

UCU Northern Region

**New
Activist
Handbook**



Congratulations on becoming a UCU branch activist! I hope this information pack will be a useful guide to your new role.

As a new UCU activist, there are four things you should do to get started in your role:

1. If you have not already done so, **inform your employer** that you are a recently appointed UCU rep/activist. Use the model letter (Resource No.1)

2. Register for UCU training.

You are entitled to paid time off to attend training and can claim travel expenses from UCU. In order to ensure we are using UCU finances appropriately UCU courses are delivered on a regional basis. This approach also helps build local networks and gain a better understanding of local bargaining situations. Therefore you should check what courses the Northern Region is running, and only apply for training in other regions if our region is not running the course, or if there is a specific reason you cannot attend the course set in your region.

Check the UCU website to see what training courses are available : ucu.org.uk/training

3. Start communicating.

Introduce yourself to members. Your Branch Membership Contact (BMC) can advise you of members in your department/workplace.

One way to get active now: Put a poster up on your door. Posters and a range of materials for promotion, recruitment and campaigning can be obtained from UCU Head Office campaigns@ucu.org.uk

4. **Gather basic information.** Ideally you should have inherited a file/folder from a previous UCU rep. If not, you will need a copy from your HR department of at least the following documents:

- Disciplinary and grievance procedure
- Recognition and/or Facilities Agreement
- Management policies and procedures
- Any standard employment contracts

How to use this online resource pack

Below is a list of numbered resources 1-56

After the list of resources is an index titled '**Where can I find information on....**'

Click on the link <https://goo.gl/X7D0Ac> to access all the resources.

UCU Reps / Activists : An introduction to your role	
1	Standard letter/email to employer to inform of recently elected UCU rep and to request time off to train
2	Information for new UCU reps - Guide to the Regional Office
3	UCU democratic structure & Key union components of regional and national structure
4	Being a UCU activist : The role of the rep
5	Being a UCU activist : Principals of being a UCU rep
6	Being a UCU activist : Understanding the sources of rights
7	Being a UCU activist : Facilities and time off for UCU reps
8	Being a UCU activist : Protection from victimisation for UCU reps
9	UCU Rep's Handbook
10	ACAS Code of Practice on Time off for trade union duties and activities
11	Winning better facilities time and recruiting new staff
Building a branch	
12	Building the branch committee
13	Branch health check exercise
14	Rebuilding a branch : A checklist for action
15	Branch rules (model local rules) including information on branch officer roles
16	Branch elected Regional Committee delegates
17	Local contacts : Volunteers can register at btu.web.ucu.org.uk/volunteer
18	Using email effectively
19	How to produce leaflets
20	Newsletters
21	Newsletter template
22	Developing a branch website
23	Twitter : UCU Twitter reference guide (for UCU branch Twitter accounts)

24	Using consultations and surveys
25	Designing and conducting a sample staff survey
26	Organising effective branch meetings
27	Organising meetings
28	Running formal meetings
29	Organising events
Representing Members	
30	Handling casework : A guide for UCU reps
31	Disciplinary and grievances at work : ACAS guide
32	Joint Agreement on guidance on disciplinary procedures in Further Education colleges
33	Representation at Work : ACAS guide
34	Continuous service for redundancy purposes
35	What to do if you are being bullied
36	Guidance for those accused of bullying
37	Lesson Observations : UCU Principals and Position
38	List of other useful websites
Recruiting and Organising	
39	Organising to build a strong and active branch
40	Workplace mapping
41	Finding non members
42	Putting together a recruitment strategy
43	Planning a recruitment campaign
44	Recruitment campaign checklist
45	How to approach a potential member
46	How to answer the 'why join' questions
47	Being a successful door-knocker
48	Ensuring recruitment of new staff – a checklist
49	Running recruitment stalls
50	Why you should be a UCU member recruitment leaflet
51	Why you should become a UCU member PowerPoint presentation
52	Speakers' notes for new staff inductions

Membership Records

53	UCU eServices : How to update your membership record
55	Poster to encourage members to use eServices
56	Poster to encourage members to use eServices (email address)

Where can I find information on....

	Resource No.	Page(s)
ACAS Code of Practice on Time off for trade union duties and activities ucunorthern.org.uk/newrep	7 9 10 11	20+ 8+
BME / Black members regional network	ucunorthern.org.uk/bme	
Branch Committee	9 17 20	25 3
Branch Committee meetings	17 20 31 32 33	2 8+
Branch Committee officer roles	20 9 21	4 26+
Branch elections	20	6+
Branch meetings	31 32 33	
Branch resources / materials	ucu.org.uk/resources ucunorthern.org.uk/roc btu.web.ucu.org.uk	
Branch rules / Local rules	20	
Bullying	40	

Bullying : Being accused of bullying	41	
Business cards	ucunorthern.org.uk/businesscards	
Capability	42	
Case issue : when a member has no case	9	9
Cases which must involve the Regional Office	ucunorthern.org.uk/repsmustcontact	
Casework	35	
Collective Bargaining issues	Hyperlink	
	9	9
	38	25+
Communication : talking to members directly	9	
Conduct and complaints	Hyperlink	
Confidentiality	35	3+
Conflicts of interest when representing a member	9	9
Consultation	38	31
Continuing Professional Development (CPD)	cpd.web.ucu.org.uk	
Continuous service for redundancy purpose	39	
	Hyperlink	
Contract of employment	6	3
	9	28+
Data Protection	35	3+
	36	77
Direct representation for individual members	ucunorthern.org.uk/newrep	
Disciplinary issues	9	8
Disciplinary meeting right to be accompanied by a UCU Rep	36	23+
Discipline / Disciplinary	36	
	37	
Emails to members	23	
	58	1
Employment Rights Act 1996	Hyperlink	
Equality Act 2010	36	78
Equality BME	ucu.org.uk/equality	

	ucunorthern.org.uk/bme	
Equality Resource Centre (UCU) : Information on all aspects of equality	Hyperlink	
eServices (Online Membership records)	ucunorthern.org.uk/eservices	
Events (organising them)	34	
Expectations of the UCU reps	ucunorthern.org.uk/newrep	
Facilities Agreement for reps	11	
Facebook	facebook.com/UCUNorthern	
Financial Services (UCU Plus)	ucu.org.uk/ucuplus	
Grievance hearing right to be accompanied by a UCU Rep	36	48+
Grievances	9 36	8
Hashtag	Use #UCUNorth	
Health and Safety advice line (online and phone)	ucu.org.uk/healthandsafety	
Induction 'New job, join UCU'	ucunorthern.org.uk/newjob-joinucu	
Industrial action	Hyperlink	
Information from UCU Regional Office	ucunorthern.org.uk/newrep ucunorthern.org.uk/weekly-digest ucunorthern.org.uk/twitter-and-website	
Information stalls to recruit members ucunorthern.org.uk/tell-us-what-matters-campaign	48 54	
Information resources standard practice for Regional Office	ucunorthern.org.uk/twitter-and-website	
Informing my employer that I'm a UCU rep	1	
Instagram	instagram.com/ucunorthern	
Join UCU : FAQs : Why join UCU?	ucu.org.uk/whyjoin 51	
Join UCU online	join.ucu.org.uk	
Law Extra (everyday legal issues)	ucu.org.uk/lawextra	
Leaflets	24	

Lesson Observations	42	
Local agreements	6 7	4
Local contacts : Volunteers can register at btu.web.ucu.org.uk/volunteer	22	
Local practice	6	5
Mapping the branch	9 46	
Mediation	36	7
Meetings with members	9 32 33 35	7 6+
Members services / benefits	ucu.org.uk/ucuplus	
Membership record eServices members.ucu.org.uk ucunorthern.org.uk/eservices	Hyperlink 58 59 60	
Modification Order	39	
NEC (National Executive)	9	33
Newsletters	25 26	
Pensions	Hyperlink	
Police interviewing a member	ucunorthern.org.uk/repsmustcontact	
Policies and Procedures	9	4
Protection from victimisation for UCU reps	8 9	6
Recruit a colleague campaign	48	3
Recruiting members ucunorthern.org.uk/category/campaigns ucunorthern.org.uk/roc	9 50 52 54	11+
Recruitment posters to download and to order	Hyperlink	

Recruitment campaigns : Regional	ucunorthern.org.uk/category/campaigns ucunorthern.org.uk/roc	
Redundancy	Hyperlink	
Redundancy Modification Order	39 Hyperlink	
Regional Committee meetings	21	
Regional Committee FAQs	Hyperlink	
Regional Committee who can attend	Hyperlink	
Regional Committee branch delegates	Hyperlink	
Regional Office location	ucunorthern.org.uk/map	
Regional Office information resources standard practice	ucunorthern.org.uk/twitter-and-website	
Right to be represented by a UCU rep	36 36 38	23+ 48 17
Rights of UCU as a recognised trade union	38	32+
Role of a UCU rep ucu.org.uk/getactive	2 4 5 38	1
Sources of rights	6 9	28+
Staff inductions / access to new staff ucunorthern.org.uk/newjob-joinucu	9 11 45 56 57	11
Staff lists (access to them)	11	3+
Stress	ucu.org.uk/stress	
Structure of UCU	3 9	32+
Support centre (online)	9	2 ucu.custhelp.com
Surveys	29 30	

Tax relief on union subscription	ucu.org.uk/taxrelief	
Time off for reps	7	
ucunorthern.org.uk/newrep	9	19+
Hyperlink	11	6+
Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992	2	9
	7	
	9	19+
Training	ucu.org.uk/training	
Twitter : Branch	28	
Twitter : UCU	twitter.com/UCUNorthern	
Waiting period (90 days)	Hyperlink ucunorthern.org.uk/newrep	
Website : Branch	27	
Website : Other useful websites	43	
Website : UCU	ucu.org.uk	
Regional website	ucunorthern.org.uk	
Will writing service	Hyperlink	

If you have any queries please contact Emma Alexander ealexander@ucu.org.uk