

Higher Education Zone Committee Candidates

The following candidates are standing for election to this Zone Committee

Manifestos are available from page 3 onwards and are in alphabetical order by surname. Those standing for Committee places and NEC have one candidate statement which is included in the main list.

Azza Abdulla Leicester Union
Mason Ammar University of Bristol Students' Union
Emily Andrews University of Gloucestershire Students' Union
Emma Atkins University of Manchester Students' Union
Nicholas Baker Birkbeck College Students' Union
Diko Blackings Oxford Brookes Union
Mark Boansi London Metropolitan University Students' Union
Justine Canady University College London Students' Union
Zainab Garba-Sani University of Bradford Students' Union
Patricia Godwin London South Bank SU
Adam Goldstone University of Birmingham Guild of Students
Nicola Hemmings University of Bedfordshire Students' Union
Zaki Kaf Al-Ghazal Leeds University Union
Angel Layer University of Portsmouth SU
Martha Longdon Nottingham Trent Students Union
Taylor McGraa Goldsmiths Student Union
Kobby Ofori University of Salford Students' Union
Luca Raimo Manchester Metropolitan University Students' Union
Luke Renwick Sheffield Hallam Students' Union
Jonathan Stephen University of Huddersfield Students' Union
Ethel Tambudza

University of Westminster Student's Union
NEC Place
Diko Blackings Oxford Brookes Union
Justine Canady University College London Students' Union
Patricia Godwin London South Bank SU
Nicola Hemmings University of Bedfordshire Students' Union
Martha Longdon Nottingham Trent Students Union



Azza Abdulla
Leicester Union

Higher Education Zone Committee

Hi there! I'm Azza and I'm the Education officer at Leicester SU and I'm standing for HE zone committee because I am passionate about removing barriers to education!

On my campus, I've been working hard to increase organisational understanding of racial inequalities and attainment in Higher Education. I have managed to secure £6k funding for Black History to improve the student experience of BME students. I'm leading the campaign on a liberated education at Leicester University to make the curriculum relevant and inclusive; pre-launch this project is now part of the University's strategy.

Additionally, I am on NUS Black Students' Campaign Committee as Women's place. Vote for me for a voice for an accessible liberated education! I genuinely care and will commit to working hard to turn these ideas to fruition and champion your voices!

The HE zone should always be fighting for a free and liberated education and a vote for me will prioritise that. I'm running to advocate for an education that tackles the attainment gap and puts the most marginalised voices on the frontline!

Mason Ammar
University of Bristol Students' Union

Higher Education Zone Committee

Hi, my name is Mason Ammar and I am the Undergraduate Education Officer at the University of Bristol Students' Union. I was elected on a manifesto that ensures every student deserves a supportive, progressive and inclusive education, the same values I hope to bring to the HE committee.

Over the last couple of years, we have seen a drastic change in higher education policy with the introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework. Despite best efforts to combat the link between fees and student feedback (NSS scores), and successfully boycotting the NSS at Bristol, we have seen that Jo Johnson will do everything to ensure we don't get in the way or stop the continued marketisation of Higher Education.

At Bristol, we secured funding to commission a piece of research into the attainment gap which centres the experiences of BME Students on my campus. For far too long, we've just been seen as problem students who are bringing down grades as opposed to victims of an institutionally racist system. One which we have to be at the forefront of challenging and changing.

With the launch of the office for students coming up, students and students' unions understand the remit and powers of the office. On a national scale - liberation campaigns needs to be brought together to make sure this is a national priority.

For a committed, experienced officer - vote Mason Ammar #1 for HE Zone Committee!



Emily Andrews
University of Gloucestershire

Higher Education Zone Committee

My name is Emily Andrews, I am currently a 2nd term VP Education Officer at The University of Gloucestershire Students' Union, furthermore, I sit on the NUS Student Opportunities Charity Advisory Group. With my Union, I work to reduce barriers to enhance an all-round student experience. I have rebooted our Rep System; now bench-marked as outstanding, I have won printing credit for all students and I am currently working on introducing a long overdue anonymous marking system.

The majority of my union membership comes from widening participation background, myself included; the topical issue of tuition fees is brought up more than anything else. The financial impact of education means that many students are limited in the experience they can have whilst studying. I would like to work with the HE committee to promote how important it is to give our Unions the tools to lobby in order to reduce the cost of additional course costs and co-curricular & extra-curricular activities. As a student who experienced these barriers, I am fully aware how integral the support of our Student Unions means to many students and ensure this remains a priority for NUS moving forward.

As a result of a poor HE funding system, smaller or specialist institutions with fewer income streams will often pass many additional costs on top of tuition fees onto the student, and officers continuously struggle to fight against this. However, not only do I believe the current HE structure is broken, I believe how NUS reaches smaller institutions is broken also. Small does not mean irrelevant and I want to be part of the solution to represent, hear and speak for the less political, quieter unions. I want to help create a culture to empower my students that change is achievable no matter where you come from.

Emma Atkins
University of Manchester Students' Union

Higher Education Zone Committee

Hello I'm Emma and I'm the Education Officer at the University of Manchester Students' Union. I've been in the role for more than a year and as well as being a certified HE nerd I have lots of ideas about what I'd like NUS to achieve in HE this year! My priorities are:

1. Multi-faceted strategy for free education. The cliché is having 'a seat at the table' and 'being on the streets' but we have to actually USE the seats at the many tables and demonstrations in a wider, coherent and creative strategy.
2. Campaigning to stay in the Single Market – that is the best outcome of Brexit for students and young people, and NUS needs to hammer this home #students4singlemarket
3. Attainment and liberation – developing the Liberate My Degree campaign and linking it to the BME attainment gap. The attainment argument also HAS to include the insufficient support International Students receive in HE
4. SUSS. The new NSS question for SUs only focuses on the 'academic interests' of students and ignores all the other amazing services and activities SUs provide. In the long term, it may mean that SUs only put resources into the activity that the NSS measures, to the detriment to everything else and the student experience. How do we tackle this?

Buckminster Fuller said:

"You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete."

NUS should launch its own survey – the Students' Union Satisfaction Survey (SUSS). SUSS will include excellent questions that accurately suss out how SUs enhance student life, illustrating how inadequate the NSS is at this. SUSS will also make the purpose of SUs clearer to both students and the public.

Vote Emma for HE Zone Committee!



Nicholas Baker
Birkbeck College, University of London

Higher Education Zone Committee

The results of the snap election have been clear. Labour's pledge for Free education holds a unique sway over students and has caused unprecedented youth votes. Student's are becoming aware of their power. The NUS functions to serve the interest of students, therefore it is the primary interest of the NUS to campaign for free education. This is no longer idealism, but a very real opportunity, we must not fail to seize this.

By being on the HE Committee I will push for these opportunities to be realised. I will make it clear that the NUS must continue to push for free education and encourage all students to realise and utilise their political power.

Education is not priveledge it is a right.

Diko Blackings
Oxford Brookes Union

Higher Education Zone Committee
Standing for NEC place for this Zone Committee

My name is Diko Blackings, President of Oxford Brookes Union

3 words

Black Attainment Gap

Those 3 words defined both my undergraduate experience and also was the reason I ran for President at my Union - because I was sick of seeing Black students let down my a education system that was not made for me, excludes me, whitewashes my history and fails me on a daily basis.

Since being elected I have ran the first Black History Month at Oxford Brookes, prepared to launch Black Attainment Gap Committee and ensured it is central to the conversations we are having with the university. I want to support sabbatical officers working on this very issue - to run a training day to inform and equip them with the skills and knowledge to challenge the institution and make the change we desperately need to make things better for Black students on campus.

Vote for me to support the VP HE in all his work

So Vote Diko Blackings #1 NEC for HE Zone

Mark Boansi
London Metropolitan University Students' Union

Higher Education Zone Committee

VOTE MARK FOR HE ZONE COMMITTEE FOR GRASSROOTS CAMPAIGNING AND PASSION!

Hi, I'm Mark Boansi, sabbatical officer at London Metropolitan Student's Union.

Higher Education is under attack. Quality is not assured however Universities are sure that tuition will come though, the fees keep increasing. Black students still caught in the chokehold of the attainment gap and our Universities still turn a blind eye ignoring the problem.

We need to take a stand as a movement. Take our fight down to the grassroots and engage the ordinary students on our campuses for our collective voices to make an impact.

A Social Policy Degree has armed me with the tools need to bring positive change to our movement.

As an officer in my Students' Union, I have worked with students to educate them on the issues within our education and led them to take a definitive stance by questioning the system without fear.

It is with this same passion and commitment that I will take to the HE committee to ensure that we are educating students, getting them engaged and lobbying together for greater impact.



Elect me to be the voice of the ordinary student; to campaign for you and to fight for you. To hold our officers to account and ensure that you at your Students' Union and your students remain the priority. For passion and accountability, vote Mark number 1 for HE committee.

Justine Canady **uclu**

Higher Education Zone Committee
Standing for NEC place for this Zone Committee

I am UCL Women's Officer and a National Campaign Against Fees and Cut activist. Higher education is at a critical point- the HE Reforms and TEF are pushing cuts and marketization at our uni, leading jobs and courses to be seriously threatened. However, the general election showed us that free education is not only a popular demand, but within our reach. We need to build a grassroots national movement that will push our version of a free education. This is a free education service that serves the public, not businesses, and it democratic and accessible to all- funded by taxing the rich and nationalising the banks.

Nationally, we must continue the NSS Boycott on every campus until the HE Reforms are driven into the ground. The link between the TEF and fees may have been temporally cut, but the framework will still continue to push ruinous privatisation and marketization in education.

We need to campaign to end zero-hour contract and outsourcing and for £10 min wage, for both students and the workers on our campuses. Building student-worker solidarity is essential to winning free education because it is the drive for profit that oppresses both the students and workers on our campuses.

We can win these campaigns through direct action and solidarity across the UK; and the NUS needs to be at the forefront. We need an NUS that doesn't quietly lobby the government and passively function as bureaucrats, but as militant activists pushing the government and VCs to listen to our demands.

Zainab Garba-Sani **University of Bradford Union of Students**

Higher Education Zone Committee

My name is Zainab Garba-Sani and I would like to sit on the HE Zone Committee. As Academic Affairs Officer at the University of Bradford, I am the lead student representative for all academic matters. I am involved at all levels in the institution, from working directly with students and the staff who deliver education, to sitting on senior decision-making bodies such as Council and Senate. Consequently, I have a good insight into topical issues affecting our students in HE such as the BME attainment gap, academic integrity and mental health to name a few.

The University of Bradford is unique in many ways. It has an incredibly diverse student population (many of which identify with various liberation groups), a large number of commuting home-based students, and a wide range of students of different ages (some with families and/or additional responsibilities). Before becoming a Sabbatical Officer I was already heavily involved in the Students' Union; mainly through the student representation system and societies. I was the first ever Student Ambassador for the international charity DKMS, helping lead the national StudentvsBloodCancer campaign. I received a Vice-Chancellor's Award for my voluntary work within the SU amongst numerous other awards. As honoured as I am to have my efforts recognised, my real goal remains to enhance student experience and to empower students to give back to society and make a real difference. University is an opportunity for students to develop both personally and professionally and I believe a key aim for HE institutions is to shape a better tomorrow.



As a member of the HE Zone Committee, I will share my experiences working with liberation groups and try to ensure that all students have an equal chance of success, so that we all have the same opportunities to make a difference.

Patricia Godwin
London South Bank SU

Higher Education Zone Committee
Standing for NEC place for this Zone Committee

I'm Patricia Godwin, the Education Officer at London South Bank SU and I would love to sit on the HE Committee this year.

I want to contribute to making education an enriching experience for all students and ensuring that all who want to, have access to education.

Adam Goldstone
University of Birmingham Guild of Students

Higher Education Zone Committee

Hi, I'm Adam, the Education Officer at the University Of Birmingham Guild Of Students.

In the last year, at Birmingham, we have been looking at how we make our university and students' union environment more inclusive, to fully represent the diversity of our students and ensure that everyone is able to access and enjoy the university experience. This has included looking at the BME attainment gap, disability access and inclusivity of under-engaged groups, such as international students and postgrads. With the introduction of our full-time Postgraduate Officer, PGs have been a particular focus this year. More students than ever are opting for postgraduate study because of the increasing difficulties in the graduate employment market, the availability of postgraduate loans and the resignation that we're already in so much debt, so what's one more year? Student unions across the country are increasing postgraduate representation to reflect this but nationally, we are going backwards. Postgrad section is increasingly underfunded, its committee hasn't existed for two years after being removed with no consultation, and PG policy is consistently not followed.

There is a lot going on in HE at the moment, but we shouldn't continue to disregard nearly a quarter of our students. If elected, I will ensure that postgraduate voices – and all of the voices that we are currently ignoring – are prioritised this year.



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Nicola Hemmings **BEDS SU**

Higher Education Zone Committee
Standing for NEC place for this Zone Committee

VOTE NICOLA NO #1 FOR HE NEC 2nd Place for genuine and authentic representation on NEC!
The reasons why I am running for HE Zone NEC 2nd Place?

Experience. Passion. Authenticity.
Firstly, I have the experience of being on HE Zones Committee last year, which gave me the opportunity to work with the previous VP HE and committee members developing the policy that went to National Conference.
Secondly, I have a passion for policy, not just because this is my graduate degree area, but because I have a commitment to seeing policy implemented in practice. In my experience as a mature student, mother and citizen of British society, most forms of social policy are very rarely ever implemented in practice and certainly not in the way that people expect.
I want to ensure that when policy passes at National Conference, policy is enacted with an authentic interpretation and I am never afraid to question the intentions and objectives behind individual or collective policies: this I believe to be a moral obligation.
Finally, I have an invested interest in the future of HE policy-making. The TEF and the Office for Students will shape my daughters' futures and the future of all young people and we must be a part of campaigning and influencing all these changes for all of us. If Education is to be seen as the bedrock of social and economic development, then it is my moral obligation to ensure that the outcomes of Policies set at National Conference, especially in terms of intentions and objectives show equity and parity.
For genuine and authentic representation on the HE NEC Vote Nicola Hemmings



Zaki Kaf Al-Ghazal
Leeds University Union

Higher Education Zone Committee

Hey, my name is Zaki and I'm the Education Officer at Leeds University Union!

The HE Sector is in a state of flux; we're witnessing a huge shift towards the marketization of education and we need to do all we can to stand up to this and resist. I feel that as a Union with vast lobbying powers, we need to be doing more as an organisation to fight cuts within the sector and push for free education and a liberated curriculum. NUS has the resources to do this; we need a more coherent plan to turn our aims into a reality.

In my time as Education Officer, I have pushed for the academic system to be viewed more holistically. Education shouldn't just be about getting the degree, it's about how the knowledge gained equips you for the world beyond university and how it should make you a more well rounded person. The university has so far agreed to diversify assessment methods and rely less on exams as well as accepting the need for a wholesale review of the personal tutoring system which is too academically focused and includes little pastoral support. I am also lobbying the university to extend the opening hours of one of our libraries to 24 hours in line with students' needs.

NUS has to support its constituent members in the strongest way possible. If elected onto the HE Zones Committee, I will push for more training and assistance to Education Officers nationwide. If at the grass-roots level we're struggling, then how are we going to succeed nationally? I'll also ensure that our work is more liberation and sections focused and that we emphasise the need to work to reduce the BME attainment gap and lobby for a liberated curriculum.

Thank you.

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Thank you.

Angel Layer **University of Portsmouth SU**

Higher Education Zone Committee

Vote Angel for HE Zone Committee!!

My Experience!

Since starting my journey in HE I've been a course rep, a faculty rep and now I am fortunate enough to be the Vice President of Education and Democracy! I've spent the last 3 years understanding exactly what students need from HE and I want to bring this to the committee!

Why do I want to be on the Committee?

Whilst I care deeply about HE in my own institution I understand that what happens at the national level impacts that and I want to ensure that NUS is best placed to fight for my students and students all over the country on HE policy

What do I want to bring to the committee?

- I AM STILL A STUDENT! I still have final year to go and so I am super keen and can bring a different perspective!!
- Developing clearer policy on how we tackle the black attainment gap
- Putting forward ideas for how the committee will tackle the day to day HE things that matter for students such as lecture issues, assessment feedback and discrepancies in University policies
- I want students to feel they can directly impact NUS policy
- Ensure that policies that go to national conference put NUS in a strong position to fight for students on all HE issues!

For a Zone Committee that fights for students vote Angel for HE Zone Committee!!

Martha Longdon **Nottingham Trent Students' Union**

Higher Education Zone Committee

Standing for NEC place for this Zone Committee

Hi, I'm Martha, President for Nottingham Trent Students' Union, and I want to be your representative for HE zone.

Having met and spoken to many of you at NUS events and conferences, I feel there are a number of priorities shared by your Unions, Guilds and the students you represent. If elected, I would like to work with Student Officers and the committee towards:

Making the TEF and OfS work for students

Ensuring the conversations around Value for Money include student cost of living and hidden costs, like Bus Fares, that present a real barrier to attainment

Securing better representation for PGT and PGR students

Embedding mental health and awareness in Higher Education

Closing the attainment gap, and ensuring students from any and all backgrounds can achieve their full potential in HE

And ensuring meaningful and democratic representation by students, to make real change to courses and support unions in tackling Q26.



Most importantly, I want to continue to listen to your ideas and priorities and make your voice heard at HE Committee and NEC!

Taylor McGraa **Goldsmiths Student Union**

Higher Education Zone Committee

My name is Taylor McGraa. I am the Education Officer at Goldsmiths Students Union, and I am passionate about being elected into the position on the HE Zone Committee.

As the first person in my family to go to university, I have a strong belief in the social and political power of higher education. My time on campus not only provided me with a fire in my belly, but the language to articulate it too. HE reflects the world we see around us, and provides us with the integrity to critique it; yet the bodies which influence higher education in this country are equally as important too.

NUS is the largest unifying body of students in the UK, and thus one of the most impactful organisers against HE reforms today. I talk to students on a daily basis, listening to their concerns, and advising them on the best ways to move forward with changing their experience for the better. I also collect data on student concerns and campaigns, using our academic rep system to effectively communicate feedback to the governing bodies of our institution. It is this invaluable experience as Education Officer that I would love to bring to the role of a member in the HE Zone Committee

This place is not about me, or my personal beliefs on how NUS should maneuver. It is about the continuous interactions that I have with students, whose experiences are most at stake under NUS's decisions. It is about considering wider policy and government tactics, and placing them in the context of the contemporary HE student experience. It is about democracy, and it is about the future.

So for a representative, engaged and impactful HE Zone Committee member, please elect me, Taylor McGraa. Thank you.

Kobby Ofori **Salford Students Union**

Higher Education Zone Committee

for HE Zone Committee!

I'm Kobby and standing for HE Zone Committee for 3 simple reasons!

Firstly, it's time to give practical support to students across the UK on the black attainment gap something which I have worked hard for at my University as a VP. It's an absolute disgrace that our black students are being failed by the system but I'm greatly encouraged by the work being done to force Universities to act, and to act quickly!

Secondly, as a former international students rep, it is such a crucial priority that NUS has a strong strategy for Brexit to support and protect EU and international students more broadly. The Brexit process puts our students at risk and the HE Committee must be at the forefront of protecting them!

And finally on the failed Teaching Excellence Framework! We must be prepared for the full review so that we can actually have a "framework" which judges excellent teaching! I work around the clock at my Students' Union making sure that students have the opportunities to practice what they study in industry and in the real world and I want to bring that experience to the HE Committee.

So vote for me to hold the government and Universities to account with NUS on the black attainment gap, Brexit and the TEF!

Vote Kobby for HE Committee!

Luca Raimo
Manchester Metropolitan University Students' Union

Higher Education Zone Committee

Hello, I'm Luca Raimo VP Education for Manchester Met University students union. And I am proud to be a second year officer at one of the most, diverse, inclusive and highest achieving institutions in the country. We are a university that has over 18,000 WP students, the size of some universities. However, though we do have the highest number of WP students in the country we are ranked the highest university with the most WP students. This in large part is down to the opportunities, extra curriculum activities and chances we as a Students' Union give to our 38,000 student population and down also to the remarkable relationship we have with our university and the amazing projects it's running. It's about putting £200,000 into our Wellbeing and mental health services, alleviating the bunching of assignments/examinations and having mandatory Undergrad Dissertation submitted online to save students both money and travelling in time. It's about fighting for students on all issues locally, regionally and nationally from TEF, Brexit and all draconian legislation against students. It's about education enhancement, academic achievements and unparalleled opportunities; that's what we do as a students union at Manchester Met and what I believe we can do at NUS, so vote me Luca Raimo for HE Zones.

Luke Renwick
Sheffield Hallam Students' Union

Higher Education Zone Committee

As someone who has sat on HE Zone for the past year, I know how this zone works and functions and it's simple to say; it doesn't do enough and it doesn't function well!

We need a zone that is more than just a one-time, one-issue, one-policy making committee like it has been in the past - I mean, does anyone know what the zone did last year!

In the volatile HE environment we find ourselves in, we need a zone that is proactive to change, staying ahead of the curve. Not one that is reactive and left in the windscreen mirror of the education sector.

A vote for me is a vote for a campaigning force for positive change for all students including those who are marginalised most by societies.

A vote for me is a mandate to change HE Zone for the better and to make us a more efficient campaigning body.

A vote for me is a more accountable zone that highlights its work to its members.

Vote Luke Renwick for NUS HE Zone Committee! ♥



Jonathan Stephen **Huddersfield Students' Union**

Higher Education Zone Committee

My name is Jonathan Stephen, I am the Education Officer at Huddersfield Students' Union. My path into higher education (HE) was not typical – I left high school early with no GCSEs, then attended Bury College quite a few years later enrolling onto an Access to HE course. I completed Maths and English GCSE whilst progressing with the Access course. I developed a passion for Psychology during my time at Bury, in which I pursued further when attending Huddersfield University as a 'mature' student at the age of 21, enrolling onto BSc Hons Psychology. After completing the course, I was invited to complete a PhD at Huddersfield. I specialise in exploring success among those who are classed as underrepresented in HE, with a specific focus on PGR students.

In my role as Education Officer, I am reflecting some of my research in projects this year. For example, I have proposed two papers at the University's Teaching and Learning Committee, including the Black, Asian, minority or ethnic (BAME) Ambassador scheme. On one level, the scheme will operate to increase sense of belonging, empower and support this community of students in safely challenging racism, microaggressions and stereotyping. Additionally, I have been granted seats on senior and school level committees, in which the BAME Ambassadors can negotiate teaching and learning from an authentic position, as well as working in partnership with academics and course reps in auditing and diversifying reading lists.

I am continually looking to enhance current initiatives that provide students in HE with a fulfilling and inclusive learning environment. If elected, I can draw on a wealth of experiences to encourage others to better acknowledge the intersections that weave throughout the diverse, highly socialised spaces within HE, and contribute to shaping the future of the NUS.

Ethel Tambudzai **University of Westminster Student's Union**

Higher Education Zone Committee

VOTE ETHEL: HE ZONE COMMITTEE

Hi I'm Ethel & I'm running because I believe in real student experiences shaping education policy for all. In our current political climate of watching Brexit unravel, we as students must stand united in getting the best deal for us.

My key priorities at Westminster Union include

A transparent Complaints

- process so students know where to complain and a clear understanding of who is dealing with their complaint at every step

Mitigating Circumstances

- policies that reflect the real lives of students
- A process that supports students through their degree not encourages deferral.

Accessibility

- ensuring all students have a union they consider safe, welcoming and that's easily accessible for all.
- Gender neutral toilets on all campuses

WHAT DO I BRING?

- Passion of a greater student movement that overcomes identity politics to achieve systemic wins for our students. Especially with Brexit and all the complexities it entails. We must also understand that Brexit is not just a topical statement, but a piece of legislation that is going to impact our lives for the rest of this generation. Now is our chance to shape how it will affect us.



- Not just breaking glass ceilings, but bringing quality input. I will push hard to bring an informed voice that is determined to put you first.

- Someone who will fight for your experiences to be reflected in policy at every point.

WHAT HAVE I DONE BEFORE?

- Deputy Member of Youth Parliament when VOTES@16 was pushed onto governments agenda

- Before becoming VP, I was the Women's officer and persuaded the university to make provisions for pregnant students.

- Gender neutral toilets introduced in a Grade I listed building.

A VOTE ETHEL , is a vote for Excellence in HE.

