

## RAISE 2025 Elections

The candidates listed below have put themselves forward for election to the RAISE Committee.

All RAISE Conference 2025 delegates who have agreed for their details to be added to the Choice Voting Platform will receive a link to vote during the week of the conference (9<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> September).

There will also be an opportunity for conference delegates to register to vote whilst at the conference.

Information for each candidate has been grouped by position and in alphabetical order.

To maintain fairness and impartiality, the returning officers have filtered the candidates within their chosen category using alphabetical order (using the first letter of the first name of each candidate).

### Candidate and Role Overview:

#### Chair

- Akhila Kayala
- Tom Lowe

#### Treasurer

- John Parkin

#### Student Officer

- Cinnomen McGuigan
- Inca Hide-Wright

#### Communication Officer

- Ashley Storer-Smith
- Bo Kelestyn
- Ro Tomlin-Wills

#### Secretary

- Faye ap Geraint
- Kevin McStravock
- Ro Tomlin-Wills

#### Student Committee Member

- Daisy Bao
- Emily Bastable
- Mia Stevens

#### Academic Staff Committee Member

- Emma Heron
- Jacob Diameh
- Kirstin Stuart James

- Lindsey Ferrie
- Michelle Evans
- Nick Cartwright
- Rex Obeng
- Tadhg Blommerde
- Tom Ritchie
- Vaithehy Shanmuganathan-Felton

## Student Union Staff Committee Member

- Annette Goddard
- Aimee Cuthbert

## Professional and Learning services staff committee member

- Errol Jones-River
- Faye ap Geraint
- Jay Nugent
- Kerry Kellaway
- Lucy McCormick

## Chair

### Akhila Kayala (University of Huddersfield)

#### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

I am a bachelors international student of Nursing . I have seen many things within the university specifically relating to the students. I know how it feels and as an international student I know the hardship most of the students go through. I believe that I can help the other students in overcoming them. As UOH is multicultural and multi-national diverse institution. I believe being a part of the global cultural heritage institution and my long term experiences can help in understanding and building the other students motivated and supported in engaging with the culture of the university and studies and also encourage them with all the possible ways.

#### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

Being able to be a part of the University for the last 4 years made me feel like I should contribute to the University and also support the students and this role would help me achieve that

#### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

I have been working in healthcare as team leader and also studying Nursing and I believe I have seen highs and lows all through my past years. I have worked as teaching assistant and also special needs teacher. All my experience from work and study thought me how to be better and give the best to others. I believe being apart of the team makes supporting the others students more

## Tom Lowe (University of Westminster)

### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

Student engagement both drives and inspires debate in how we can enhance our universities. As often the major challenge and the solution for development themes such as retention, satisfaction and graduate outcomes, it is critical that we continue to research, be critical and explore solutions. Student engagement in the 2020s has been transformed, by the digital engagement methods learned during COVID-19, ongoing marketisation pressure on our students and staff, and AI creating questionable opportunities for the creation of knowledge. It is only by researching contemporary students' engagements that we can ensure our higher education is relevant in the future.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I am nominating myself for one final term of Chair of the RAISE Network so I may support our association during a critical time. Across 2024-25, I have led a review of the RAISE Networks operations, which has led to an investment of our financial reserves to double of our operational capacity. As Chair for 2025-28, I will work with our operational support to create further income generations to sustain the RAISE Network through the current funding crisis in our sector. These funding streams will include budget friendly one day training events, sponsorship for our events, and institutional membership to gain access to resources, which alongside the continuation of our Annual Conference, has the potential to grow RAISE from an academic network to a democratic sector body. In addition, I will continue to support the RAISE Committee to ensure succession planning for RAISE's continuation into the 2030s and beyond.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

I am committed to student engagement as a movement, which I have evidenced through my membership of the RAISE committee for over 10 years. In this position, I have seen impact through the leadership of RAISE during the global pandemic, the rotation and induction of more than 20 committee members, and the success of 10 Annual Conference. As the sector has become more financially stretched, I have ensured our events remained relevant, as well as ensuring RAISE ran its first conference on diversity and inclusion in 2024. In addition to my commitment to RAISE, I have researched and innovated on the topic of student engagement for 12 years, studying a breadth of topics from student voice to partnership, student time management and attendance, and belonging and employability. I have also delivered talks and keynotes on the topic across Europe, and been engaging in publishing both edited books and academic articles.

## Treasurer

### John Parkin (Anglia Ruskin University)

#### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

My interest in student engagement began as an early years teacher teaching children aged four to five. My teaching practice was underpinned by co-creating learning with children and using a playful approach to learning.

When I joined Anglia Ruskin University as a Senior Lecturer Practitioner in Education, I wanted to continue aspects of my early years teaching in my higher education teaching. In this role, I was interested in continuing to use a playful approach. My research is focused on using Playmobil and play to support student learning, engagement and employability and how males can be supported to complete a BA Primary Education Studies degree. I am currently co-editing a special issue of RAISE's SEHEJ journal which is focused on student voice in the HE sector.

I currently work on embedding employability into courses across Anglia Ruskin University, allowing me to focus on enhancing student engagement in employability.

#### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I have enjoyed being the RAISE Treasurer and would like to continue for another term. Serving as Treasurer allowed me to learn more about student engagement through collaborating with colleagues across the sector. I am passionate about the aims of RAISE to build a community of students and HE staff focused on improving student engagement across the sector.

As Treasurer I have worked with the committee to allocate new funding for projects which further meet the mission of RAISE, including a fund to support student engagement research projects open to our members and a bursary for students to attend the RAISE Conference. Although these funds are relatively small, I would like to stand as RAISE Treasurer so we can maintain and grow these projects during my next term as well as maintain the financial security of RAISE for the future.

#### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

As Treasurer I have ensured RAISE stays in financial good health by keeping within our agreed budget and maintaining a healthy reserve for the future. I am particularly proud we have achieved these financial goals during a turbulent period for higher education funding in the UK. I have worked with the committee and our operations officer to streamline processes and develop a reserves policy to ensure the efficiency of RAISE.

I have also been a school governor for six years at a Cambridge primary school which allows me to contribute to the strategic development and financial accountability of the school, which has supported by current role as Treasurer. I am also a member of the British Educational Research Association's Risk Assessment and Audit Committee which enables me to bring back learning on identifying and mitigating against risks facing the sector.

## Student Officer

### Cinnomen McGuigan (The Open University)

#### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

Coming from an institution that has always offered distance learning, and was the first to fully offer online distance learning I think I bring a perspective that is currently needed in the sector. Most institutions that traditionally offered in person only teaching, are now also offering hybrid and fully online teaching, and students are rightfully taking advantage of those options.

We struggle with engagement at the best of times. So, in a climate of "cost of living" constraints, multiple job juggling, and a horrendous gig economy, where students are constantly trying to do whatever they can to make ends meet, we need to go to where they are.

#### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I am currently a student rep on a number of academic committees at my university, and sit on Qualifications and Assessments, Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement Oversight Group, and am a member of the Senate. I also volunteer with the QAA, and am currently a member of the Student Strategic Advisory Committee, the Degree Awarding Powers committee, and Academic Integrity Committee.

I feel that the experience gained in those areas also hugely enhance what I can bring to the RAISE committee.

#### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

Having had to look at building student community across a geographically diverse student body that we never see, and also tasked with raising the impact of student engagement at my home institution I think I'm uniquely qualified to continue utilising that knowledge for the betterment of student engagement across the sector. And if re-elected I have a number of plans to continue increasing engagement with students. Building on the work in the Student Blog space, more vox-pop videos and interviews to ensure we are adequately representing student voice for the term to come. And I look forward to continuing my support of the Student Committee members with their plans and hopes for their roles.

## Inca Hide-Wright (University of Warwick)

Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

### Interest:

- Personal experience- Recent Widening Participation, disabled, caring and commuting graduate who has experience in engaging the increasingly disengaged due to systemic, academic and social challenges.
- To support student engagement, belonging and thriving

### Relevant experience:

- Co-lead Building Belonging project
- Work student voice teams (SU and University)
- BSc in Psychology, MASc in Community, Engagement and Belonging.
- Working with other students and staff on projects, university strategies and resource development to support student engagement, from education and student experience strategies to the development of wellbeing strategies and personal tutoring structures and resources.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I believe I bring unique insights as a recent graduate who has ever growing experience in student engagement, belonging and inclusion, as well as supporting strategic alignment of projects, campaigns and initiatives. One of my strengths is connecting with people and information in a way that supports participation, belonging and mattering, to bring about meaningful change and progression within groups, departments and organisations. I have experience in co-creation and co-developing change, including student specific engagement strategies; working with students to understand the root of the challenge in a way that moves us away from a deficit model and mindset approach. I have experience in developing, adapting and facilitating student events such that they are valuable and engaging; creating space for all to participate, contribute, engage and gain.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

- Co-leading building belonging project and WIHEA Building Belonging Learning Circle; Co-created what is now the Building Belonging Framework and bank of resources, including a community of almost 90 students and staff, engaging and supporting over 100 students in building belonging focused projects and initiatives such that they have voice, power and actively feed into the change they would like to see in terms of belonging and success at university.
- Co-leading on the launch of the "make a change" platform and student engagement events, raising awareness of how all university student members can contribute to the change they would like to see within the university.
- Developed, based on community feedback, and piloted the WIHEA Connect sessions to support the raising awareness, understanding, access and building of connections for students interested or already working to enhance learning and teaching.

## Communication Officer

### Ashley Storer-Smith (University College London)

#### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

With my 10 years' experience working within in Students' Unions, my MA Student Engagement in HE, my blogging and academic publishing, and my recent career change to focus solely on student partnership work – I live and breathe student engagement. I have led on student engagement work operationally and strategically in a range of institutions in a range of roles including Student Voice & Representation, Student Partnerships, Student Advice, CPD, Student Success, and social engagement.

Many of my blogs are published on Wonkhe and other spaces, my first book chapter about student belonging, and I have featured on a range of podcasts within the UK and EU discussing my experiences and theories of student engagement.

I also co-lead of a QAA Quality Enhancement Project which is a mass audit of academic representation systems in the UK. This work will help the sector understand the current state and future of student voice.

#### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

RAISE has had a significant impact on my life. Without RAISE; I wouldn't be in the career that I am in, academically publish around student engagement, or have the confidence to be a keynote speaker at a RAISE Conference. Due to this transformational effect that RAISE has had on me, I want to ensure that all student engagement staff have the opportunity to know who RAISE are and engage with their incredible community. This is why I want to become the Communications Officer.

As I have spent the past two years in the SU Staff Committee Member role at RAISE where I led on communications and expanding engagement with SU colleagues; I am wanting to expand on this work and continue engaging HE colleagues who have never engaged with RAISE or just recently engaged with RAISE so that they can enjoy and get the most of out of this community.

#### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

I have undertaken similar roles around internal and external communication within staff community of practice groups in HE with the National Union of Students (NUS) and Student Volunteering Network. With this experience of developing communication strategies, engaging with other groups across the HE sector, and developing key communications; I am able to directly bring this experience across to RAISE

As the current Students' Union Staff Committee Member for RAISE, I have led on a range of communication initiatives for RAISE to create wider engagement with SU Staff. This includes developing key partnerships within the sector as well as utilising a range of communication channels to engage staff who haven't engaged with RAISE before. I also worked closely on relaunching the RAISE Summer Webinar series that significantly expanded the reach and engagement of RAISE.



## Bo Kelestyn (University of Warwick)

### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

Student engagement is central to my work as an educator, researcher, and facilitator. I believe in co-creating meaningful learning experiences with students, built on trust, belonging, and shared purpose. My approach is rooted in design thinking, which I use as a creative, inclusive, and values-led framework for partnership. From creating cards for design-led student engagement, to writing and speaking about student engagement, and recently co-editing a special issue of Perspectives: Policy and Practice in HE, my work consistently centres students as partners in shaping higher education. The RAISE community has inspired and supported my work. Having hosted a SIG event, engaged with the annual Conference together with my student collaborators, giving back as a Communication Officer feels like the right next step to deepen my commitment.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I am nominating myself because I believe communication and storytelling are powerful tools for change. RAISE does vital work in championing student partnership, and I would love to help amplify its voice. With my experience in podcasting, blogging, and public engagement, I want to help tell the stories of our community, celebrating its diversity, sharing its successes, and strengthening its reach. I'm especially passionate about accessible, engaging content that reflects RAISE's values and invites more people into the conversation. I would work collaboratively with the Committee and Members to grow our communications strategy and support knowledge-sharing across the network. This role would be a natural extension of my ongoing engagement with RAISE and a way to give back to a community that has deeply influenced me. I believe student engagement will be in special need of more human-centred communication, given the challenging times ahead of the sector.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

I bring extensive experience in student engagement and communication. As a design thinking academic, I specialise in co-creating with communities, using storytelling to connect and inspire. I host the Student Experience by Design podcast and have created content for WonkHE, Advance HE, THE, and SEDA. I regularly produce toolkits, blogs, and resources, including the Designing Together cards, which I'll present at the RAISE 2025 Conference. I've coordinated communications as Course Director, Director of Student Engagement, and Director of Student Experience. My media work includes radio interviews (BBC, LBC) and teaching on The Guardian Masterclasses. I've supported institutional campaigns, including TEF Gold. I'm confident in using digital tools, analysing engagement data, and tailoring content to diverse audiences. My strategic yet human-centred approach would allow me to serve the RAISE community as Communication Officer with empathy and creativity.

## Ro Tomlin-Wills (London Metropolitan University)

### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

My career in higher education has been dedicated to amplifying student voice, championing inclusive environments, and ensuring meaningful student engagement is at the heart of institutional strategy. Across both Students' Union, student services and professional services roles, I have seen the transformative impact that authentic engagement and effective communication and collaboration can have on the student experience. I am passionate about collaborative approaches that harness student insights to shape, develop and communicate opportunities, initiatives, and campaigns that genuinely resonate with diverse communities. I believe student engagement is most powerful when students are empowered as partners, and when their stories, achievements, and concerns are celebrated widely.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I bring a blend of strategic oversight and hands-on delivery in student engagement, communications, and partnership work. At London Metropolitan University, I lead campaigns that connect with students from all backgrounds across external and internal university-wide surveys, and work closely with Marketing & Communications to enhance student participation and feedback. My previous experience as Head of Student Engagement at Solent Students' Union involved developing student-centred campaigns and mentoring part-time officers in promoting activities to the wider student body. I am passionate about making the work of RAISE more visible, accessible and relevant across the sector, and I would relish the opportunity to support the Committee in disseminating best practice, building networks, and co-creating engaging digital content. My approach is collaborative, data-informed, and always focused on impact and inclusion.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

I have substantial experience leading communications, engagement campaigns and digital content across multiple platforms, both at university and Students' Union level. I currently manage the promotion of large-scale institutional surveys, deliver insight reports for senior leaders, and work with colleagues to ensure effective communication of survey outcomes to staff and students. I am adept at using social media, designing marketing materials, and have worked with design and digital teams to develop resources, event promotions and online engagement strategies. My previous roles required coordinating complex projects, from cross-institutional campaigns to society events, always ensuring clear messaging and wide-reaching impact. I am skilled at stakeholder management, partnership building, and championing inclusive approaches in all communications. I have a proven track record in managing and delivering successful marketing and engagement initiatives, and would bring strong organisational skills, creativity, and commitment to the Marketing Officer role at RAISE.

## Secretary

### Faye ap Geraint (Aberystwyth University)

#### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

I have over a decade of experience working in student engagement, leading projects such as “Your Voice Matters” and “Tell Us Now,” which embed student feedback into quality assurance processes. My academic background includes an MA in Student Engagement in Higher Education, underpinning my strategic and practical contributions to the field. As a national representative for RAISE and contributor to the QAA 2024 Quality Code, I continue to influence sector-wide practice. My work focuses on partnership, continuous feedback, and belonging areas I research and embed institutionally. I’ve presented at national conferences and serve as a reviewer for the SEHEJ journal.

#### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I am nominating myself for election as Secretary to continue contributing to RAISE’s mission with energy, care, and structure. This role will enable me to combine my passions—amplifying student voice, supporting good governance, and strengthening communities of practice. As clerk to numerous university committees, I bring proven experience in minute-taking, document management, and action monitoring, alongside the flexibility and responsiveness needed for effective committee support.

RAISE is where my strategic insight and sector engagement come together. I have proudly supported conference delivery, elections, and operational procedures. I value this opportunity to contribute to a network that promotes innovation in student engagement and inspires inclusive practice nationally. My focus, going forward, is to maintain excellent communication within the committee, ensure our outputs are well-coordinated and representative, and uphold the transparency that strengthens RAISE’s credibility and reach.

#### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

I currently serve as the Professional and Learning Services Committee member and the Student Insight and Engagement Lead at Aberystwyth University, where I deliver major student voice projects and lead institutional responses to the NSS and module evaluations. I clerk multiple university-level committees, including the Academic Enhancement Committee and Student Voice Working Group, bringing governance experience directly relevant to the RAISE Secretary role.

My professional strengths include SharePoint site development for committee work, creating action logs, maintaining membership records, and supporting documentation for conferences and elections. At RAISE, I have helped deliver national conferences, journal editing, and quality guidance. This practical experience, combined with my strategic mindset and commitment to inclusive education, makes me well-suited to the committee role of Secretary. I bring care to process, clarity to communication, and an unwavering commitment to supporting RAISE’s collaborative, student-centred ethos.

## Kevin McStravock (Ulster University)

### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

I have a longstanding interest in Student Engagement which has flown throughout my professional career. I commenced my higher education career as a student officer at Ulster University Students' Union followed by two years as Deputy President and VP Education at the Union of Students in Ireland. I have since completed a Masters in Student Engagement at Winchester and supported student engagement policy locally and nationally through my previous role in QAA and current role in Ulster University's Centre for Quality Enhancement.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

Having completed four years on the committee as Communications Officer, I am keen to remain part of the student engagement community and see the progression to Secretary as a natural step. I have developed a comprehensive understanding of RAISE's operations and see the potential to enable the work of the committee and key strands of RAISE's work through effective governance and administration. I would also be keen to support the Chair, Vice-Chair and Operations Lead to identify opportunities for further expansion of RAISE's work and to support our engagement with other sector bodies operating in the space.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

I have four years experience on the RAISE Committee which has given me a strong understanding of RAISE's operations and how the Secretary role fits into this. I have extensive experience of committee administration as Secretariat to Academic Senate in Ulster University and previous Secretariat for two committees within QAA. I have a strong network across the UK and Irish higher education sector having worked within sector bodies in both nations - this will support RAISE in continuing to expand its reach across the sector. Given my background in student representation, I remain connected to the student movement and support the work of NUS, USI and individual students' unions through volunteer positions and occasional training. This would enable me to work closely with other committee members to enhance RAISE's engagement with students and Students' Unions.

## Ro Tomlin-Wills (London Metropolitan University)

### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

Student engagement is the thread running through my entire career in higher education. From supporting the student voice and engagement at Students' Union level to shaping university-wide strategies for student feedback and partnership in my current role, I am driven by the belief that students must be central to every aspect of institutional life.

I am passionate about collaborative approaches that harness student insights to shape, develop and communicate opportunities, initiatives, and campaigns that genuinely resonate with diverse communities. I believe student engagement is most powerful when students are empowered as partners, and when their stories, achievements, and concerns are celebrated widely and see tangible results from their engagement.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

My experience overseeing both major and minor projects, managing institutional communications, and facilitating meetings equips me well to handle the responsibilities of convening and organising meetings, minute taking, and ensuring effective follow-up on actions. I am highly organised, attentive to detail, and experienced in handling a board range of meetings, such as working/steering group matters, focus groups, survey administration, and reporting, as well as data analysis. Having held both operational and strategic roles, I understand the importance of robust internal communication and documentation for the success of any committee. I am eager to contribute my skills to maintain high standards of transparency, efficiency, and engagement within RAISE, ensuring members feel informed, valued, and able to participate fully in all aspects of the network.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

My background includes significant committee support, internal communications, and operational management. As Student & Academic Engagement Manager at London Met, I lead survey administration, convene working groups, and ensure efficient dissemination of minutes and action points. I have a strong track record in producing reports for senior committees, managing membership communications, and developing processes for feedback and evaluation. Previous roles required oversight of multiple projects, stakeholder engagement, and logistical planning for events and forums. At Uni of Southampton and Solent Students' Union, I supported board-level meetings, supported/managed cross-institutional working groups, and handled documentation for diverse committees. My attention to detail, experience with SharePoint, and digital communication skills enable me to maintain organised, accessible records and clear communication channels. I am confident that my administrative, organisational, and collaborative abilities will make a positive contribution to the RAISE Committee as Secretary.

## Student Committee Member

### Daisy Bao (The University of Edinburgh)

#### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

As an enthusiastic advocate for the student experience, I have spent over six years working as a student officer, staff officer, and RAISE committee member. I have developed a strong passion for engaging students and helping to build inclusive communities where every student can learn, share, be heard, and feel valued.

My interest in Student Engagement roots in my personal experience as an underrepresented and first-generation university student. Despite facing challenges due to my disadvantaged background, I was fortunate to receive tremendous support from nice teachers, classmates, and university staff from undergraduate to PhD. These experiences have inspired my academic interest, particularly in fostering student-staff partnerships and co-creation in curriculum, extra-curricular research, representation system, and quality assurance.

Although these areas of HE may seem separate, I believe they closely connected by their shared goal of enhancing student development. For me, student engagement is not simply an output, but a type of relationship where students are invited into the HE conversation, students and staff are equally respected, and students are part of the intelligent talent of the HE institution.

#### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I would like to apply to join the RAISE student committee. Over the past two years, I have greatly valued my role on the RAISE committee and am eager to further contribute to its mission. Throughout my career, I have been as an educator, policy maker, student representative at the school, national (SGSSS), and international (U21) levels, and as an EDI committee member at SGSSS. These roles not only enhance my experience working collaboratively to help students navigate an unpredictable and evolving world but also have fueled my passion for student engagement and equipped me with the skills to amplify student voices, coordinate and negotiate on educational matters, and design and deliver impactful events of varying scales.

Continuing as a RAISE student committee member would allow me to deepen my commitment to supporting students in higher education and to share my knowledge and research insights with the wider student engagement community. Much of my current research aligns closely with RAISE's focus areas, and I have found the network to be an invaluable platform for connecting students and academics from diverse backgrounds and institutions. The opportunity to help advance RAISE's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion in higher education is especially meaningful to me. I would be truly grateful for the chance to further contribute to this dynamic team.

#### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

I have well experienced leading roles and have skilled leadership in relation to student engagement:

As a student:

- My doctoral study collects all student-staff partnership schemes across the UK, and explores the nature of student engagement, partnerships, and co-creation with a case study
- The RAISE student committee member
- The EDI committee member of SGSSS (Scottish Graduate School for Social Science
- The student rep at the school, national (SGSSS), and international level (U21)
- The student lead in large-scale projects related to Student Feedback, EDI, and Nature Education.

As staff:

- The researcher in the Municipal Teacher Education Centre (Shanghai)
- The policy maker in the Shanghai Government (education department)
- The teacher in Zhejiang University Affiliated Primary School.

These experiences allow me to deepen my understanding and skills in relation to engaging students. Moreover, my communication skills are enhanced through interacting for various purposes, including ensuring the project is well planned, managing timelines within the deadlines, supporting team members, acknowledging everyone's contribution, and negotiating with the external stakeholders.

## Emily Bastable (University of Southampton)

### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

- Started advocating within my undergraduate programme for better teaching on race and ethnicity in Education
- Was elected VP Education and Democracy (2022/23)
- Appointed onto the Quality Assurance Agency Student Strategic Advisory Committee (2023-2025)

During my tenure as VP, I particularly became interested in how to upskill staff in student engagement- recognising that like all professional practice this needed training, support and formal recognition. I have since shared my advice through the student voice toolkit to several conferences and audiences which creates a common understanding about what good practice in student engagement looks like.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I would like to continue my work in student engagement as my two-year term with the Quality Assurance Agency Student Strategic Advisory Committee (QAA SSAC) has come to an end. As a part of the QAA SSAC, I have contributed to the Student Partnership Principle in the Quality Code as the only student writer and wrote the policy brief on Value for Money (published Summer 2025). Student experience and engagement is a field that is constantly changing, and therefore it is important to work collaboratively and innovate. As the government finds their footing within higher education and the sector is threatened with extreme financial instability, it is important that we build capacity and community which advocates for students and staff needs. It is through connecting passionate people together that we can share practice, resources and knowledge and this is something that the RAISE network is well established and known for.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

In my tenure as VP Education and Democracy I was the student lead for the Teaching Excellence Framework and the Access and Participation plan which gave me a clear understanding of the Office for Students Conditions and regulatory requirements for England. I am currently a PhD Student where my research looks at how Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise can be applied to undergraduate and postgraduate taught curriculums through participatory action research. My experience as a student voice advocate has filtered into my work as a researcher as I endeavour to centre the student voice still. Consequently, I am asked to advise other staff on how to redesign their modules to listen to current student needs. I'm well adept at supporting cross-institutional projects, supporting staff by giving advice, and mentoring more junior student voice advocates. I think this experience makes me a strong candidate for the position of student committee member.



## Mia Stevens (University of Bristol Students' Union)

### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

As Undergraduate Education Officer at Bristol SU, a key priority of mine is student engagement, specifically with assessment feedback and marking criteria. In my first term, I co-designed and co-led a university-wide project which aims to improve student engagement with assessment feedback and peer-to-peer learning around feedback literacy and self-assessment. I also lead on a project focussed on improving students' engagement with, and understanding of, marking criteria. This involves working with over 150 students across various workshops, focus groups and feedback sessions to initiate conversations around how we can better improve students' experience with self-evaluation.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I am particularly excited about co-creation, not just between students and teaching staff, but also with professional services, senior executives and representatives of the Students' Union. I think the work that RAISE does in encouraging those university-wide relationships in HE is so important. When students can bring their lived experiences as learners, and staff can bring their expertise as educators, the classroom becomes a far more vibrant and engaging environment. I would love to take what I've learned in my role at Bristol to contribute to the RAISE committee, while also learning from other committee members from across the sector to bring examples of best practice back home to Bristol.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

In my role as an Officer, I sit on many education, teaching and learning committees, where I always make sure to think beyond my own experience as a student and bring with me a wealth of research, data and perspectives when called upon to represent student opinion. As part of this, I make a real point of championing and platforming individual students and academic reps who have a particularly useful insight to offer but who may not have access to those senior decision-making spaces. Co-writing and co-presenting papers with other students has been a wonderful way to leverage the impact of students' lived experiences whilst also giving students the opportunity to be involved in shaping their education beyond the parameters of their everyday roles. I am also a Trustee of the Students' Union, as well as its EDI board, from which I can bring experience in governance, risk, and strategic oversight.

## Academic Staff Committee Member

### Emma Heron (University of Northampton)

#### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

I am a passionate believer in students and am their absolute champion: improving student experience is what gets me up in the morning. My interest in student engagement includes:

- Students' relationship with assessments (high/low stakes, vulnerabilities, inclusivity)
- Vertical 'families' of students (e.g. personal tutoring) and horizontal 'families' (e.g. multidisciplinary opportunities)
- Transitions into, through and beyond university
- Student research conferences
- The role of accommodation in the student experience

#### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I feel I have a lot to offer to the RAISE network. My professional journey in HE spans over 25 years and has been shaped by my belief that students should be able thrive at university:

- I have deliberately pursued roles that let me follow this interest including more and less conventional roles spanning academic and professional services, giving me a unique insight
- I have worked closely and positively with Students' Unions and see their place in student engagement as central.
- I have experience of working with students to deliver on change, and regard their involvement as central to what we do
- As creator of Listening Rooms (an award-winning approach to listening to HE student voices), I have built a national reputation both as student voice advocate and as innovative qualitative methodologist
- I have been a teacher and a personal tutor for over 20 years

#### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

I am an experienced member of internal committees for over 2 decades and am familiar with the collective as well as individual responsibility that comes with such membership. I am an academic member of staff who has experience of working with fellow academics (through both matrix and direct line management), and I appreciate teaching & research demands on academic colleagues I am an experienced academic in the field of learning, teaching, assessment and student experience and as such understand many of the topics of importance to academics who interact with students I have experience of leading and running university-wide events and am confident with the responsibilities associated with such event management. I have led on Scholarship of Teaching & Learning research funds in two universities for a total of 8 years and appreciate the importance of enabling university staff and students to work together on projects

## Jacob Diameh (University of Lincoln)

### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

- Currently serve as Student Engagement Lead at the University of Lincoln, designing and delivering inclusive academic initiatives.
- Organised LIBS PGR Festival (80+ PhD participants), School Action Day (500+ attendees), and Black History Month events.
- Championed student voice in programme development, leading to improved satisfaction metrics.
- Developed performance dashboards and coordinated engagement forums and Subject Boards.
- Former Postgraduate Student Officer representing 4,500+ students in governance and welfare reforms.
- Led engagement strategies that increased participation by 80% and advanced institutional equity goals.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

- I am nominating myself to serve as an Academic Staff Committee Member because I bring deep, practice-based expertise in student engagement, curriculum co-creation, and inclusive pedagogy.
- As Student Engagement Lead and Teaching Fellow at the University of Lincoln, I have led initiatives that increased student participation, advanced decolonised curricula, and embedded student voice into programme design.
- My academic portfolio spans lecturing, dissertation supervision, programme redesign, and inclusive assessment, with direct impact on over 800 students per semester.
- I am passionate about connecting research, practice, and policy in student engagement, and I am eager to support RAISE's national agenda by co-leading academic engagement events and collaborative projects.
- This role offers an ideal platform to amplify diverse academic perspectives and foster sector-wide dialogue that is evidence-led and student-centred.
- Co-led impactful research on student engagement, academic pathways and innovation

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

- Over 5 years' experience in UK Higher Education teaching and academic leadership across undergraduate and postgraduate levels.
- Currently Student Engagement Lead and Teaching Fellow at the University of Lincoln, leading strategic student engagement initiatives and curriculum innovation.
- Organised large-scale events including LIBS PGR Festival (80+ PhD participants), School Action Day (500+ attendees), and Black History Month.
- Delivered multidisciplinary teaching across modules such as International Business, Project Management, Accounting, and Leadership to over 800 students per semester.
- Actively contributed to curriculum design, module revalidation, and inclusive assessment aligned with UK QAA benchmarks.
- Served as Chief Exams Invigilator, ensuring integrity and coordination across multiple academic faculties.
- Regularly collaborate with the Students' Union and institutional governance structures to embed student voice in decision-making.
- Member of AdvanceHE, British Academy ECR Network, and Eleanor Glanville Institute, contributing to research-informed inclusive education practices.

## Kirstin Stuart James (University of Glasgow)

### Outline your interest in Student Engagement and any relevant experience

The JISC Raise Committee rightly recognises student engagement as fundamental to academic success. This is not only for learners as they navigate Higher Education (HE), but also for the institutions striving to support them. As an experienced Lecturer, and now Learning Director, I have witnessed the transformational potential of HE on people's lives countless times and engaged, active learners have been fundamental to these successes. The work of JISC has broad reach and a commitment to inclusive and evidence-informed practices. Joining RAISE would be an opportunity to shape the ongoing work of JISC in fostering meaningful student engagement.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

RAISE has worked consistently to champion and value student engagement in HE. During this time of transformational change, particularly with the rapid integration of AI across all HE systems, it is more important than ever to appoint an Academic Staff Committee Member with the proven ability to foster fruitful staff-student relationships across institutions, with individuals and with external partners. As both an academic and an occupational therapist, I bring a unique combination of professional insights and experiences to foster inclusive and collaborative learning cultures. My ethos and approach to student engagement reflects my deep commitment not only to student success, but also-crucially-to student well-being. If appointed, my tech-fluency alongside my values of justice, compassion and integrity will build on the RAISE's track-record of success and amplify the central importance of student engagement in shaping a positive future for HE.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

I have decades of experience with a strong record of supporting individuals to flourish. I began my career in the NHS as an occupational therapist, mentoring students to build confidence as they transitioned into practice. Since 2015, I've worked in academia as a Lecturer, Programme Lead, and now Director of Online Learning and Teaching in the Graduate School, College of Medicine, Veterinary and Life Sciences at the University of Glasgow. I now work in the digital space, but people remain central to everything I do. I build collaborative relationships, leveraging technologies to enhance this where appropriate. I embed pedagogies of justice and compassion into curricula and have secured scholarship funding: most recently to explore the value of the dissertation in contemporary learning and how to foster inclusive communities across diverse, global, learning cohorts. I bring leadership, global outreach, academic rigour, and research expertise to contribute to the work of RAISE.

## Lindsey Ferrie (Newcastle University)

### Outline your interest in Student Engagement and any relevant experience

Partnership learning is a fundamental ethos I have championed throughout my Higher Education career. From co-developing a University-wide, peer-driven employability ambassador scheme to co-designing a tutoring support gameboard, I have seen how educational practice flourishes when students and educators learn and work together. My interests focus on digital and creative tools to support student transitions. I am actively exploring the connections between emotional and academic motivations for learning and how this can be used to develop personalised engagement frameworks. I am also fascinated by the potential of learning analytics and AI to support student self-reflection on their learning behaviours.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I am excited to nominate myself for the Academic Staff Committee vacancy because I am deeply passionate about amplifying student voices, co-creation and partnerships. This role is an excellent opportunity for me to bring together my enthusiasm to enhance educational opportunities with my strong communication skills, creative thinking, and genuine commitment to positive change. Supporting the work of RAISE would provide me with the chance to deepen my learning in the field of student engagement, share my experiences and expertise in HE and to continue to champion the values of student engagement. I am an enthusiastic and dynamic educator, able to quickly establish motivational networks which will be useful in a variety of RAISE events and initiatives.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

As a National Teaching Fellow with over 10 years' experience in HE recruitment, outreach, pastoral support and governance, I am committed to transformative education through active communities of practice. Having been an academic member of several learned societies (British Pharmacological Society; Royal Society of Biology; HESPA) I have in-depth knowledge of collating stakeholder perspectives to enhance the groups strategic vision; have organised and facilitated large-scale national and international conferences and have reviewed and awarded member research fund applications. I am keen to use these experiences alongside my excellent communication and networking skills to support and advise RAISE.

## Michelle Evans (University of Leeds)

### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

I am an Associate Professor of English for Academic Purposes. I am interested in all forms of communication and academic discourse across the university. For the past 15 years, I have been working with students as partners to unpack the ways that language(s) and disciplinary discourse communities can support student engagement. Via conference presentations and publications, I encourage members of the academic community to reflect on student engagement approaches. I am co-editing a 2026 Bloomsbury volume that is being written by student authors. I coordinate students-as-partners scholarship within my school, where I support colleagues to work with students in curriculum design and classroom pedagogies.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I hope that my expertise in academic language and literacies would be a helpful contribution to the committee. I have been working in partnership with students labelled as 'international' and 'widening participation' for some years. I have practical experience of working to address the challenges of facilitating innovative students-as-partner projects within university systems that may lack the necessary infrastructure and flexibility needed for this way of working. I have been a member of educational committee groups in the past so I have a good understanding of the nature of the role and the reality of the work required to make a positive contribution to the committee.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

In addition to the experiences above, I have other experience that would make me a valuable committee member. I am Deputy Director of the Language Centre at the University of Leeds. This role includes responsibility for the continuing professional development of ninety lecturers of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in line with university student education priorities, which includes working with students as partners. To achieve this, I work with academic and student stakeholders within the school, and the wider university, to design and deliver staff development opportunities related to student engagement. I am also a member of the Students-as-Partners network within Leeds' Institute for Teaching Excellence (LiTE) where I contribute to student and staff events and initiatives. I have also been a member of the working group for Pedagogic Research in the Arts in my faculty. This involved reviewing the groups' strategic priorities as well as taking responsibility for the design and delivery of staff and student events.

## Nick Cartwright (University of Leeds)

### Outline your interest in Student Engagement and any relevant experience

- Director of Student Success and School Academic Lead for Inclusive Pedagogy at the University of Leeds, leading initiatives to close awarding gaps and foster belonging.
- Designed and implementing the \*Masterclass First\* model, embedding inclusive, student-centred development into core modules.
- National Teaching Fellow (2022) recognised for outstanding contributions to student outcomes and inclusive pedagogy.
- Established Black Student Advocate and EDI Ambassador/Student Success Champion programmes, amplifying minoritised student voices and shaping policy.
- Extensive experience co-creating student-centred strategies, including School Academic Baseline Standards (SLABS) and Student Success Committees.
- Research and publications on anti-racist education, decolonial pedagogy, and student engagement recognised nationally and internationally.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I am nominating myself because I have a proven track record of leading impactful student engagement and success initiatives. As Director of Student Success and School Academic Lead for Inclusive Pedagogy, I have developed and implemented strategies that have measurably improved student outcomes, closed awarding gaps, and enhanced belonging for students from underrepresented backgrounds.

I designed the \*Masterclass First\* model, embedding inclusive, student-centred development into core modules, ensuring all students benefit from structured academic and professional skills support. I established Black Student Advocate and Student Success Champion programmes to amplify minoritised student voices and shape School strategy.

Recognised nationally as a National Teaching Fellow for my contributions to inclusive pedagogy, I bring extensive experience of working collaboratively with students, staff, and external partners to enhance the student experience. I want to use this experience to positively influence student engagement at School and Faculty level.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

- Senior Fellow of the HEA and National Teaching Fellow (2022), recognised for excellence in inclusive pedagogy and student outcomes.
- Published widely on decolonising and inclusive teaching, critical race pedagogy, and student engagement.
- Experienced mentor supporting colleagues through PRiSE and HEA Fellowship applications.
- Chair of the School Student Success Committee and facilitator of Student Success Meets, sharing best practice in learning, teaching, and assessment.
- Director of Student Success and School Academic Lead for Inclusive Pedagogy, leading School-wide strategies to close awarding gaps and improve belonging.
- Designed and implementing the \*Masterclass First\* model to embed inclusive, student-centred academic and professional development within core modules.
- Established Black Student Advocate and Student Success Champion programmes to amplify minoritised student voices and influence decision-making.

## Rex Obeng (University of Hertfordshire)

### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

I am a Principal Lecturer and Deputy Associate Dean for Student Experience at the University of Hertfordshire, passionate about advancing student engagement and success. My work focuses on inclusive pedagogy, co-creation, and data-informed interventions that have improved student retention, progression, and sense of belonging. I've led initiatives such as an innovative feedback tool used across UK institutions and sector-recognised induction and tutoring models. As a second-generation Use graduate and advocate for equity, I bring lived experience and leadership to champion inclusive practice. I would be honoured to contribute to RAISE's mission of enhancing student voice and meaningful partnership in higher education.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I am passionate about creating inclusive, student-centred learning environments and have led impactful initiatives that enhance engagement, retention, and outcomes across diverse student populations. As Deputy Associate Dean for Student Experience, I've developed university-wide strategies, including sector-recognised induction tools, a pioneering feedback system, and co-curricular interventions that empower students as partners in their education. My work reflects a commitment to closing awarding gaps, promoting belonging, and enabling student voice at every level. I would like to join the RAISE Committee to contribute meaningfully to national conversations around student engagement, share sector best practices, and collaborate with like-minded professionals to champion equity, partnership, and authentic student experiences.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

As Deputy Associate Dean for Student Experience and Principal Lecturer, I lead institution-wide strategies that centre student voice, engagement, and belonging. I've co-created inclusive pedagogies, introduced sector-recognised induction models, and designed data-informed tools that improve retention and support student success. My work includes delivering national workshops on feedback, co-creation, and assessment, with active contributions to TRN and STRIVE 200 at MMU. I have strong experience working collaboratively with students, academic staff, and external partners to design and deliver impactful events and engagement initiatives. I would bring to the committee a deep understanding of student-centred practice, a proven ability to translate ideas into action, and a strong commitment to equity and meaningful partnership.



## Tadhg Blommerde (Northumbria University)

### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

- My commitment to student engagement and RAISE is demonstrated by my role as co-founder and Convenor of the RAISE Artificial Intelligence in HE Special Interest Group (SIG).
- My practice is rooted in Student-as-Partnership (SaP) principles, involving co-designing curricula and co-authoring publications with students to enhance their learning experience.
- I have a national profile for innovative student engagement, particularly in using Generative AI to develop students' critical skills, employability, and future-readiness.
- I have extensive experience supporting diverse learners, including developing tailored support for international students to enhance their academic success and sense of belonging.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

- Through my leadership of the Artificial Intelligence in HE Special Interest Group, I have learned more about RAISE and become interested and eager to contribute more broadly to the network's strategic direction and help advance its core mission.
- I want to use my national experience in disseminating innovative teaching practices to support RAISE in its aim to promote and share good practice, facilitate collaboration, and build a strong bank of resources for members.
- As a passionate advocate for Students-as-Partners, demonstrated through co-authoring work with students, I am keen to ensure the student voice remains central to all RAISE initiatives, from influencing policy to planning the annual conference.
- My work on ethically integrating new technologies like GenAI into curricula has prepared me to help the committee navigate emerging challenges in student engagement, ensuring RAISE remains at the forefront of pedagogical innovation.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

- RAISE Leadership & Community Building: I have direct experience with RAISE as the co-founder and convenor of the RAISE AI in HE Special Interest Group, growing it to over 80 members.
- Student Partnership & Inclusivity: My work is grounded in Students-as-Partners principles, including co-authoring publications with students.
- National Dissemination & Influence: I have a significant national profile for sharing good practice in student engagement. This includes delivering keynote addresses, presenting at numerous UK conferences and webinars, appearing on podcasts, and sharing resources via a YouTube channel with over 230,000 views.
- Mentorship & Staff Development: I have SFHEA recognition and a sustained record of mentoring colleagues at all levels, from PhD candidates to Programme Leaders, both within my institution and at other UK universities, on enhancing their teaching and assessment practices.

## Tom Ritchie (University of Warwick)

### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

- Director of Student Experience, University of Warwick Chemistry Department
- Created "We are Chemistry" programme achieving 45% reduction in student departures and 20,000+ engagements
- Work recognised through University Teaching Excellence Award and Royal Society of Chemistry Inclusion & Diversity Prize
- Academic lead for Warwick's Building Belonging Framework and Education for Sustainable Development
- External trustee, Oxford Brookes Students' Union
- Consultant to student unions and universities on student engagement strategies
- Currently Fulbright Scholar researching student-centred education and AI integration
- Champion of "equal partnership for equal benefit" approach to student collaboration

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

- Proven ability to develop and implement student engagement strategies that deliver measurable outcomes
- Deep commitment to genuine student partnership - treating students as equal collaborators, not just consultees
- Experience scaling successful initiatives from departmental level to institution-wide frameworks
- Strong networks across UK higher education sector and internationally through current Fulbright work
- Understanding of both academic and students' union perspectives through trustee experience
- Passionate about evidence-based approaches to student engagement that create lasting change
- Keen to share effective practices and learn from RAISE network colleagues
- Committed to advancing student engagement as transformative educational practice
- Excited to contribute to RAISE's mission of promoting innovative student engagement across the sector

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

- Led award-winning transformation of student experience - 45% reduction in departures, 12% increase in academic success
- Developed institution-wide frameworks (Warwick's Building Belonging Framework) from successful departmental practice
- Extensive student partnership experience: curriculum co-creation, student-led initiatives, genuine collaborative approaches
- External trustee providing governance oversight of student engagement strategies
- Established researcher and conference speaker in student engagement field
- Currently Fulbright Scholar investigating innovative pedagogical approaches
- Collaborating with Monash University, Leeds Institute for Teaching Excellence, and Exeter University on student engagement and belonging
- Proven ability to work across disciplines and build sustainable partnerships nationally and internationally
- Strong track record securing funding and resources for student engagement initiatives
- Deep understanding of sector challenges through multiple institutional contexts
- Committed to evidence-based practice and measuring real impact of student engagement work

## Vaithehy Shanmuganathan-Felton (Roehampton University)

### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

As Deputy Dean of Student Education, I place student engagement and experience at the heart of my work. I believe education is a powerful driver of social mobility and am committed to enhancing access and widening participation. I have led both school-level and institutional initiatives to improve attendance, foster belonging, amplify student voice, and improve attainment. I'm particularly interested in data-informed, technology-enabled approaches that ensure inclusive and responsive engagement strategies. These projects have resulted in increased student participation, improved attainment, and higher satisfaction, enabling me to drive meaningful, student-centred change.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I am deeply committed to improving student experience, engagement, and outcomes across diverse cohorts. My current role as Deputy Dean of Student Education provides a strategic platform to influence change at scale. I have successfully led initiatives focused on attendance, belonging, student voice, and attainment, using data to drive impact. I bring experience of cross-institutional collaboration and a strong track record of embedding inclusive, evidence-based practices. I am passionate about shaping sector-wide approaches to student engagement and sharing best practices. This role aligns with my values and expertise, and I'm eager to contribute at a national level.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

- Over 4 years' experience in student education leadership, currently serving as Deputy Dean of Student Education.
- Chair of the Division of Sport and Exercise Psychology Training Committee which oversees the national standards and accreditation of PG programmes in the discipline
- Led both school-level and institutional initiatives focused on student engagement, attendance, belonging, and attainment.
- Developed data-informed strategies to monitor and enhance engagement, including early intervention processes.
- Experience working collaboratively across faculties/schools and services to drive improvements.
- Strong track record of using technology to support engagement and learning analytics to inform decision-making.
- Regularly contribute to university committees and working groups focused on student success and experience.
- Committed to evidence-based, student-centred approaches that deliver measurable impact on outcomes and satisfaction.

## Student Union Staff Committee Member

### Annette Goddard (University of Bath Student Union)

#### Outline your interest in Student Engagement and any relevant experience

Student engagement is my bread and butter, without students we have no voice, no drive and no change makers. I thoroughly enjoy working with the students as partners, encouraging inclusion in resource creation and content delivery through Student Trainer Schemes. Within our language schemes I work alongside remarkable students, who share their enthusiasm for languages with peers, fostering a sense of belonging and community. Through student led initiatives I'm dedicated to empowering students to be the best they can be, via peer-to-peer schemes or through training and workshops. Building strong inclusive communities that support from within.

#### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I'm passionate about designing and delivering engaging, research-informed workshops that support students' personal and professional development. I enjoy creating content based on feedback, current topics, and skills needs, and I thrive in both online and face-to-face environments, ensuring communication is key. I'm committed to building inclusive communities—evidenced by my roles as Co-chair of the Women's Network, SU Wellbeing Champion, and member of the SU Peer Network. These experiences reflect my proactive, organised, and creative approach to empowering others, which I feel would be valuable to the role. I enjoy working with Officers, Student Leaders and stakeholders in my role; from training, to conferences and collaborations, I would love to continue this on a wider scale. I'd relish the opportunity to further contribute to H.E. by helping build a diverse, collaborative network where students and staff grow together, sharing best practise and embedding values in all that we do.

#### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

- 13+ years' experience of creating, delivering and evaluating workshops for children, young people and adults
- 7 years+ experience in HE working for student engagement through a variety of projects.
- 6 years of experience in managing mentoring programmes with employers, creating a University Award projects and engaging students in different roles (eg Opportunity Plymouth with Liz Staples)
- Experience across 3 different universities: Bath, Bath Spa and Plymouth.
- Created a community of practise for HE colleagues after an AGCAS conference
- Delivered talks at Cardiff SI-PASS and Plymouth CAN conference on impact of peer schemes.
- Co-created a strategic framework ensuring we engage with Student Leaders in an equitable, impactful and evolving way across the SU.
- Involved in Officer Handover and deliver #IAmRemarkable promoting the confidence to share successes and make it the norm!
- Participated in Train the Trainer workshop
- Contributed to blogs to better communicate schemes to the University <https://blogs.bath.ac.uk/pvc-student-experience/2025/05/13/languages-at-bath-a-vibrant-community-of-learning-and-connection/>

## Aimee Cuthbert (Highlands and Islands Students' Association)

### Outline your interest in student engagement and any relevant experience.

I am Aimee and I currently work for HISA as a Development Manager. I engage with students daily through our elected officers and via our activities and clubs, which has its challenges as a geographically-dispersed tertiary education provider, but it allows me to work with talented colleagues to ascertain student engagement in quality processes, UHI consultations and building communities in remote and online environments. For me, student engagement happens at all levels, from the transformation that extra-curricular activities can have, through to formal structures and daily office interactions – which has led me to research student voice and student unions academically.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I would like to nominate myself for this role as I believe this role could encourage SU/SA/Guild staff members to engage with the ever-increasing academic research of student engagement and extra-curricular activities to help improve student engagement in increasingly challenging times. I would also like to nominate myself for this role as I would love to see increased representation from the devolved nations of the United Kingdom to bring differing contexts to student engagement, quality processes and legislative requirements to expand the thinking and discussions RAISE can have in this space. Finally I would like to nominate myself for this role as I have got a lot out of previous involvement with RAISE professionally and personally and would love to be able to pass this on to other SU/SA/Guild colleagues as well as embed myself further in the movement.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

I have been involved in SUs for a decade as a staff member – with roles in communications, student voice, representation and democracy and overall student engagement - and several years prior as an engaged volunteer during my undergraduate studies. I have been able to see first hand in various institutions how university and SU-led student engagement initiatives can impact on students' lives considering the vast changes in student body's priorities and challenges over my professional career. I have also throughout my career been able to build good links with sector bodies such as sparqs, College Development Network and NUS as well as having links with SU colleagues in Scotland and the UK. I also graduated with an MA in Student Engagement in Higher Education from the University of Winchester in October 2024.

## Professional and Learning services staff committee member

### Errol Jones-Rivera (University of Glasgow)

#### Outline your interest in Student Engagement and any relevant experience

Academically, I hold a PhD in Education, focusing on student engagement with assessment and learning experiences, understanding engagement through a psycho-social framework that's compatible with social-constructivist pedagogies. For the past 12 years, I've been teaching pedagogy as well as supporting, designing, and implementing different ways to help students, by helping educators create inclusive high-quality learning and assessment, by providing them with evidence-based tools, experiences, and teaching/assessment design methods. These include AdvanceHE awarding winning university-wide initiatives to bring student voice into lecturers' professional development, as well as reliable techniques for using inclusive pedagogy as a means of ensuring meaningful assessment.

#### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

As a first-generation university student with a learning disability, who came from impoverished background, I've nearly failed-out of every educational institution I was enrolled in, save one. I only have the wonderful life I have because of teachers who fostered my engagement. As an Academic Developer, it's my duty to help educators remember that every second with a student is a chance to change someone's life. There are very real and identifiable gaps in our knowledge of engagement's role in learning, but there is also existing theory, great ideas, and existing practices that could close those gaps. They need only development, a chance at a proof of concept, or a platform to systemically change how educators do their good work. I believe I can provide a passionate specialist's voice for the sector's academic developers, by helping to ensure RIASE activities meaningfully contribute to our ability to help lectures change students' lives.

#### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

- (2013) Co-Creator of the Edinburgh Napier Creative Writing Ma's Teaching Internship, a unique PgCAP equivalency programme, studying pedagogy through the lens of the student experience while enrolled as a student.
- (2015) Co-designed/led Students as Colleagues, Advance HE awarding winning initiative and Strategy Flagship programme at Edinburgh Napier University, pairing students with educators in different subject areas, providing colleague-style feedback on teaching/professional development.
- (2021) PhD using gamification to understand Student Engagement's role in Formative assessment experiences, and implications for assessment and learning design.
- (2022) The sole Inclusive Curriculum Design Officer for Cardiff University, Developing the Maximum Effort Initiative, identifying gaps in inclusivity to inform and implement pedagogic innovations in teaching, assessment, and policy.
- (2022-Present) Academic Developer, University of Glasgow, Embedding Inclusion & Engagement at the strategic level; Deputy Coordinator of the Uof G's PgCAP; convener PgCAP for Course Design; Co-Author of Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy.

## Faye ap Geraint (Aberystwyth University)

### Outline your interest in Student Engagement and any relevant experience

I have over a decade of experience working in student engagement, leading projects such as “Your Voice Matters” and “Tell Us Now,” which embed student feedback into quality assurance processes. My academic background includes an MA in Student Engagement in Higher Education, underpinning my strategic and practical contributions to the field. As a national representative for RAISE and contributor to the QAA 2024 Quality Code, I continue to influence sector-wide practice. My work focuses on partnership, continuous feedback, and belonging areas I research and embed institutionally. I’ve presented at national conferences and serve as a reviewer for the SEHEJ journal.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I am nominating myself for re-election because I remain passionate about amplifying the contributions of professional services staff to student engagement. RAISE offers a unique space for collaboration, innovation, and critical discussion, and I want to continue contributing to its development. During my term, I have supported election processes, organised national conferences, presented at webinars, and helped foster inclusive strategies that reflect a diversity of professional experiences. I aim to continue building on this momentum by supporting knowledge sharing across institutions and championing student partnership as a cross-cutting priority. This role enables me to connect evidence with action, linking student insight with institutional change. I believe that re-election will allow me to deepen these contributions and, with my RAISE colleagues, continue to help shape the future direction of RAISE.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

I currently serve on the RAISE Committee as the elected representative for Professional and Learning Services staff, where I have been actively involved in running committee elections, reading group, journal reviewer, buddy scheme mentor, grant allocation panel member, and delivering conferences. My institutional role as Student Insight and Engagement Lead has equipped me with extensive experience in leading student voice campaigns, managing feedback systems, and supporting strategic enhancement. I collaborate with key stakeholders, including SU Officers, academic leaders, and sector organisations, to embed evidence-based, student-informed practice. I was also a member of the writing group for the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education – Advice and Guidance 2025, contributing to Principle 2: Engaging Students as Partners. This guidance is designed to support institutions sector-wide. I am also a reviewer for the Student Engagement in Higher Education Journal and chair institutional working groups focused on student voice and engagement strategy.

## Jay Nugent (University of Westminster)

### Outline your interest in Student Engagement and any relevant experience

My interest in student engagement started as a fortuitous accident nearly 12 years ago, working for Bournemouth University, tasked with building one of the most cohesive PGT communities and a sector-leading employability programme. Within the process of achieving these goals over a four-year period, I discovered the real meaning of the 'student voice' and was privileged enough to be a bridge between students and decision makers, which, when done correctly, was powerful in making a real difference for students and the institution. Ever since developing this insatiable itch to help students, I have always sought out opportunities to help in improving student engagement and was pleasantly surprised when I discovered the RAISE network prior to the pandemic. Fast forward to today, I direct one of the largest cohorts overseeing student engagement in employability with 8000+ active participants, and I continually look to learn, improve what we do in the sector.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I've been impressed with the RAISE network and what it stands for. I have thoroughly enjoyed the open conversation about student engagement and how sometimes it gets wrapped up in bureaucracy and managerialism, and I see the real value in offering an alternative, which RAISE does wonderfully! With the sector under significant strain, we can no longer ignore students as a dehumanised transaction or assume a means to an end. I believe my passion for student engagement and keen interest in lived experiences would be a good fit for this position, and I am confident I could suggest ideas for topics and facilitate interesting conversations that aid in research and professional practice.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

Event management experience of both in-person and virtual events, 100+ of varying sizes, including presenting and facilitating with varied audiences. Good knowledge of how professional services work and the challenges of resources, and an understanding of what student engagement might constitute. Marketing and promotions experience used to work as an Assistant Head of Marketing, and currently in a position of student engagement and communications for an employability service. Some achievements include overseeing the launch of new social channels, reaching a follower base of 12K in two years and reaching nearly 100K for some posts. Also, have some experience using AI and agents and understand good principles of design and communication.



## Kerry Kellaway (Plymouth Marjon University)

### Outline your interest in Student Engagement and any relevant experience

My role is Director of Student Success Services at Plymouth Marjon University and Student engagement is central to this. Additionally, I'm a trustee for a local charity around engagement with libraries and information services.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I believe in student potential and working with students as partners in shaping their studies, careers and lives beyond universities. Student engagement is something I truly believe is essential to the success of universities and broader society.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

I am Treasurer for South West Regional Library Services, so have experience on a board of trustees. I work for a mid sized university in the South west with a large widening participation population as Director for Student Success and partner with our Student Union on all issues pertaining to student engagement.

## Lucy McCormick (University of Glasgow)

### Outline your interest in Student Engagement and any relevant experience

I am committed to student engagement as a collaborative, values-led process that supports student mattering, persistence and success. In my current role as Induction and Transitions Adviser at the University of Glasgow, I co-create inclusive and iterative resources with students to support transitions into, through and out of the University. I previously worked as a Student Engagement Officer in Scotland's largest Further Education college, where I partnered closely with the Students' Association to drive data-driven institutional change. Earlier in my career, I taught in East and South Asia, an experience that shaped my culturally responsive, student-centred approach to engagement.

### Why would you like to nominate yourself for the role?

I would welcome the opportunity to contribute to the RAISE committee's work, advancing student engagement as a meaningful, inclusive, and transformative process. Throughout my career, I have been committed to shaping educational spaces that prioritise partnership, trust, and mutual learning between students and staff. I am particularly interested in supporting students to develop a strong sense of mattering and agency, and in creating opportunities for collaborative learning communities that recognise the diversity of student backgrounds and aspirations. I see this role as a chance to contribute to sector-wide conversations about student engagement, while also learning from colleagues across the network. I am especially drawn to RAISE's focus on dialogue, resource-sharing, and partnership, and I would value the opportunity to support its work in driving positive change across Higher Education.

### Outline your relevant experience in regard to the position/s you wish to be considered for

My experience leading student engagement initiatives across both Further and Higher Education, in partnership with professional services staff as well as academic and Learning Development colleagues, prepares me well to contribute to the RAISE committee in this role. Alongside this, I have a strong track record in event management and conference organisation, including as a member of the host institution organising committee for the RAISE Conference 2025. I am particularly keen to lead and facilitate events for professional services colleagues at the RAISE Conference and throughout the year, creating spaces for collaboration, shared learning, and sector-wide dialogue. Throughout my career, I have developed strong cross-team collaboration skills, and I would draw on this experience to offer practical support to Officers, contributing professional and learning services insights to student-focused and communications initiatives and assisting with event delivery and wider committee activities across the RAISE network.