

A portrait of a young woman with long, wavy brown hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a white top and a necklace with three circular pendants. The background is a soft-focus green field.

# Amy Kelly

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For  
USI Campaigns



**Union of Students in Ireland**  
*Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn*

# Introduction

My name is Amy Kelly.

I am the current President of GMIT Student's Union. I studied Gnó agus Cumarsáid in GMIT before being elected to the role of Vice President for Welfare for two consecutive years.

Throughout my time in GMIT I feel I have gained a lot of experience in running successful campaigns and having to be creative to get student engagement.

I have put myself forward for the role of Vice President for Campaigns as I have worked closely with USI during my time in the student movement and I believe I have gained the skills needed to further this role.

I have always had a love for campaigning throughout my time as a student and also during my time with GMIT Students' Union. I brought new interactive ways to get students involved with the issues including mental health, eating disorders, healthy living, personal safety, sexual health and accommodation. This year I have been elected to the USI campaigns sub-committee and the democratic review committee, and I believe this has given me a huge insight into the running of the national union and what is involved as a national officer.

The main areas of focus in my manifesto are the national campaign, worker's rights, union development and accommodation.

I welcome any questions or ideas that you may in vision for this role, as it is to represent the student voice on a national level and I want to ensure that is our main focus.

I am a highly motivated, and I am eager to represent students on a national level. I know I have the skills and experience to ensure that USI campaigns are a thriving part of USI and the back bone to achieving a stronger union.



If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

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Míle buíochas,  
Amy



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## Achievements

- Current President of GMIT Students' Union.
- Vice President for Welfare in GMIT Students Union for two years.
- Elected member of USI Campaigns Sub-committee.
- Elected member of USI Democratic review committee.
- Received the first Amber flag in the Connaught in 2015.
- Brought 650 GMIT students to the USI National protest in October, which was the highest travelling number in the country.
- Lobbied and received approval for gender neutral toilets.
- Successfully Lobbied college management and got winter exams before Christmas in the Academic calendar.
- Lobbied and successfully got €300,000 released from campaigning to be invested in equipment and facilities for GMIT students.
- Commenced GMITSU's first policy and motion document.
- Achieved the highest number of students registered to vote across the country.
- Class Representative for 3 years.
- Irish Language officer for GMITSU.

# Campaigns

## National Campaign

The #EducationIs campaign which has been running for the past 3 years has seen tens of thousands of students take to the street on several occasions, over 80,000 new students registered to vote and politicians from every political party lobbied on the issue of Higher Education Funding.

With the decision on higher education funding likely to be made in the coming months we must intensify our lobbying and campaigning and ensure that we are prepared for every possible decision from July onwards.

Having sat on the USI Campaigns sub committee this year I know what has and hasn't worked with the National Campaign. With national media we are constantly challenging health, housing and the Garda whistleblower scandal for space, we need to aim more of our media attention at local and regional media outlets to gain the support of TD's, Councillors and society as a whole.

## Local Campaigns

Students' Union across the country run countless campaigns including, welfare, education, student rights, and equality. I want to work with regional and sabbaticals officers to ensure they have the right skills, knowledge and training to run local campaigns. I will run training in Press release writing for SU officers to ensure student voices are heard in the media. I want to encourage Students Unions' to run local events, press releases, engage with the national campaigns USI will work on.

## National action

With the possibility of a General Election being called in the next academic year, I will ensure that candidates and political parties are aware of student issues when writing their manifestos. During the summer months I will work with sabbatical officers and run a training event on how to lobby TD's during a general election.

## Lobbying

Lobbying is of huge importance within the student movement. It has created huge change over the past few years. I will keep track of all TD's that SU's have lobbied and met with and ensure follow-ups are done. I will ensure that USI hold lobbying days in which sabbatical officers and students are given the opportunity to lobby TD's from their constituency.

I would aim to set up student lobbying groups around the country to act as a basis for lobbying on key issues. This grouping could also act as a core campaign group for USI for campaigns on campus, gathering petition signatures and empower students to become active on national issues.

## Research

The Vice President for Campaigns role requires a lot of relevant research to be carried out within each campaign to ensure correct information is relayed. I will ensure that every USI campaign is researched based and back-up with the relevant data.

Research has been monumental in ensuring the success of USI campaigns, this can be seen from the nursing and midwives campaign in recent years and now with the research into the housing crisis in Ireland.

## Student Accommodation Campaign

There are many colleges across the island of Ireland struggling with accommodation, whether it be the lack of, standard of accommodation or price increases.

I aim to work with the USI Student housing officer regarding the results of the National Student Housing Survey that has been completed. With the reliance of DIGS style accommodation, I have proposed a motion for congress regarding the right to the same protection and rights students renting private accommodation or campus accommodation have.

Also it is important to note, at present Ireland has no body which carries out student focused housing accommodation studies as well as student housing. Housing trusts are currently being investigated by USI, not only do other student housing trusts provide accommodation but also the student focus allows the corporation to carry out studies on student needs and the demand for different elements of property. I will look to continue the work done to establish this cooperation as a means of easing the housing crisis and putting the power back into students' hands.

## Student placement campaign

There are many students who obtain the opportunity to go on work placement. There are still many flawed areas in relation to support for these students and assistance given to them during their placement.

I aim to ensure students going on placement are still made aware of their workers' rights in which I will work with the regional officer to roll out the campaigns on a local level. I will work with the TUI, INTO, ASTI and ICTU and I will lobby the Department of Education and Skills for a stipend for travel and materials for students on placement.

## Equality Campaigns

I will assist the Vice President for Equality and Citizenship regarding all campaigns that are to be ran. I will work closely with the officer around many areas such as LGBTQ\* and gender, traveller's rights, consent, mature students and repeal the 8th.

# #Amy4USI Campaigns

## Feachtas Gaeilge

Beidh mé ag obair leis an Oifigeach Gaeilge maidir le na feachtais a bhíonn i rith na bhliaina. Ba má liom níos mó gaeilge a féicáil maidir leis na feachtas go léir USI agus san fheachtas náisiúnta. Beidh mé ag obair leis an Oifigeach Gaeilge chun Seachtain na Gaeilge a chur air siúl do mhic léinn timpeall an tíre chomh maith.

## NUS-USI

I will continue to engage campaigns ran by USI with northern Ireland colleges. I also aim to work with NUS-USI and the Oifigeach Gaeilge with their campaign to get an Irish Language bill passed.

## Horizon 2020

From the Horizon 2020 fund, I will assist in rolling out a Student Switch Off Campaign. This campaign will aim to encourage student action on climate change including reduction of waste usage and energy-saving in accommodation. I will also seek to run other climate action campaigns on divestment support, green campus and more.

## Workers Rights

SIPTU have been rolling out a fantastic campaign this year regarding workers' rights. I will be encouraging a huge push on this campaign and ensuring the campaign filters through the student population in third level.

## Early Education campaign

I aim to work with SIPTU regarding their "Big Start" campaign. The campaign is about bringing Students, workers, providers and parents together to create enough awareness about the deplorable exploits within the childcare sector.

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## Nurses placement allowance campaign

Student nurses who go on placement currently have a weekly allowance of €50 for travel and €50 for accommodation. This is by no means a sustainable way

to live and support commuting or staying in accommodation during the working week.

I will lobby the department of Education and Skill and the department of Health to get this allowance increased.

## Trade Unions

I intend to continue the working relationships built with trade unions in Ireland such as SIPTU, IMPACT, the Coalition for publicly funded higher education. I will also aim to build relationships with trade unions on issues that overlap.

## Union Development

### Training

As a full-time sabbatical officer for three years, I can see the importance of training for officers in a wide range of areas. The new areas of training I feel that need to be addressed are the following:

### Governing Body Training

Many sabbatical officers sit on Governing Body, but often enter during a time of year in which there is no training facilitated to incoming officers. I aim to run a training event at SUT, ensuring officers are given the knowledge & understanding of all aspects of sitting on Governing body.

### Press Release writing training

Although some SU's do have a communications staff member or sabbatical officer, an area I felt I would have valued this year would be in relation to press release writing. Many sabbaticals must write their own press releases and I want to ensure USI gives each MO the skill and training necessary to get student voices heard in their local media.

### Regional Campaign Hubs

I would like to create regional campaign hubs that will allow SU's to use each other's connections and contacts to ensure successful campaigns are ran. I will work with the regional officers to ensure they work with local SU's, collecting the data required.

I will also give a database document to each region in relation to local TD's and their information.

### USI Campaigns Subcommittees

As I was part of the campaigns sub-committee, I see there is a need to split up the sub committee into two. I would aim to have a national campaign sub-committee focusing solely on the national campaign and then a sub-committee for all other areas in which sabbatical officers wish to campaign on.

### TU Merger

Within the role of Vice President for Campaigns, I will ensure merging SU's within a TU are fully supported throughout the process by USI. I will work with the colleges merging to offer support regarding constitution writing, working as a collective team, and union development.