

Media Release

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Attention: Education and
Political reporters
For Immediate Release**

Extension Must Not Compromise Fee Freeze Or Fee Maxima

The six week extension to the fee freeze deadline must not compromise holding the costs of tertiary education, say the New Zealand University Students' Association (NZUSA).

"The Vice Chancellors have not indicated to date that the 4.5% increase in funding on offer is not enough to hold student fees for 2003. It was not raised as an issue during the election campaign and it is odd that it is now being raised as a problem," said NZUSA Co-President Andrew Campbell.

"Students do not want to see the Vice Chancellors use the threat of rejecting the fee freeze offer as a stick to get changes to the governments fees maxima policy that would have a negative impact on students. Such a strategy would be transparent but may also mean fee increases for students," said Campbell.

"During the extra six weeks, councils should consider very carefully the negative impact of fee increases," said NZUSA Co-President Andrew Campbell. "They act as a disincentive to study, particularly for the poorest students, and force students to borrow more and more from the unfair student loans scheme."

Tertiary Education Minister Steve Maharey announced the extension to the deadline today, now October 11, after Vice Chancellors' expressed disquiet over another fee freeze.

"Fee rises will do nothing to help tertiary institutions and they will hurt thousands and thousands of students. The tertiary sector needs to freeze fees for 2003 and then get on with the longer term plan of a new tertiary funding system and equitable fee maxima and fee reductions."

ENDS

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