



NEW ZEALAND UNION OF STUDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS (INC.)

TE RŌPŪ ĀKONGA O NGĀ WHARE WĀNANGA O AOTEAROA

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Press Release

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Attention: Education and Political reporters

Women students demand action on gender pay gap

Women students are expressing concern over research released today by the Ministry of Women's Affairs that shows female students face a gender pay gap just one year after entering employment, and are calling on the Minister of Women's Affairs, Hon Pansy Wong, to take action.

Figures released today show that only one year after entering the employment market an income gap of up to six percent develops between men and women with a bachelor's qualification or above, and disturbingly the gap grows to up to twenty percent for some women graduates after five years.

"For a long time many have pointed to the high participation of women in tertiary study as evidence of equality between men and women, yet this research shows that in reality there is still a high level of inequity in New Zealand society," said Sophia Blair, National Women's Rights Officer at the New Zealand Union of Students' Associations.

"These figures unfortunately will come as no surprise to most New Zealanders – the pay gap has existed for many years. What will come as a surprise to many though is that instead of implementing an action plan to address the gender pay gap in society, the National Government has chosen to shut down the very programmes that were in the process of addressing this gap. Instead, all we now have is more research, which tells us what we already know," said Blair.

"The Government needs to set out a real plan of action to address the pay gap in society – it is absolutely outrageous that while our female graduates, who do the same degree as their male counterparts, get paid less from right from the start," said Blair.

"Fixing the pay gap in New Zealand would rectify a breach of a basic human right, boost the income of families and increase the material welfare of many women in New Zealand." concluded Blair.

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