

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

DATE: THURSDAY 24 JULY 2008

ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



HECS fee increase to maintain excellence

The University of Tasmania will increase its Higher Education Contribution (HECS) fees for the first time since 2005 in order to continue to deliver a first-class education experience for students.

To date, UTAS has been the only university in Australia not to increase its HECS fees by the 25 per cent allowed under the former Federal Government's higher education reforms. Holding fees to the lowest possible level was a deliberate policy of UTAS to encourage Tasmanians to enrol at the university.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Daryl Le Grew said the 25 per cent increase was regrettable but unavoidable if the University was to remain fiscally responsible and maintain its standards of excellence.

“An unintended consequence of the timing of the Federal Government's Bradley Review is that there is no planned increase in Commonwealth funding for teaching and learning in the foreseeable future. With escalating costs and no funding increases, the University has no option left but to increase fees,” he said.

Prof Le Grew said he understood the increase was a blow to students, but wanted to reassure them that the University was committed to allocating a major proportion of the extra funds to scholarships and teaching and learning.

“The University Council has made a firm commitment that a proportion of the extra income will be dedicated to scholarships, in particular expanding our equity scholarships, and toward enhancing the teaching and learning experience,” he said.

“We are disappointed that we have to go down this path and we have held off as long as possible, but in terms of responsible fiscal management and in order to continue to provide the best experience for our students, we have no option,” Prof Le Grew said.

“While we deeply regret having to increase our course fees, UTAS remains committed to maintaining its high-quality facilities and ensuring its students continue to enjoy a world-class teaching experience.”

Information Released by:

The Media Office, University of Tasmania

Phone: (03) 6226 2124 or (03) 6226 2691

Mobile: 0417 517 291

Email: Media.Office@utas.edu.au