

Section 4: Stake in NUS for All

Introduction

NUS' ultimate strength remains its membership, and its ability to generate involvement among its members. I got involved in NUS through the liberation campaigns, and played a leading role in creating the part-time Black Students Officer position in 1999. I truly believe in their work not only to involve the traditionally under-represented groups, but also to change attitudes on and off campuses. As VP Education, I have worked closely with NPC to ensure postgraduate students too have a stake in our national union. The change in the demographic of students has meant that students' unions and NUS need to reach out to the diverse nature of our student communities and provide a flexible service, tailored to their needs. I am committed to building strong and sustained partnership with bodies such as RCN, NASUWT and Mature Students Union to build an inclusive NUS where every member has ownership of our campaigns.

Liberation Campaigns

I fully support the autonomy of Liberation Campaigns and will be committed to support their work. I want Liberation Campaigns to work and the wider student movement to recognise the valuable contribution they make to our national union. As President, I will ensure that the support is made available for their campaigns and events, and I fully pledge to remove the barriers that undermine their vital work.

International Students

The number of international students in UK institutions continues to grow and yet they remain with little financial support & limited rights to paid work. Over the past two years, I have campaigned actively to lift the restriction on employment rights for international students. Last year, I played a central role in the creation of the International Students' Committee. This year, I have lobbied ministers for the regulation of international students' fees.

I am also organising an international students conference in May 2002 to establish a permanent national committee for international students. Next year, I will create a specific area of responsibility on the NEC & in the budget to support work on international students banking, and provide unions with best practice guides to support international students locally.

Special Regions

NUS-USI is not only the voice of students in Northern Ireland, but also plays an important part in the community. Projects such as Community Relations & Conflict Resolution initiatives have proved to be valuable in bringing students from different communities together. I have travelled to Northern Ireland on several occasions to support NUS-USI events, including addressing their demonstration against hardship.

As someone who believes in devolution, I am committed to working with our Special Regions to call on Westminster Government to provide the funds to meet the pledges of the respective governments in Scotland, Wales & NI to eradicate student hardship.

I will ensure that NUS UK Priority Campaigns are drawn up with the full involvement of our Special Regions, and I will also take full responsibility on the NEC to oversee the full implementation of the Bi-lingual policy across all departments.

Nursing Students

As VP Education, I have attended both the UNISON & RCN conferences to represent the needs of nursing students. Next year, I will prioritise campaigning for living salaries & adequate equipment provision for nursing students. I will establish a forum to bring together student officers and representatives of nursing & midwifery students, so we can provide a united and professional support and advice.

PG Students & NPC

This year, I have built a strong and meaningful link with the National Postgraduates Committee (NPC) and attended & spoke at its AGM in the Summer. I have also produced a comprehensive section on the website on PG students covering key issues like research supervision & PG student funding.

I have also established a permanent seat for the NPC on HENC to ensure the voice of PG students remain at the core of our National Union.

As President, I will integrate work on PG students within our staffing structures so we can begin to provide MPs with research documentation and information for better support for PG studies.

ITT Students

This year I have worked closely with the NASUWT to rid the education system of the unfair system of numeracy tests and to call for financial parity for all Initial Teacher Training students.

As President, I will maintain the close ties with NASUWT to continue to provide representation and much needed advice to ITT students. I will promote the work of

the NUS/NASUWT caseworker and build formal links between local NASUWT and students' unions.