Friends,

Welcome to conference, I hope that you all have a wonderful and inspiring time, make friends and enjoy being in this amazing space where every student can express themselves as they are.

Students’ Unions helped change my life. It wasn’t until I joined my LGBT+ Society that I had the confidence to be myself and come out.

But for too many students and too many Students’ Unions, NUS isn’t doing enough. On all the big issues affecting our society, from the EU referendum to immigration, NUS has been too silent and Students’ Unions have been left alone. I’m running to change that.

For the past two years I have had the pleasure of working tirelessly for LGBT+ students. It’s been a challenging and busy two years, but I’ve pushed UCAS into a U-turn on its gender binary titles, forced the Government do a U-turn on giving men who sleep with men the HPV vaccine, saving 2000 lives a year and commissioned the first ever research being published into the experiences of LGBT students in Further Education.

Now I am asking for you to put your faith in me for one more year, I have delivered on the promises I made to LGBT+ Students, and next year I want to build on my successes, and create a better society for all students.

Grass Roots Activism

For too long NUS has expected activists like me to find their own way to NUS events, it has not taken them on the journey of politics or taught people how to be political, either in the board room or on the streets, elect me and I will create activist training for all students on how to engage with local and national change. Being an activist doesn’t just mean going on a demo, we need an NUS that helps all students – from the rugby player campaigning for free Wednesday Afternoons, to the LGBT Officer fighting for gender neutral toilets – have the tools to make a difference on their campus.

Voter Registration

This year I had the pleasure or working with Gloria DePiero MP (Shadow Minister for Voter Registration) to get students registered to vote before the boundary review, which disenfranchised thousands of students. If elected I will work with Institutions to automatically register all students on enrolment, to ensure that no student is shut out of voting for their future.

Votes at 16

I will work with every FE union and create toolkits and guides to take the fight to local and national levels to get the vote at 16. We’ve talked about it for too long. If elected, I’ll make Votes at 16 a national priority - FE should never be forgotten or ignored.

EU Referendum

The choice facing the UK during the EU Referendum is massive. It’s a choice between Nigel Farage’s immigrant-hating rhetoric and workers’ rights. NUS needs to launch a mass movement to fight to stay in the European Union, and equip Students’ Unions with the tools to win the argument.
A Living wage for all campus staff -

I will work with Unions to highlight the external contractors that pay poverty wages. It is time that public money stops propping up the poverty pay of private companies who provide services like cleaning and catering to our institutions. I will launch research into the effect that poverty pay has on young people and their educational attainment and lobby for a commission on the long term effects of austerity.

Investment Campaign

The campaign for our institutions to divest from fossil fuels has taken us so far, but now is the time that we start this campaign with a new perspective. We need to campaign for Institutions to invest in newer and greener energy, for a better and more sustainable future. It’s not enough for us to be simply ‘against’ institutions investing in fossil fuels, we have to be ‘for’ a positive alternative. If elected I’ll launch a national ‘Investment Campaign’ to make sure NUS stands up and fights against Climate Change and for a more sustainable future.

A national Trade Union student membership drive -

I’ll build on our relationship with the TUC and Trade Unions to encourage students to join a Trade Union. Thousands of students work part-time, many in our Students’ Unions, but the vast majority are not members of a Trade Union. I’ll launch an agreement to make it easier for Students’ Unions to set-up a Trade Union branch for their student staff and launch a national drive for students who work part-time to join a Union. We must continue to work closely with Trade Unions to fight the Trade Union Bill that threatens to water down our workplace rights.

Fighting the Government’s rhetoric on Immigration -

This year we have seen tens of thousands of refugees fleeing war torn countries and people trying to make the UK their home. This Government has been abhorrent in their dealing with this. Elect me and I will work with the International Students’ Campaign to lobby the government on this issue. And I will create a campaign the ALL Students’ unions can get involved with, not just a select few at high cost.

Challenging Prevent -

The Prevent programme is no longer fit for purpose, we need a new campaign to lobby the government on its racial profiling and further marginalising students. We need a campaign that all students feel safe taking part in to lobby this government and its agenda, elect me and I will work with various liberation campaigns to ensure that we have an inclusive campaign of challenging Islamophobia wherever it manifests itself.

A review of anti-semitism in NUS -

This year NUS has launched an institutional racism review. This needs to go further. For too long I have been speaking to Jewish students who feel isolated and further marginalised by NUS and their students’ unions. This needs to end - elect me and I will hold an independent review into anti-semitism in our movement to ensure every Jewish student feels safe on campus and in NUS.

What I've achieved

- Introduced the first ever Trans conference into NUS
- Lobbied to lobby to get Men who sleep with men vaccinated against HPV - and won saving around 2000 lives a year.
- Fought the UK’s awful immigration laws and reforms.
- Created an Out in Sport campaign for all SU’s and lobbied BUCS to create a sport and LGBT section
- Created a General election campaign lobbying MP’s and PPC’s for LGBT rights
- Set up the LGBT network within the National Union of Apprentices
- Won Gender neutral titles when applying for courses through UCAS
- Better activist training days, ensuring that we are doing the most for our activists.
- A Project on LGBT & faith - going beyond just Abrahamic faith, for an inclusive campaign
- Published research into the experiences of LGBT students in FE

I’m proud and honest about my politics and that’s why I’m standing as a Labour Student in this election.
I joined the Labour Party for the same reason I got involved in student politics: I want to make the world a better place and I want to work with others to achieve that. When Labour don’t deliver on that idealism, I’ll always call them out. Most of all I am a collectivist which is why I’ll always put the views of students first, as I have always done as a LGBT Officer.