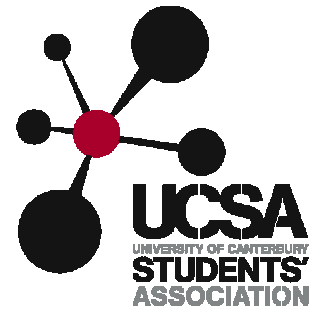


## From the Office of the President

29 June 2009.

RE: STUDENT SERVICES LEVY



Notice to all members,

UC Student services exist to ensure the social, cultural, academic and economic well being of ALL of its students. The UCSA advocates to ensure the well being of UC students is considered and protected when making changes within the university operation.

The UC announced today the implementation of a Student Services Levy. It will be levied against every student, and is to be ring-fenced and solely apportioned to the cost of student services and student space provided at UC.

**The UCSA has resolved to support the levy. It does so because it ensures the current level of service provision is maintained. It also secures the protection of the quality of teaching and research at UC.**

The UCSA accepts that the current model of funding does not allow for the continuation of the services at the current level. Every dollar spent on service provision is a dollar not spent in the classroom, and students have seen erosion in the resources provided for teaching and research over the past few years.

The UCSA also accepts that the indication from central government is that funding will become increasingly focussed on teaching and research, the core activities of the university. This policy will see an eventual erasing of services on offer, and a regression back to a user pays system of service provision. Both of these outcomes are completely unsatisfactory to students and the UCSA.

The university sector is under-funded, under-resourced and now under-pressure to guarantee the quality of education whilst maintaining a level of service that makes certain the well being of students. The levy is clearly designed to address this very real problem.

By entering into the discussion the UCSA has secured a number of key concessions to the implementation of the levy. These include:

- i) Ring-fencing. The levy can only be spent on student services and student spaces.
- ii) Appropriations committee. Students will make up half the delegates of a committee to advise where the funds should be spent.
- iii) Limitation. There will be a lifetime cap, concession to those students studying at distance and those here for only one semester.

There is no doubt that being involved in the discussion has had a tangible effect on the shape and implementation of the levy. As such the UCSA will continue to part of the discussions around the levy.

By imposing a levy the UC is asking its students to shoulder some of the burden of service provision. It is the position of the UCSA that the when imposing a levy the university must be transparent, accountable and flexible. Supporting in principle the

levy in no way erodes the mandate of the UCSA to call the UC to account and advocate for the most relevant services available.

By charging students separately for services requires the university to then report to its students exactly what services are being provided and the costs associated with them. The UCSA looks forward to these reports.

Up until this point the UC has shown good faith when discussing their approach to both the provision and funding of student services. To this end the Vice Chancellor, Dr Rod Carr, has accepted an invitation by the UCSA to attend an open forum where he will answer questions and address concerns of the student body. This will be held in the first week of the third term.

By paying separately for services and space, students are ensuring their facilities will be state of the art, their well being top of mind and the quality of the UC degree will remain a valued currency in the employment marketplace, facts the UCSA will continue to remind those decision makers within UC.

There is no doubt the decision by the UC to levy students for services and space imposes a real cost on the very stakeholders who can least afford to pay it. Students are being put in an impossible situation: contribute to the cost or see those services cut. The UCSA cannot support a cut to service provision.

As an organisation with student interests at the centre of every decision the UCSA will continue to lobby central government to increase funding to the sector. It will continue to advise the UC on matters of student interest. The UCSA will continue to be proactive in providing welfare, advocacy, support and funding to its members at no charge.

All members are welcome to talk to me regarding the position of the UCSA on this matter. My door is always open; please make an appointment by emailing me in the first instance ([president@ucsa.canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:president@ucsa.canterbury.ac.nz)).

Steve Jukes

PRESIDENT.