

Dear state based PENs,

Yesterday the VTAS Pen passed a motion to petition the Minister for Education and Training, Simon Birmingham, to continue the government's support for the OLT or to act on the recommendation of Professor Milbourne's report to establish a new body to support learning and teaching higher education.

We ask you - each state based PEN - to join us in passing this motion. The motion is below and also in a Word doc, attached. It will then be sent to the Minister on behalf of all PEN networks.

Motion that Vic-Tas proposes to all other state networks to support the following motion

We, the state-based Promoting Excellence networks call on the Federal government to continue its support of the Office of Learning and Teaching (formerly the 'Australian Learning and Teaching Council' and the 'Carrick Institute') or act on the recommendation of Prof Melbourne's report, to establish a new national institution to support learning and teaching in higher education.

Over many years the OLT has contributed to improved learning experiences of thousands of higher education students through its support of teaching awards, grants, fellowships and other initiatives. It has done this by supporting networks and by funding innovations by educators themselves, that have led to improved student learning experiences. Collaboration across institutions, partnerships with industry and the arts, and sharing of new teaching practices, have been supported, to address the challenges of maintaining quality in a mass education system. The value placed on education by universities in the sector has grown as a result. The real winners are graduates who have greater capacity to deal with complexity in their fields.

The state-based networks of Victoria-Tasmania, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the NT, and NSW-ACT, support academic and professional staff in universities to engage successfully with OLT programs. We have witnessed the positive impact of the

OLT's programs on our institutions. We therefore urge you to continue to support the work of the OLT.

A recent CommunityRun campaign to garner support from academics, students and community to support the either saving the OLT or acting of Prof Melbourne's report has over 800 signatures and rising!

CommunityRun Petition

On a separate note, if you have not already seen the Community Run petition, you may like to sign and share the campaign.

The campaign which has collected over 1200 signatures and counting! Please help spread the word by signing and sharing this campaign with your email contacts or on Facebook or Twitter (#OLTphoenix).

<http://www.communityrun.org/petitions/save-the-olt-or-act-on-prof-milbourne-s-report>

The campaign has sparked a number of media articles, Jenna Price contacted me on the weekend and produced a great article published in a number of outlets today which might also be promoted -

<http://m.theage.com.au/comment/another-promise-broken--office-of-learning-and-teaching-to-lose-funding-20160418-go8q9y.html>

In addition, the Australian Teaching Fellows are drafting a media release to be published in various outlets.

We need to send a message to the federal government about the importance of bodies such as the OLT in supporting Australian Higher Education. In this time of electoral and governmental uncertainty we need to ensure that support for teaching in Australian higher education isn't forgotten.

kind regards,
Joy Whitton for
VTAS Network