



***Australian Federation of Graduate Women Inc.***

**PO Box 224, Enmore NSW 2042**

[www.afgw.org.au](http://www.afgw.org.au)

20 May 2012

Professor Ian Young,  
Vice Chancellor  
Australian National University  
Canberra, ACT 0200

Dear Professor Young,

While delighted to hear that your decision to halve the amount of one-on-one tuition to School of Music students has been emphatically reversed the Australian Federation of Graduate Women (formerly the Australian Federation of University Women) is most concerned by the proposed restructure of the ANU School of Music which will lead to a reduction in funding and staff cuts. ANU is the national university, established by Ben Chifley to advance Australian education, and held in the highest esteem nationally and internationally. We are particularly concerned that the proposal to reduce number of the permanent staff in the ANU School of Music will undermine the quality of students' musical education. Our focus, nationally and internationally, is on the advancement of girls and women of all the nationalities who make up multi-cultural Australia through education across all disciplines.

Music is one of the central arts/sciences in the disciplines of universities. The quality of performance demands one-to-one tuition with regular staff. Australia has a fine reputation in the world of music based on just that attention to quality. So many women are entering the different fields in which music has an important place - film, theatre, musical theatre, composition, performance in a range of areas and in the cross disciplinary approaches engaging poetry, science and music evident, for example, in 'The Galileo Project' by the Canadian group, Tafel Musik. International evidence such as this demonstrates that more organisations are fostering interdisciplinary cooperation in a way that involves music.

AFGW is also concerned that the impact of the proposed cuts will have a disproportionate impact on the careers of women staff members. Typically, women academics are less likely to enjoy secure employment and face greater barriers to professional advancement.

AFGW is most concerned that ANU has conflated the issues of introducing educational technology and admitting students from disadvantaged backgrounds with a cost-cutting exercise that appears to have been undertaken without due consideration of alternatives.

We ask you to reconsider this decision in the light of the future needs of Australia's creative young people.

Yours sincerely

Dr Madeleine M. Laming  
Higher Education Convenor  
Australian Federation of Graduate Women

Dr Jane Baker  
National President  
Australian Federation of Graduate Women