



澳大利亞學漢語協會
Association for Learning Mandarin in Australia Inc.

MEDIA RELEASE

UC Centre for Quality Teaching and Learning is good, but misses the Asian Century

ALMA welcomes the University of Canberra's new Centre for Quality Teaching and Learning, to help teachers benefit from the latest research.

ALMA is, however, surprised and disappointed that the lengthy description of the Centre does not include any mention of languages education. This is contrary to the Federal Government's recent emphasis on the importance of teaching Asian languages in schools and its commitment to support the learning of five priority Asian languages from Kindergarten to Year 12.

The University of Canberra not only clearly fails to understand the importance of Asian languages in its new Centre; it has actually closed down existing language programs, including Chinese and Japanese. These languages are two of the Government's five priority Asian languages, and the languages spoken by Australia's two largest trading partners.

ALMA notes that the Victorian Government released a Vision for Languages Education in 2011. Aside from the obvious benefits of learning foreign languages in order to deal effectively with important diplomatic and trading partners, the Vision importantly acknowledges that it's a good idea to teach more than one language to children because it improves learning in all other areas of the curriculum.

We are both astonished and alarmed a university that prides itself on training teachers to deliver excellent education seems not to have noticed the potentially significant role of foreign languages in improving educational outcomes.

We urge the University to take note of the evidence, as well as the bipartisan policy priorities articulated in the White Paper on Australia in the Asian Century, to put more resources into this important educational area.

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The Association for Learning Mandarin in Australia Inc (ALMA) is a not-for-profit community organization that promotes Mandarin education in Australia