

**Media
Release****11 August 2006
Attention: Education and
Political reporters
For Immediate Use****Otago Polytechnic fee increase disappointing**

"Otago Polytechnic is the first of the public tertiary institutions to set its domestic fees this year and it is extremely disappointing that they have chosen to raise student fees, some by up to 5%," said Conor Roberts, Co-president of the New Zealand Union of Students Associations (NZUSA).

"Last year students at Otago Polytechnic borrowed over \$8.5 million simply to pay for fees, students are frustrated that it will be even higher next year."

"Students should not be forced to pick up the slack because of Government underfunding of our public tertiary education system. Dr Cullen is currently undertaking a review of how tertiary education is funded in New Zealand, but is omitting to look at the actual levels of funding for our institutions."

"Low levels of public funding lead to high fees."

"If we want high quality tertiary education in this country then the Government must take responsibility to properly fund it, current funding levels are outrageously low."

"High fees act as a barrier to tertiary education for many people and high debt has a host of negative outcomes for students and the wider society."

"As we go into the fee setting season, students are calling on tertiary institutions to not raise fees and send a message to the Government that they cannot get away with simply passing the buck onto students," Mr Roberts concluded.

ENDS

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