

**Media  
Release**

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Attention: Education and  
Political reporters  
For Immediate Release**

## **Government listens to students: better news on fees**

Students are welcoming today's announcement that Labour have stepped away from their fee maxima policy which would have seen large fee increases for thousands of students. However students are still concerned that the amended policy will allow some room for fee increases for 2004.

"We're pleased that the government has listened to student protest and introduced an annual fee increase limit of five percent," said Fleur Fitzsimons, Co-President of the New Zealand University Students' Association (NZUSA). "However, Labour need to decrease fees to give meaning to their pledge card promise to keep tertiary education affordable."

While pleased that fee increases could not be of the magnitude signalled by the maxima, students will still fight for a zero increase or fee decreases.

"We do not believe that a five percent fee increase can be justified by tertiary institutions, many of whom are showing healthy mid year surpluses," said Fitzsimons. "Better funding for tertiary institutions can not come off the back of students who are already paying thousands of dollars each year and borrowed over half a billion dollars last year alone to pay for their fees."

Fitzsimons said it was a good sign that the government was responsive to student associations and student activism around fees, and that they had made some changes for the better.

"While we believe that postgraduate students deserve tuition fee control, we are pleased that the Government has adopted our suggestion that their annual fee increase limit be \$500 rather than the \$1000 originally suggested."

"Students at tertiary institutions will now be focussed on ensuring that all student fees are stabilised for 2004 and then start to come down," said Fitzsimons.

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