

VOTE **CHLOE FERGUSON** #1 CAMPAIGNS & ENGAGEMENT

**STUDENT
WORKER
SUPPORT**

**INTERNATIONAL
STUDENT
SUPPORT**

**BUILDING
COMMUNITIES
& BELONGING**

**CAMPAIGN
TRAINING**

**SUSTAINABLE &
NET ZERO QUB**

**CAREERS
SUPPORT**



#COUNTONCHLOE

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CAMPAIGNS & ENGAGEMENT



A little bit about me

Hi folks! I'm Chloe Ferguson and I'm rerunning because I would love to continue being your VP Campaigns and Engagement. I've been involved in all different aspects of student life, whether that is a course rep, society executive member or chair of Climate Action Group and I know I can take that experience and put it to good use. I am rerunning because Students deserve better than what they're getting. You have been continually mistreated and scapegoated as the problem this year by the media, by politicians and by wider society- all whilst receiving no support amidst a serious ongoing mental health crisis. That simply isn't good enough.

What have I done so far?

- **Supporting Clubs and Societies:** This year we've successfully lobbied Queen's Sport to overhaul their funding processes, a massive win in the face of tens of thousands of pounds worth of unequal funding hinged on gender. Additionally, I've implemented new ways of promoting Clubs and Societies, including mass round ups and open night style events to increase membership.
- **Students in Crisis:** A massive focus of mine this year has been getting the essentials to students when they've needed it the most. This has included, leading the coordination on care packages for over 200 self-isolating students, putting together Christmas care packs, creating food bank contribution points and successfully lobbying the university so that students who were immediately suspended after receiving a COVID fine by the PSNI could submit their assignments during the Christmas assessment period.
- **Campaigning nationally:** Along with many other student activists, I am involved with the National Students Deserve Better Group, and co-lead the QUBSU branch which over 500 of you have joined! These efforts from the student movement contributed massively to the £500 Covid Disruption Payment (but the work is far from done!)
- **Sustainability and Climate Action:** As this year's Chair of Climate Action Group, I proposed amendments to our QUBSU Green New Deal, moving towards more radical asks grounded in Net Zero carbon emissions by 2030. We are continuing to lobby senior management on declaring a climate crisis and accepting these points, and have joined the Youth Working Group for Belfast Climate Commission to shape local climate strategy. Climate Action Group has also successfully applied for membership to NI Climate Coalition, the largest Climate Network in Northern Ireland, which will give students to feed in on policy and law on a national stage.
- **Engagement and Fundraising:** This year we have had to be innovative in creating student communities and connections. Kicking off with Freshers, I coordinated a livestreamed RAG Battle of the Bands raising £1,600 for Belfast Samaritans and Save the Children, and from there we've worked with various societies and local groups to develop our online community- an example being our QUB Students' Union Community Group on Facebook. In collaboration with Scribblers, we worked together on a Pen Pal and Creative Exchange Scheme which benefited and connected just under 200 students feeling isolated during lockdown.

Building Community and Preventing Isolation

Student isolation during COVID-19 has only served to highlight the utmost importance of building student communities and ensuring a sense of belonging in both learning and social circles.

Every student should feel like they have a place to **belong, contribute and be themselves**- both in and outside of the classroom. Engagement strategies for building up **community** must be led by the needs of the **Student Voice**, and that voice must be listened to in all faculties and departments across the university. The needs of students are individual, dependent on elements such as commitments and course style. This must be reflected in the opportunities students are given to engage with the Students' Union, their courses and each other. If elected, I will work to establish **joint student-staff engagement networks** strategically focused on community and isolation across the university, hosting **round tables specialized to each school**. This will involve various groups such as Academic Reps, Staff Members, Relevant Societies and Peer Mentors, to focus on how to give support in both learning and social communities school wide.

Every Student should be empowered to share their thoughts and get involved in Students' Union led activities- whether that is clubs and societies, or our lobbying groups. By creating a **monthly Engagement and Entertainment Forum**, specific space will be created for students to highlight the social opportunities they want their SU to bring to life. From this feedback, and my own knowledge and experience, both online and in person events will be hosted to foster community and create student to student connection in the Student Body. To help facilitate this connection, I will create **Community Ambassador Volunteer roles**, which will focus on facilitating engagement in student spaces. This could include encouraging participation into specific departments such as Volunteer SU, or bridging communication gaps with student accommodation or postgraduates.

Additionally, I will also focus on assisting the evaluation and **overhaul of our Students' Union specific engagement processes**, identifying areas for improvement in areas such as Student Council, Clubs and Societies, and liberation groups. So many students are involved in student life, but right now, the pathway to voicing your opinion and creating change is not clear or accessible.



Investment into Student Led Activities

This year has placed clubs and societies under a strain that's been unseen, creating difficulties for committee members both in terms of how to facilitate normal activity, and in how they are able to promote their groups.

I will prioritize a **Sports Club Covid Recovery**, working with Queen's Sport to ensure a safe return to play, developing membership growth and external sponsorship strategies to minimize the pandemic's impact on our brilliant student athletes. Additionally, I will ensure clubs and societies are given **access to promotional avenues**, social media **training**, and create an **Engagement and Events Toolkit** that covers how to effectively facilitate student activity and get others involved. The need to look after the **wellbeing of our student leaders** has been highlighted consistently over the last years, and by hosting weekly Presidential Forum's and Clubs and Soc drop-ins, **personal development opportunities** will be identified and created. I will additionally bring in increased accessibility and training for the **Finance Office Processes**, and establish a **Gender in Student Activities Working Group** to tackle topics such funding disparities and stereotypes which dissuade Students from getting involved in particular activities.

Against the backdrop of the Students' Union **New Build**, you need a strong voice to stand up for the resourcing and needs of Student Led Activities, particularly the access needed to both **social and storage space**. Student **Media and Journalism** will also be invested in, creating tools to establish to amplify it and student to student communication. As this year's treasurer for RAG, I've seen firsthand the importance of charity and fundraising- by creating **Student RAG Ambassadors in each school** and Staff Charity Leads we can further embed the culture of giving in our university everyday.

It's important we empower students to become leaders, giving them the resource and time to lead on the projects they want to, so our Students' Union is truly Student Led.

Sustainable and Net Zero Campus



Our planet is at a breaking point, and it's time for a system and cultural change in how Queen's responds. Queen's management publicly and consistently promotes the institution as a leader at both a global and local scale, however, they remain quiet and complicit in the trend of only make sustainable change when and where it suits their business model.

This simply isn't good enough. Change must be radical and it must be now.

If elected I will continue to work with the Climate Action Group to lobby QUB to declare a **Climate and Ecological Emergency**, and accept the terms of the **Green New Deal**. This includes fighting for a **Net Zero Carbon QUB by 2030**, a ban on single use plastic, the implementation of **ethical procurement policies** and radical curriculum change to integrate sustainability and the climate crisis as a constant in our learning.

I additionally will look internally towards the Students' Union itself, and ensure the **New Build** its processes are as Green and sustainable as possible. Utilising the created connections with the **NI Climate Coalition**, we will work to provide opportunities for students to learn more about how they can lead more sustainable lives.

Campaign Training and Resources



Students should be empowered to **make the change they want to see**, at a local, institutional and national level. Lobbying both the government and Queen's during COVID-19 has shown the power of collective voice and action. This must continue.

In order to make this happen, I will coordinate a **Campaign Development Plan** which will include a **Campaign Support Hub** on the QUBSU website, with a timeline on how to run a campaign from beginning to end, suggestions for direct action, templates for mass emailing, and advice on how to organise. The plan will also include **training sessions** and the creation of an **Activism Grant** to fund campaign costs. Inspired by the Students Deserve Better group, I will ensure there is a **permanent campaign group** which could focus on various student issues, such as housing or a free, fully funded and accessible Education system.

Other Issues I will campaign on:

- **Off Campus Discipline:** Students have a right to a private life, however they are currently being punished once by the police, and then again by the university. This is taking a huge financial and emotional toll, and needs to be eradicated.
- Lobbying QUB to work towards **University of Sanctuary** status and increase scholarships for refugees

Student Worker Support

COVID-19 has served to highlight the issues and mistreatment of student workers both in and outside of the university.

If elected, I will seek to work with Trade Unions and promote a university-wide information campaign which focuses on informing workers of their rights, the benefits of unionizing, and how to challenge mistreatment within their workplaces. To coordinate this, a QUBSU Student Workers Forum will be implemented, so we can listen, plan and signpost to appropriate Unions for advice when needed. The plan is to both look internally at the worker issues within QUB and the SU, and then also put in place a Student Worker Charter to ask businesses in the local area to sign, creating a pledge around workers rights such fair wage, safe working conditions and a no tolerance policy on harassment.

International Student Support

International Students have historically been **treated unfairly, facing discrimination** whilst consistently being undervalued across the university, and the COVID-19 pandemic has brought frustrations to a tipping point.

If elected, I will work with our International Student Representatives and societies to amplify their voice and experience, implementing an **open feedback system** to identify ongoing issues, alongside an **International Student Network**. This will tie together all student led activity to do with International Students, giving space for a place of discussion and collaboration. I will also host **events outside of the usual weekday hours**, to help those struggling with isolation and homesickness.

Our Students' Union website and communication channels currently have no space dedicated solely to International Students. This creates accessibility barriers and needs changed. If elected I will **create dedicated website space** which will link to university resources, give information on relevant issues and needs, such as how to get a **National Insurance Number**, VISA guidance and funding options available etc.

If elected I will also work with the Student Guidance Centre to provide information on employers who can **sponsor VISA's for graduates**.

Careers Support

The world is changing, and with that, the world of work is too. You come to university to learn, develop new skills and explore who you are, and more often than not, this includes options on what you may want to pursue as a career. However we often find students being shoehorned into prescribed versions of work which are either not fit for the digital age, or are not looking at the topics students actually want to pursue. This is a recurring issue university wide, though realised in different ways for different subjects. If elected, I will increase careers visibility for humanities students, bring focus to how to pursue a career in the Third Sector, promote CV and Interview Question Workshops and develop skill swap opportunities so students can create their own industry networks in areas which interest them.

#CountOnChloe 1-4th March 2021

@ChloeforCandE

