



Students hold National Day of Action against deregulation and fee hikes

Embargoed until 10:01 Wednesday April 13th

Students across the country are coming out today against the federal governments continued plans to deregulate university fees, to increase the student debt load and huge funding cuts in rallies organised by the National Union of Students (NUS).

“Simon Birmingham, the Minister for education, has made it clear that the government fully intends on continuing with their plan to introduce \$100,000 degrees for students, restricting the access to university to the super rich” said Sinead Colee, NUS President.

The government’s plans, including the 10% increase on how much of fees students have to pay would see students stuck with a lifetime of debt they have no chance or repaying. This will be particularly damaging for women students who are already disproportionately affected by debt.

“The governments bill, in various forms, has been struck down 3 times already. What are they not getting? There’s no appetite amongst students, the education community or the Australian public for these reforms.

What we are seeing here is a government who’s only ambition seems to be to suck every last dollar out of the students of Australia. What we need is a serious look at increasing the funding to universities, as we are already on the lower end of the spectrum internationally when it comes to higher education funding” Said Colee.

Australia currently spends 0.7% of GDP investing in tertiary education, compared with the OECD average of 1.1% of GDP. Australia is ranked 33rd out of 34 OECD countries for public investment in tertiary education.

Last week Adelaide and Perth held successful rallies calling on the government to abandon these plans as well as a snap rally in Melbourne on the 8th of April where several students were pepper sprayed by the Victorian police.

“We strongly encourage the Victorian police not take the extreme measures they resorted to at the rally last Friday that saw some students taken away in ambulances.”

Students from universities across Australia are calling on this government to abandon it’s attack young people.

For further comment contact:

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