



Press Release

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Attention: Education and Political reporters

Threats to funding? Students say no

Students are alarmed at hints to future cuts to tertiary education funding contained in the Prime Minister's opening statement to Parliament today.

"While we support the government's intention to work with the tertiary sector to ensure high quality tertiary education, this should not come at the expense of hard working students," says NZUSA co-President David Do.

The Prime Minister's statement to Parliament said the government will examine the policy settings around student loans and allowances, suggesting that some students refuse to take their studies seriously or spend too long in the education system.

"We reject the characterisation that students do not take their studies and work seriously. Many juggle part time work with full time study, and borrow to live from the student loans scheme simply because they are not eligible for student allowances," says co-President David Do.

"The Government appears to be hinting at tightening eligibility for loans and allowances. This will hit students who are already struggling to make ends meet," says Do.

"Some students would not have been able to save up money to offset their living and academic costs due to higher student unemployment over the summer. The last thing students need to worry about is whether their student allowance or loan living costs are going to be cut because of supposed 'non-seriousness'," says NZUSA co-President Pene Delaney.

"The current economic climate and high unemployment also means that we are seeing an influx of people returning to study and upskill themselves, including graduates who have found it difficult to find work. We should not be penalising New Zealanders who want to upskill themselves," concludes Pene Delaney.

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

ENDS

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