

**Elle Gray**  
**President**

### **AGM Report – May 2008**

This year I have had the real privilege of being the President of Portsmouth Students Union, at a time when as an organisation we are overcoming some of the troubles of the past and all areas are blossoming. We are much more professional and more highly regarded by people in the University and wider community, than ever before. A few highlights for me are the continued strength of our Volunteering (Team of the year!), the record amount of money raised for our RAG charities, a renewed focus on our primary objective (the advancement of education) through improved course rep structure and training, many different sports successes and a new energy coming from the amount of new societies forming and holding fantastic events. All this combined with the birth of a proper newspaper to join our already strong media has meant we are able to communicate better than ever before. I am also especially proud of the fact we have always been there for students in any situation, that is what really makes us the Students' Union.

As a Union we have looked at our staffing and structure this year to make sure we are well equipped to provide the best possible experience for all Portsmouth students. We are also starting a two year audit process (Students' Union Evaluation Initiative), which will look at how we operate and make us more effective.

The challenges of the future will be the use of space in this building, and the Government review of University funding in 2009. We have campaigned hard this year to highlight the issue of student debt, with the local council and MP working on our behalf to stop any further privatisation of education. This campaign must continue to preserve the right to be educated because of your ability to learn not your ability to pay.

I want to thank my sabb team for being so passionate about their individual roles, the permanent staff who work tirelessly behind the scenes with absolute professionalism and enthusiasm despite – or maybe because of – all the crazy ideas we throw at them, and last but not least, the students who have helped in our diverse range of activities and events – your efforts are what makes this Union so great.

I wish the new sabb team all the best and good luck for next year.