

# Student Support During COVID-19

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Wednesday 15 September

Tēnā koe Minister Hipkins

## Re: Student Support During COVID-19

On 23 August forty-nine students' associations, councils, and organisations released our **National Student Action Plan on COVID-19**. This Action Plan was designed to ensure that the wellbeing of the hundreds of thousands of tertiary students in polytechnics and universities across Aotearoa New Zealand was front of mind in Government decision-making.

In the Action Plan there were three key asks of the Government during this incredibly uncertain time for our taurira:

- **We asked that as a temporary measure, the Government extend income support from StudyLink to all domestic students as a temporary Universal Education Income.**
- **We asked that the Government significantly increase resources allocated to the COVID-19 Hardship Fund to ensure that all students have the financial support they need to make it through lockdown.**
- **We asked that the Government increase the mental health support for tertiary students and young people, in a period where poor mental health is exacerbated by social isolation and uncertainty.**

**Only one of these calls has been answered.** While we welcome the \$20 million increase in the Hardship Fund for Learners this simply isn't enough on its own. An ambulance at the bottom of the cliff doesn't solve the significant financial difficulties tens of thousands of our students are facing across Aotearoa.



**Students are some of the most precarious in society.** Their casual jobs have dried up, their one-off jobs have disappeared. They are often not eligible for other income support such as the Wage Subsidy and are forced to borrow to survive.

As the representatives of over 400,000 students across Aotearoa, we call on you to introduce a temporary **Universal Education Income** to make sure that every student can afford to live. We need bold action now so that we don't fail an entire generation of taurira. **A revolutionary moment in the world's history is a time for revolution, not for patching.**

A Universal Education Income (UEI) would provide income support for every student across Aotearoa, regardless of whether they're full-time or part-time and regardless of whether they're an apprentice or a postgrad. A UEI is not a radical departure from other forms of Government income support during this lockdown. **It is the only way to ensure that no student is left behind.**

If we want to create a barrier-free education system that truly puts learners at the centre, we need to stand up and be counted. Our students are struggling to survive and need your support. We know that you are working incredibly hard at this unprecedented global time however, we really hope that you take our request seriously.

We want to work with you to support students during this time and would appreciate it if there is any way that we can organise a teleconference call to discuss our needs as students during the coming weeks.

Ngā manaakitanga

**Tertiary students of Aotearoa New Zealand**



## SIGNATORIES

New Zealand Union of Students' Associations (NZUSA)  
Te Mana Ākonga (TMĀ)  
Tauria Pasifika (TP)  
National Disabled Students' Association (NDSA)  
Albany Students' Association (ASA)  
Auckland University Students' Association (AUSA)  
Auckland University of Technology Students' Association (AUTSA)  
Lincoln University Students' Association (LUSA)  
Massey at Distance (M@D)  
Massey at Wellington Students' Association (MAWSA)  
Massey University Students' Association (MUSA)  
Manakaū Institute of Technology Student Council (MITSC)  
Otago University Students' Association (OUSA)  
Students' Association at the Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology (SANITI)  
Students' Association at UCOL (SAU)  
Students' Association at Wintec (SAWIT)  
Younited Students' Association (EIT)  
Unitec Student Council (USC)  
University of Canterbury Students' Association (UCSA)  
Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association (VUWSA)  
WelTec and Whitireia Student Connection

Auckland University Pacific Islands Students' Association  
Fale Niu AUT Pacific Island Student Association  
Lincoln University Pacific Island Students' Association  
Massey University Pasifika Students' Association  
New Zealand Tongan Tertiary Students Association  
Niuean Tertiary Students' Association New Zealand  
Pacific EIT (PEIT)  
Pacific Island Students of Ara  
Tuluma Tokelauan Students' Association  
University of Otago Pacific Island Students Association



## SIGNATORIES CONTINUED

Kokiri Ngatahi  
Manawatahi  
Mātātupu  
Ngā Tauira Māori  
Ngāi Tauira  
Te Akatoki  
Te Awhioraki  
Te Roopū Māori  
Te Roopū Tautoko  
Te Tira Akonga  
Te Waiora  
Titahi ki Tua

Auckland University Disabled Students' Association  
Otago Disabled Students' Association  
Victoria Disabled Students' Association  
University of Waikato Disabled Students' Association  
University of Canterbury Disabled Students' Association

University of Auckland Postgraduate Students' Association  
University of Otago Postgraduate Students' Association  
Victoria University of Wellington Postgraduate Students' Association