



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

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**www.afgw.org.au**

The Hon. Senator Chris Evans  
Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills,  
Jobs and Workplace Relations  
PO Box 6022  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

2 February 2011

Dear Senator Evans

We are writing on behalf of the Australian Federation of Graduate Women to express our dismay at the abolition of the Australian Learning and Teaching Council announced on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2011. While we recognise the importance of rebuilding flood-affected infrastructure, we believe that your decision to withdraw funding for the ALTC is misguided.

Abolition of the ALTC will save a total of \$88m, but it has the capacity to jeopardise the government's own higher education targets and undermine morale throughout the sector.

We believe that abolition of the ALTC will have long-term negative effects on the quality of learning for all students in our universities, however we are particularly surprised at this step given the government's commitment to increasing the number of students from low socioeconomic status families going to university to 20 per cent. Typically these students require more innovative and intensive approaches to teaching; precisely the type of activity that is encouraged by the ALTC through its research grants scheme.

Your government has acknowledged the crucial role played by teaching in higher education on many occasions and recognised the positive impact of various ALTC programs on the quality of teaching and learning in Australian universities. Abolition of the ALTC awards devalue the efforts and expertise of university teachers and will make more difficult to attract high calibre graduates to the profession in the future.

In view of the long term damage that this decision will do to the higher education sector, and the relatively modest savings involved, we ask that you reconsider this decision.

Yours sincerely

Dr Jane Baker  
President

Dr Madeleine M. Laming  
Education Convenor