

# MEDIA RELEASE

## OCT 16 STRIKE WINS SUPPORT OF ALL HIGHER EDUCATION UNIONS

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Seven unions covering university staff across Australia will be supporting the October 16th higher education strike to protest the Government's proposal to deny universities access to \$404 million in funding unless they adopt a series of hard line industrial conditions, and to press home their claim for enterprise agreements that do not contain the conditions.

"The decision represents an unprecedented level of cooperation on the part of trade unions in the university sector, and demonstrates to the Government and university management the determination of academic and general staff to resist Commonwealth meddling and protect the independence of our public university system," said Grahame McCulloch, National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) General Secretary.



In addition to the NTEU, the trade unions that have officially indicated that they will be supporting the October 16 strike are the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU); Australian Manufacturing Workers Union; Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union; Australian Education Union; Australian Services Union; and the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union.

"The Government's requirements do not deal with the real workplace issues facing academic and general staff," said McCulloch. "Indeed, the requirements, including forcing university staff onto Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs) and lifting limits on casual employment, will make the situation worse and erode the quality of education provided by our public university system."

"General staff that work in universities throughout Australian in a range of technical, professional, administrative, clerical and academic support positions are essential to the effective operation of universities," said David Carey, CPSU Federal Secretary.

"The Government's industrial requirements, including forcing staff onto AWAs, would leave non-academic staff without many of the protections union negotiated agreements provide such as maternity leave, overtime and penalty rates."

"It is our responsibility to our members to ensure that this Federal Government does not force universities into taking away many of the working conditions our members now have," said Carey.

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