

Press Release28 July 2010 - For Immediate Release
Attention: Education and Political reporters

Polytechnic funding cuts may not heal

Students are concerned at the future of courses at their Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs) as Government funding cuts continue to bite.

Millions of dollars have been stripped out of the polytechnic sector over the past few years. While the Budget a small boost in funded places, other cuts mean that the sector will receive about \$20 million per year less from 2011, and some institutions will be worse hit than others.

"Students and society looked to the Budget to deliver relief from Government underfunding for the tertiary sector. Instead, this Government's Budgets have continued a depressing pattern," said NZUSA Co-President David Do.

"It is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain quality and fair access to education due to continuous Government underfunding. The high number of reviews and job losses the sector is experiencing will inevitably mean some courses will be cut, and the staff:student ratio will increase. This will detrimentally impact on the quality of education that polytechnic students receive," said Do.

"All students deserve the opportunity to access education, but Government underfunding is putting this at risk. Particularly worrying is the fact that small polytechnics in isolated areas will struggle in the long-term. Students would want to see enhanced access to higher education in all regions, and would be very concerned at any reductions or limitations that may result," says Do.

"If New Zealand really wants to ensure we have a more skilled population and a stronger recovery, we should not be constraining the ability of ITPs to fully deliver on building skills across the workforce, or for students to access the skills they need," concludes Do.

NZUSA is the national representative body for tertiary students and has been advocating on student issues since 1929.

ENDS

For more information contact:

NZUSA Co-President David Do, 027 486 8677, david.do@students.org.nz