

ALEX CAUSTON RONALDSON

#1 FOR BLOCK OF 15



In the current climate, Small & Specialist Representation is more important than ever. With changes being passed by the coalition government, it is the smaller institutions that will suffer the most. At University for the Creative Arts alone, we have had to make millions in cost savings. I believe in the right to study niche subjects, but is this the future of specialist Higher Education?

This is the time at which all Unions should be standing up and showing their institutions that without them, they cannot support the student experience. Whilst budget cuts are going ahead, this is not the time to be cutting Union block grants. I will lead that fight.

We need a National Union that will deliver change not only in government, but also on the ground on our campuses. We need a National Union that will go out and speak to our students and really engage the leaders of tomorrow.

Small and Specialist Unions, alongside FE Unions need the support of their National Union to deliver resources, training, events and campaigns that are relevant, accessible and able to deliver change for them locally. I will push the National Union to deliver this.

Being a sabbatical officer from an Arts Union, I have seen first hand how the government totally disregards the Arts. However, with the decline in manual exports, humans are one of the only resources remaining in this country and the creative industries is one of the most buoyant industries in the country. Why is the government giving up on the creatives of tomorrow?

One of the more destructive initiatives laid down by this government, the AAB rule would have killed our specialist institution. My Union lobbied the government not to cut £1.5m worth of students from an institution that runs 95% of portfolio entry and only 6% AAB students. We won that fight and gained exemption, albeit for only one year. I will work to procure permanent exemption for specialist institutions.

GuildHE institutions are becoming more and more of a priority across the sector and it is time for the National Union to move with this shift. I will hold the Vice-Presidents accountable for all Unions, not just the atypical. It is time we identify Unions not just by their location and student numbers, but by their demographic, their courses and their students. I will look work with the VP UD to create a cross HE-FE support network by these descriptors, not the traditional location and level based system we have now.

It is time for HE Unions to work with FE Unions, not just distance them. The FE leaders of today will undoubtedly become the HE leaders of tomorrow, we need to support and work with FE Unions to develop a long-term strength within the National Union.

I have lead the change in my Union from a small Union limited by our resources and locations to one that however small we are, we act big, think big and support our membership in a way that would have been impossible 5 years ago. Let me be that change in the National Union.

KEY POINTS

- 1 VP Accountability for GuildHE & Small & Specialist Unions
- 2 A National Union relevant to all
- 3 Increased Communications to all Members
- 4 FE & HE Partnership Network
- 5 Protecting and Championing Arts Education

"In the time I have known Alex he has not only shown foresight and strength as a leader of a small and specialist, but passion for FE as well. With Alex on block, NUS will be all the better for it"

**Tom Hollick,
President CCNSU & UD Zone Committee**

HISTORY

- **2011-2012**
UCASU Lead Officer, Chair of the Trustee Board & Epsom Campus Officer
- **2010 - 2011**
UCASU Epsom Campus Officer & Chair of Finance
- **2008-2010**
UCASU Student Trustee & Student Council Chair
- **2007 - 2008**
UCASU LGBT Officer & LGBT Soc President
- **2007-2010**
UCA Fashion Course Rep & School Rep
- **2006 - 2007**
NUCA SU LGBT Officer

WWW.ALEXCR.CO.UK

| twitter: [ucasu_alex](#) |