

Hey guys - I'm Meike, the President at the Students' Union in Greenwich and I also sit on the NUS UD Committee as well the NUS Service Board as Trustee. The reason I am standing for NEC Block of 15 is simple – I strongly believe THE CULTURE OF NUS HAS TO CHANGE! Last year's conference was my very first encounter with NUS and I quickly developed a love and hate relationship. I met amazing officers from all over the place. I made friends with officers, learned a lot from them and exchanged invaluable experiences which really helped me in my role. Having spoken to a lot of other officers about the culture of NUS, it seems to ring true for everyone that we love NUS for the people.

However, there appears to be a shared feeling about the current culture which hinders NUS from moving forward & achieving things for EVERYONE. It was only a few weeks ago that I (finally) learned the correct word is faction and not fraction. I understand that NUS is a political movement and that different opinions, competition and debate are part of that, but no one can argue that the atmosphere at most NUS events is always very divided and factional. After last year's conference I genuinely asked myself whether NUS is a political movement or in fact a political party which doesn't really know it is one.

NUS has to find its identity again and full-time officers need to realise that their radical political behaviour as well as getting personal on social media etc. affects everything; themselves and their work, the staff they work with, us officers on the ground and effectively all students! While a lot of officers seem to share those views, I understand that individuals seek support from current factions due to the existing culture and the elections. I feel too many are already 'in too deep' in a faction and address these issues in 1-2-1 conversations but not necessarily on a more official platform.

ALL OF US could achieve so much more, individually, and together if only NUS focussed on what should be priority – CHANGING THE WORLD! Instead we're debating (for about 15 minutes...) at the National Conference whether there should be more halal options available with the NUS Extra card. Clearly that can only be a good thing which will benefit a lot of people, so let's just do it?! But no, radical political views, personal issues that individuals have which each other and the fact that a lot of people don't seem to be able to stop for a second and put themselves into someone else's shoes, hinder us from changing things for our students!

Too many SUs have disaffiliated over the last few years and too many officers feel the same way I do! We could achieve so much more if there was healthy political debate rather than officers constantly firing shots at each other.

Yes, cultural change is difficult and takes time, but we cannot lose hope. We cannot lose faith that nothing will change. We cannot give up and let more and more SUs disaffiliate, let more and more officers turn their back on the national movement that is supposed to help them thrive in their roles and achieve positive changes!

Vote for me and I promise that I will not lose myself in the detrimental political culture but stay true to my guts! Vote for me and I won't stop addressing the issues, but will fight for cultural change so that NUS finally becomes the movement we all need it to be again – A movement that supports officers on the ground to do the best they can, a movement that changes policies to ensure ALL of our students are treated fairly, a movement that future officers are proud to be a part of, a powerful collective movement that is respected on a national level and never backs down to fight for the rights of current students and all future generations to come!

Vote #1 for #GermanEfficiency – Vote #1 for Meike!