

# Representing Students at National Conference

## A Guide to Consulting with Students before National Conference

As a delegate at Conference, you represent students from your Union. This guide will help you to consult with the students that you represent before conference.

### What is the value of consulting with students?

At conference as a delegate you have three main roles: to set policy, elect leadership and hold the current leadership to account. In all of these roles you'll make decisions on behalf of students from your union, so you need to know what they think, and how they'd want you to vote.

The decisions made at conference change students' lives, so to vote on motions and in electing leaders, you need to understand the lives of the students.

NUS Conference is the largest Student Democratic Event in the World and to be a strong democratic movement we encourage decision making by as many people as possible. By consulting with Students, more people are involved in the process and have a voice.

Overall, the better you understand the students you represent, the better you can represent them.

### How to meaningfully involve students

- Begin with a clear aim, what do you want to get from the conversation, and what do you want them to take away?
- Consider how you open the conversation: Sometimes it's easier to present your view and then ask what the person you're talking to thinks, rather than to ask someone's opinion on a topic they might have never thought about before
- Target Students with a vested Interest – for example Student Carers might particularly want to

read motions related to their experience, and know which way they'd like you to vote on them.

- You could start a conversation by discussing an issue that you know there is strong feeling about.
- Ask for meaningful tasks to be done – you could ask a friend to read a particular motion or a set of manifestos and get them to tell you what they think.
- Even small starts can start a conversation - If you talk to 6 Friends, and they mention it to 6 others, and they mention it to 6 others, you've spread a message to over 200 people in a day!

### Tools to get people interested

- Hold a Meeting or focus group;
- Canvass in a well-used public space;
- Hold a debate or discussion on a topic;
- Leafletting;
- Postering;
- Stunts – The More Creative, the better;

### How Students can be involved during conference

- Watching the Live Stream – this will be available on NUS Connect;
- Follow the Hashtag #nusconference;
- You could tweet how you've voted on every motion so that students can follow along.