

VOTE AISLING GALLAGHER #1 FOR BLOCK OF 15



I got involved in student politics as a first year, when someone recommended I stand for student council. At the end of my first year I was elected NUS-USI Women's Officer, and was re-elected unanimously last year. The NUS Women's Campaign helped shape my politics; I am proud that the NUS-USI Women's Campaign has been built on intersectional feminist foundations, committed to the liberation of all women.

As a Women's Officer I am often asked about abortion and sexism, but rarely broader political issues- it's often forgotten that reproductive healthcare isn't all that affects women students.

Liberation activists are often dismissed when it comes to focusing on education, funding or trade unions, and this must change.

You can't increase access to education without fighting for liberation. That's why I will fight for an NUS that supports free, fully funded education- because the liberation of marginalised groups is intrinsic to increasing our access to education.

I believe in...

Liberation at the heart of NUS. We desperately need to improve accessibility at our events; access issues affect everyone and shouldn't be left to just the Disabled Students' Campaign. We need to ensure that NUS is everything an accessible union, workplace and political movement should be.

An NUS that stands up for its members. Student protestors have been suppressed by police and managements, facing arrests, suspensions and violence- sometimes in collaboration with student unions. Protests have won us our most basic rights, from the vote to the weekend. Our national union has a duty to support students who are fighting for our education and our futures.

A transparent NUS not influenced by backroom deals and unaccountable decision making. Bullying and clique politics have no place in our national union, least of all among its leadership. It's time that those responsible for excluding and bullying so many activists, officers and students were held to account. NUS is supposed to encourage participation. At the moment, the exact opposite seems to be happening.

In the interests of transparency, I am a member of the Labour Party (UK), and the National Campaign Against Fees & Cuts. I am running in this election as an independent candidate.

Get in touch if you'd like this in another format or to know anything else

@twoshadesofhope

facebook.com/aisling4block
agallagher896@qub.ac.uk

My Record

- Built the NUS-USI Women's Campaign from scratch and organised yearly Women's Conferences- the first ever NUS-USI liberation committee was recently elected
- Created the NUS-USI Disabled Students' Officer role in my first year in office
- Lobbied my students' union to send elected delegates to NUS liberation conferences.
- I'm on the executive committee of Abortion Rights, the largest UK pro-choice campaigning group, and give regular talks on access to reproductive healthcare services in Ireland.

Worked with UCU and Unite on behalf of NUS-USI and helped co-ordinate support for the staff pay disputes on my campus.

Helped lead a successful campaign against the outsourcing of students' union security jobs to G4S, in spite of its horrific record.

Overtured a worrying precedent when my union president (with no mandate) threw me out of a national conference for voting in favour of a woman's right to choose.



Having been forced to go against elements in my own union more than once, I know how isolated and intimidated campaigning students can feel. Too many times, students' unions have abandoned members who have been victimised simply for standing up for the values of fairness and equality that our movement holds dear.

So far, only independent activist networks have supported campaigning students. In the face of hostile managements and unions dominated by those using sabbatical positions for CV points, it's crucial that NUS steps up and support its members, financially and pastorally, when they need it most.