

unite the  
union  
at  
Loughborough

# NEWS LETTER



**Issue 51 November, 2024**

**WELCOME TO THE LATEST NEWS FROM UNITE  
THE UNION AT LOUGHBOROUGH**

## **Christmas Leave Extension.**

Unite the Union proposed an item at the July JNCC to extend this year's Christmas leave to include Monday 23 December 2024. Senior Management were generally supportive at the time, and the Vice Chancellor's October notice clarified that management are on board. We're really pleased to have secured the additional day's holiday.

## **Purchasing of Annual Leave.**

We are currently consulting with the University about the Purchase of Annual Leave Scheme. We have asked Senior Management to include the buyback of annual leave at the request of our members. This has been noted and may be implemented in the future, depending on how popular the Scheme is. We are awaiting the finer details of the scheme, which we anticipate will be available soon.

## **Declaring External Work.**

You must declare any external employment that may have a conflict of interest with the University. More information can be found [here](#).

We have supported members involved in conflict of interest situations which have resulted in a breach of trust and further action. We want to prevent all such breaches. Please get in touch if you'd like some advice about your circumstances.

## **Women's Prayer Room (EHB).**

We are aware of incidents of women experiencing harassment in the EHB Prayer Room. Individuals have been hesitant about taking steps forward and notifying the University because they are afraid of further repercussions. We strongly encourage you to come forward and report any abuse you encounter at the University, either by contacting Security or informing us. We will treat all reports in the strictest confidence.

## **Union Christmas Dinner.**

We are delighted to invite you to our Annual Christmas Dinner on Monday 9 December at the Village Bar, 12:15pm. The menu is attached and lunch costs £10 per head. Please send your menu requests to [Graham Moody](#) before Monday 25 November. Please pay on the day or in advance by contacting Graham.

## **Get Involved!**

If you are interested in getting involved in your Union Branch Committee, we'd love to welcome you to the Team. Please see attached.

We're also looking for members who want to take a less active role in assisting us in supporting our members, including activity around public relations and membership recruitment. The amount of time spent on these roles is largely up to you. The roles are entirely voluntary, and time for training will be provided.

Contact for those interested [M.L.Hyde@Lboro.ac.uk](mailto:M.L.Hyde@Lboro.ac.uk)

# Getting involved in Unite BRANCHES



If you'd like to get more involved in your union now is the time to do it. Elections for workplace representatives and branch officers will be taking place early in the first quarter of 2025, so this is your chance to become more active in Unite.

Elections for workplace representatives and branch officers take place once every three years. The next electoral period is 2025 to 2028. Your regional office will provide more information about how elections will be conducted, but all reps will be elected by the end of March 2025.

**This leaflet provides a brief overview of the role of BRANCH OFFICERS in Unite the union and a general outline of what their roles entail.**

## The Branch in Unite the union

Everyone is in a union branch. These are usually based on workplaces, but they can also be based on an industry or geography. The Branch is the key structure through which members can come together to participate in the Union's activities and democracy, access services, recruit, organise, campaign, support local issues and influence Unite policy.

Branch officers are elected by and from the members of the branch. Details of how to run the elections are provided by your regional administration. All branch officers must be elected for the new electoral term by end of March 2025.

***To ensure that a branch can function properly the rule book says that each branch will have at least the following officers to make it work: Rule 17 sets out how branches operate.***

## Branch Secretary

The role of branch secretary is vital for our democracy. They:

- Bring members together – arranging meetings, keeping records and communicating with members.
- Look after branch funds – all Branches have their own funds to help meet the costs of day to day running and the secretary (along with the Treasurer) ensures that the finances are correctly recorded and reported.
- Working with other reps to ensure that the union is strong in their workplace.

- Ensuring that the branch has a say in union elections and policy making – submitting nominations and motions for conferences.

## Branch Chair

The chair presides over all meetings of the branch, keeps order and ensures that business is conducted in accordance with the union's rules and branch standing orders. The Chair works closely with the branch secretary to draw up meeting agendas, verify minutes and signs official documents; is impartial and is seen to act fairly.

## Branch Treasurer

The treasurer works in conjunction with the branch secretary to ensure that the finances of the branch are correctly recorded and reported. They prepare the paperwork for the quarterly audit by the regional administration. The rules allow for the positions of treasurer and secretary to be held by the same person.

## Equalities Officer

The branch equalities officer raises awareness and promotes equality of opportunity in the branch; advises and supports members in relation to equality issues; encourages participation of women, Black & Asian Ethnic Minority (BAEM), LGBT+ and disabled members at all levels and promotes education for minority groups.

The branch may decide to elect other officers to share out the work of the branch, and take decisions between branch meetings, these members make up the branch committee.

**Running a branch may sound challenging, but all of our Branch secretaries and officers receive quality training. The training is a great opportunity to learn – and meet other Unite activists from across all of our different workplaces and Sectors.**

Branch officers are eligible to be nominated to various lay delegate or representative positions.

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# Getting involved in Unite WORKPLACE REPRESENTATIVES



If you'd like to get more involved in your union now is the time to do it. Elections for workplace representatives and branch officers will be taking place early in the first quarter of 2025, so this is your chance to become more active in Unite.

Elections for workplace representatives and branch officers take place once every three years. The next electoral period is 2025 to 2028. Your regional office will provide more information about how elections will be conducted, but all reps will be elected by the end of March 2025.

**This leaflet provides a brief overview of the different WORKPLACE REPRESENTATIVES in Unite the union and a general outline of what their roles entail.**

The role of the workplace representative is fairly self-explanatory and they are vital to the work of Unite. They are elected from the members in a workplace by those members. A representative may have a different title in your workplace but their place in the union is enshrined in the rule book (Rule 18) which sets out the following different types of workplace representative:

## Workplace Reps/shop stewards

- Reps make a difference in their workplace by supporting, advising and representing members.
- Problem solving, communication, negotiating and influencing skills will be a key feature of the reps job.
- Reps allowed time off for trade union duties.

## Safety Reps

- Investigating potential hazards and dangerous occurrences at the workplace and examine the causes of accidents at the workplace.
- Investigating complaints by any employee relating to health, safety or welfare at work.
- Taking up health, safety or welfare issues with the employer.
- Carrying out regular inspections representing workers in talks with the employer or the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) or other safety enforcement agencies and get information from them.
- Attending meetings of safety committees.

## Learning Reps

- Raise awareness of the benefits of learning.
- Encourages fellow workers to take up learning opportunities.
- Support members in learning.
- Provide advice and guidance on learning.
- Secure equal opportunities in learning.

## Equality Reps

- Understanding equality issues.
- Developing knowledge on discrimination and the relevant legislation, policies and procedures.
- Helping make Unite workplaces focus on Dignity at Work issues and outlaw bullying.

## Environment Reps

- working with your employer and members carry out an environmental survey of the workplace.
- To encourage and assist members with advice on how to reduce their carbon footprint at work.

These roles may sound challenging, but all of our workplace representatives receive quality training in all of the areas of their responsibility. The training is a great opportunity to learn – and meet other Unite activists from across all of our different workplaces and Sectors. The role of the Health & Safety reps is covered by law and specialist training is therefore available. Following your training support and advice is available from other reps or your union fulltime official.

Workplace reps are eligible to be nominated to various lay delegate or representative positions.

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