



*Australian Council of Deans of
Information and Communications Technology*

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To: Ms Jessie Borthwick,
Acting Deputy Secretary, Higher Education Reform and Support, DET

From: Professor Iwona Miliszewska
President, Australian Council of Deans of ICT (ACDICT)
and President, ACDICT Learning and Teaching Academy

Re: Office of Learning and Teaching and Higher Education in ICT
20 April 2016

The Office of Learning and Teaching provides a unique essential component of driving the national educational quality agenda.

The Australian Council of Deans of ICT is very concerned about the proposal to terminate the OLT, with no alternative in train to continue its programs. The OLT and its predecessor, ALTC, have been crucial in generating initiative and support for higher education across the STEM disciplines, including the ICT disciplines, and across the whole sector. The ALTC and OLT have had impact far greater than what might have been anticipated, considering their size and level of funding. The ALTC initiatives encouraged the formation of councils of deans in many areas and, consequently, led to the creation of forums for teaching and learning that have improved the quality of education in every university.

The OLT competitive and commissioned grants are of particular importance, as they focus on addressing issues of broad concern, and formulation of improved practice. The OLT programmes have been the best way to have higher education evidence collected and best practices reported, for multiple disciplines and across disciplines. It has worked very effectively at a scale larger than any one discipline can coordinate; its mandatory requirement for dissemination of the results drives timely and wide delivery of impact.

Australia urgently needs graduates in ICT, with an estimated 100,000 gap in available workers in the next five years. Improving the quality and efficiency of their education is essential, and the OLT is a key support for the universities' efforts to do this.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Iwona Miliszewska