

For strong, campaigning unions - vote Matt East #1 for block of 15



Hi, my name is Matt East and I'm a second year President at Anglia Ruskin Students' Union. Over the past few years, I have seen how students' unions can transform lives - but we all know that SUs face significant challenges in the future. We are all too aware of the Government's brutal attacks on our education system, but NUS must recognise that there are also real threats to students' unions - to their legitimacy, long term finances and campaigning effectiveness.

Now more than ever, we must reach out to the breadth of our membership, to look at new and innovative ways to engage with grass roots students and those from non-traditional backgrounds who never come into our unions. We must inspire a new generation of activists and break down the barriers that stop students from engaging in our campaigns and democratic processes. NUS has an important role to play, and I want to support you and your unions to get the most out of our national union. That is why I am asking you to support me for the block.

TIME FOR AN ACCOUNTABLE NUS >>>

For too long, students' unions have been unable to hold the NEC and their campaign tactics to account. As an officer I wanted more than just a phone call about the demo and lobby, I wanted to be able to feed into the policy choices and debates that were happening in NUS. I believe all students should have an opportunity to input into campaigns, that we should enable our members to be in the driving seat of their national union.

I will! >>>

- Ensure all unions in my region get the NEC papers before the meeting and feedback afterwards.
- Ensure that your questions to national officers get asked - and get answered.
- Visit unions in my region at least once a term and contact them every two weeks.

DEFENDING STUDENTS' UNIONS >>>

Students' unions are influential - we are empowering a new generation to make a difference, and collectively we influence the lives of millions of students every day. Unfortunately this means that some will try to attack our legitimacy, in order to silence our voices and stamp on our activism. I believe that we need strong, well-resourced FE and HE unions, which put representation and campaigning at the heart of all they do... and we need to have an NUS that is willing to support SUs and challenge them to improve!

I will! >>>

- Defend and oppose any attacks on the legitimacy of SUs by groups such as the Young Britons' Foundation.
- Ensure that the integration of SUEI into NUS delivers for students' unions, encouraging more unions to engage and benefit from this process.
- Work with the VP UD to champion the impact of SU's work on the student experience and develop new ways to access and share this information.

REPRESENTING OUR DIVERSE MEMBERSHIP >>>

I've come from a diverse institution with students from all walks of life, and the one thing I have learnt is that there is no longer such a thing as a 'typical student'. We have to transform our SUs into places that engage a range of students well beyond the traditional full-time 18-24 year old undergraduate. We must be bold and innovative, challenging our unions to think outside of the box in order to develop a truly representative movement.

I will! >>>

- Work with students' unions to develop innovative ways of engaging with non-traditional students - sharing best practice nationally to ensure that SUs can strive to become truly representative.
- Ensure the NEC thinks beyond the 'traditional student'.
- Support and champion the right of liberation campaigns and student sections to feed in and help shape the national priority campaign.
- Insist that services supplied by NUSSL relate to the wider student body.

MAXIMISING OUR CAMPAIGNING EFFECTIVENESS >>>

During the lead up to the national demo, I realised the huge potential for local unions to work together, both FE and HE and across different mission groups. As government cuts hit locally, SUs must work together, taking the opportunity to make an impact and win for our members within our local communities.

I will! >>>

- Link up unions who are working on the same issues in the same areas, maximising your effectiveness.
- Help to support and build strong links between HE and FE unions, supporting the sharing of resources to benefit your campaigns.
- Identify and explore real examples of best practice with regards to sharing resources and collaboration between SUs.

"Matt is a fantastic officer who is passionate about driving SUs forward. He has always been approachable, friendly, helpful and patient - someone who I have turned to for advice throughout this year. Matt would excel in this role, enhancing representation both locally and nationally."

> Lucy Hopkins - President, Loughborough SU

"Matt is an officer who is committed to innovative thinking about what students' unions can deliver for members in the future. I know he will work hard on the block to represent the diversity of unions, whilst being open, approachable and supportive to student officers."

> Sarah Wakefield - General Secretary, UMSU

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