

**The University of Fiji discounts its Foundation and Year 1 fees in 2021 to encourage students to attend the University despite the slash in TELS sponsorship.**

The University of Fiji is encouraging students to attend the University despite the removal of TELS by the Government for students with 7<sup>th</sup> form marks of between 200 and 249.

The Acting Vice Chancellor Professor Shaista Shameem said the removal of TELS support for students with 200-249 marks was a big blow to many high school students who, previously, could obtain a university education because they were sponsored and thus could realise their dreams.

She said that in view of the fact that these students would now have to support themselves in foundation or first year or their parents would have to support them, the University of Fiji had decided to discount fees to a fraction of what students would normally pay. This was to ensure that those with aspirations for a university education would not miss out and would have the opportunity to attain a qualification that would provide them with a better future.

First year students who join the School of Business and Economics, the School of Humanities and Arts, the School of Science and Technology, the Justice Devendra Pathik School of Law and the Centre for iTaukei studies will see a reduction of 12% or more in tuition fees in 2021.

Students enrolling in the Foundation Studies Programme will enjoy a 44% reduction in fees in 2021.

In addition, students who find it difficult to pay their fees upfront will be able to arrange payment plans with the Finance Office.

Professor Shameem said the University was founded on the principle of accessibility of higher education for those facing hardship or lack of equal opportunity. The University was duty bound to ensure that, notwithstanding the constraints, no one who wanted higher education would miss out purely because of lack of sponsorship. The new TSLB policy was sprung on young people in the middle of the year and many of them had no idea how they would attend University since they could not afford to pay fees. Thus the University Council had decided that discounted fees would be offered to first year and foundation students.

In 2021, the University will offer programmes using the "Face-to-Face Online" methodology, incorporating the "virtual classroom" to help reduce travel and accommodation costs for students. The University has also set up computer labs in Tavua, Lautoka, Sigatoka, Kinoya and Labasa for students who have difficulties with internet connectivity and to reduce travel costs. The University established the PC labs to make it more convenient for students to attend classes. In addition the University will establish its Ba Campus from January 2021.

Students can contact the University for further information regarding fee reduction.