

A Vote for Tasha is a Vote For...

1. Campaign on Postgraduate Funding
2. Mental Health support systems
3. Quiet Room in the Graduate School
4. Fight for further Research extensions
5. Expand supervisory toolkit to PGT
6. Improve PG disability support
7. Encourage more PG engagement in Clubs & Societies
8. Further develop the PG Reps system and PG Forum
9. Set up an official PG Discord community network
10. Launch a comprehensive cross-disciplinary calendar of research

There is so much I have done already and so much I have yet to do. Please vote for me so I can finish the job and ensure the changes students need are followed through and happen!

Vote Tasha Montgomery #1

#THEFULLMONTY



VP Postgraduate

Vote on <https://qubsu.org> 8am 01 March - 8pm 04 March

WHO ARE YOU?

My name is Tasha Montgomery and I am your current Postgraduate Officer. I am a working-class PhD student in the School of Mathematics and Physics. If the past 8 years at Queen's has shown me anything, it is that the student movement directly influences and drives change.

Over the last 8 months, I have worked hard to build a good working relationship with the Graduate School and others, so that we can effectively work in partnership to benefit your experience. Representation matters, your voices should not be ignored!

It's fair to say that when I ran last year, I, like everyone else, had no idea COVID-19 was coming. While I am happy to have achieved many significant changes for postgrad students, there has been much that I have had to postpone due to current circumstances. Please vote for me so I can finish the job and ensure the changes students need are followed through and actually happen!

SO, I CAN TALK TO YOU ABOUT PG EDUCATION?

Yes, listening to you and advocating on your behalf when it comes to your educational experience is part of the job. That means attending meetings, committees and raising issues with your teaching.

This year I have rolled out the supervisory toolkit for PGR students to ensure supervisors are aware of their obligations to students, defended the need for a safety net for students and voiced your concerns and suggestions about PGT courses within the university at all levels.

If re-elected my plan is to:

- Work with all three faculties to develop the supervisory toolkit to cover Master's dissertations.
- Once allowed, I intend to roll out the drop-in sessions at the Graduate School and other locations during the week, both during and outside of the normal 9-5.
- Launch a comprehensive research calendar of existing lectures and seminars across all research centres to better facilitate interdisciplinary learning for all students at all levels.

YOU SAID REPRESENTATION MATTERS?

It truly does. This year, the Postgraduate Reps were elected for the first time. Since then, we have begun shaping the way postgrad representation occurs within the SU structures. The Postgraduate Forum was also overhauled to allow for stronger voices and wider issues to be raised and discussed in the current climate. I want to:

- Ensure internally selected research cluster reps from all schools are included going forward.
- Continue developing and empowering the working groups for PGT, PGR and PG Mental Health so they can speak about the issues affecting students.

AREN'T WE IN A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS?

It has finally been acknowledged by the university that we are in a mental health crisis. At the start of semester 2, I was able to launch a dedicated PG Mental Health Network with the goal of addressing key issues across the board. This is just the beginning, I still want to:

- Continue to focus on improving mental health provisions for all PG students. Including PGR specific support during APRs and Differentiation, which is under review right now.
- Provide a platform for Mental Health issues at postgrad level within the university, incorporating the new PG Mental Health Network working group.
- Work with the VP Welfare to design a PG Mental Health checklist and a toolkit for identifying poor mental health with specific PG triggers included.
- Ensure all PG Reps can receive mental health first-aid training so they can better support their peers.
- Run a campaign aimed at reducing the stigma around postgrad burnout, to encourage more students to speak out about toxicity in research and unrealistic academic pressures.

I CAN'T AFFORD TO DO A POSTGRAD

The current system needs to change. Right now it is inaccessible to working-class students, many need to work part-time alongside their studies just to survive. There should NEVER be financial barriers to education, our government should be supporting our students completely. This year I co-launched the **#FundOurPostgrads** national campaign with NUS-USI and UUSU. I am committed to seeing this campaign through and getting students the funding they so desperately deserve. I pledge to:

- Boost awareness of the NI PG funding crisis within the student body, particularly with undergrads who will be most affected due to tuition fee rises, if things don't change.
- Increase pressure and lobbying on the NI Executive to properly fund our PGT courses; also including maintenance loans for all PG students, similar to their GB counterparts.
- Extend support next year for all PGR students whose research has been impacted by COVID-19.
- Secure an agreement for a PGT fee cap to prevent increasing tuition fees.

BUT THE PG COMMUNITY IS SO DISCONNECTED?

I want to ensure that our community is inclusive and welcoming for all, to build on what already exists, as well as develop new ways of engaging with students from all backgrounds.

- Work with clubs and societies to encourage more PG engagement.
- Set-up an official Postgraduate Discord to allow for better community discussions.
- Improve disability facilities and roll out the JAM card scheme within the Grad School.
- Create a dedicated quiet room within the Graduate School.
- Multilingual Signage throughout the Graduate School to help welcome and assist our diverse international student body.