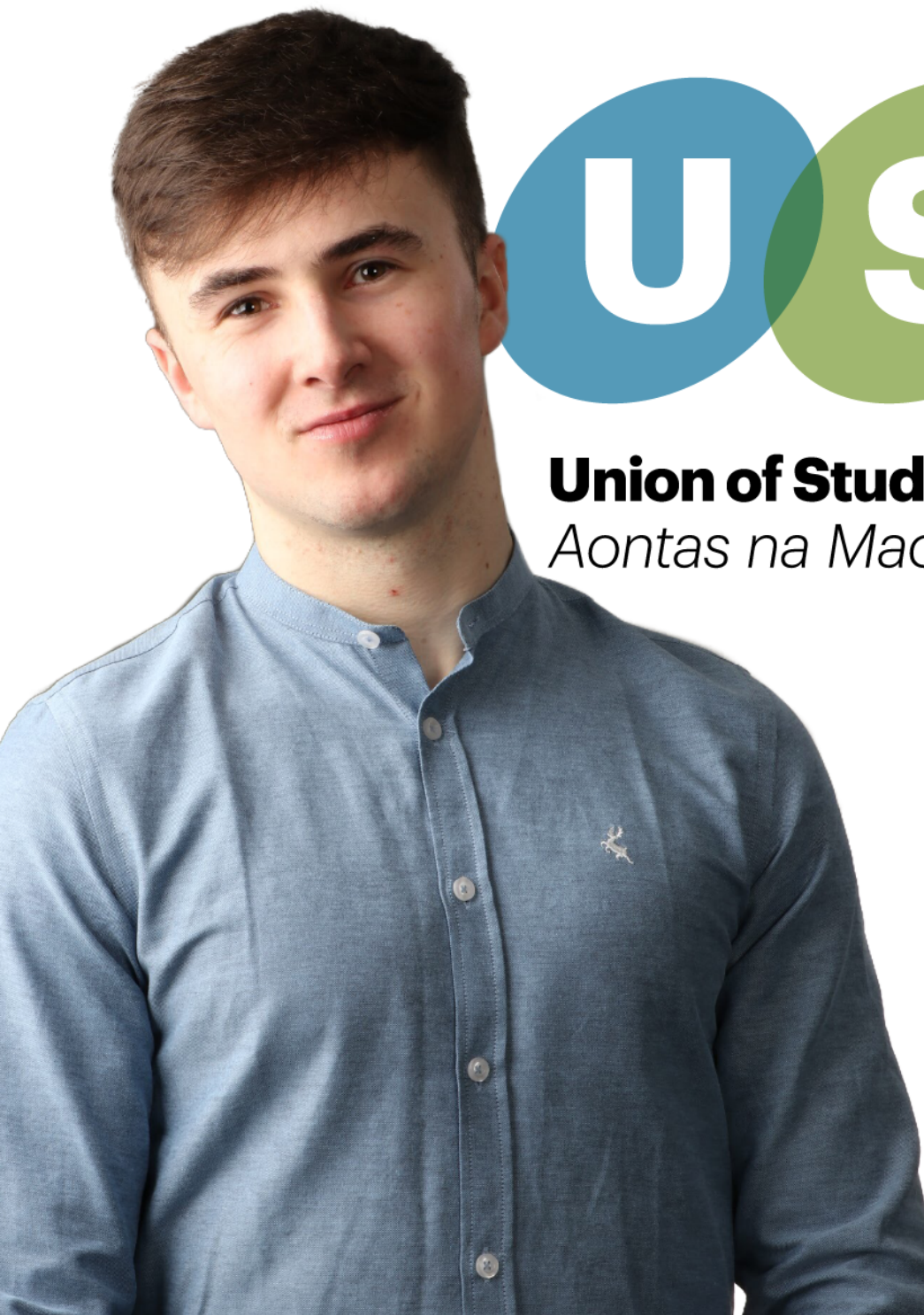


# CRAIG MC HUGH

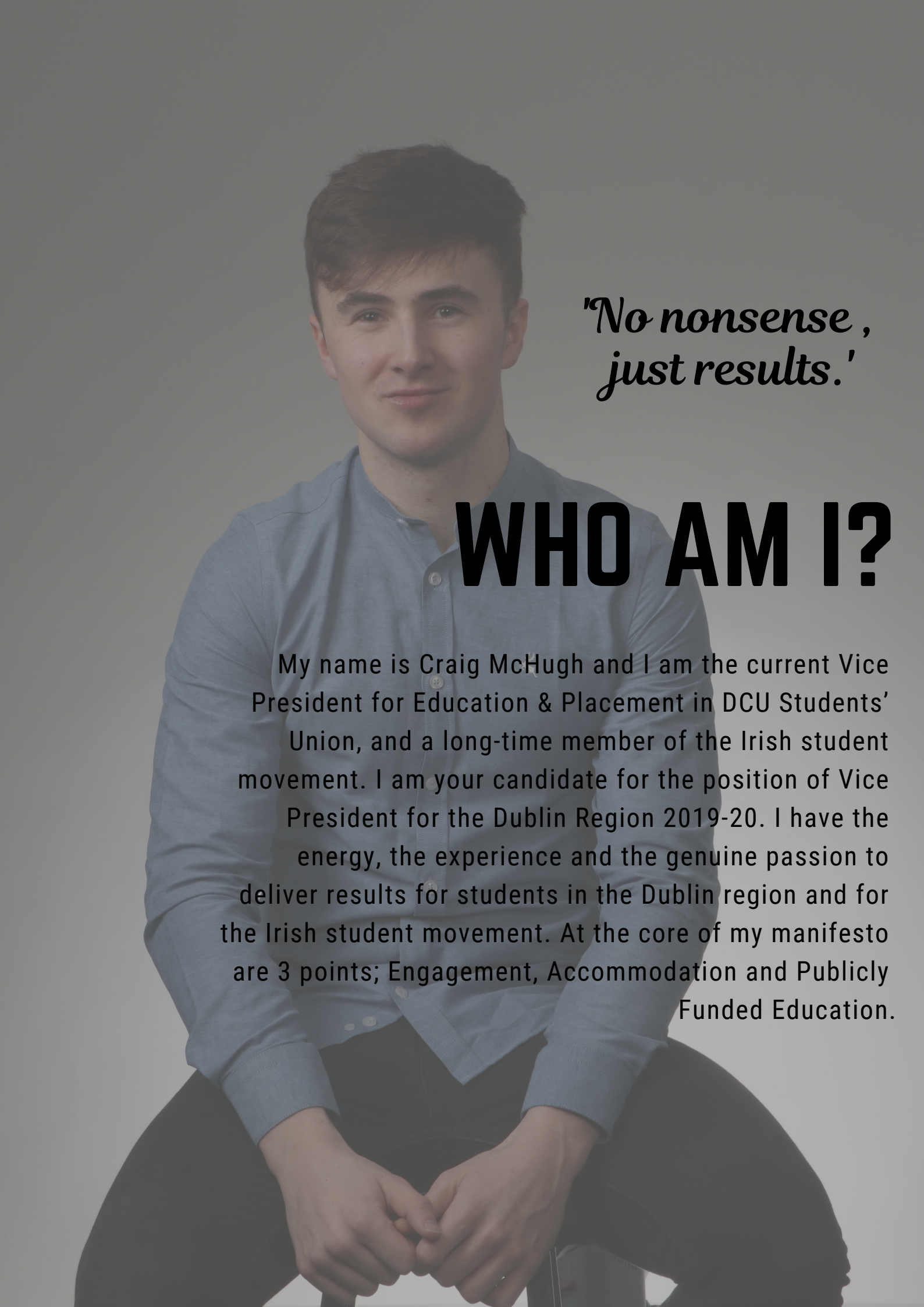
FOR USI VP DUBLIN REGION

## MANIFESTO FOR POSITION OF VICE PRESIDENT FOR THE DUBLIN REGION



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

#USI19



*'No nonsense ,  
just results.'*

# WHO AM I?

My name is Craig McHugh and I am the current Vice President for Education & Placement in DCU Students' Union, and a long-time member of the Irish student movement. I am your candidate for the position of Vice President for the Dublin Region 2019-20. I have the energy, the experience and the genuine passion to deliver results for students in the Dublin region and for the Irish student movement. At the core of my manifesto are 3 points; Engagement, Accommodation and Publicly Funded Education.



# ENGAGEMENT

***Campus Engagement:*** USI needs to be on the ground more with students' unions and the members of which through them we represent. While a core part of my role is to roll out USI campaigns on campuses across Dublin, I want to play a key role where suitable in the campaigns of local MOs, so students can feel as valued members of the USI. I've worked closely with the last two Dublin VPs Aisling and Colm and wish to build on their work.

***Officer Engagement:*** I pledge to meet with each individual sabbatical team member in the Dublin Region to identify what core issues they wish to work on this year and not only support them but provide them with opportunities and assistance along the way. For example, if an officer feels particularly motivated on the issue of student accommodation in Dublin however it is not part of their MO brief (or is) I will actively engage them on our campaigns in this area. I feel like this will be a core solution to fixing how some officers feel distanced from the campaigns of USI in recent years.

# ENGAGEMENT...

***Part Time officer empowerment:*** Having been a PTO in a year whereby our M.O faced some serious internal difficulties, I recognise the value of PTOs in unions but also the passion and energy they ooze but struggle to use. I will build a close relationship with the Dublin region P.T.Os and work with them on the issues they face by providing support and guidance but will also seek to directly engage them with the USI process. I strongly believe that officer board shouldn't be just focused on the members of sabbatical teams or the results of surveys etc. I feel P.T.Os are the backbone of students' unions. A strong connection with these means a stronger union and a stronger student movement.

***Multi Campus Engagement:*** Having worked on a students' union split across 3 campuses and in the context of the new TU Dublin merger process, I understand that a visit to an institution can't be as simple as racking up to the so called "central campus". However, different campuses have different needs, I will be realistic in my efforts but will strive to be a Dublin Region VP visible on all campuses.





# ENGAGEMENT

***An Update from USI via Council:*** In many councils the SU president provides an update on the work they have done or will be doing. With the support and agreement of MOs, I would love to bring a similar level of engagement forward from USI via my position. I will address either in person or via pre-recorded video to councils across Dublin what USI has been doing over the last period. The aim of this is to make reps feel like they are at the centre of the national student movement, as they are.

# SUPPORT & DEVELOPMENT

***Class Reps:*** The bedrock of the student movement is the class reps on the ground. With class rep engagement down on some campuses in recent years, I'll work with M.Os to end this. I'll put my energy at the start of the semester to help run Class Rep Run for Election campaigns and help roll out key training for reps.

**Union Development:** I will work closely with institutions across the region to help them grow and identify how they can improve their structures or levels of engagement.

***A friendly face:*** Being a sabbat or even a P.T.O can be draining and exhausting. I've been there, I know what it's like to feel like people aren't seeing the work and graft you are putting in or to feel isolated from everyone else.

Aside from my goals and objectives, I will be a friendly face and a familiar one and the kind you can call at anytime for any guidance, support, ideas or even just for a friendly chat. I'm an honest individual, and I'll say it as it is between Officer Board and M. Os and vice versa

***.Reaching Out:*** M. Os have plenty going on. Sometimes in the most stressful of times, our instinct is to go it alone as opposed to reach out to our national union for help – that's why I won't wait for you to call on me, I will maintain regular engagement with members of the union , so I know what's going on on the ground and will make regular visits to provide whatever help I can.

# BIGGER & BETTER TOGETHER

## *UCD and Marino:*

As a national union, we need to work together. Having worked with Marino on a student teacher campaign back in DCU and having had regular interaction with UCDSU, we need to ditch our grievances and come together in this funding crisis and accommodation mess. I will work closely with the two institutions to look at how they can work as part of USI in the future, but also for the meantime how they can be part of the student movement from the outside. There is value in us working together and pooling resources, I'll make this clear from day one that the best kind of student movement is the kind where the Dublin region is united under one banner.



# CAMPAIGNS

## *My experience:*

Played a leading role in the #ShanowenShakedown campaign and met directly with government TDs and opposition spokespeople to draft rent cap legislation.

I challenged Minister for Higher Education Mary Mitchell O'Connor outside Leinster House on Loan Schemes and Rent caps of which she clarified to me and the country on video, that for the remainder of this legislative session and government "loans schemes are off the table".

Have sat on Campaigns sub committee and have rolled out campaigns for publicly funded education, raise the roof and #StandWithNurses as well as playing a key role in #SaveOurShepherd

Have worked with the ISSU for two years on the issues of publicly funded education, challenging Minister Jan O'Sullivan on the cutbacks the government were rolling out to higher education of which was directly affecting second level students at the time.

# CAMPAIGNS

Critical Importance: Fund the Future.

Secondary Campaign: Raise the Roof.

Further campaigning: Bus Connects, Climate Change  
(and other USI campaigns)

CAMPAIGNS:

# PUBLICLY FUNDED EDUCATION

***Fund the Future:*** Having been involved with the foundations of the coalition for publicly funded education since 2015 via my role with ISSU, I know what needs to be at the core of USI – should we wish to remain relative.

I know from first hand M.O experience, that many of the issues we face on the ground are directly linked to our critically under funded system. USI needs to go back to its routes and prioritise the campaign for funding. We have excelled as a movement progressing major social changes such as Repeal and Marriage Equality – but must recognise why we were set up in the first place. I do not believe in neglecting the social movements of the past, but strongly believe in prioritising fighting the disastrous situation in the funding of higher education in this country.

CAMPAIGNS:

# PUBLICLY FUNDED EDUCATION

Priorities: I will make Fund the Future and Raise the Roof relative and the issue on campuses across the next 12 months. We need students talking about this on the ground and on to their local reps should we wish for anything to change. A march once a year, may show our strength in numbers but this can't be it – we need active, regular campaigning and need students themselves to feel a value in it so much that they take it upon themselves to come out and show support. There is potential in these two campaigns to reignite the flare once very evident in the student movement and deliver meaningful change for Irish society.



# STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

The situation in Dublin regarding an absence of rent caps and the continuous rise in luxurious accommodation builds needs to be tackled.

***Affordable PBSA:*** The luxury student accommodation builds that are coming up across the market in Dublin is not a solution to the serious problem regarding supply that we are facing. The government's student accommodation strategy is not ambitious enough for the continuously rising trend in student numbers in the Dublin region. We need Dublin councils to declare that these luxury builds do not count toward the effort to make student accommodation more affordable, as they build, although increasing supply are only pushing prices up. The idea that digs set ups should become the normal for student housing, with people paying from 500 euro per bed in a shared room is not acceptable and will further damage Dublin's reputation as a place to come to college in the future. If elected, I'll push councils to pass motions declaring that the luxury builds do not count toward the government's strategy for student accommodation. Furthermore, I'll work alongside officer board to campaign on campuses and in the surrounding areas for more to be done to build affordable accommodation

### ***Rent Caps:***

The progress on expanding RPZ legislation to PBSA in Dublin has been incredibly slow. The bill and legislation to allow this has been caught up in debate chambers across the Oireachtas and we as the stakeholders who stand to lose the longer this drags on, ought to pile the pressure on our law makers to get this passed. If elected, I'll work closely with VP For Campaigns and the rest of officer board to lobby and put public pressure on politicians to have this process finalised and set in law as soon as possible.

### ***TU Merger:***

Although DIT, ITT, AND ITB will now be under the TU Dublin institution, they still will not be able to borrow to build student accommodation. I will make the case for this to be changed and will work alongside TU Dublin SU to campaign to change this, so students in Dublin's new technological university can have access to affordable purpose-built accommodation.

# TU DUBLIN

With an overwhelming mandate to form a new students' union that serves City, Tallaght and Blanchardstown TU Dublin Students' Union has an exciting year ahead.

However, there are issues to be dealt with within the teething process. I will work closely with representatives from each campus to act as a go between and facilitator to make sure the process is going smoothly. I believe USI's role in this should be at the discretion of the MOs though and it is essential we respect their wishes.

I plan to sit down with the TU Dublin SU president and then each individual campus president to get an idea of what they want to get out of the process and how I can help them best.



# BUS CONNECTS

The new bus connects system is going to seriously affects students, especially those in the north side of our city and those who commute. I will work alongside MOs to make the case for special provisions to be made to serve institutions. I will also work alongside MOs to make representations to local representatives about their concerns on the issues. Finally, I plan to sit down with each MO to work out what the best way forward is in dealing with this issue.

## THANK YOU!

Thank you so much for having a look at my plans for the year ahead. If you have any questions or any ideas whatsoever please do not hesitate to get in touch with me or approach me at any time.

You can follow me on facebook at  
[www.facebook.com/craigforusidublin](http://www.facebook.com/craigforusidublin)

You can also email me at [craig.mchugh32@mail.dcu.ie](mailto:craig.mchugh32@mail.dcu.ie)