

**MEDIA  
RELEASE**

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## "Brighter future" a now distant glimmer say students

Students are disappointed today with the Government's Budget following the announcement that the main funding categories in tertiary education will not be guaranteed to increase in real terms over the coming few years and that \$98 million dollars worth of Scholarships will be slashed. While acknowledging a 1.95% (below predicted inflation level) funding adjustment in 2010, students have been left in the dark over tertiary funding beyond next year.

"The amount that the Government has increased spending in the tertiary education budget for 2010 is below predicted inflation levels and is effectively a cut. In a time of recession where more and more New Zealanders will be looking towards participating in tertiary education in the face of high unemployment, it is highly disappointing not to see a substantial increase in an area that is key to New Zealand's economic recovery" said Jordan King, Co-President of New Zealand Union of Students' Associations.

"If greater funding is not provided it will mean fewer people will be able to access tertiary education as institutions will be forced to cap numbers and those seeking education will be shut out" said King. "The last thing we need is to emerge from this recession with an even less skilled workforce, however, without proper funding increases this is precisely what this announcement has signalled."

"Students are also worried that this announcement will signal, in the coming years, changes to the fee maxima system. The Government may, in an attempt to make up the funding shortfall of institutions, allow them to set their own fees," said King. "Such an action has already proved in the past to be a dismal failure and would be incredibly short sighted, regressive and place more debt on an already overburdened student population."

"This Budget presented a real opportunity for the Government to deliver on its "Brighter Future" promises in the last election. Instead, New Zealander's have been delivered a short sighted and parochial plan for the future which undermines further and higher learning at such a critical time" concluded King.

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