



30th January

For immediate release

## **STUDENTS ARE READY FOR BIRMINGHAM**

The National Union of Students has warned the government that any plan to increase or deregulate fees will be met with sharp resistance. “We beat deregulation on the streets in 2014 and we are ready to do it again” said Education Officer Anneke Demanuele, “You would think the government would have learnt its lesson, not to attack students”.

Simon Birmingham speaking to SKY news on Monday flagged his intentions to announce new government policy on higher education. The National Union of Students are ready for the government, with protests already called around the country for March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The National Union of Students fears this can only mean more attacks on low SES students. The Minister for Higher Education has previously indicated his support for partial and full fee deregulation, a policy which NUS opposed in 2014 and which failed twice in the senate. As well as deregulation, the government is still committed to a 20% funding cut to universities, which means the quality of education will continue to fall and the cost will inevitably get pushed onto students.

“Birmingham may have been vague during his interview on SKY news but the National Union of Students won’t be vague in our response. If the government attempts any more attacks to university funding, if it attempts to reintroduce fee deregulation or tries in any way to move legislation that puts students in the crosshairs, we will fight back” said Anneke Demanuele “We have already planned demonstrations around Australia for the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March to demand free education, and we will make sure that every student around the country is aware of the attacks being pushed by the Liberals”.

The Education Department’s campaign *Make Education Free Again* acknowledges that students’ education used to be subsidised, and in the last 30 years has only gotten more expensive for students. “We want to fight for an education system that is truly accessible, not one that saddles students with tens of thousands of dollars’ debt. And it’s not just that the cost of education keeps on rising, it is also that government support for students does not rise in line. Living on \$30 a day is untenable for ordinary students” said Anneke Demanuele.

### **RALLY DETAILS –**

Victoria – 2pm, State Library, March 22<sup>nd</sup>

Sydney – 2pm, University of Sydney, March 22<sup>nd</sup>

Brisbane – 2pm, location TBA, March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Adelaide – 2pm, Rundle Mall, March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Canberra – 1pm, Australian National University, March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Wollongong – 1pm, Wollongong University, March 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Newcastle – 2pm, Newcastle University, March 28<sup>th</sup>.

Perth – 2pm, Murray Street Mall, March 29<sup>th</sup>.

Campaign Page – [www.facebook.com/makeeducationfreeagain](http://www.facebook.com/makeeducationfreeagain)

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