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# INTO TEACHING

The magazine for EIS student members



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**Free  
Student  
Membership**

**& Free  
Probationer  
Membership**



**Scotland's  
largest  
education  
trade union**

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*the Union*



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**As a member you can:**

- Access advice & assistance from a local EIS Rep while you're on placement
- Be active in EIS campaigns
- Learn about Professional Learning opportunities with EIS Learning Reps
- Be part of an EIS student group in your university

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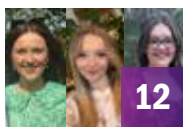
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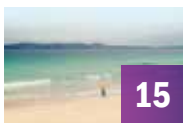
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# Welcome to the EIS Student Magazine

It is designed specifically for student teachers to give you some advice on matters that will be important to you such as: going on placement, your employment rights as a student worker and how you can get involved with your union and contribute to shaping Scottish education for future teachers and learners.

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**STAND UP**  
FOR QUALITY EDUCATION



# 10 Reasons

# Join the Union

## **BIGGEST IN SCOTLAND**

The EIS is the largest teacher trade union representing over 80% of Scotland's teachers (8 out of 10 teachers and lecturers in Scotland are members of the EIS).

## **SCOTLAND'S MOST AFFORDABLE TEACHING UNION**

The EIS is a well-resourced Scottish union, with a large number of Scotland-based staff with affordable membership fees. The EIS is free for all student members and remains free throughout your probation year and beyond.

## **IMPROVING YOUR PAY AND CONDITIONS**

The EIS campaigns actively to secure and maintain professional salaries and improve conditions of service for all its members. The EIS has the overwhelming majority of members on the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) where your pay and conditions are negotiated with government and employers.

## **SUPPORTING YOUR CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

As a professional organisation the EIS is committed to promoting opportunities for quality professional learning (PL) for ALL teachers throughout their careers. The EIS has a wide network of fully trained Learning Representatives who support members with their PL.

## **HIGH QUALITY LEGAL AND PROFESSIONAL ADVICE**

Our solicitors and our network of EIS Representatives, Local Association Secretaries, Organisers and Area Officers are available to provide the highest quality support and advice when it is needed. We also provide EIS members with FREE legal advice on non-employment matters through our dedicated EIS legal helpline staffed by qualified lawyers, open 8am – 7pm 5 days a week.



## INSURANCE COVERING ALL EIS MEMBERS

The EIS provides four insurance policies to all members covering: Personal Effects, Malicious Damage to Motor Vehicles, Third Party Insurance and Personal Accident Insurance.

## PROFESSIONAL FINANCIAL ADVICE

EIS Financial Services provides independent financial advice, a comprehensive range of insurance and other financial planning products exclusively to EIS members.  
[www.eisfs.co.uk](http://www.eisfs.co.uk)

## LEADING ON THE KEY ISSUES FOR EDUCATION

A commitment to promoting **quality** and **equality** across our education service – for teachers and for learners – is a hallmark of the EIS and its work in developing and influencing policy covering: education, the equality agenda, workload and wellbeing, pay and Conditions of Service and all other areas of trade union work.

## CAMPAIGNING ON THE THINGS THAT MATTER TO YOU

The EIS is a campaigning organisation that takes a lead on the big issues for education and teachers. The EIS runs major campaigns to protect education, deliver better, more equitable opportunities and outcomes for learners, and defend the pay and conditions of teachers.

## STUDENT SPONSORSHIP

The EIS allocates part of its annual budget to student sponsorship for each Teacher Education Institution in Scotland. We invite funding requests from student members and student societies. In the past, this sponsorship has been used for events including training workshops, graduation balls and final year conferences.





# Get Involved

**EIS Student Membership provides you with important benefits.**

**While on placement you can join in with union organised events, campaigns and become active in the organisation.**

## ..... Here's how .....

### **Establish an EIS Student Group**

Meet regularly with other students to discuss local and national education issues, identify student teacher concerns, get to know other teachers who want to make a difference and develop campaigns with other students to make real change.

If you'd like to organise a student group or get more involved with EIS events or campaigns, contact your EIS organiser.

### **Get Involved with the Student Teacher Society**

Every Students' Association encourages students to set up a society on an issue or subject that is important to them. The EIS has supported the formation of Student Teacher Societies and provided funding and speakers for events they have organised. Contact your Student Teacher Society to find out what events they are running over the coming months and get involved.

### **Get Involved Locally**

Every student who joins is encouraged to get involved in the union. You automatically become a member of the EIS Local Association in your University area and are welcome to attend its meetings and events. This will give you a chance to learn about what's happening in schools in your area and the contribution the union makes to the big issues for education and teachers.

**Edinburgh Napier University:**  
Edinburgh Local Association

**Queen Margaret University:**  
East Lothian Local Association

**Royal Conservatoire:**  
Glasgow Local Association

**University of Aberdeen:**  
Aberdeen City Local Association

**University of Dundee:**  
Dundee Local Association

**University of Edinburgh:**  
Edinburgh Local Association

**University of Glasgow:**  
(depending on where you are studying)  
Glasgow or Dumfries and Galloway Local Association

**University of Stirling:**  
Stirling Local Association

**University of Strathclyde:**  
Glasgow Local Association

**University of the Highlands and Islands:**  
(depending on where you are studying)  
Highland, Orkney Islands, Shetland Islands, Moray, Argyll and Bute or Western Isles Local Association

**University of the West of Scotland:**  
South Ayrshire Local Association

### **Find out about the EIS Local Association, its events and campaigns**

You can find the contact details of your Local Association Secretary, as well as a link to their website containing information on local agreements and newsletters at:  
**[www.eis.org.uk/Contacts/LocalAssociation](http://www.eis.org.uk/Contacts/LocalAssociation)**



## Support for Student Teacher Education Societies & Events

Your Teacher Education Institution (TEI) may have an existing Student Education Society so contact your Student Association to find out. If you are interested in setting up a Student Education Society, becoming a Student Contact for your year group or course then please contact your EIS Organiser.

## EIS Organisers

If you want to know more about any of the ways you can get involved contact the EIS Organisers



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# EIS Campaigns

The EIS is a campaigning union where we engage members in our campaigns to not only improve their working conditions but to improve Scottish education as a whole.

Since launching our campaign at the EIS AGM in June 2023, the EIS has been engaging with all stakeholders on our Stand Up for Quality Education campaign. The aim of the campaign is to significantly improve teachers' working conditions, and health, safety and wellbeing at work and by so doing, the quality of learning experiences for learners. We want to make teaching a profession where teachers feel supported and our young people receive the quality education they have been promised.

The EIS continues to campaign on teacher workload and wellbeing, class sizes, vital ASN provision and for the resources that are needed to reduce the poverty-related achievement gap. We are clear that teachers' working conditions are inextricably linked to young people's learning conditions. Quality education that has equity at the heart of it, needs both teachers' working conditions and pupils' learning conditions to be good.

As the largest teacher trade union in Scotland, with over 60,000 members, the EIS has a strong track record of delivering for its members and for the children and young people that they teach. Representing 80% of the country's teaching professionals, gives the EIS the strength to defend Scottish education and protect the interests of its learners and teachers.

Regardless of the sector in which you work once you qualify, EIS campaigning is relevant to you.

Although we have no party-political affiliation, the EIS is a highly active member-led organisation which campaigns vigorously across the issues that are critically important to our members working in Early Years, Primary, Secondary and FE and HE, at all stages of their careers. We make our voice heard on



Andrea Bradley, EIS General Secretary

key campaigning priorities, for example, on equality and social justice issues, on climate education, on curriculum and assessment matters.

## A Message from the General Secretary

Welcome to the EIS, the Union is delighted to have you within our membership! We believe that every teacher, no matter where they are on their career journey, has an important role to play in providing and standing up together for quality education for our young people. We believe that every teacher has a role to play in helping shape Scottish Education now and in the future.

Our Stand Up for Quality Education campaign has been firing on all cylinders over the past year, with the EIS pressing government and employers hard on excessive teacher workload; on protecting and increasing the number of teacher jobs and on reducing precarity of employment; on the need for significantly increased additional support needs provision for the more than 40% of young people with recognised additional needs; and on better support for schools and teachers to respond to problematic pupil behaviour.

And our campaigning has had successes this year: additional government funding for ASN provision and political commitments on protection of teacher numbers; halting of local authority cuts, including by Glasgow City Council where 450 jobs were on the line; and significant evidence-gathering through the commissioning of independent academic research and through our own all-member survey answered by more than 10,000 of our almost 65,000 members, to

continue building the very compelling case that teacher workload in Scotland is unfair, unhealthy and unsustainable.

The workload component of SU4QE is hotting up. A ballot for industrial action on workload opened at this year's AGM. The EIS is determined to hold the Scottish Government and local authority employers to past promises to reduce workload for the benefit of teachers, young people's learning and the future of Scottish education.

With this in mind, as a student member, you're most welcome and very much encouraged, to get involved in our Stand up for Quality Education campaign. It's very much about your future professional lives. Check out the 'Get Involved' section of our website to find out how you can contribute.

In the meantime, I wish you all the very best for the next stage in your journey into the teaching profession.

## The EIS is a Campaigning Union

**In the past year, our Stand Up for Quality Education campaign has brought attention to our three main themes of pupil behaviour, ASN and workload. Members across Scotland have been completing surveys, discussing issues at branch meetings, raising concerns with school management, influencing local authorities and ultimately affecting positive change in their workplaces. You will hear about this campaign on school placements - so get involved! The EIS also campaigns on issues relating to a reduction in class sizes, reducing teachers' maximum class contact time and an end to zero-hours supply lists."**





## Additional Support for Learning (ASL)

Additional Support for Learning (ASL) provision has been the subject of intense scrutiny in Scotland in recent years. With the publication of the Additional Support for Learning Review and the impact of the pandemic on children and young people, this scrutiny is likely to be sustained in the years to come. Increased complexity of needs among the learning population, against a backdrop of underinvested public services and a reduction of 20% in the number of ASN teachers since 2010, is undoubtedly impacting on educational provision. There is a well-evidenced gap between theories of inclusion, the law on children's rights, and daily practice in our schools; a gap which stems from massive under provision of the sources of support children require. The EIS remains firmly

committed to inclusive education in principle. We believe that education is a human right and that inclusive education, i.e. schools and classes comprising a diverse mix of learners, is the foundation of a more just society. The presumption that, when appropriate, children will be educated alongside their peers in their local school is sound. The serious concerns our members have voiced repeatedly are about implementation of well-intentioned policies, and the gap between promise and practice. Scotland's children, and Scotland's teachers, deserve a system where promise meets practice, not mainstreaming on the cheap. For more information on the EIS contribution to this debate and the work of the ASN Network, visit our website.



## Instrumental Music Charter

The EIS is campaigning to protect and promote instrumental music education in Scotland's schools. Instrumental Music Tuition in schools is a core component of music education and plays a significant role in delivering National Qualifications in music. Without adequate investment in IMTs, the achievement of music qualifications will decline. Our campaign urges the Scottish Government to provide adequate funding to Local Authorities to sustain and grow Instrumental Music Services, and deliver on their manifesto commitments relating to Instrumental Music Tuition:

1. Deliver instrumental music lessons free of charge
2. Mainstream instrumental music tuition as part of the curriculum
3. Deliver GTCS registration for Scotland's school based Instrumental Music Teachers

For more information on our IMT Network, visit:

[www.eis.org.uk/networks/instrumental-music-teachers](http://www.eis.org.uk/networks/instrumental-music-teachers)



## 'Sustain the Ambition' and 'Playing for a Brighter Future'

'Sustain the Ambition' and 'Playing for a Brighter Future' As part of the campaign to arrest and reverse the decline in the number of qualified nursery teachers employed within Early Years establishments, the EIS funded research by the Child's Curriculum Group into the contribution of qualified teachers to nursery education. EIS Local Associations and the EIS nationally continue to campaign against and oppose cuts to nursery teacher posts across the country. Building on this work, we have published a companion publication to the 2020 OECD Report on Early Years Education. 'Playing for a Brighter Future' highlights the importance of qualified teachers in supporting the holistic development of our youngest learners and shines a light on the 55% decline in nursery teacher numbers since 2010. It also offers practical advice about how to support the EIS campaign, both locally and nationally. Additionally, the EIS national body has established a network of Early Years practitioners to inform the advancement of EIS policy in this area and to provide a forum in which the professional identity and experiences of nursery teachers can be explored and promoted. The Network also comes together for a variety of professional learning activities. Information on previous and up-coming Early Years events can be found on our website.

[www.eis.org.uk/Research/Sustain-The-Ambition](http://www.eis.org.uk/Research/Sustain-The-Ambition)

[www.eis.org.uk/in-education/playingbrighter](http://www.eis.org.uk/in-education/playingbrighter)





# EIS

# and Equality

The EIS has a commitment to the promotion of sound learning rooted in equality and inclusivity. We continue to offer learning and advice for members, produce guidance on a range of equality issues and maintain a strong network of trained Equality Representatives. More information about the EIS and Equality can be found on the EIS website:

[www.eis.org.uk/equality](http://www.eis.org.uk/equality)

## Anti-racism

The EIS supports national anti-racist campaigns and produces resources to support members around anti-racist education. The work of the Equality Committee in these areas is guided by the Anti-Racist Sub-Committee. We continue to lobby for an anti-racist curriculum and involve our members in a range of CPD on this issue. The national EIS BAME Network is open to all Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic members. Resources include:

- Briefing for members to advocate for anti-racist education and challenging anti-Muslim prejudice
- Guidance and online videos on Mobilising for Anti-Racism in the workplace
- The Tale o' the Glasgow girls, a narrative poem resource to teach about refugee rights
- Welcome Packs for Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrant Children

## Disability Equality

The EIS is committed to supporting our disabled members, ensuring their rights and legal protections are upheld throughout their employment. Our Disabled Members' Network is open to anyone who identifies as disabled, and for members who would be entitled to reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act (2010), which includes neurodivergent members.

Resources include:

- Disability History Month films made by disabled educators
- Guidance for EIS Members and Workplace Representatives regarding reasonable adjustments in the workplace
- Information about Disability and the Law

## LGBT+ Inclusion

The EIS supports the commitment to the provision of LGBT+ Inclusive education in Scottish schools. We are committed to challenging homophobia, biphobia and transphobia and advancing the rights of LGBT+ people in Scotland and beyond. The work of the Equality Committee is informed by the LGBT Sub-Committee and the EIS has a growing informal network of LGBT+ members. Resources include:

- The Power of LGBT Inclusive Education – guidance
- Video showcasing teacher stories of Section 2A in Scotland
- EIS member briefing – Conversion Practices
- Advice on Supporting Transgender and Non-binary Learners

[www.eis.org.uk/Equality/Anti-Racism](http://www.eis.org.uk/Equality/Anti-Racism)

[www.eis.org.uk/Equality/Disability-Equality](http://www.eis.org.uk/Equality/Disability-Equality)

[www.eis.org.uk/Equality/LGBT](http://www.eis.org.uk/Equality/LGBT)



## Under 30?

The EIS are looking to engage young members, offering opportunities to connect and share their experiences. To sign up to our mailing list, and find out more, email Ayumi Cristoph [achristoph@eis.org.uk](mailto:achristoph@eis.org.uk)

## Gender Equality

The EIS is involved in a range of efforts to promote gender inequality and end discrimination, through our campaigning, training and advice to members. We are involved in a range of national bodies dedicated to gender equality. The EIS Equality Committee is informed in this area by the Gender Issues Working Group. Resources include:

- Guidance on Menopause and Menstrual Health at Work
- Podcast episode on Tackling Misogyny in Educational Establishments
- Advice on Violence Against Women, and Tackling Sexual Harassment in Educational Establishments
- Advice on challenging misogynistic attitudes among children and young people: Get it Right for Girls

## Child Poverty

Poverty continues to blight the lives of hundreds of thousands of people in Scotland. Low wages, precarious work and insufficient social security provision, coupled with high costs of housing, food, childcare, transport and energy, continue to conspire with the result that a quarter of a million (almost one in four) children in Scotland live in poverty.

It's a matter of huge concern for teachers because poverty can have a devastating impact on the educational outcomes and life-chances of the children and young people who experience it. For some time now, the EIS Equality Committee has been campaigning to highlight the causes of poverty and the educational disadvantages and inequalities of outcome that it leads to.

The Equality Committee has produced a number of resources to support teachers in addressing the impact of poverty and to mitigate its negative impact, in their own settings.

## Pact

The PACT Programme offers research-based professional learning opportunities for all teachers and schools focused on policy, practice and pedagogy, in order to minimise the damage that poverty can do in the classroom, in the playground and beyond. PACT is rooted in social justice principles, takes a human rights approach to poverty, and is designed to further support and deepen the development of a whole-school anti-poverty culture.

The EIS is currently updating our PACT materials and will soon be offering a refreshed PACT programme.

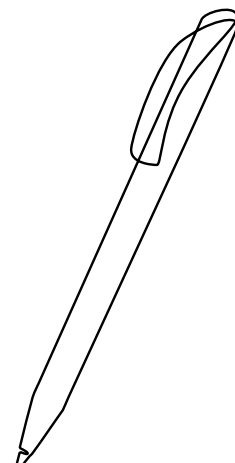




**Heather Wallace**

BEd 4 Strathclyde Uni

*"The EIS offers various opportunities for Continuing Professional Development"*



**How would you describe your BEd year in three words?**

Rewarding, challenging and inspiring.

**Who was your favourite teacher at school and why?**

My primary six teacher Mrs Coyle. I can remember so much of our learning being topic based – the novel Coraline, the Amazon Rainforest and Europe. She really made learning "fun." In secondary school, I loved my modern languages teacher, Mrs Matassa. She made every pupil feel special, she got to know every one of us and you knew that she really cared. She definitely inspired and encouraged my language learning.

**What's the one thing you'd like to change about teaching?**

While the teacher induction scheme is a wonderful opportunity that provides teaching graduates a guaranteed post for a year, the limited job security and permanent contracts beyond probation is a real worry and concern of mine. It is vital that teachers can build meaningful relationships with the children in their class and get to know each child as an individual, however short term, temporary contracts can make this very challenging for both teachers and pupils. I hope that this starts to change in the coming years.

**Why do you think it's important to be an active member of a trade union?**

Being an active member of a trade union can provide teachers with support and a voice. Being a member of a union such as the EIS gives opportunities to network beyond your own local authority. It also is another means of keeping up to date with current developments in education. The EIS offers various opportunities for Continuing Professional Development and so becoming an active member would allow teachers to enhance their own learning.

**Any embarrassing teaching moments?**

Thankfully none yet, or none that are sticking out to me!

**What advice would you give to a student starting their teaching course?**

Your greatest strength will be your resilience. You will be receiving lots of feedback across placements and assignments, and it is important to remember that this feedback is to help you become a better teacher. Placements can be challenging but the experience is invaluable. You will learn so much from being in schools, so get involved! Your placement is what you make of it. My biggest piece of advice would be to keep

on top of your placement file! Get as much of it completed as you can, as early as possible.

**What's the most important lesson you've learned about teaching so far?**

The importance of getting to know each child as an individual. Once you know each child individually, you will be able to target their learning towards their areas of strength and development, hook their learning based on their interests, and use the relationships that you build to enhance their wellbeing within the classroom.

**Your greatest strength will be your resilience. You will be receiving lots of feedback across placements and assignments, and it is important to remember that this feedback is to help you become a better teacher**



**Isabelle Winnington**

BEd 4 Music Royal Conservatoire of Glasgow

*"Being an active member of a trade union is important as it can give you access to support and advice"*



## How would you describe your BEd year in three words?

Exciting, demanding, rewarding

## Who was your favourite teacher at school and why?

I had a few favourite teachers, mainly my music and drama teachers. They were always so supportive of my passions and encouraged me to push myself. I also had an incredible guidance teacher who really cared about the wellbeing of his pupils. They have had a big impact on my life and my decision to become a teacher.

## What's the one thing you'd like to change about teaching?

I would like to see more recognition and encouragement of positive teacher wellbeing. Being a teacher is physically and mentally challenging and it is easy to get burnt out or overwhelmed. I think more support systems for teachers and open dialogue about the challenges of teaching would be extremely beneficial. You can't look after the young people in your life without looking after yourself!

## Why do you think it's important to be an active member of a trade union?

Being an active member of a trade union is important as it can give you access to

support and advice as required. For me personally, it makes me feel like I have a voice and someone who will fight my corner if needed.

## Any embarrassing teaching moments?

Teaching comes with many embarrassing moments! My worst was definitely when I had a complete technology fail and all my video examples were upside down! The children thought it would be funny to also turn themselves upside down to watch the videos! Not my finest moment...

## What advice would you give to a student starting their teaching course?

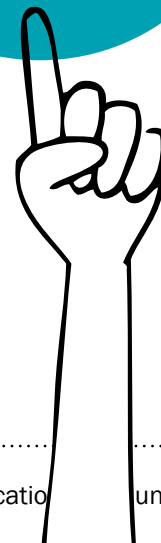
I would advise any new student teachers to be open to anything and not make assumptions. Children and young people are all so unique and some may surprise you! It is important that you are able and willing to adapt in the classroom. Also, manage your workload! Student teaching comes with a lot of paperwork and it's super important to prioritise time for yourself too.

## What's the most important lesson you've learned about teaching so far?

The most important thing I've learned about teaching is how much difference a teacher can make in someone's life. Sometimes the teacher is the one constant in a young

person's life and showing that you truly care about each of your pupils can make them feel so valued. Building relationships and seeing positive outcomes for your pupils is incredibly rewarding.

**Sometimes the teacher is the one constant in a young person's life and showing that you truly care about each of your pupils can make them feel so valued**





**Katie Sturgeon**

BEd 3 The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

*"For me, being an active member of a trade union gives me a collective voice, as well as providing protection against any unsafe or unfair treatment in my place of work"*



## How has your course been to date?

I am really enjoying the BEd course at RCS. It is engaging, informative and the content so far has taken me on a very exciting journey. It has been a very busy three years – but that's how I like it!

## Who was your favourite teacher at school/why?

I have a few favourite teachers in mind, particularly my Music teacher, my History teacher, and my Business/Admin teacher. These teachers provided continual support, encouragement and were always on hand if I ever needed a chat – particularly Miss H. in Business and Admin! In each of their classrooms, their fun, infectious personalities really made learning fun, and they continue to be my inspirations moving forward into the teaching profession.

## What would you change about teaching?

For me, my only change to music teaching specifically would be to introduce a much more defined programme in the early years, before learners reach secondary school – we need to bridge the gap! Music has so many advantages and introducing these more frequently to young learners is vital to help support both academic and personal development, for example:

improving social skills, and increasing levels of self-esteem and self-confidence. Many of the learners I work with in primary schools are so excited to receive music when they start S1, which in itself, is extremely rewarding.

## Why is it important to be part of a trade union?

Being part of a trade union offers support and amplifies 'the rights' of a teacher/professional. For me, being an active member of a trade union gives me a collective voice, as well as providing protection against any unsafe or unfair treatment in my place of work. Not only that, but they provide valuable communication keeping us music teachers regularly updated on important information, all the while making sure we understand our rights.

## Embarrassing teaching moments?

Thankfully not many... The best one has to be nearly falling over a piano stool – numerous times in the one lesson may I add!

## Advice for student teachers?

Grab every opportunity – ask lots of questions and never say no to a challenge. Take time for yourself: teacher training can

be intense sometimes – prioritise your own health, as you are most important.

Live in the moment – four years, or a PGDE vanishes in front of your eyes...

Prioritise – create lists, be organised and make sure to stay on top of your A-Game, as best as you can.

Take the criticism! We all learn from our mistakes... Smile, and take this on board, as hard as it can be sometimes – there is no failure, only feedback.

## Most important lesson so far?

I have learned so much over the last three years, however, as a teacher, you are the inspiration for the next generation – my main mantra as a practitioner. You can't teach kindness, you can't teach dedication, but you can inspire, change, and guide young people to be the best versions of themselves. Teaching, especially music teaching, is the best job in the world.

**Take time for yourself:  
teacher training can be  
intense sometimes –  
prioritise your own health,  
as you are most important.**



# Looking After Your Health and Wellbeing



**Being mindful of health and wellbeing is important throughout your studying life and beyond. The EIS hosts an online resource to support the health and wellbeing of everyone involved in education:**

[www.eis.org.uk/member-support/hwresource](http://www.eis.org.uk/member-support/hwresource)

The following are highlights from the resource:

**NHS 24** can be contacted by phone and digitally (including app) for urgent care, as well as advice and service details:

[www.nhs24.scot](http://www.nhs24.scot)

**The NUS and student unions** can provide information on the support available whilst at university:

[thinkpositive.scot](http://thinkpositive.scot)

**Education Support** is a UK wide charity supporting people working in education, and offer a free helpline, staffed by counsellors:

[www.educationsupport.org.uk](http://www.educationsupport.org.uk)

**Breathing Space** is a confidential phoneline for anyone in Scotland over the age of 16, feeling low, anxious or depressed:

[www.breathingspace.scot/about-us/who-we-are](http://www.breathingspace.scot/about-us/who-we-are)

**Samaritans** is a free, confidential service for anyone experiencing mental health issues. The service also provides resources specifically for those working with young people:

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

**The Health and Safety Executive (HSE)** offers a variety of resources aimed at improving health and wellbeing in the workplace:

[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

**Mind to Mind** is from NHS Inform and offers ways to improve mental wellbeing by hearing what others have found helpful:

[www.nhsinform.scot/mind-to-mind](http://www.nhsinform.scot/mind-to-mind)

**The Mental Health Foundation** offers practical resources around self-help and supporting others:

[www.mentalhealth.org.uk/scotland](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/scotland)

**Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH)** has resources to improve mental health, including information about mental health and the Equality Act 2010:

[www.samh.org.uk](http://www.samh.org.uk)

**YoungMinds** hosts a range of resources to support the mental health of children and young people:

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

# Working While You Study

## Know Your Employment Rights

The University experience for some students is clouded by employers who take advantage of their lack of workplace knowledge. Some employers try to impose working practices on students that more experienced staff would not accept. As Scotland's fourth largest trade union, the EIS works with the NUS and the STUC to campaign for better terms and conditions for young workers.

Here is a brief guide to employment law so that you can be aware of your rights at work.

The legal minimum requirement, under the Working Time Directive, is for a **20 minute rest break** if you are expected to work for more than 6 hours

### Pay, Tax and National Insurance

Both full and part-time workers in the UK are entitled to earn the national minimum wage (under 21) or the national living wage (21 or over), and this must not include any tips, gratuities or service charges.

From the 1st April 2025 wage levels have been set at:

- £12.21 National Living Wage
- £10.00 Aged 18 to 20
- £7.55 Under 18
- £7.55 Apprentice

### Holidays and Annual Leave

There is a minimum right to paid holidays. Some employers will offer more than the legal minimum of 28 days per year if you work 5 days a week. Part-time staff are entitled to the same holidays as full-time staff on a pro rata basis. The facts to remember are:

- You start to accrue leave as soon as your employment commences.
- While on leave you will receive your normal rate of pay.
- Public and bank holidays can be included in your minimum holiday entitlement.
- On leaving an employer, you must be paid for any leave you have not taken.

### Working Hours

Adult workers cannot be forced to work more than an average of 48 hours a week over a 17 week period. If you are 18 years of age or over and wish to work more than 48 hours a week, you can opt out of the 48 hour limit. This must be voluntary and be put in writing and this must not form part of an agreement with the whole workforce.

### Breaks

Most employers have their own policy on breaks, so it is best to ask your manager or colleagues what these are before you start work. The legal minimum requirement, under the Working Time Directive, is for a 20 minute rest break if you are expected to work for more than 6 hours. This time can comprise of a lunch or coffee break and your employer can specify when you take it.

### Trade Union Membership

As well as being a member of NUS and a student teacher member of the EIS you have a legal right to join an appropriate union for your part-time employment. Some unions have special reduced rates for student members or for part-timers.

For more information on your Employment Rights as a student part-time worker check out [www.worksmart.org.uk](http://www.worksmart.org.uk) and use their union finder to find the most appropriate union for you.



**Part-time staff are entitled to the same holidays as full-time staff on a pro rata basis**



Living Rent is Scotland's tenants and community union. We organise collectively to build the power to secure material improvements to our daily lives and put power back into the hands of ordinary people. We fight for better rights and better protections against rent increases, evictions, lack of public services, high energy bills, pollution or poor-quality housing.

#### How we work:

##### Members organise at different levels:

**Locally:** We support each other against evictions, rent increases, stolen deposits... We build up our collective confidence to stand up for our rights and address the housing crisis. Have an issue? Get in touch!

**Locally:** Our members organise in local neighbourhood branches to fight on campaigns in their communities. In the last year, members have won campaigns to get the council to install street lighting in both Edinburgh and Glasgow, won a commitment of £18m from the council to retrofit blocks in Lochend in Edinburgh and successfully pushed for tighter restrictions to short term lets in Edinburgh, to name just a few.

**City wide:** Alongside neighbourhood issues, we organise at the city level to put back homes into use, to get better public services and to ensure that our cities work for the people who live in them!

**Nationally:** Our neighbourhood activities inform our national work, where we fight for structural legislative change. We know that our housing has been 'in crisis' for some time, but this was brought into sharp focus during Covid-19 and even more so during the cost of living crisis. Faced with rising energy bills, increased inflation and rising food prices, we are now facing a perfect storm of economic insecurity for too many of us.

Rents in Scotland have been completely unaffordable for years and too many landlords have failed to improve our housing stock, whether in the private or social and public rented sector. To bring about real change in Scotland's housing, we are pushing for rent controls that tie the quality of the home to the amount the landlord is able to charge to bring down rents and increase the quality of our housing.

**Next steps:** We know the current political system is failing ordinary people and we refuse to wait for politicians, or charities to change things for the better.

Our fights and successes are testament to the fact that community organising works. Through coming together, we have been able to force landlords to give members compensation, halt rent hikes and evictions and do repairs and on a national level - force the government to introduce eviction bans and rent freezes.

But we are only as strong as our membership. If you believe in organised communities and that everyone should have access to safe, secure, affordable housing, get in touch on [contact@livingrent.org](mailto:contact@livingrent.org) Join as a member and get involved in your local branch.

[www.livingrent.org](http://www.livingrent.org)

Twitter: @Living\_Rent



# Welcome

**nus** *scotland*  
national union of **students**



## Introducing NUS Scotland's President, Sai Shraddha Suresh Viswanathan

Sai began her tenure as President of NUS Scotland in July 2024, having served as Vice President for Welfare at Aberdeen University Students' Union in the 2022-2024 term. She is the first international student to be elected to the position and will serve for a two-year term. Sai was elected on a manifesto that outlined some of her priorities for NUS Scotland during her term including building a strong and accessible student movement; protecting vital education funding; and fostering a culture which is representative and supportive of the diversity of Scotland's student, recognising all students - college and university, international and domestic, and apprentices. She is keen that NUS Scotland continues in its tradition of building positive working relationships with Trade Unions and has valued the close collaboration with EIS since her term began and hopes to see it continue.

## Who we are

NUS Scotland is the national campaigning organisation for students – we represent over 500,000 students at college and university. With 30 member students' associations, NUS represents every college student association and the vast majority of university student associations in Scotland. We promote, defend and extend the rights of students, and work to develop and champion strong students' associations. Whether it's a local campaign that your students' association is fighting on campus, or a national campaign in partnership with our sister unions to make students' lives better, NUS Scotland is the collective movement that makes change happen.

## What has NUS Scotland won for you?

Over recent years, NUS Scotland has achieved some big wins for students

- £3.2 million fund for mental health counsellors
- £2,400 increase in student finance from 2024/25
- Increased the student loan repayment threshold
- Ensured students are eligible for the new carer support payment benefit
- Free bus travel for under-22s and peak rail fares scrapped

## What we're working on now

When Sai and the other NUS officer across the UK started their term last year they sat down to lay out their priorities and identified key areas which they want to address during their terms.

They want to address the problem of inadequate funding at universities and colleges which is leading to course and job cuts. They want to end student poverty, ensuring no-one is going cold or hungry to

get an education. They want to make sure housing and public transport is affordable, accessible and reliable for students. And they want to fight for human rights, standing up for trans students, and stop the exploitation of international students paying extortionate fees.

Running with these priorities NUS Scotland will be campaigning hard for a move away from the status quo of our education system being geared towards profit making and instead towards a system that focuses on student and staff experience, wellbeing, and outcomes. Students have been bounced from crisis to crisis over the last few years, so we know that now is not the time for fiddling around the edges, but for transformation – and the student movement is determined to lead the way. Here's how:

## A Fair Deal for Our Future

We are campaigning to put more money in the pockets of the lowest-paid, youngest workers and students in Scotland and across the UK and to end student poverty.

**We promote, defend and extend the rights of students**

Students and apprentices are working longer hours than they want to or should be when studying, because it's legal for employers to pay them less than older colleagues and student support is inadequate to cover the cost of living.

Scottish Government research shows most students work significantly more than 10-15 hours a week despite they themselves recommending against that.

There's no under-21s discount on rent or transport, and there's no student discount on our bills. That's why we are demanding fair pay from our workplaces and fair funding from our governments now.

In our Fair Deal for Our Future campaign, we are demanding a real living wage for all workers, regardless of age or if they are an apprentice. And we are calling for student support equal to the living wage so that students can focus on our studies without worrying about going hungry.

## Housing

According to a survey we conducted just last year more than a third of students in Scotland (34%) are struggling to pay their monthly rent and housing costs. Because of this 57% of those students have skipped meals and 19% have had to use foodbanks. This is absolutely unacceptable.

Everyone deserves a safe, affordable, and secure home but across Scotland far too many students don't - a shocking 12% of students have experienced homelessness. Student housing has reached crisis point and NUS Scotland is leading the campaign to fix this. We are making sure student experiences of housing are at the forefront of politician's minds and working to ensure that the Scottish Government introduces rent controls that include student accommodation and bring rents down to affordable levels. We are also calling for an end to the exploitative practice of landlords demanding huge upfront deposits or UK based 'guarantors'.

## Students' Human rights and Liberation

At NUS, we are determined to stand up for human rights and liberation, which means working collectively to fight oppression and supporting each other to heal from it.

This past year we set up the NUS Liberation Collective which is our new space to strengthen and support liberation activism and which is led by students and apprentices from our five liberation groups: disabled, LGBTQ, Racialised, Trans and women. Students from these groups can join the collective and contribute to our campaigns, events and conversations.

This builds on a long history of liberation activism within the student movement which has had a huge impact on education and society.

A particular focus for our campaigns in the year ahead will be to continue our unequivocal support for trans and non-binary people, who continue to face an increasingly hostile media and political environment. We won't rest until trans

students are treated with respect and can live their lives in joy and peace, and the same is true for women, disabled, Racialised, and all LGBTQ students.

## Standing up for International Students

International students represent almost a third of all students in the UK and are an important part of the higher education sector, a growing presence in the further education sector and an essential part of the student movement. They bring specific stories and skills and face different challenges to access education in the UK.

Unfortunately, the higher education system in Scotland and across the UK has become reliant on exploiting international students and charging ridiculously high fees, and the UK Government's hostile environment is designed to make international students' lives difficult.

Like our liberation collective, we are creating a platform for international students to connect and support each other in facing and dismantling the hostile environment, and are working to see education funded sustainably through public money so it can move away from this exploitative model.

## Mental health

In previous years NUS Scotland has successfully won funding from the Scottish Government for dedicated mental health services at colleges and universities. Unfortunately, this hasn't been extended long term.

As Scottish Government research has shown that around half of students said they struggle with mental health because of financial difficulties we will continue fighting for long-term funding for student mental health, and for the underlying root causes of the mental health crisis to be addressed.

Our Think Positive project will also continue to work with institutions and students' associations to deliver better mental health support on campus.



## How to get Involved

We can't deliver all of these campaigns as individuals, we need to be working together with students from across Scotland. You can keep track of the work that NUS Scotland is doing by liking our page on Facebook or by following us on Twitter.

Your local students' association has a tremendous amount of influence meaning they can have a really positive impact on the experience of students like you. Make sure to get involved with the campaigns that your students' association is working on, or get directly involved yourself and become a course representative or run for a position in your students' association's elections.

It can be intense balancing course work and your placement, but it's important to do more than just study whilst at university. University is a great opportunity to meet lots of other people from a wide range of backgrounds, take that opportunity by getting involved with clubs and societies. Your students' association will offer a wide range of opportunities from one day events, or to weekly volunteering commitments, make sure you check out what else you can do whilst at university and make the most of your time.

Just remember that you are now part of a union – and that means there will always be someone to stand up for you, and always someone for you to stand up with.

### Instagram:

[www.instagram.com/nusscotland](https://www.instagram.com/nusscotland)

### Bluesky:

[bsky.app/profile/nusscotland.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/nusscotland.bsky.social)

### Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/nusScotland](https://www.facebook.com/nusScotland)

### Tiktok:

[www.tiktok.com/@nusscotland](https://www.tiktok.com/@nusscotland)

### X:

[x.com/NUSScotland](https://x.com/NUSScotland)



# What to Expect While on Placement

**Your first school placement can seem daunting, but it can also be a lot of fun. Placement gives you the opportunity to put into practice all the skills that you have learned so far and ‘find your feet’ in the classroom.**

**The wellbeing of everyone in the school community is a fundamental prerequisite for productive teaching and learning**

## Before you Begin

- **Research** your school and find out as much about it as you can. School website/X/Facebook pages are often useful sources of information and news.
- **Talk** to other students, lecturers and your Student Education Society to build up a picture of what to expect.
- **Visit** the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) website. It also contains advice for student teachers and can be found at [www.gtcs.org.uk](http://www.gtcs.org.uk)
- **Request** login details for the school's computer network.
- **Get** a copy of the school's staff handbook and behaviour policy.
- **Find** out how long it takes to travel to the school and what the best route to get there is.
- **Arrange**, with your mentor and Headteacher, a time to visit the school prior to commencing your placement. Use the opportunity to find out which classes you will teach, levels, any significant

information about individual pupils that you should be aware of (medical, behavioural etc) as well as the policies and protocols of the school.

## First Day

- **First impressions count** so make sure that you arrive in plenty of time and have school and mentor contact details with you in case of an emergency.
- **Dress appropriately** as you should look smart but stay practical because you need to feel comfortable when you are working with children.
- **Smile and introduce yourself** to your new colleagues. This may seem difficult if you are nervous but remember, they have all been through the same thing before and will be happy to help you settle in.
- **Try to learn your pupils' names quickly**; one good way to help remember them is to create a seating plan.



# Throughout your Placement

## Your health and wellbeing are important

Teaching can be a stressful and exhausting profession so taking care of your own health is very important. Support should be available in school or through your university so please talk to someone if you need to. The wellbeing of everyone in a school community is a fundamental pre-requisite for productive teaching and learning.

## Always ask questions

If you are unsure about where to find something, how to set up equipment or how you should deal with a particular issue, your colleagues and your mentor should be able to help.

## Be professional

If you find yourself socialising in a place where pupils or parents from your school may be, then remember to behave appropriately. Social media platforms like BlueSky, X, Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram are now part of personal and professional life. It is important to think carefully about your privacy settings on personal accounts and devices and familiarise yourself with the school's social media use policy for any professional accounts and devices.

## Regularly update your school experience file

If you keep this organised, then you will avoid trying to remember experiences and writing last minute updates.

## If you become ill

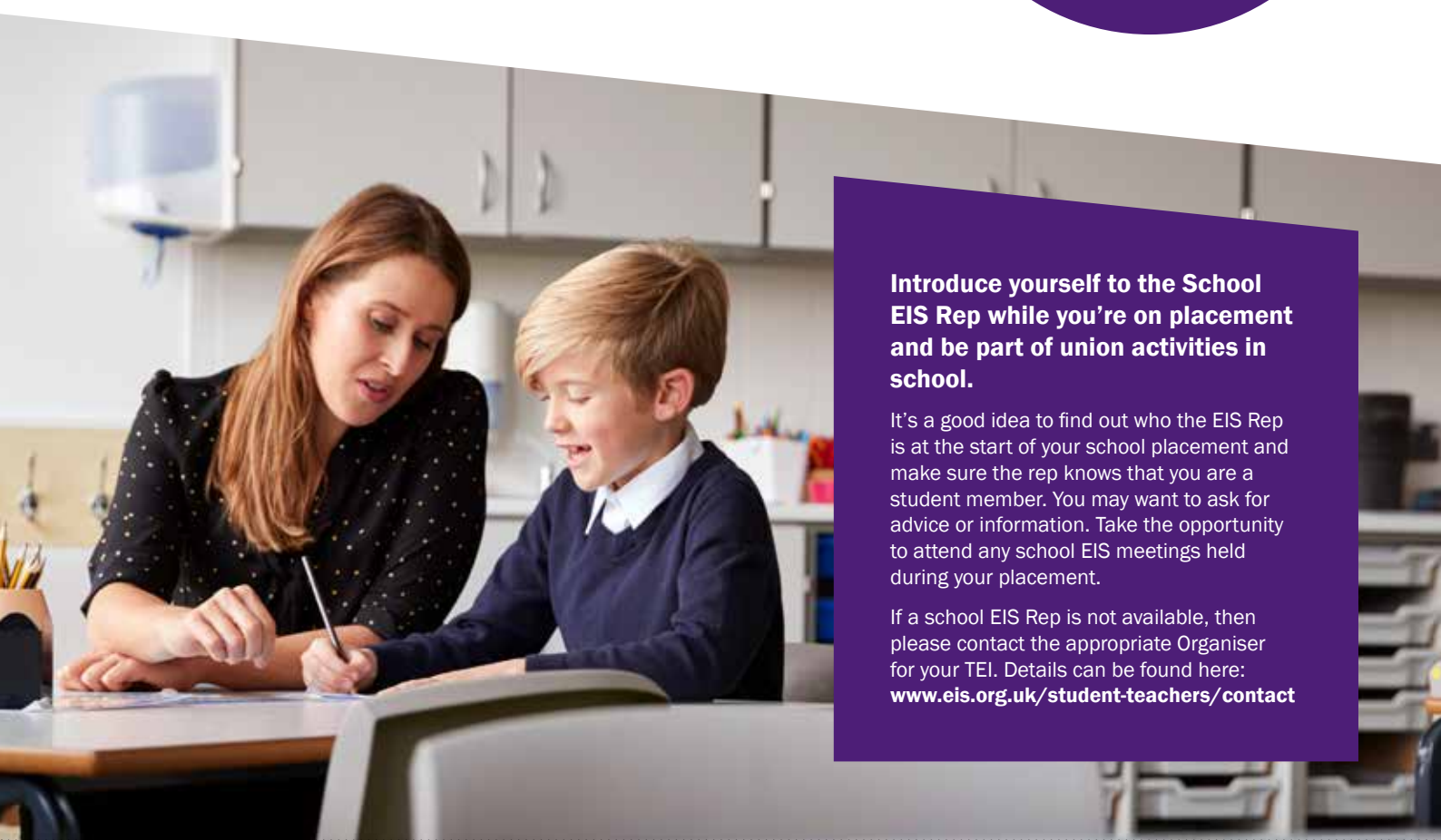
You should inform your school as well as your university tutor immediately.

**Look out for  
EIS drop-in clinics  
at your university  
for advice on  
placements**

## Introduce yourself to the School EIS Rep while you're on placement and be part of union activities in school.

It's a good idea to find out who the EIS Rep is at the start of your school placement and make sure the rep knows that you are a student member. You may want to ask for advice or information. Take the opportunity to attend any school EIS meetings held during your placement.

If a school EIS Rep is not available, then please contact the appropriate Organiser for your TEI. Details can be found here: [www.eis.org.uk/student-teachers/contact](http://www.eis.org.uk/student-teachers/contact)



# EIS Networks

The EIS has a number of networks you can get involved in. Find out more online in our 'Get Involved' section: [www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk)



Promote the work of ASN teachers in the wider educational community.



Connect with members of the Instrumental Music Teachers network.



Connect with BAME members, access relevant opportunities and advise the EIS' anti-racism agenda.



Connect with disabled members, access relevant opportunities and advise the EIS' disability equality work.



Open to any member 30 or younger, this is a new network for EIS members to connect and share their experiences.



Connect with members who identify as LGBT+ and advise the union on LGBT+ issues.



Early Years Network - Brings together Nursery teachers to share experiences, discuss common challenges and promote their distinct professional identity and contribution to learning and teaching.

# EIS Representatives

EIS representatives are fundamental to the operation of this union and play a vital role for the members in the workplace. All EIS representatives are volunteers and carry out a number of duties on behalf of the Educational Institute of Scotland and for their colleagues and fellow members. School Reps can support you while you are on placement so find out who they are as soon as you arrive in school.



## Professional Learning

**The EIS is committed to providing all members with high-quality professional learning opportunities that support career-long professional development. As a student member, any of the various training courses and professional learning seminars organised by the EIS are open to you. Details of courses and events are available through the EIS website.**

## EIS Reps

[Help](#) / [Advice](#) / [Info](#)

### What does an EIS Rep do?

- Gets TUC accredited training
- Keeps members up-to-date with the latest EIS news and action
- Provides support and advice on workplace issues
- Represents the collective interests of members in workplace negotiations
- Promotes the benefits of EIS membership and ways to become involved

## Learning Reps

[Professional Learning](#)  
[Help](#) / [Advice](#) / [Info](#)

### What does an EIS Learning Rep do?

- Undertakes high level training at postgraduate level
- Provides guidance and support to colleagues on Professional Learning (PL) opportunities
- Helps to organise events and seminars
- Raises the profile of Professional Learning through work with partners

## Health & Safety Reps

[Help](#) / [Advice](#) / [Info](#)

### What does an EIS Health & Safety Rep do?

- Gets TUC accredited training
- Promotes safe working practices in educational establishments
- Identifies health and safety issues
- Investigates potential hazards at work
- Supports employees with complaints about health, safety or welfare at work
- Inspects workplaces to identify hazards

## Equality Reps

[Help](#) / [Advice](#) / [Info](#)

### What does an EIS Equality Rep do?

- Gets TUC accredited training
- Advises Local Associations and branches on equality issues
- Supports individual members
- Promotes equality and social justice in the workplace
- Helps develop local equality strategies
- Supports local equality initiatives



**FREE**  
**Student**  
**Membership**

**&**

**FREE**  
**Probationer**  
**Membership**



**Join**  
*the Union*



[www.eis.org.uk/join](http://www.eis.org.uk/join)