

Hi, I'm Conor, I'm 18 and started at Queen's in September. I have experienced mental health issues since my early teens, and now I am here, in Queen's and find myself having daily battles in an attempt to stay sane. Are you, like me, fed up of having conversations with brick walls? I will work positively with the University to improve responsiveness to students and accountability taken by Queens in areas such as accommodation, student resources, study support and Covid Response. Let's talk about it! Vote Conor Todd for Welfare Officer.

I will work with the University to ensure that Queen's fulfil their obligation to students to maintain their mental and physical wellbeing whilst we are studying here. I have been there, having had different types of therapy, I know that one size doesn't fit all. The University has to work on its counselling provision for students, especially in light of the pandemic. Every student should be able to access the type of help they need, be it for the first time or as someone who has sought help before.

Being locked down in student or rented accommodation, or at home, not being able to socialise, meet new friends, or old, and having to study, eat, sleep and stay in one place has taken its toll on us all. Let's talk about it!

Queens has convinced us to come, and they told us there would be support. They promised the world and delivered half-empty housing, leaving students to fend for themselves all the while under the watchful eye of the intrusive security regime depriving students in Halls of their privacy and agency. While Queens' did offer a rent break for some during the pandemic, private renters have been offered no help and have had to struggle to pay rent, fees and living costs, while not having the traditional students' job market to make some money. It is difficult enough to be a student, especially in a pandemic, but having to worry about finances and everything else impacts students' studies and mental well being. I will work with the students union to fight for a better deal for students from the University and Stormont. Let's talk about it!

Queen's have buckled to press pressure when it comes to implementing COVID measures and not given a second thought to their students' welfare; students to whom they have a responsibility and whose money they are taking month on month. We need a university who has their students' welfare at the heart of their covid response and decision making to ensure adequate access to support and counselling services at this time. Let's talk about it!

When I have dealt with Queen's about issues I have faced here, I have been told, 'yeah, but you're just one student'. Individually we are all 'just one student', but as the student body, our concerns and anxieties need to be addressed more proactively and constructively by the University. Yes, I am 'just one student', one of many whose mood and anxiety have worsened with the pandemic and I am 'just one student' of many who feels let down by the University's response. I want to be the change; I want to stand up for student welfare and hold the University to account; to encourage and promote a better deal for students and a happier year and years ahead. Let's talk about it!

On-Campus and around the University, I will work towards a harassment-free environment. I will ensure the continued support and provision of free sanitary products for students; periods aren't a choice, they are a fact of life. I will also work for the continued provision of freely available contraception in and around campus. I will support a harassment-free environment for all students and encourage them to call out any harassment they witness. We cannot be bystanders when it comes to anyone being harassed in our community, female, male or LGBTQI+. Let's talk about it.

The welfare officer will support the wider Student Union in carrying on their excellent work in fighting for better financial provision for students. This links directly to student welfare and is often the cause of a lot of stress and anxiety. We all need to be together in this fight,

Let's talk about it!

Vote TODD, Conor for Student Officer Welfare