



April 5th

For immediate release

NUS condemns Education Minister Simon Birmingham's commitment to university fee deregulation

The National Union of Students is seriously concerned about Higher Education minister, Simon Birmingham's announcement that the Liberal government remains committed to seeing Australian students pay more for their education.

NUS National Education Officer, Max Murphy, said that the announcement "showed the government wasn't committed to the interests of students or the Australian community, but only focused on austerity."

"Cutting 20% of funding to an industry that exists for the benefit of our community is an atrocity. Australia already has one of the lowest rates of public funding for tertiary education in the OECD, and this has only made it clearer that having accessible and quality education in this country is not a priority for the Liberal government at all."

"The government needs to commit to funding the future of Australia and end their threats to an industry that gives all Australians the chance of a better life. We need our government to commit to never deregulating university fees and to provide a fully funded Higher Education system".

This comes in combination with the governments recently announced attacks to decrease the repayment threshold at which students pay back their HECS debt to only \$42,000 (lower than the average median graduate wage) and to increase the contribution that students contribute to their HECS from 40% to 50%.

"Deregulation at its core is unfair and is an attack on students. Students around the country have rallied in the thousand against its introduction and will continue to do so until students are no longer saddled with the prospect of a lifetime of debt."

Students around the country will be protesting against the government's plans for higher education between the 6th and 13th of April. This announcement has only helped engage more students with these actions and drawn attention to the lack of support students have from the Government.

For Further Comment Contact:

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