

**RESPONSE TO THE VICTORIAN PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY INTO THE EXTENT, BENEFITS AND POTENTIAL OF MUSIC EDUCATION IN VICTORIAN SCHOOLS**

This response provides an overview of the Faculty of Education views on the Inquiry's terms of reference and information on current practices of the Australian Catholic University in Victoria regarding its teaching degrees.

- Pre-service teacher training for specialist music teachers

Through the graduate entry secondary teacher education programs, students with appropriate music backgrounds can undertake curriculum and pedagogy units. ACU has an Memorandum of Understanding with the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music to provide credit for four units in their Master of Music (Performance Teaching). The Faculty in Victoria does not currently offer specialist undergraduate training for music teachers, however there is potential for courses to be developed in future depending on the need for such training. The University does offer specialist music degrees as part of a Bachelor of Creative Arts and Bachelor of Music (Honours) course but these are not necessarily tailored to becoming a music specialist teacher in the secondary, primary or early childhood fields.

In NSW, the Faculty has an arrangement with the Australian Institute of Music in Sydney to provide a pathway into the graduate entry secondary pre-service teacher education programs.

- Pre-service teacher training for generalist primary teachers

ACU Victoria offers a diverse music experience for generalist teachers in first and third year of an early childhood/primary degree and third and fourth year of a Primary Bachelor degree, and also in the two year graduate entry pre-service course, Master of Teaching (Primary). The subjects (units) run for 12 weeks and include practical music workshops supported by six weeks of lectures that give background and frameworks explaining the importance and relevance of developmental music in education.

ACU has a strong commitment supporting music education and our approach to music has many perspectives including that of music as social justice, music as lifelong learning, music for health and wellbeing and music as music learning. Each of these perspectives has been developed to ensure a fit with the VELS guidelines and outcomes and the units are currently being reshaped to fit the national Arts curriculum guidelines.

Although the two units of study in music education appear to be more hours than offered by many other universities, there is still much that is not covered in this time; some students feel under-prepared or lack confidence to teach music. Due to the crowded pre-service teacher education curriculum, there are insufficient hours available to allocate to helping students develop appropriate competency and confidence. This means that for many teachers, they need to attend in-service professional development programs in order to learn more about incorporating music into their class programs effectively.



One area that ACU appears is addressing in some small way is that of the use of technology and IT applications in teaching and learning music. We hope to be trail blazers in this area over the next five years.

- Professional development for teachers

ACU has identified this as an area where we can contribute significantly to the future of music education in Victoria. We are developing programs to introduce the new national curriculum to currently practicing teachers.

We are also establishing an on-line learning community that provides video and other resources for supporting teaching and learning.

ACU supports an annual Summer or Winter school of Orff Schulwerk, an approach to music education that is inclusive of all levels of musical ability and is an integration of singing, movement, instruments and improvisation. These courses are well attended by teachers and interested students.

- Any research your university has conducted into the benefits of music education for students

There are no current projects being undertaken in Victoria, but several areas that need research have been identified and study design is underway for these projects to commence in 2013. This includes a study to identify the issues and problems encountered with the transition from primary to secondary school and a study that examines the previous school music experience of our current early childhood students and the repertoire and understanding they bring from their schooling to university.

In NSW, Dr Jan Kane is researching several areas related to music education. One study is focused on the effects on music teacher self-efficacy of immersion in a professional development interactive and 'hands-on' music program for generalist classroom teachers. Another study is a pilot study examining the effects of music as an intervention when combined with drama to affect changes in student social and behavioural outcomes. In planning is another project. This project would focus on Australian music education reform and the possible role and interplay of studio teachers with primary classroom teachers.

- Any school music education programs that your university is involved in

There are plans for the next two years to develop two wider school community music projects. These programs would be collaborative between students at the University and Catholic schools where there are teachers willing and able to support such programs.

### **Statement about music education**

Although the value of music education has been identified and articulated in policy documentation, and the fact that there is a growing body of evidence to add weight to the importance of the inclusion of quality music programs in schools (Bamford, 2006; Eisner, 2002; Finley, 2011; Pascoe et al., 2005), Bamford suggests there is a discrepancy between mandated arts education (including

music), and what actually happens in schools (Bamford, 2006; Finley, 2011). Bamford has also noted the significance of the finding that individual schools themselves often have a large influence on the formulation and implementation of arts education policy and may choose not to implement a music program.

There are many reasons why schools do not or cannot include music education in the curriculum. It may be the case that those charged with the implementation of education policy have a narrow, rather than a more expanded view of what constitutes intelligence, or do not appreciate the broader benefits of music for learning more broadly, including literacy learning. Gardner, in his theory of multiple intelligences has identified at least seven intelligences and it is now generally accepted that children think and learn in different ways (Kornhaber, 2001). However, time constraints and pressures of assessment dictate that the focus remains on the style of intelligence required to complete measurable tasks.

It is often the case too that teachers and principals have not had the opportunity themselves to experience high quality, engaging music education programs. Their own musical skills and sense of self-efficacy are often limited, and even though we are all immersed frequently in music in our daily lives and most of us have the means to listen to any style of music at the time and place of our own choosing, many primary teachers often have limited experience of first-hand music-making. Their experiences of music may be as consumers rather than as participants. Or, they may have the perception that they have to be trained musicians to engage musically with children.

The majority of primary generalist teachers feel musically inadequate. Burnard (2003, p. 32) notes that overwhelmingly, pre-service primary teachers express "frustration, embarrassment and humiliation" about their musical experiences in their own early years of schooling. In a study of Australian primary classroom teachers and the challenges they faced in implementing arts education, many expressed feeling ill-equipped and inadequately trained to deliver quality arts programs (Alter et al., 2009). Eisner (1999, p. 17) notes that often "we are expecting teachers to teach what they do not know and often do not love". These factors often perpetuate the cycle of teachers lacking the confidence and skills to engage in first-hand music making with students.



Professor Marie Emmitt  
Executive Dean  
Faculty of Education

10 January 2013

**References**

- Alter, F., Hays, T., & O'Hara, R. (2009). The challenges of implementing primary arts education. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood, 34*(4).
- Bamford, A. (2006). *The Wow Factor - Global Research Compendium on the Impact of the Arts in Education*. New York: Waxman Munster.
- Burnard, P., & Hennessy, S. (2003). "How musical are you? - examining the discourse of derision in music education. In S. Leong (Ed.), *Musicianship in the 21st Century: Issues, Trends, Possibilities*. Marrickville, NSW: Australian Music Centre.
- Eisner, E. (2002). *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*. London: Yale University Press.
- Finley, S. (2011). Critical Arts-Based Inquiry. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Kornhaber, M. (Ed.). (2001). *Howard Gardner - Fifty Modern Thinkers on Education - From Piaget to the Present*. London: Routledge.
- Pascoe, R., Leong, S., MacCallum, J., Mackinlay, E., Marsh, K., & Smith, B., et al. . (2005). *National review of school music education: augmenting the diminished*. Canberra: Australian Government.