

# UCU **Activist** **Education Guide** 2011/2012



*The health and safety reps course was excellent and will give me more confidence to challenge my managers. The tutor was fantastic with very strong presentation skills.*

*I found the three-day reps training workshop at UCU Carlow Street enormously helpful. There were some really meaningful moments of solidarity, empowerment and ideas for collective action through our many group activities and role play. I certainly feel more confident and knowledgeable about my role as rep and will definitely try to attend future training when that becomes possible again.*

*The effective negotiating skills course has given me great support for the role I will have to play in coming months negotiating redundancies of colleagues. I now feel better prepared and that I might even enjoy some aspects of the challenge. The group work was great and kept things lively.*

*The course improved my understanding of how things work and where I can go to for more information if I get stuck.*

*The reps induction course was a brilliant introduction to UCU and its work. It was great to meet up with like-minded people. The course has definitely developed my confidence to go back to my branch and get things going.*

*By developing a greater understanding of work-related stress I am able to use that understanding to work with and help guide colleagues to the correct professional help that they may require, as well as working with colleagues to identify wider reaching and local and national issues that my well need to be raised.*

*The documents provided were very useful and I know I will refer to them in the future.*

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# Welcome

## from the general secretary

Welcome to UCU's Activist Education Guide for 2011/12. Since the formation of UCU in 2006, UCU has identified and trained more reps year on year. Last academic year 1500 reps and branch officers went through the UCU education programme. This is fantastic but we can't afford to be complacent; we have a challenging year ahead and we need to continue to identify and encourage more members to come forward and get involved in the work of UCU. These members need high-quality training so that they can support UCU campaigns, enforce UCU policy and protect and defend our members in the tertiary education sector.

The UCU activist education programme continues to evolve, and in 2011/12 we offer a range of innovative courses specifically designed to help the union increase membership, participation and its effectiveness in today's challenging environment.

For our more experienced activists, we include a new specialist course on effective negotiating which is crucial to support the local bargaining agenda. We also have a new media skills course to enhance your branch's ability to work with the local press as well as to create your own multi-media message.

Thank you for your interest and your work on behalf of UCU members. We look forward to meeting you on a course at some point in the future.

**Sally Hunt**  
UCU general secretary





# How does the programme work?

## Approach

Our aim for each UCU course is to use a range of teaching methods in order to keep courses interesting and appealing to different learning styles within the group.

Participants learn how to solve problems and tackle issues collectively using a trade union approach. There is also the opportunity to work individually as well as an increasing use of multi-media. Our aim is to give participants the confidence to return to their workplaces and take part in the work of the UCU branch immediately.

## Accreditation

We aim to accredit most UCU courses. Accreditation takes place through the TUC and the various TUC partner accreditation centres around the country. This enables reps to gain qualifications through the Open College Network (OCN). These credits can be aggregated to provide access into further and higher education.

## Tutors

The UCU programme provides high quality, accredited education and training through UCU's partnership with trade union education. The programme is delivered by TUC-trained tutors who are experienced trade unionists and professionally qualified. A number of sessions are also delivered by UCU staff. On occasion external speakers will also be invited to take part.

## Materials

UCU courses are designed to be as practical as possible. Typically, participants will be asked to complete pre- and post-course activities as well as use policies and procedures from individual workplaces as reference points.

The course materials are regularly revised with input from tutors, UCU staff and previous participants to incorporate legislative changes, new government initiatives and UCU policies.

## Courses are free!

All courses are free to UCU members, and travel and child care costs can be reimbursed.

## Accessibility for disabled members

We endeavour to meet all access needs. We ask that members let us know of any special requirements when they apply.

## Open to all

The union is keen to actively encourage black, women, disabled and LGBT members to get more involved and apply for a course. We welcome applicants who self-identify in one of these areas.

## Attendance

There are two ways that you can apply for a UCU course:

- using the application form at the back of this guide, or
- online at [www.ucu.org.uk/training](http://www.ucu.org.uk/training)

We will aim to acknowledge your application as soon as we have received it. Final joining instructions will be sent out three weeks before the start of the course. If you are not able to attend, please let us know so that we can offer your place to another colleague.

As a UCU rep you have a statutory right to attend trade union training. If you have any difficulties in securing paid release from your employer speak to your branch, your regional office or contact [training@ucu.org.uk](mailto:training@ucu.org.uk)

# UCU REPS

This course is aimed at all new UCU reps and branch officers as well as those who have yet to attend any training. We encourage all UCU activists to attend the Rep 1 module of this course regardless of which role they hold within the branch.



## REP 1: INDUCTION

### Who should attend?

- all UCU reps
- all branch officers
- membership secretaries/recruitment officers

### This course will cover the following:

- the purpose of UCU, its structure, functions and democratic processes, and how you can get involved
- your role and other UCU roles in the branch
- your rights as a UCU rep
- how to apply a trade union approach to your work as a UCU activist
- how to develop a local campaign
- the relationship between organising and campaigning, sustainability and the overall effectiveness of the branch
- changes to equality legislation and help to embed equality into your work as a UCU rep
- how to apply equality good practice and UCU equality policy
- the support available to you as a UCU rep.

## REP 2: REPRESENTING UCU MEMBERS

### Who should attend?

- UCU reps, branch officers who have completed the rep 1 induction, safety reps induction, learning reps or equality reps courses
- all UCU reps, branch officers and caseworkers who represent UCU members and carry out case work on behalf of the branch/LA

### The three-day module will cover the following:

- the individual and collective nature of trade union work
- best practice when advising and supporting members
- how to interview a member
- developing an understanding of key legislation and procedures relating to the representation of members
- how to raise grievances looking at specific institutions' policies and procedures
- practical advice on preparing documentation, witness statements and representation in casework
- progressing cases using preparation, negotiation and planning skills
- best-practice guidance on representing members at formal hearings.

\*in Scotland this course is run as Rep 2 and Rep 3

## UCU reps induction: Rep 1

Course	Location	Duration	Dates
Rep 1	Leeds	3 days	21–23 September 2011
Rep 1	London	3 days	26–28 September 2011
Rep 1	St Andrews	1 day	7 October 2011
Rep 1	Manchester	3 days	12–14 October 2011
Rep 1	Birmingham	3 days	18–20 October 2011
Rep 1	Taunton	3 days	14–16 November 2011
Rep 1	London	3 days	21–23 November 2011
Rep 1	Oxford	3 days	11–13 January 2012
Rep 1	Liverpool	3 days	30 January–1 February 2012
Rep 1	Southampton	3 days	1–3 February 2012
Rep 1	Gateshead	3 days	20–22 February 2012
Rep 1	London	3 days	5–7 March 2012
Rep 1	Harlech	3 days	20–22 March 2012
Rep 1	Taunton	3 days	16–18 April 2012
Rep 1	Liverpool	3 days	1–3 May 2012
Rep 1	Glasgow	1 day	14 May 2012
Rep 1	Taunton	3 days	21–23 May 2012

## Representing UCU members: Rep 2

Course	Location	Duration	Dates
Rep 2	London	3 days	17–19 October 2011
Rep 2	Birmingham	3 days	6–8 December 2011
Rep 2	Leeds	3 days	12–14 December 2011
Rep 2	London	3 days	4–6 January 2012
Rep 2	Oxford	3 days	11–13 January 2012
Rep 3*	St Andrews	1 day	27 January 2012
Rep 2	Manchester	3 days	30 January 2011–1 February 2012
Rep 2	Taunton	3 days	1–3 February 2012
Rep 2	Oxford	3 days	27–29 March 2012
Rep 2	London	3 days	16–18 April 2012
Rep 2	Liverpool	3 days	1–3 May 2012
Rep 2	Harlech	3 days	16–18 May 2012
Rep 2*	Glasgow	1 day	21 May 2012
Rep 3*	Glasgow	1 day	11 June 2012

# HEALTH AND SAFETY REPS

Every UCU branch should have at least one lead health and safety rep who sits on the branch/LA committee. In addition it is good practice to have a branch network of health and safety reps to represent members in different buildings, departments and faculties.



## Who should attend?

- all new and existing health and safety reps
- branch officers

*To achieve the safety reps accreditation participants must attend all eight days of the course*

## SAFETY REPS 1: INDUCTION

**This two-day module will cover:**

- the role and functions of a safety rep
- obtaining facilities and time off to carry out the safety rep's function
- using the Safety Reps and Safety Committee Regulations
- organising members around hazards at work
- applying a trade union and equal opportunities approach to health and safety
- identifying employers' duties under health and safety legislation
- using the Health and Safety at Work Act
- developing the skills needed to be an effective safety rep.

## SAFETY REPS 2: MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

**This two-day module will cover:**

- building union organisation around health and safety issues
- introduction to risk assessments
- analysing symptoms of ill health by using body mapping and other techniques
- carrying out inspections at work
- using a systematic approach to tackling health and safety problems
- the role of safety reps in investigating injuries, incidents and ill health.

## SAFETY REPS 3: PREVENTION OF INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS

**This two-day module will cover:**

- planning and carrying out health and safety inspections
- notifying employers about hazards at work
- systematically tackling health and safety problems
- using and improving the risk assessment process
- applying control measures to occupational risks
- developing the skills we need as safety reps
- drawing up an action plan.

## SAFETY REPS 4: BARGAINING FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

**This two-day module will cover:**

- negotiating improvements in workplace health and safety policies
- carrying out stress audits
- negotiating effective policies and procedures around stress and violence
- campaigning around individual and collective health and safety issues
- improving health and safety training
- using the safety committee effectively
- developing the skills needed to be an effective safety rep.

## Safety reps 1: Induction

Course	Location	Duration	Dates
H&S 1	London	2 days	20–21 September 2011
H&S 1	Birmingham	2 days	12–13 October 2011
H&S 1	Harlech	2 days	21–22 November 2011
H&S 1	London	3 days	13–15 March 2012

## Safety reps 2: Management of health and safety

Course	Location	Duration	Dates
H&S 2	London	2 days	15–16 September 2011
H&S 2	London	2 days	24–25 October 2011
H&S 2	Birmingham	2 days	23–24 November 2011
H&S 2	Harlech	2 days	19–20 March 2012
H&S 2	London	3 days	19–21 June 2012

## Safety reps 3: Prevention of injuries and accidents

Course	Location	Duration	Dates
H&S 3	London	2 days	6–7 December 2011
H&S 3	Birmingham	2 days	1–2 February 2012
H&S 3	Harlech	2 days	24–25 May 2012

## Safety reps 4: Bargaining for health and safety

Course	Location	Duration	Dates
H&S 4	London	2 days	10–11 January 2012
H&S 4	Birmingham	2 days	7–8 March 2012
H&S 4	Harlech	2 days	TBC



# LEARNING REPS

Every UCU branch should have at least one learning rep or education officer who sits on the branch/LA committee. In addition, it is good practice to have a branch network of learning reps to represent different groups of members who may have differing learning and training needs.



The course will look at your role as a learning rep, your legal rights, current issues, UCU union policies, agreements on learning and skills, and how to extend the UCU organising agenda to build the branch around learning.

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## Who should attend?

- new and existing UCU learning reps or education officers
- all branch officers

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## At the end of this module you will have:

- discussed why issues relating to learning, training and professional development are trade union issues
- identified the role of the learning rep in your workplace and within UCU
- demonstrated an understanding of your legal rights
- become more informed about learning and skills issues in post-compulsory education
- prioritised key issues and developed a plan to address these issues
- assessed your members' learning needs
- explored what learning, skills and professional development opportunities exist within your college/university
- discussed equality issues around learning and how to deal with them
- practiced the necessary skills needed to support individual members to access their rights to time off to learn
- created an action plan for your first UCU learning event to take to your branch committee.

*Learning reps have a statutory right to attend training within six months of appointment.  
For more information go to [www.ucu.org.uk/ulr](http://www.ucu.org.uk/ulr)*

## Learning reps courses

Course	Location	Duration	Dates
Learning reps	Leeds	3 days	8–9 February & 4 April 2012
Learning reps	Tondu	3 days	19–20 April & 11 June 2012
Learning reps	London	3 days	14–15 May & 12 June 2012

# EQUALITY REPS

UCU equality reps and officers will work within branches to promote equality with the employer and union members. This could include looking at issues such as flexible working, absence management, discriminatory practices, equal pay and equality impact assessments.



## Who should attend?

- UCU equality officers
- equality reps
- branch officers

**This course will give reps an introduction into how to use equality legislation to tackle discrimination at work and how to develop and promote a branch-based equality agenda.**

## It will help you to:

- understand the role of the UCU equality rep or equality officer
- ensure equality is embedded within the branch bargaining and organising agenda
- find out more about discrimination legislation
- improve equality policies and agreements
- find out about good practice and share success stories
- promote equality in the workplace, branch and the union
- develop tools and techniques for raising equality issues
- develop equality networks
- sharpen negotiating skills.



## Equality reps courses

Course	Location	Duration	Dates
Equality reps	London	2 days	3 November & 8 December 2011
Equality reps	Birmingham	2 days	15 December 2011 & 19 January 2012
Equality reps	Manchester	2 days	7 February & 9 March 2012
Equality reps	London	2 days	2 May & 1 June 2012



# Specialist UCU courses

All of the following courses are aimed at more experienced UCU activists and/or those who have previously attended an introductory training course.

## Challenging and handling redundancy

The threat of redundancy has never been more acute for UCU branches. This is a two-day course aimed at branch officers and reps who are likely to be involved in challenging redundancies and/or supporting members facing redundancy. We recommend that at least one representative from each branch attends.

### Who should attend?

- UCU reps and caseworkers
- branch officers

This course aims to give participants an understanding of the issues, rights and obligations pertaining to redundancy so that they are able to challenge it and support, represent and advise those affected by it.

### By the end of the course you will be able to:

- define your role as a rep in relation to challenging redundancies and supporting members
- plan, implement, organise and campaign around the threat of redundancy
- identify the early indicators of redundancy
- understand the legal obligations for employers
- identify the key steps for preventing, challenging and handling redundancies.

The course will cover topics such as:

- the effects of redundancy on different groups of staff and identifying support for those staff
- the alternatives to redundancy such as redeployment, voluntary severance and early retirement
- how to interview members and develop a representational plan
- applying a trade union strategy when progressing redundancy cases.

## Challenging and handling redundancy courses

Course	Location	Duration	Dates
Challenging and handling redundancy	London	1 day	15 November 2011
Challenging and handling redundancy	Birmingham	2 days	16–17 November 2011
Challenging and handling redundancy	Colchester	1 day	13 March 2012
Challenging and handling redundancy	Glasgow	2 days	17–18 April 2012
Challenging and handling redundancy	Manchester	2 days	26–27 April 2012
Challenging and handling redundancy	Taunton	2 days	26–27 April 2012
Challenging and handling redundancy	Norwich	1 day	16 May 2012
Challenging and handling redundancy	Birmingham	2 day	20–21 June 2012

## Effective negotiating and bargaining

The ability to conduct successful negotiations is paramount to a branch's effectiveness and strength. This course is an opportunity for reps and officers involved in branch negotiations at all levels to increase their understanding and confidence to better represent UCU members on a whole range of current collective issues.

### Who should attend?

- branch/LA negotiators
- other branch officers
- all UCU reps involved in local negotiations

### The course will examine:

- the role of the UCU negotiator and the negotiating team
- legal rights that may be used to support negotiations
- links between branch organising and campaigning activity
- different stages of negotiation
- techniques for communicating effectively and responding to unfair tactics in negotiations
- how issues of equality and diversity impact on negotiations
- how to implement a successful collective bargaining strategy.



## Effective negotiating and bargaining courses

Course	Location	Duration	Dates
Effective negotiating and bargaining	Manchester	2 days	9–10 November 2011
Effective negotiating and bargaining	St Andrews	2 days	2–3 February 2012
Effective negotiating and bargaining	Birmingham	2 days	14 March & 2 May 2012
Effective negotiating and bargaining	Taunton	2 days	26–27 March 2012
Effective negotiating and bargaining	Southampton	2 days	8 May & 8 June 2012
Effective negotiating and bargaining	Leeds	3 days	16–18 May 2012
Effective negotiating and bargaining	Oxford	2 days	5 June & 6 July 2012
Effective negotiating and bargaining	London	3 days	23–25 May 2012
Effective negotiating and bargaining	Glasgow	2 days	21–22 June 2012

## Tackling bullying and harassment at work

Dealing with cases of harassment and bullying in the workplace is becoming an all too common task for UCU reps. This course has been designed to support your work in handling cases of harassment and bullying by increasing your understanding of the issues and giving you the opportunity to consider the practical ways in which harassment and bullying can be tackled in your workplace.

### Who should attend?

- UCU health and safety reps
- branch officers and other UCU reps

### The course will enable you to:

- define and recognise bullying and harassment
- understand how employment law and health and safety legislation apply to workplace bullying
- develop a plan for dealing with harassment and bullying in your workplace
- outline techniques for interviewing and representing members who witness or report bullying.

## Tackling bullying and harassment courses

Course	Location	Duration	Dates
Tackling bullying and harassment	London	2 days	14–15 February 2012
Tackling bullying and harassment	Birmingham	2 days	16–17 May 2012

## Tackling organisational stress

The incidence of workplace stress has steadily risen amongst public sector workers since the mid 1990s. Members working in education are at a greater risk of work-related stress than most occupational groups. Substantial government spending cuts leading to widespread redundancy and restructuring throughout tertiary education means the risk to the health and welfare of UCU members at work has never been greater.

### Who should attend?

- health and safety reps
- branch officers

- other UCU reps

### By the end of the course you will be able to:

- identify the causes and effects of stress in the workplace
- apply relevant legal standards and policies to stress
- consider effective prevention and control measures
- select appropriate information for tackling stress at work
- develop UCU campaigns against stress in the workplace.

## Tackling organisational stress courses

Course	Location	Duration	Dates
Tackling organisational stress	London	2 days	3 November & 15 December 2011
Tackling organisational stress	Birmingham	2 days	28 March & 25 April 2012



## Introduction to pensions

This course is aimed at existing pensions reps or other branch reps or officers who are currently or will be offering support to members with pensions enquiries. Every branch should have a least one pensions representative to be able to give a specialist level of advice to members locally.

### Who should attend?

- pensions reps/champions
- other branch officers
- all UCU reps involved in advising members on pensions

### Course objectives

The course will help you to understand both the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) and the University Superannuation Scheme (USS) and will focus on:

- changes to these schemes
- how pensions are calculated
- additional pensions benefits
- ill health and redundancy issues
- pension developments and communications in your branch.

## Introduction to pensions courses

Course	Location	Duration	Dates
Introduction to pensions	Leeds	2 days	15-16 November 2011
Introduction to pensions	Tondu	2 days	24-25 November 2011
Introduction to pensions	Bangor	2 days	17-18 April 2012
Introduction to pensions	London	2 days	8-9 May 2012
Introduction to pensions	Birmingham	2 days	10-11 July 2012



## Media skills

In this period of political uncertainty it's even more important for unions to campaign effectively, to defend jobs and win the political, moral and economic argument. Increasingly there is an expectation from UCU members that branches are better equipped to make links with local media to issue press releases, be interviewed and generally get their message heard by their local community.

### Who should attend?

- communication/media officers
- other branch officers
- all UCU reps involved in communications

### By the end of the course you will know how:

- the media industry works
- to approach your local media, be it radio, television or the press
- to write a press release
- to conduct yourself in an interview situation
- to work with and access further support from our UCU press team.

Both written and practical elements make up this dynamic learning opportunity led by the UCU press office.

## Media skills courses

Course	Location	Duration	Dates
Media skills	Manchester	1 day	8 June 2012
Media skills	London	1 day	25 June 2012
Media skills	Leeds	1 day	4 July 2012

# Courses for members

## Green working

This new course is designed for UCU members and reps who wish to develop their understanding of climate change and ways to protect the environment through change at work. It is intended to enable those taking part to develop as environment champions or reps.

### Who should attend?

- members who have an interest in climate

change issues and want to get more involved in the work of their branch

- newly appointed environment reps
- existing reps and branch officers

### This course will cover the following:

- environment terminology and the current debate
- legislation and other environmental information
- environment management systems
- current trade union policies and organisation
- workplace and community strategies.

## Green working courses

Course	Location	Duration	Dates
Green working	London	2 days	9 November 2011 & 10 January 2012
Green working	Leeds	2 days	16 February 2012 & 12 March 2012







# UCU course booking form

Your name \_\_\_\_\_ UCU membership no \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime tel no \_\_\_\_\_

Postal address \_\_\_\_\_

Course name/s (please include date and location) \_\_\_\_\_

Branch/institution \_\_\_\_\_

What is your union role/s? (eg H&S rep, ordinary member) \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have approval from your branch to attend this course? Yes/No\* Do you have approval from your employer? Yes/No\*

Special requirements (eg dietary/disability) \_\_\_\_\_

\*delete as applicable

Accommodation is available in special circumstances. If you need accommodation please contact: [training@ucu.org.uk](mailto:training@ucu.org.uk)

**Please return your completed form to:**

**UCU Training**

**University and College Union**

**Carlow street**

**London NW1 7LH**





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