蔡慧玲报道

本地三所大学宣布，大学学费一年内将不受消费税上调的影响。

新加坡国立大学、南洋理工大学和新加坡管理大学昨天通知学生，2007/08学年的学费将保持不变。

财政部第二部长尚达曼去年12月针对即将进行的消费税调整，回答媒体询问时表示，所有政府部门在一年内不会因为消费税调整收费，而政府也将承担医药费和教育费的相应费用上涨。大学昨天也发表文告，对消费税上调作出了相应的表态。

国大在文告中表示，虽然消费税上调意味着大学的运作费将上涨，但国大的本科生和研究生课程的学费将维持不变。南大的本科生和研究生课程学费同样不会改变。

在新大方面，大学去年起采用固定收费制度，让所有进入新大学生的能在大学生涯里免受学费调整的困扰，因此现有的学生当然不受这次的消费税调整影响。至于将在新学年开学的新生，他们将根据现有的收费支付第一年的学费，到了2008学年，学费将从现有的7500元调至8300元。

不过，新大发言人接受访时表示，学费调整是新大对学费进行的例常检讨，与消费税无关。

大学愿意承担消费税
大学生表示欢迎

对于各所大学愿意承担消费税的增加，受访大学生表示欢迎。南大电机工程系三年级学生陈英姿说：“之前听说学费要上调，是有想过会影响到学费。虽然只是2%，但对于家庭收入不多的学生，这难免还是会造成一定的影响，所以大学维持学费是一个很好的决定。”

正在等待A水准成绩放榜的曾子盈也有同样的看法。她认为只要学费增加的款项得以善用，她不介意多付一些。曾子盈说：“如果学费增加可以带来更高素质的教育素质和更好的师资，其实学费稍微增加是可以接受的。但希望大学能给来自贫困家庭的学生更多的经济援助。”

另一方面，新大也第一次宣布新成立的法学院课程的学费。即将在8月开课的新大法律课程每年学费为9000元，比国大法律学院的6110元大出三分之一。不过，新大校长霍华德亨特说，为了确保法学院的课程达到一定的素质，制定较高的学费是必要的。

霍华德亨特说，较高的学费反映了大学在引进高素质法律系师资方面的投资。他说，这些师资除了对法律界发展有深入了解，也有能力帮助学生打好在商业、财务、经济等方面的基础，栽培他们成为兼具法律知识及熟悉国内外企业界运作的律师专家。

新大正在积极同顶尖律师行接洽，探讨为法学院学生设立新的奖学金，帮助减轻学生的经济负担。
All three local universities have announced that their tuition fees would not be affected for one year by the increase in GST.

NUS, NTU and SMU informed students that tuition fees for Academic Year 2007/8 would remain the same. The universities have responded in support of Minister Tharman's statement in December last year that the government would not revise fees due to the impending GST rate adjustment. He said then that the government would also absorb any increase in medical and education fees.

NUS said in a statement that even though the GST increase would mean higher operating costs for the university, they would not increase tuition fees for its undergraduate and research programmes. Likewise, NTU is also not revising fees for its undergraduate and research programmes.

As for SMU, the university has adopted a fixed fee model since last year so that students would have the benefit of certainty and assurance throughout their years in university. Hence, current students are not affected by the GST revision. For incoming students in 2007, they will continue to pay the existing tuition fee for the first year and from 2008, their tuition fee will increase to $8,300.

SMU spokesman said that the fee revision is part of the university’s ongoing review and is not related to the GST increase.

SMU also announced its tuition fees for the new undergraduate law programme which will be $9,000 for students enrolling in August. This is about one-third higher than NUS’ law programme which is $6,110. SMU President Professor Howard Hunter said that the premium fee is necessary to ensure the SMU law programme achieves a certain high standard.

Professor Hunter said that the higher tuition fees reflect the university’s investment in highly trained law faculty attuned to the importance of comparative and emerging fields of law as well as faculty who will provide law students with a sound education in business, finance, economics and subjects related to law. These are critical to becoming a successful practitioner in today’s highly sophisticated multi-national corporate and commercial legal practice.

SMU is currently in talks with top law firms to set up law scholarships to ease the financial burden on students.