



Sharon Grierson MP
Federal Member for Newcastle



7 May 2005

**JOINT STATEMENT WITH WAYNE REYNOLDS,
NTEU STAFF REPRESENTATIVE**

The Federal Member for Newcastle, Sharon Grierson, and the National Tertiary Education Union Staff Representative at the University of Newcastle, Wayne Reynolds, have called for a rethink of the restructuring process at the University.

Following a meeting yesterday, Ms Grierson and Associate Professor Reynolds said the restructuring should be agreed and managed over a three year period to lessen the impact of job losses on the University and the wider regional economy.

"Expecting the University to absorb these massive cuts and restructure within 12 months is unacceptable," Associate Professor Reynolds said. "We need to avoid the sense of crisis and conflict that will inevitably flow if we try to implement these changes too quickly."

"The Nelson reforms have placed the University under enormous political and financial pressure," Ms Grierson said. "We recognise the need to respond to those pressures. However, we need more time, more consultation, and more financial assistance from the Howard Government to achieve a responsible and sustainable outcome."

"The implications for the Hunter of cutting approximately 450 jobs within twelve months, plus the expected 150 jobs lost in the flow-on effect to the wider economy, must be carefully considered, particularly at a time when the economy is contracting and business confidence is falling," she said.

Ms Grierson and Associate Professor Reynolds called on the Minister for Education, University management, staff, and student representatives to engage in genuine consultation to devise a solution that looks after the long term interests of the University, its students and staff, and the Hunter region.

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