

## BARGAINING OBJECTIVE 2

# Industrial relations – recognition of green reps, facility time and procedures

### BACKGROUND

The term used by the union to cover this branch role is currently 'green reps'. In some workplaces a different title may be used like environment rep, sustainability rep, or climate rep etc. What is important is at least 1 person in each branch is appointed to co-ordinate the Green New Deal claim.

### APPOINTMENT

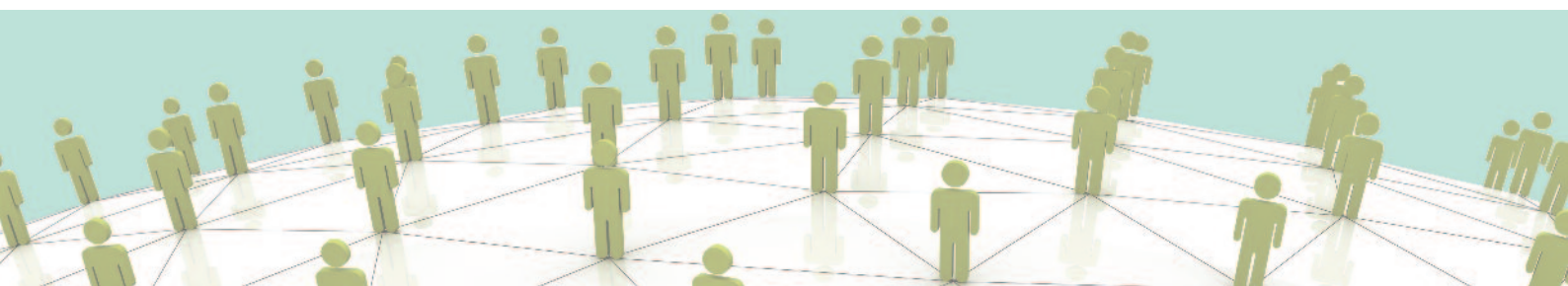
There is no legal right to appoint green reps. This contrasts with health and safety, and union learning reps, who do have statutory recognition. UCU urges branches to obtain recognition rights from the employer. In the absence of legal rights branches are urged to make the case for recognition of the role.

### FACILITY TIME

To be effective in the role it is vital that facility time is negotiated. This should include remission from class contact time where the appointed rep is in a teaching role. Where the facility time currently agreed for all union duties is in the form of a set number of hours per week for the branch, additional hours will need to be allocated for the green rep role. There is considerable overlap between climate change and health and safety issues. For example, air pollution is both an occupational health issue and a product of the burning of fossil fuels. Safety issues arising from extreme weather events are exacerbated by climate change, hence the importance of recognising the need to progress climate justice.

### PROCEDURES

Review the current system for dealing with climate and environmental matters. It is important that the negotiating and consultation procedures can be used to progress issues. Very often there is no or





minimal union engagement. They can often be talking shops with no clear actions identified and resources allocated to deliver them.

## DEMANDS

- The role of green rep should be recognised by the employer and afforded time off for training (eg UCU Green New Deal training for green reps.)
- There should be additional facilities time for the branch allocated to the role.
- Clear procedures should be established with any environmental or related policies and strategies that include a role for the green rep on behalf of the branch.

## NEGOTIATORS' RESOURCES

### **ACAS Guidance: Trade union representation in the workplace (March 2014)**

*In some workplaces trade unions gain agreement from the employer to elect or appoint representatives with a specialist role. Environmental representatives focus on the climate change agenda and changes in work organisation and green workplace projects. They may serve on environmental committees if these are established. They can work to improve the impact of an organisation or workplace on the local environment, helping nearby communities and raising the reputation of the employer. Environmental representatives have no statutory rights to time off, training or facilities. Appropriate training is available from trade unions and the TUC and the government sponsored Union Learning Fund is available to support approved training programmes for these representatives. In determining what time off, training and facilities should be agreed consideration needs to be given to the relationship between these specialists and other union representatives concerned with collective bargaining and ULRs. (Page 11)*

<https://archive.acas.org.uk/media/2307/Advisory-booklet---Trade-union-representation-in-the-workplace/pdf/Trade-Union-Representation-in-the-Workplace.pdf>

Within the SOS-UK/NUS Responsible Futures framework for a whole institution approach to embedding sustainability in tertiary education institutions, criteria includes the need to include TU members in decision making spaces for such issues: <https://sustainability.nus.org.uk/responsible-futures/about>

**THIS GND QUICK GUIDE** provides an overview and entry point to engaging with one of six UCU Green New Deal demands for universities and colleges. To access the full GND bargaining and negotiation framework, click here: [https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/11326/Green-new-deal-bargaining-guide--model-claim/pdf/green-new-deal\\_bargaining-guide\\_jan21.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/11326/Green-new-deal-bargaining-guide--model-claim/pdf/green-new-deal_bargaining-guide_jan21.pdf)

To discuss this further, seek advice on progressing this demand or other aspects of the GND, and to use the model claim and letter, contact [environment@ucu.org.uk](mailto:environment@ucu.org.uk)

