

greenwich  
students'  
union

# A Greenwich Manifesto





# Executive summary

The General Election is due to take place on Thursday 4th July, and the deadline to register to vote in this election is 18th June. It is incredibly important that students have their say and vote in the elections and Greenwich Students' Union wants to support this.

Greenwich Students' Union will be engaging in the Election in three ways:

1. Creating and enabling a voter registration drive, encouraging students (Greenwich students and our Kent and Christchurch students at the Medway Campus) to register to vote and to vote.
2. Whole heartedly supporting the Manifesto for our Future, created by NUS based on 10,000 students' voices.
3. Developing and delivering on our own Greenwich manifesto, based on the experiences of Greenwich students, with a London and Kent focus.

Greenwich Students' Union wholeheartedly supports the Manifesto for our Future, created by NUS based on 10,000 students' voices, including those at Greenwich.



# A Greenwich Manifesto

At Greenwich Students' Union, students are at the heart of everything that we do. This is why we have developed the manifesto for Greenwich students, by Greenwich students.

## What matters to Greenwich students?

*"No matter your faith, you are valued and feel you can talk about your faith or ethnicity here. You don't need to hide who you are."*

Noor-UI-Huda Chaudhary,  
Law Programme Representative

*"As a mature-student, I didn't take the traditional route to University, but after lockdown, I took an access course with the end goal to go to University. I feel like I've achieved so much in my role, and I will never forget what I've experienced."*

Charlie Williams,  
2nd year Psychology Student,  
Retail Supervisor

*"My faith is fundamental to my identity, and for me, faith comes above everything else. It is important that students have spaces to practice their faith and we create an environment where all students are at liberty to practice their faith."*

Naa Kotey,  
Msc Computer Science, former UG  
Engineering & Cybernetics student,  
former Student Trustee and President  
of Believers Love World Society

*"My role exists to make sure the University becomes a more inclusive environment for LGBTQ+ students. I've had mostly positive experiences, but it doesn't mean everyone's experiences are the same"*

Tam Page,  
2nd year English Literature student  
and LGBTQ+ Liberation Chair



From talking to Greenwich students and listening to their priorities, we identified the following as the course issues for Greenwich:

- ♦ Climate Action
- ♦ Housing
- ♦ International Student Support
- ♦ Cost of Living
- ♦ Investing in Education

The policies in this manifesto were discussed and endorsed by elected GSU Officers, and GSU Student Assembly. They highlight the aims and priorities for Greenwich students in the coming General Election and highlight where all parties should be delivering for all students.

### **Greenwich Greener Future:**

- ♦ Implement free or discounted bus links for students to ease the financial burden on them.
- ♦ Introduce TFL bikes in Greenwich so students can utilise the extended cycle pathways to encourage sustainable transportation.
- ♦ Ensure the safety and accessibility of cycling infrastructure.
- ♦ Expand the pedestrianisation of neighbourhoods in London and beyond.

### **Global Greenwich:**

- ♦ Remove the cap on working hours for international students to enable vulnerable students to support themselves financially whilst they study.
- ♦ Reduce financial barriers for international students by addressing additional and unequal charges for entry.
- ♦ Reinstate dependent visas for the families of international students.
- ♦ Implement alternative payment plans for international students who are unable to pay their fees upfront for unexpected reasons.

### **Cost of Living support:**

- ♦ Call for the provision of a free hardship fund to support students facing immediate financial challenges.
- ♦ Increase the NHS Bursary for health students to support them in their education and training.
- ♦ Direct support to help with increased energy bills
- ♦ Reduce the interest paid on Student Loans.

### Affordable, quality housing:

- ♦ Introduce rent caps to make accommodation more affordable.
- ♦ Support the Renter Reforming Bill to enhance tenant rights and protections.
- ♦ Establish an easier redress scheme to address issues related to the quality of student housing.
- ♦ Advocate for improved insulation in housing to enhance living conditions.
- ♦ Introduce a private renting housing service that connects providers and students, assisting those who have never rented privately before.
- ♦ Extend the exemption from Council Tax to include part time students.

### Investing in Kent:

- ♦ Encourage investment in graduate jobs in the Kent region.
- ♦ Invest in infrastructure that encourages students to stay in the local area post-graduation including jobs, housing and post-graduate training schemes.
- ♦ Improve Medway bus services for better connectivity and safer routes.
- ♦ Increase capital funding for universities with campuses in areas underserved by higher education.

### Investing in the future/ Education:

- ♦ Advocate for a lifelong learning/loan scheme to facilitate re-skilling opportunities for students.
- ♦ Campaign for free education at the point of access to ensure equal opportunities for all.
- ♦ Make closing the awarding gap a national policy priority







# To Conclude

This manifesto represents the aims of students across Greenwich; for their local area, for the country and for their future. It is students who are entering the world that the new government will create, and their voices should be prominent in its shaping.

We encourage our students to register to vote and cast their ballots on 4th July in line with the policies and values that they hold in high regard. We also encourage candidates to take the above issues into account when creating their platforms, and to remember that students are a crucial part of their voter base. We have seen that students can change the tide of elections when they turnout. Now is the time to do it again.

# greenwich students' union

