



Jessica Elder  
for  
USI Vice-President Welfare



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

# Accommodation & Finance



- Streamline & renew information in the accommodation and finance guide and look into the feasibility of creating an **Accommodation and Finance app** for easily accessible information.
- Have an active and present role in the **National Homelessness and Housing Coalition** to further progress and strengthen our lobby efforts in ensuring students get the quality housing experiences and provisions they deserve.
- **Strengthen SUSI & USI's** relationship to continuously provide an enhanced service to students as well as streamlining information sharing between officers and SUSI.
- Lobby the government to **commit to an increased budget allocation** to reach the additional 100m needed to fund financial aid effectively.



## Support

- **Reform of Welfare Working Group** to ensure communication is not solely focused at National Council & that they run as effectively as possible.
- Create '**A Win for Welfare**' guide for Officers that contains information & guidance on implementing strategic changes & policy, casework management, regional services and examples of ideas, events, speakers and stunts for campaigns.
- **Manifesto run-throughs** at the start of the year and regular check ins with officers to ensure they receive personal support in achieving their goals.
- Ensure that Officers have **appropriate, relevant and up to date training** over the summer months.
- Working with the VP AAQA & regional officers to develop a **welfare & education support programme for class reps and Councillors**.

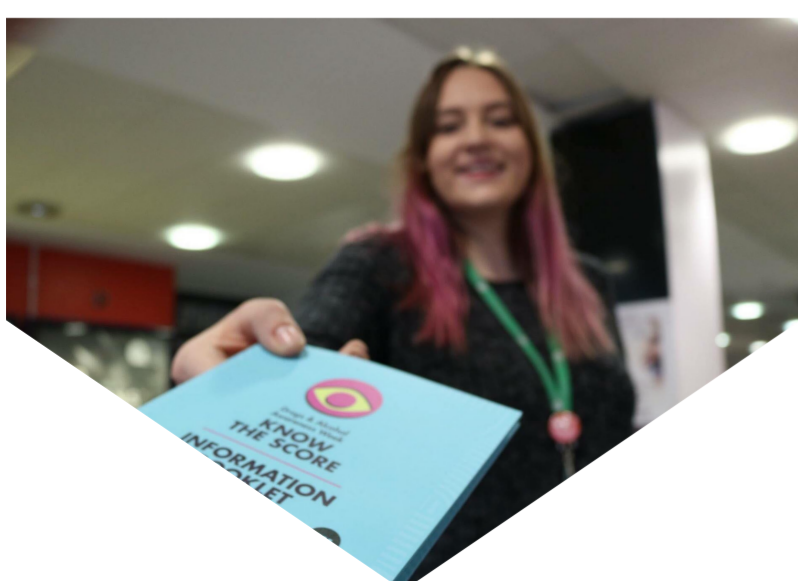


# Drugs & Alcohol

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- Create a **Harm Reduction Booklet** with information on drugs & Alcohol, mental health, harm reduction, First Aid and local support services all in one place.
- **Reigniting & reviewing the Campaign on Drugs & Alcohol** to have campus focus & presence.
- Lobbying for a **3rd level student focus** to be taken towards drugs and alcohol after the **National Drugs Strategy 2017-2025**.
- Continue to increase USI's involvement & relationship with organisations such as REACT & Drugs.ie as well as external services north & south of Ireland.
- Providing access to **training for officers** on the topic of Drugs, Alcohol & harm reduction.

# Consent & Healthy Relationships



- Repeat the 2013 **Say Something Survey**
- Develop and gain funding for a **Consent Ambassador Scheme** across Ireland where students & officers are trained in delivering consent workshops, disclosure & active communication.
- Create and provide a **consent workshop toolkit** that ambassadors and unions across the country can effectively roll out on campus.
- **Strengthen USI's relationship with ESHTe project** to ensure that institutions & staff have appropriate recommendations on reporting, resources, education/training and support as well as lobbying for national change & resources at 3rd level.
- Lobbying the department for Education & skills and the HEA to **hold institutions accountable** to any recommendations going forward.
- Strengthen USI's work in **highlighting unhealthy relationships**.
- Create and roll out a **separate campaign week** solely focusing on Consent to truly bust stigma, educate & highlight the issue nationally.



## Mental Health

- Gain funding & support for a **Mental Health Ambassador Programme** with recruitment of students & activists across the country to provide training & support.
- Create an Island Wide **Student Mental Health Network** made up of Mental Health Ambassadors & in conjunction with the USI Mental Health Advisory Group.
- Develop and run a **Student Mental Health Conference** with the Youth Mental Health Taskforce, Please Talk, ReachOut and Mental Health Ambassadors to create a focused space solely for student mental health.
- Endeavour to gain funding and provision for **online accredited counselling service** for students and officers across Ireland.
- Revamp and **review the Chats for Change** roadshow to **reach more campuses** with a focus on being present during mental health weeks on campus.
- Work with the HEA and, alongside Please Talk, institutions on creating **Student Mental Health Agreements (SMHA)** that provides students with commitment from their colleges in the area of mental health.
- Ensure the **Mental Health App** currently being created has a **holistic** approach that incorporates elements of Drugs & Alcohol, Sexual Violence, Bereavement, Physical Health and body confidence to name a few.

## Sexual Health

- **Expand the SHAG Campaign** to reach more campuses.
- Evolve the SHAG campaign to include **reproductive choice** & reduce stigma in **long term health conditions** affecting the reproductive system.
- Lobby for USI input & a **student focus** on a new **National Sexual Health Strategy** due that is due in 2020.



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elder.jessica18@gmail.com

# Introduction

I'm Jess and for the last two years I have had the honour to serve as the Vice-President Welfare in Queen's University Belfast Students' Union (QUBSU). This year I have also served as a part-time national officer – as the Vice-President for Welfare within NUS-USI, the national union for students studying in Northern Ireland (NI). I have never felt more proud of our movement than when working others to represent and protect the rights of students in Queen's and across NI. I have been inspired by the amazing work of students and student leaders across the country and would be immensely humbled if elected to serve you, your union, and students across the island as the next USI Vice-President for Welfare.

The decision to run for this role came after deep thought and consideration & I wanted to ensure that I could commit absolutely everything to role. I'm running for this position to work with you to fight, defend and protect the rights of: the student who works in two jobs to make ends meet; the student who sometimes struggles to get out of bed and face the world; the student who feels unbearably homesick; the student that doesn't feel safe on campus. I believe I can bring a fresh and unique perspective to USI, and hope that my manifesto priorities resonate with your union and your students.

Over these last two years I have been heavily involved in USI, from delivering consent workshops at this year's Pink Training to sitting on the USI Students for Choice Taskforce. I currently sit on the management board of Northern Ireland's leading young person's sexual health charity and through my work on tackling the conversation of sexual violence at 3rd level, have made significant headway in developing institutional responses & commitments on this issue. Whilst being the part-time national officer with NUS-USI, I have gained extensive experience and knowledge into what it takes to be a national officer and have built relationships that will last a lifetime in the student movement.

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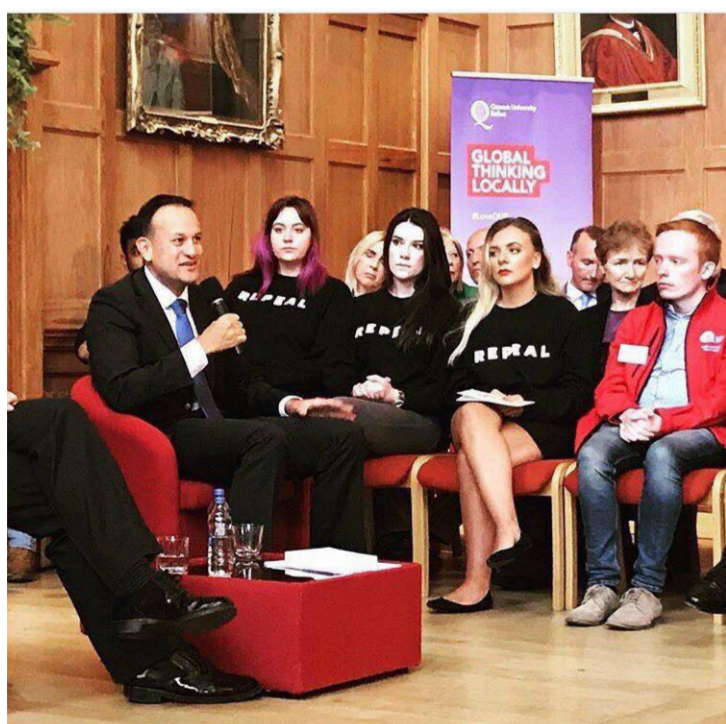


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## Experience



- Two years as Vice-President Welfare in QUBSU & 1 year as National NUS-USI Vice-President Welfare.
- Lobbied for the creation of a QUB wellbeing advisor specialising in Safe & Healthy Relationships.
- First campaign in Northern Ireland HEI focused on consent
- Secured an on campus sexual health clinic.
- Management board of NI's leading young person sexual health charity.
- Development of National survey looking into sexual violence in 3rd level.
- First comprehensive QUB campaign on Drugs & Alcohol.
- Created and co-ordinated NUS-USI National advisory Board on 3rd level Sexual Violence.
- USI Student for Choice Taskforce 2 years running.
- USI Campaigns Sub-Committee 2 years running.
- Re-established the QUBSU Nursing society.
- Lobbying Government officials on tackling sexual violence & mental health services at 3rd level.
- Consent workshops at USI Pink Training, Victim organisations & NI wide wellbeing conference.