



ROSHNI
JOSHI 

for Vice President (Further Education)

“ Among student activists Roshni’s consideration and developed knowledge of policy is unmatched and her genuine commitment to FE students is phenomenal ”

GRAEME KIRKPATRICK
VICE PRESIDENT, NUS SCOTLAND

From the introduction of an FE fees and loans system in England– helping colleges justify charging higher fees to some of the most vulnerable students in the system– to the appalling wages paid to apprentices, to outdated and unfair changes on housing benefit and A Levels, there can be no doubt that the attacks on our students are part of a wider agenda. This government is targeting working class learners, and creating a two-tier system of education.

A vote for me is a vote for an FE Zone which isn’t afraid to pose a serious alternative; we will not stand for loans in FE. We will fight for education as a social good and a universal right, funded by taxing the rich and big businesses– not by fiddling around the edges.

A serious fight on FE Funding:

More than 60% of all FE students pay £30 or more a week on travel alone

and only a fraction can access financial help for it– that’s inexcusable. Combine this with the fact that FE learners from poorer families can’t get free school meals while those in sixth form can, and the government’s disregard for Further Education becomes clear.

Elect me and I will launch a serious fight for a new deal in FE funding:

-  A universal funding entitlement of at least £2000 a year for all full time and £1200 a year for all part time FE students.
-  Housing benefit and Income Support available for all independent learners.
-  A full Disabled Students’ Allowance available to all disabled students.

A Living Wage for apprentices:

Minimum wage for apprentices is an unbelievable £2.65 - regardless of age

It’s not a coincidence that, egged on by these government promises of cheap labour, employers have been creating new and totally unregulated ‘apprenticeship’ programmes- many of which offer little to no professional support, qualification value, or job guarantee.

Delivered correctly, apprenticeships empower learners to take control of their lives and educations. But the misuse of vocational education for the gain of businesses- such as Next- at the expense of learners needs to end.

That’s why I’ll campaign for:

-  The full minimum wage, and then a living wage, for apprentices.
-  Guaranteed professional support and a job at the end.

Independent Unions:

Strong campaigning through local partnerships .

There are still hundreds of FE Unions who pay membership but just don't engage. The best way to fix that is to build strong, local partnerships which support each other.

Having our allies in HE back us up isn't something we should have to ask for; it should be built into the way NUS operates. Networking is important, but that's not all that independence is; independence is the ability to walk into the HE union next door and exchange ideas and support, to know the local community centre and the needs of the people in it- to link up with anti-cuts campaigns in your area.

Funded Unions:

Having been a volunteer FE officer, I fully understand the impact of thoughtless and dangerous cuts to Enrichment. IAG reduced; block grants slashed or removed entirely. We cannot and must not accept that we can't challenge these attacks on our student lives. **Elect me and I will:**

- 👉 Create a network of resources and briefings to help win on- campus arguments about gaining Sabbs and increasing block grants.
- 👉 Lobby at a national level for a minimum block grant funding requirement for FE unions.
- 👉 Find new ways of funding training, so we can make it available to officers in the Nations.
- 👉 Offer a minimum of one free place for every college on a raft of FE training programmes.

Different formats available on request

In the meantime, schools and sixth forms– a huge potential membership– remain largely un-unionised and unaffiliated. **Elect me and I will:**

- 👉 Take the highly effective Scottish 'Student Forum' model and build a set of resources dedicated to expanding it across the UK.
- 👉 Work towards building new and independent unions among school and sixth form students.

Mature students:

A part of our movement

The right to education should be universal, and the only way to make it so is to make it free and funded for everyone. A system which forces mature students to take out loans of as much as £4,000 a year tells them that they don't deserve an education. This is an attack on everyone's right to study, but it's also targeted at working class students and student parents; not everyone can choose when they study.

Meanwhile, mature students- statistically already extremely likely to drop out of a course, sometimes pay as much as £47 per hour for the most basic support services offered to younger students for free. **As VPFE I will:**

- 👉 Campaign for the legal right to free pastoral and academic support for all students.
- 👉 Develop accessible ways for mature students and student parents to get involved in the FE Zone .

Find out more

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