



Australian Federation of Graduate Women Inc.

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12 June, 2016

Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham
Minister of Education and Training
PO Box 6100
The Senate
Australian Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

re Office of Learning and Teaching

As the proposed June 30 closing date for the OLT is fast approaching, I'm writing on behalf of the women of AFGW to express our concern that such a valuable resource for Higher Education should be lost. If their funding is not continued, or their role not taken up by a university-based National Institute for Learning and Teaching as recommended by Professor Ross Milbourne in his 2015 review, there will be no support for further developing educational excellence.

In championing the Innovations agenda your government has endorsed the significant role Higher Education plays in enabling national growth, innovation and productivity. You have also acknowledged that good research is necessary for innovation. The OLT funds inspiration in University classrooms across the nation. Good research springs from good teaching and the Fellowships provided by OLT have advanced strategic, high profile research to grow this good teaching.

This research has enhanced Australia's international reputation as a world class provider of Higher Education. It has also advanced hundreds and thousands of students, both local and international, fitting them to contribute to a more agile and innovative Australian society.

As Nobel laureate, now Vice-Chancellor of the Australian National University, Professor Brian Schmidt stated such a small investment in teaching innovation as the continued funding of the Office of Learning and Teaching represents is very good value for the nation. Considering over one million Australians are involved in Universities it is only a few dollars each.

It is unthinkable that this proposed cut should occur, and perhaps I have missed the announcement of its continuation or replacement by the recommended Institute in the hurried Budget and the build up to the Federal election, but we urge you to support this valuable programme.

Tricia Blombery
Convener Standing Committee for Education
for Dr Jane Baker, President AFGW

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