



# USMAN

**THE COURAGE TO DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY**

Vote Usman Ali

#1 for National President

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**When I made it to university I realised how this had an inspirational impact on young people in my neighbourhood, who now wanted to continue into higher education. When I became President at Salford Students' Union I loved how our Union, through the radical changes we made, was accessed by people who never knew about it and by people, like me, who were once disconnected from it. And as Vice-President Higher Education I realised the radical difference that we, as a national student movement, can play in transforming a generation.**

NUS is the only organisation that can make this happen. I've delivered as I said I would as Vice-President HE and I've served the movement relentlessly for the last three years. I hope you judge me through not just my words but my actions over the last few years, and the impact I have made and the people and students' unions I have inspired. I struggle to think that it is by chance that I am where I am now - I want to give my all to use my unique experience and non-traditional background, in a context where both have suddenly become incredibly relevant.

**I want to lead the NUS as President with a vision to go where it has never been before and transform this generation.**

But this needs serious courage. It needs us to shake-up our priorities and to see things differently. I'm going to make this opportunity count and seek a change that our children will feel.

## Bring democracy home

We've spent too long simply thinking about HE and not our education system as a whole. I have the courage and vision to look at the education system as a whole.

My experiences with Egyptian, Libyan, Syrian and Tunisian students, friends close to me, has seen them fight for democracies abroad. And I remembered that the NUS was formed ninety years ago as part of an international movement for world peace. Students are the brave intellectual and sincere leadership that Britain is crying out for.

Students must be empowered to confidently lead the national debate (not just operate in our Unions) in creating and lobbying for political and economic solutions as our systems malfunction.

The NUS needs to think bigger about the education system as a whole and build a solid narrative for this - from primary school all the way to higher education - working with partners for this.

We must expose and confront corporate interests and lobby groups - become a force to be feared again.

## NUS must lead by example

We cannot expect of our members anymore what we do not expect of ourselves - I will operate from the heart of the NUS outwards - we need to embody our priorities.

- Begin consulting for a future Democracy Review, with genuine openness and learning from last time.
- Explore innovative accountability methods between students and NEC - including video-blogs and feedback.
- All NUS full-time officers need to hold shared responsibility for the Access agenda.

## Fight 'PREVENT'

Prevent is government's anti-dissent programme.

- Challenge government with UCU and others and protect student civil liberties - zero-tolerance for spying.
- Name and shame every institution that has taken Prevent funding and implemented the programme.

## Appeals & complaints


When things go wrong students need to have fair, transparent and effect methods of getting their complaints resolved, not having their life put on hold for months or even years.


- Organise training nationwide to help Unions fight for a national standard in dealing with appeals and complaints.
- Advocating for more timely resolutions and a dedicated independent advice service with the OIA.
- Ensure we achieve independent complaints bodies in both Further Education and Northern Ireland.


## Access - #1 Priority

*The Government's market-driven approach to higher education is wiping out opportunities for a whole generation of school leavers. We need a radical approach to ensure they have every chance of going to University - fulfilling this obligation is fundamental to who we are.*


### POWERFUL CAMPAIGNS - ENGAGING SEVEN MILLION STUDENTS


 Identify and **break barriers of participation** in the national student movement through genuinely engaging with our least represented demographics - envisioning our Unions as hubs of social activism.

 Build upon "I am the Change" but connect it with the most disconnected student profiles and **REDEFINE** the student movement. NUS must work closely nationally with those it hasn't traditionally worked with - like international student societies. At a local level our Unions should share outcomes with diverse student societies.


 Bring the voice of liberation wherever possible into the national spotlight - rather than hoping that everything's fine by 'knowing liberation is working'. Liberation campaigns should receive more dedication from NUS officers and greater staff resource.

### REBUILDING AMBITIONS AND ASPIRATIONS


 Fight to ensure that our widening participation and access priorities are supported by legislative change where possible.

 Empower students and graduates to enter local schools (or revisit their former schools) and act as mentors. I will deliver a National Student Mentoring Scheme for this, prioritising this in the most socio-economically deprived areas of the country.


### BUILDING TOMORROW'S LEADERS TODAY - PREPARE FOR 2015 NOW

 Students demands in party manifestos - focus on **access for disadvantaged students, transparent gov't and accountable institutions.**


 Launch a **Future Leaders Activist Academy for students in FE** that creates dynamic activists to be the future leaders of British civic, not just student, society.


 Staff support in FE can play a crucial role in unlocking students potential. There must be a regional strategy that enables **FE staff leaders to be trained by NUS.**


### CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR TODAY'S YOUTH

 Create a **National Entrepreneurial Student Scheme** - this is NUS creating exciting opportunities for students through mentoring and training, and not relying on the Government. Let's embed entrepreneurial spirit amongst students!

 Champion the role of **apprenticeships** with FE students and ensure that government promotion of apprenticeships reaches the most deprived areas.

 Lobby to ensure that the **liberation groups** most affected during time of recession are protected, and not placed under the wrath of market-ruthlessness.

 Connect students' unions with **unemployed youth** in their local areas for employability programmes; providing funding for Unions for accredited projects that build bridges between local businesses and young people.

 With over 25% of bursaries not reaching the young people that need them the most, and with the EMA taken away, we must lobby to ensure that **bursaries** are firstly **monitored** for fairer and more appropriate use, and secondly pursue **accreditation for scholarships** to attract philanthropic investment.

"Usman is one of the most inspirational people I have come across, he never forgets about the people on the ground, or the small SUs that need that little bit more support. Coming from an FE union, year upon year he has consistently helped us. Usman is someone that is genuine and has the drive, passion and knowledge to be and incredible leader for the NUS."

**Victoria Kettlewell, President, Mid Cheshire College, Welfare Zone Committee**

"I was a student parent who felt unsupported and unrepresented. As a new officer I was unsure about my ideas for students with children and Usman encouraged & supported me, sharing his experience and showing the impact that I could have. Now I'm sharing my knowledge all over the UK, thanks to his non stop advice and guidance."

**Oeiisha Williams, Education and Welfare Officer, Birmingham City Students' Union**

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