

Media Release

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Attention: Education and
Political reporters

For Immediate Release

Government must fund staff pay increases

Students are urging the Government to increase funding to tertiary institutions to cover staff pay increases rather than resorting to raising student fees. "Students support pay increases for tertiary institution staff but this should not come at the expense of students," said Camilla Belich, Co-President of the New Zealand University Students' Association (NZUSA).

This statement follows a letter sent to the Association of University Staff (AUS) and the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors Committee (NZVCC) from the Minister of Education stating that there would be no Government money for staff wage increases in the May Budget.

"It is the Government's responsibility to adequately fund the tertiary sector. Staff at New Zealand tertiary institutions will never have internationally comparable pay levels, which would attract and retain academic staff, unless the Government wakes up to this reality," Belich said.

The letter from Mr Mallard stated that any staff wage increases this year must be funded through the 'normal ways'.

"Government funding is the only 'normal' way of funding staff pay increases. Students would be disgusted to hear that Mallard expected them to pay for what his multi-billion dollar surplus apparently cannot accommodate," said Andrew Kirton, Co-President of NZUSA.

"At an average of around \$4000 per year, tertiary fees are already far too high. Students will not tolerate anything but a commitment from Mallard for fee reductions in 2005," Kirton said.

A copy of Trevor Mallard's letter to Helen Kelly, AUS General Secretary, can be found at http://www.aus.ac.nz/national_bargaining/2005/Auckland/MallardLetter.pdf.

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