

Here is a more expanded, powerful and national-level version of your manifesto for Vice President (Higher Education) at the National Union of Students:

Badhri Durgapu

Candidate for Vice President (Higher Education)

Higher Education is at a defining moment.

Across the UK, students are navigating one of the most challenging periods in recent history. Rising rent, insufficient maintenance support, increased academic pressure, overstretched mental health services, and uncertainty around graduate futures have created a system where too many students are surviving — not thriving.

Higher Education should empower students. Instead, many feel unheard, overstretched, and under-supported.

I am standing to change that.

My Experience: Turning Student Concerns into Action

As a Student Voice Leader and Employability Officer, I have worked directly with students facing real challenges. I have:

- Delivered employability workshops focused on job readiness, skills development, and interview preparation
- Strengthened partnerships with Careers teams to increase access to placements and opportunities
- Promoted placement-year awareness and graduate preparedness
- Raised academic and student welfare concerns at institutional decision-making levels

Through this work, I have seen the reality: students work incredibly hard, yet systemic barriers often hold them back. I understand both the pressures students face and the structural challenges within universities.

But institutional advocacy alone is not enough. We need national leadership that pushes further.

My Priorities

Academic Fairness & Quality

Students deserve transparency, fairness, and integrity in their education.

I will campaign for:

- Transparent assessment and marking processes
- Fair and consistent academic regulations
- Stronger student representation in academic governance
- Protection of educational quality across institutions

A degree must represent opportunity, credibility, and academic excellence.

Cost of Living & Financial Security

The cost of studying in the UK is rising, while maintenance support is failing to keep pace. Students are working excessive hours just to afford basic living costs.

I will:

- Lobby government for improved maintenance funding
- Campaign against exploitative housing practices
- Push for realistic financial support that reflects actual living costs

Education should not depend on financial privilege.

Employability & Graduate Futures

Higher Education must prepare students not just to graduate but to succeed.

I will advocate for:

- Employability embedded into every course
- Fair and equal access to placements and internships
- Stronger accountability on graduate outcomes
- National collaboration between universities and industry

Students deserve confidence in their future, not uncertainty.

Mental Health & Student Wellbeing

Students cannot succeed academically without proper wellbeing support.

I will push for:

- Improved funding for university mental health services
- Preventative wellbeing strategies
- Reduced academic pressures where possible
- A culture shift that prioritises student welfare

Wellbeing is not an add-on. It is essential.

Stronger, Transparent Student Representation

NUS must be visible, accessible, and accountable to students.

I will:

- Strengthen communication between NUS and Students' Unions
- Ensure national campaigns reflect real student experiences
- Provide consistent updates and transparency in decision-making

Student representation should feel connected, not distant.

Honest Leadership. Realistic Change.

I will not promise instant solutions to complex national challenges. What I will promise is:

- Consistent advocacy
- Strategic, evidence-based campaigning
- Honest communication
- Relentless focus on student interests

Higher Education should open doors not create barriers.

It should empower students do not exhaust them.

Vote Badhri Durgapu

Vice President (Higher Education)