



#gowithjoe



2010 saw the beginning of a huge attack on students and it was only the beginning. In just four years we've seen the removal of EMA, tuitions fees tripled, college fees introduced, an increasing cost of living, and our unions under unprecedented pressure. Above all we've got a government that just won't listen, a government that doesn't care about students, a government that doesn't care about education. On top of that, every day the devolved governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland distance themselves from the outdated reforms coming from Westminster, and the education landscape becomes increasingly fragmented and even harder to navigate.

But next year presents us with a real opportunity. An opportunity to stand up to politicians around the country and to tell them that enough is enough. I still fundamentally believe that it is our unions and NUS that can set the agenda on how our education system should work, and that we have the ability to make the public care about education more than any other organisation in the country.

Re-elect me and I'll ensure that we do just that. Stop the government in their tracks, start campaigning for a system that fits around students, and mobilise the communities around us to fight for a vision of education that delivers for every student regardless of their background.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE MY MANIFESTO IN ANY OTHER FORMAT, OR HAVE ANY QUESTIONS YOU WANT TO ASK ME THEN PLEASE GET IN TOUCH -

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1.

THE GENERAL ELECTION

The very fabric of our society is under threat, and with devastating cuts being inflicted upon the most vulnerable in society we have a huge fight ahead of us to demand a better future. Whether that's for a better education system, more funding for colleges or more financial support - 2015 will be a huge test for not just the student movement, but the entire country. Our unions need to be at the forefront of that fight, the fight for a better future.

I will...

- Create a 'Manifesto for FE', outlining exactly what we want further education to look like, containing policies that we need to be demanding for the next government to implement, combined with red lines that we will stop any political party that tries to cross them.
- Mobilise the public to place education at the top of general election agenda, forcing politicians to actually deliver.
- Provide unions with guides and resources on voter registration drives, helping you to engage with your students and campaign on a local level.
- Build on the Scottish Independence Referendum to campaign for the voting age to be lowered to 16 in all UK elections.

2.

THE STUDENT VOICE

Student voice is too often seen as a box-ticking exercise for colleges, rather than an important part of the journey through education. I want to empower students to work in partnership with their colleges, allowing them to co-create their educational experience and helping students to improve the communities that surround them. As a national union we can do so much more to help unions deliver for their students.

I will...

- Prioritise NUS' work to create strong, well-resourced unions in FE with bespoke advice for you and the activists in your college.
- Call for greater student input into Ofsted inspections, and for all college's commitment to learner voice to be assessed.
- Campaign to change the Education Act, allowing your union to represent all of your learners, not just the ones over 16.
- Create a national student voice online resource base that you can use on your campuses to deliver training for your reps, share best practice with other unions and get advice on campaigning for change.



"JOE'S RECORD AS NUS VPFE IS OUTSTANDING. HE'S BEEN A GREAT LEADER OF THE FE ZONE THIS YEAR, AND HAS REALLY EQUIPPED MY STUDENTS' UNION WITH THE TOOLS IT NEEDS TO RUN GREAT CAMPAIGNS. I CAN'T WAIT TO GIVE HIM MY VOTE."

AMY SMITH - VICE PRESIDENT, SHEFFIELD COLLEGE STUDENTS' UNION & NUS NEC

3.

APPRENTICESHIPS THAT WORK

Apprenticeships are one of the best routes into employment, and we've got to do everything we can to make sure they are treated with the status that they deserve. But apprenticeships need to actually prepare people for work, be high quality, and accessible to everyone.

I will...

- Continue to lobby the government to increase the minimum wage for apprentices, carrying on the fight for a universal living wage.
- Call for apprenticeship qualifications to be recognised by UCAS and universities, enhancing their status amongst employers.
- Campaign for legislation to force companies who procure government contracts to provide a minimum number of apprenticeships, creating real training opportunities for the millions of young people who face unemployment.
- Fight to make apprenticeships free for everyone, because no one should have to pay to earn.

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4.

EDUCATION FOR ALL

Our education system has been attacked, dismantled and undervalued and we must use the general election as an opportunity to call for a better system that actually delivers for the public. Vocational education needs to be given the status it deserves, the cost of living crisis needs fixing and careers advice for young people needs to be reinstated so students can make genuinely informed choices.

I will...

- Campaign for a careers advice service that is dedicated to young people, because one of the biggest barriers to education and employment is not knowing what your options are.
- Fight endlessly for a fairer financial support system for all students, and mobilise for a weekly allowance to be reinstated for FE students.
- Continue to call for a UCAS-style system for all FE courses in the UK, including apprenticeships.
- Ensure the government's review of vocational courses doesn't result in the devaluing of vocational education or the introduction of 'traditional' exams.
- Lobby for all Level 2 Maths and English qualifications to be recognised by universities and employers, not just GCSEs.

MY RECORD

- Led the campaign to **keep FE teachers qualified**
- **Fought Michael Gove's** GCSE and A-Level reforms
- **Forced the government to scrap loans** for 24+ apprentices
- **Lobbied against** the 17.5% cut to the FE budget
- Worked with SUs to extend the **free school meals** programme to FE colleges
- **Extended NUS FE training** to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

ABOUT ME

- NUS Vice President (Further Education) (2013-Present)
- **NUS NEC (2012 – 2013)**
- NUS LGBT Committee (2012 – 2013)
- **NUS Society & Citizenship Committee (2011 – 2012)**
- President of Cornwall College Students' Union (2011 – 2013)



"THE STUDENT MOVEMENT HAS FACED MANY CHALLENGES THIS YEAR, AND JOE HAS BEEN A HUGE SUPPORT TO ACTIVISTS LIKE ME BY HELPING US TO LOBBY FOR CHANGE LOCALLY AND ENSURING FE ISN'T FORGOTTEN FROM THE NATIONAL AGENDA. HE'S DEFINITELY GOING TO BE MY 1ST PREFERENCE AT #NUSNC14."

SHERRY IQBAL

PRESIDENT, MIDDLESBROUGH COLLEGE STUDENTS' UNION



I feel it is important to be open about your politics, and I am standing in this election as a Labour Student. I joined the Labour Party because I strongly believe in the values of equality and social justice. I disagree with my party when they get things wrong and I will always put the views of FE students first.



gowithjoe.org.uk