

cam's
manifesto
our union our change



**KEEP
CAM
AND
CARRY
ON**



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The Minifesto:

CHANGE OUR UNION

KEEP THE CAMPUS LARDER

SUPPORT PART-TIME WORK

BUILD AFFORDABLE UNI
ACCOMODATION

SAVE OUR SCOTTISH UNIS

MAKE EVENTS SUSTAINABLE

STAND UP FOR GRAD VISAS

DEFEND OUR RIGHTS

LISTEN TO OUR COMMUNITY

@KeepCam4Pres
Voting open March 27th & 28th



Introduction

Who am I?

Hey, I'm Cam! I've been your Director of Education over the last year. Before that I was a PGT student studying legal and constitutional studies. I'm originally from the sunny city Aberdeen, but grew up in Yorkshire, and lived in Singapore for six years. Outside of the office, I love going on long walks along the beaches (with Isla of course) and night out!

Why President?

I have delivered some of the biggest changes to our academic experience, I now want to do the same for the issues that affect all our community. From expanding the Campus Larder; supporting students in part-time work; fighting to ensure the University is held accountable for its investments; ensuring that affordable halls are built; and getting the Change Programme done.

How am I qualified?

I have been your DoEd for the last year and, as a member of the Students' Association Board, I initiated and lead on the Change Programme, starting the process to bring the biggest change to our Union since 1989. Alongside our President, I have lobbied and held the University accountable on a range of issues from working groups up to the University Court. I know the ropes and will hit the group running from day one.

- Cam





My time as your **doed**

ff After delivering some
of the biggest changes
to our academic experience,
I now want to do the same for
the issues that affect all
students.”

Promises

delivered

Why you can trust me to deliver:

New Extensions Policy

No matter what School you are in, you can now rely on the same policy and apply hassle-free through the new online portal.



Started the Change Programme

I proposed, launched, and lead on the biggest shake to how we operate since 1989. Now is time to start delivering.



24-Hour Study Space

Just finished a shift but still need to study? You can now study late into the night, meaning you get those last-minute deadline pushes!



Remodelled the Academic Calendar

No more exams during May Dip, a longer break, giving you more time to recharge and revise!



Reworded Academic Alerts

Missed a class and worrying about an Academic Alert? The DoWell, DSN and I have word to reword them, so they are less punitive and more supportive.



Protect Wednesday Afternoons

Sports, activities, society events, there is so much to do on a Wednesday afternoon. Which is why I've worked with the AU Pres to ensure there as few classes on a Wednesday as possible.
#WellbeingWednesdays



Some other highlights

Delivered **Reimagining Representation**, getting more students on University groups. Secured the **highest nominations in the Class Rep Elections**. Working to **ensure students working part time aren't disadvantaged**. Started the process to begin **revamping the University App**.





What's next?

a lot done, more to do.

your your union change

Leading change

Get ready, because your Union is changing and, change for the better. I have launched the biggest shakeup to how we operate in decades. And I can't wait to take you on the journey.

The (brief) story so far

Coming into my role, I realised our Union was struggling. **Frankly, one night I had enough. Determined for change, I went home, I researched successful union transformations, drafted a proposal and took it to the other Sabbs and asked: "Am I crazy?"** Luckily, they agreed I wasn't. So, I set about convincing the other trustees to support us and we passed the paper to initiate a Change Programme. We then took the plan to the University and asked if they will help support us with delivering this. After a meeting with the Principal, we had **secured the largest increase in our Block Grant for decades**.

With funds in hand, I set about hiring our Change Director – which we managed to do before Christmas 2023. We appointed Antony Blackshaw, a seasoned leader in driving change within Student Unions.

What's next?

Over the coming months, Antony and his team will meticulously assess every facet of our Union, drafting a comprehensive Change Plan that will chart our course towards becoming the best Student Association out there. This plan will enhance and broaden our representation, activities, and commercials. With the backing of both the University and you, we'll be fully prepared to dedicate ourselves to turning this plan into tangible results, bringing about the biggest change we've seen since 1989.

My goals for the Change Programme

While ranked among the UK's top ten Student Unions in 2023, we aim to further enhance to reflect the best of leading universities. My key priorities including **securing an increased grant, supporting officers to prevent burnout, ensuring proper support for volunteers, connecting our PGs to their Union and maintaining competitive wages and employee benefits.**

Support with the cost of living

The UK is experiencing the worst cost of living crisis in a generation. Prices are skyrocketing while student loans & grants stagnate. Families, who are also struggling, cannot help like they have in times past. Students, more than ever, are working multiple jobs to boost their income. With some unable to take on work due to visa or course restrictions.

This has been a perfect storm, but there are ways we can and will help. From the Campus Larder giving out hundreds of items each week to ensuring part-time work does not impact your academic performance.

Supporting Part-time Work

Over the last year I have been working with the Deans within the University to reform our **extenuating circumstances** policy. The focus of which has been a **formal recognition from the University that part time work to support university costs should not determent the very studies students are trying to support**. This will include part time work as an extenuating circumstance. We are making great progress on policy change, but we must ensure the University delivers. The pedal cannot be taken off the gas, we must keep going.

Free Breakfasts

28% of students have skipped meals because of the cost-of-living crisis, with 63% spending less on food and essentials to help cut costs (DJS Research, 2023). **I will work with our Senior Management Team, and the University's Cost of Living Taskforce to set up and fund a breakfast club** to ensure all students can eat the most important meal of the day.

Continue and expand the Campus Larder

Each week the Campus Larder helps students with the cost of food. We stock a wide range of the products, as well as all the essentials. It has the project I am most proud to have worked on and **I am committed to putting in the time and energy to keeping the larder going**. I also want to explore **extending hours** over religious holidays, as well as foods that fit with religious dietary regulation to make the campus larder even more **accessible and inclusive**.



Keep fighting for our housing

There is no doubt about it: we are in a housing crisis. One that every President has had to grapple with over the last six years. Now it is mixed with the worst cost of living crisis in a generation, an accommodation service which isn't backed by central funding, huge changes in how students rent accommodation. If we don't get this right, we not only price people out of halls, but out of St Andrews.

Affordable University Accommodation

Albany Park was meant to be affordable but, with ever spiralling costs, it was going to be no cheaper than Whitehorn and Powell. So, we managed to convince the University Court to go back to the drawing board on Albany Park and commit to building the most affordable accommodation they can. **Building halls quickly wasn't good enough if students couldn't afford to rent them.** We are looking at not just the most affordable in the UK, for inspiration, but Europe too. The challenge now will be holding Court and the University to this commitment. So, **let's finish the job and deliver the most affordable halls we can.**

HMOs and Private Accommodation

Fife Council's decision to limit HMO Licences has had the opposite effect, making the housing crisis so much worse. Over my term as DoEd, I have worked with the community council, and been at the tables where this has been discussed. Except all they have to do is wait a year and our officers change. I am not going to let that happen. **I will continue to lobby Fife Council, alongside the Community Council, to overturn this detrimental decision**

Working with Accommodation Groups

It will be critical to **work closely with our next Accommodation Officer**, and their committee, so we can **deliver the 'How to Rent Guide'**, host events, and help keep students up to date. We should explore splitting the role into Halls and Private Accommodation, so we can even better represent students, and help the burden on our officer.

We should also be **working with groups outside of the Union**, such as CASH, to empower campaign and keep the pressure on the University & local authorities.



SOSU

'Save Our Scottish Universities'

The government is destroying our universities with devastating funding cuts. We're all left worse off, and it is our international students who are left paying off the tab.

Government funding

The Scottish Government cut over £100 million to Universities and Colleges in its 2024/25 draft budget. This equates to a real-time decrease of 19% in Government Funding.

In 2021/22 **our University lost £24million supporting it's Scottish and Rest of UK (RUK) students.** With even more cuts on their way, despite increasing inflationary pressures, students become a financial burden to Universities. This is NOT how it should be. And could lead to less Scottish and RUK students being accepted to Scottish universities, **widening an already growing attainment gap.**

This loss is made up by international students. Many universities are now dependent on international fees, with an average of 39% of the average Scottish university income coming from international undergrads. Our University is a stark outlier with that percentage being approximately 72% to help cross the gap. Leaving our **international students exploited.**

The worst part is Universities cannot speak up about this, otherwise they risk undermining confidence and risking the international market they rely on so much, so it is **up to us to speak up and hold government accountable.**

Campaigning

As UK and Scottish elections loom, we are in a prime position to not let higher education fall off the agenda. I am **committed to continuing to draw attention to this crisis**, standing with other student unions and NUS Scotland to **keep our education free and accessible to everyone.**

Demanding that the current and incoming Governments take steps to maintain funding for our universities, end the marketisation of our HE sector, and end the exploitation of our international students.



Our climate our responsibility



Across St Andrews, the UK and the globe, students are increasingly standing up to the existential threat posed by climate change and we are demanding urgent action from our leaders. From protests and strikes to social media campaigns, we are taking a stand and calling for meaningful climate policies to address the crisis.

Sustainable events

In line with our sustainability pillar within our Strategic Plan, we should be working to add sustainability to our events risk assessment. Focusing on, **minimising our waste footprint** by **reducing consumption**, single use plastics, and reducing harmful admissions wherever possible. While concurrently promoting and **increasing reuse and recycling, sourcing local produce, managing energy and water usage** wisely. We can achieve this by consulting and working with our student groups, the DoES, DoSDA, Senior Management and the Association Board. I aim to have this in place by the start of the 2024/25 Academic year.

Collaborate with the Environment Subcom

The climate, and impending effects of change, are at the forefront of many of our student's minds. I am **committed to working with the Environment Officer so we can support students and make a difference**. From the events during **Green Week**, to **Rewilding Kinkell**- we must do all that we can to help our local environment and advocate for changes outside of St Andrews.

Transition St Andrews

There has been a lot of debate about the soon to be vacant retail space in the Union (formally Blackwells & Vinted). The Student Rep Council heard from Transition St Andrews becoming possibly interested in the space- offering an array of services and a home in town for StAndReuse. While the decision who lets the spaces falls to the Association Board, we can **use my position as Sabb and Trustee to ensure that bids from organisations such as Transition are equally and fairly heard**.

Our community

St Andrews is a small town, on the north-east of Fife. It is our home, and we must ensure that all our students feel safe and supported.

Postgrads

Before I became DoEd I was a Postgrad Taught Student, so our PG community is something that is incredibly close to my heart. From societies to traditions, our Union isn't always the best at making sure PGs feel welcome and involved. That needs to change. **I will work closely with the DoSDA and St Leonards College to make sure that our PGs have an equal (if not better) St Andrews experience as our undergrads-** knowing this Union is YOUR Union.

Safety on our Campus

This is something incredibly close to my heart, and I will work with the University and the DoWell to make that sure every single student gets the support they need. We will explore **strengthening and better publicising Report and Support**, advocating for the **implementation of the SafeZone app**, continue to **tackle spiking** in and out of the Union, and **work every day to change culture around GBSV**.

Wellbeing Wednesdays

I will work with the DoEd, AU Pres, DoSDA and DoWell to ensure the University commits to **keeping Wednesday afternoons clear** for the next academic year, and beyond. These afternoons are so important and allow students to take a break from studies and focus on their health.

Deliver the Student Partnership Agreement

As your DoEd I have been working closely with the University to update the Student Partnership Agreement (SPA), which details how the Association and Uni interact, how student representation and input on Uni committees and groups works, and what our shared priorities are. However, it is **time to break away from the ways of the past**. This agreement shouldn't be done behind closed doors, we cannot have an SPA without consulting our students, our officers and our wider community. That's what I aim to do, **bring transparency and student input to the forefront**. It means more work for us and the University but will **deliver something meaningful**, rather than a document on a shelf.



My promises to you

Defending our freedoms

Rights to Protest and Freedom of Speech

In a thriving democracy, the voices of its citizens, especially students, must be heard loud and clear. I recognise that students are often at the forefront of social change, advocating for justice, equality, and progress. I pledge my unwavering support for the rights of students to protest peacefully and express their opinions without fear of reprisal or censorship.

Empowering Student Voices

It is imperative that their rights to free expression and peaceful assembly are protected and upheld. I commit to working tirelessly to publicize these rights, ensuring that every student is aware of their freedoms and empowered to exercise them effectively.

Educate and Inform

Knowledge is power, and I will prioritise informing students about their rights through an educational campaign. We will equip you with the information and skills you need to effectively engage in activism, advocacy, and drive change.

Your voice will be my voice

We've had setbacks and challenges this year, especially around SRC motions but at every turn I have advocated for our Union to push ahead so we can let our student's voices be heard. I will continue to be that voice and advocate as your President.

Divest the university's investments

Through University Court, **I will support our student groups in their calls to divest University investments away from companies that endanger our environment and climate, as well as those who go against our principles and ethics; for which we stand.**

Stand up for Graduate Visas

When the Graduate Route was announced in 2019, it was enthusiastically welcomed by the HE Sector. It offers international students, the opportunity to work and build connections. **This did not stop the current Government from announcing a review of the Graduate Route** and a completely unjustified clamp down on students bring their families while they study. We **stand by our international students** and **lobby this government to publicly commit to maintaining the Graduate Route** into the next parliament and beyond.



summary

let's finish the job

I hope my record as DoEd shows I am someone who delivers what they promise and doesn't compromise on what's important. Someone who know the ropes and will hit the ground running on day one.

This next year is pivotal for the Students' Association and the radical changes we bring to our Union. This is YOUR Union. Our community, and nothing means more to me. We need to support one another during the worst cost-of-living crisis in a generation, when government is cutting the funding to our future, curtailing visas, and clamping down on freedom of speech. I will stand up with you and demand change.

A vote for me in this election is a vote to ensure your voice is heard from the Union to College Gate and beyond. I will advocate for you day-in and day out.

**I only promise what I can deliver,
and I will deliver what I promise.**

- Cam

vote to:

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