

University and College Union

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To	Branch and local association secretaries
Topic	Members' Annual Equality Groups Conference
Action	Submit names of participants for the Annual Equality Groups Conference; Motions for the five individual conferences; and Nominations for the Equality Standing Committees
Summary	Make all relevant submissions
Contact	Sue Bajwa (email: sbajwa@ucu.org.uk) or Swati Patel (email: spatel@ucu.org.uk)

Dear Colleague

Registration is now open for UCU members to attend the 2025 Annual Equality Groups Conferences.

Equality Conferences

This year each of the equality groups will have a 1-day hybrid conference from 11:00 – 16:00. The venue will be UCU Head office, and the online platform will be Zoom. Those participating remotely will be able to participate fully in the conference, including voting on motions and attending workshops. When registering for the event delegates **MUST** select if they wish to attend **the conference/s in-person or remotely**.

The conference will be held on following dates:

Friday 14 November - Women Members' Conference **(10.00 – 16.00)**

Important update: There will be a breakfast networking session before the conference begins from 10:00am. This is optional

Saturday 15 November - LGBT+ Members' Conference **(11.00 – 16.00)**

Thursday 20 November - Disabled Members' Conference **(11.00 – 16.00)**

Important update: There will be a breakfast networking session before the conference begins from 10:00am. This is optional

Friday 21 November - Black Members' Conference **(9.30 – 16.00)**

Important update: We will have a breakfast networking session before the conference begins from 9.30am. This is optional

Friday 5 December - Migrant Members' Conference **(11.00 – 16.00)**

This year the equality groups conference will have a broad theme of Organising Against Division: Building Inclusive Workplaces, Resisting Reactionary Politics. Each group conference will have its own focus within the broad theme.

The conference is an excellent opportunity to discuss with other UCU members about equality work. There will be the five separate conferences for black, disabled, LGBT+, migrant and women members to discuss issues relevant to their group, move motions and elect members to the national standing committees.

For more information about this conference please use the link below:

<https://www.ucu.org.uk/membersannualgroupsconference>

Registration:

Use the links below to register for each conference:

- [Women Members' Conference](#) Registration deadline, Friday 31 October
- [LGBT+ Members' Conference](#) Registration deadline, Friday 31 October
- [Disabled Members' Conference](#) Registration deadline, Thursday 6 November
- [Black Members' Conference](#) Registration deadline, Friday 7 November
- [Migrant Members' Conference](#) Registration deadline, Friday 21 November

If you are unable to use the online system to register, please contact [Sue Bajwa](#).

An automatic confirmation e-mail will be sent out once registration is complete. Once registered, if participants are unable to attend, individuals are asked to cancel registration as soon as possible.

Participants to the Black, Disabled, LGBT+, Migrant and Women's conferences are self-nominating and delegates must self-identify with the relevant equality group. You can only attend the conference if you self-identify with the relevant equality group.

Accommodation

The conference times have been scheduled to accommodate travel to and from the conference on the same day. If you require accommodation due to a disability or access requirement, please ensure you provide full details on the registration form.

If you are attending conferences on the 14 & 15 November and/or 20 & 21 November accommodation will be booked for you if requested on the registration form.

Access Requirements

If you have any specific access requirements (e.g. documentation in large print) please provide us with full details on the relevant section of the registration form to ensure that we can make suitable arrangements. Alternatively, please contact [Sue Bajwa](#).

In accordance with the Standing orders of the Equality Standing Committees and Annual Equality Groups' Conferences, your attention is drawn to the following.

Nomination for standing committees

The black members' conference, the disabled members' conference, the LGBT+ members' conference, the migrant members' conference and the women members' conference will all elect new members for their respective committees.

The main objective of each committee is to advise and campaign on issues specific to the members who they represent.

Enclosed with this circular is a copy of the current standing orders of the UCU Equality Standing Committees and Conferences. The standing orders will give you a good guide to what the standing committees do. Each Standing Committee will usually meet 3 or 4 times a year. Please contact the Equality Unit on spatel@ucu.org.uk if you require further information.

Candidates must provide, as part of their nomination, evidence of their qualifying employment, normally in the form of a copy of a payslip for work carried out within the preceding 12 months, or, in the case of a member who is self-employed, evidence of payment for work carried out within the preceding 12 months.

Registered attendees at each of the conferences will be eligible to elect committee members from nominations sent in by branches and local associations to form a Standing Committee. Outlined below are the places available for each of the standing committees.

Black

- Five vacancies for a term of two years

Disabled

- Five vacancies for a term of two years and one vacancy for a term of one year

LGBT+

- Five vacancies for a term of two years and three vacancies for a term of one year

Migrant

- Five vacancies for a term of two years and one vacancy for a term of one year

Women

- Five vacancies for a term of two years

Motions to the equality groups' conferences

Branches/local associations are invited to submit up to **three appropriate motions**. Motions must have been approved either by a quorate general meeting, or by properly constituted meeting of the relevant groups of Black, Disabled, LGBT+, Migrant or Women members, or by a quorate branch committee meeting. The secretary of the branch/local association will be asked to confirm that motions submitted have received such approval. **Motions for consideration and decision will be limited to matters of direct concern to the relevant constituent groups of members represented at the conferences.**

Forms for nominations for the Standing Committees and the submission of motions can be downloaded here:

[Black members nominations and motions form](#)

[Disabled members nominations and motions form](#)

[LGBT+ members nominations and motions form](#)

[Migrant members nominations and motions form](#)

[For Women member nominations and motions form](#)

If you cannot download a form for any reason, please contact [Sue Bajwa](#)

We look forward to your participation at the conference and making the event a positive and purposeful experience.

Yours sincerely,

Jo Grady
General Secretary

Last amended by NEC 20 June 2025 (NEC/1721)

UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE UNION

Standing Orders of the Equality Standing Committees and Annual Equality Conferences

1 NATIONAL EQUALITY STANDING COMMITTEES

1.1 Terms of reference

As determined by national rule 23.1, there shall be five National Equality Standing Committees: a Black Members' Standing Committee (BMC); a Disabled Members' Standing Committee (DMC); an LGBT+ Members' Standing Committee (LGBT+MC); a Migrant Members' Standing Committee (MMSMC); and a Women Members' Standing Committee (WMC). It shall be the responsibility of the standing committees to advise and to make recommendations to the National Executive Committee, normally through the Equality Committee, on any issues arising specifically from or related to the interests of the specific section of members whom they represent. The standing committees will be responsible for the organisation of their respective Annual Equality Conferences. In addition, the standing committees will: select the UCU delegates to the relevant TUC Equality Conferences and propose motions and amendments to the National Executive Committee for submission to those conferences; put forward candidates for relevant TUC committees for endorsement by the National Executive Committee; and encourage self-organised networking among the relevant section of the membership. The standing committees will meet on dates specified in the UCU Calendar or as agreed by the NEC.

The quorum for meetings of each standing committee is one third of the voting representatives.

1.2 Composition

Each standing committee will consist of: 10 representatives elected by the appropriate Annual Equality Conference; the appropriate National Executive Committee equality seat holders; the General Secretary and those Officers who self define as belonging to the appropriate group. The General Secretary and Officers will have all rights of committee membership except that they will not be entitled to vote.

1.3 Chairing

Each year, the standing committees will elect their own chairs from among the relevant NEC equality seat holders. Chairs shall serve from as soon as possible after the annual Congress meeting until the close of the next annual Congress meeting, subject to re-

appointment for further periods. The standing committees will elect their own Vice-Chairs each year at the first meeting following the relevant Annual Equality Conference.

1.4 Eligibility

To be eligible for election or co-option to the standing committees, candidates must be in good membership standing and belong to the relevant constituent group (belonging to these groups being self-defined in all cases). At the time of nomination, candidates must be in qualifying employment under rule 3.1.1, or have been in qualifying employment within the preceding 12 months, or be a postgraduate researcher in membership under rule 3.1.2. Any persons elected or co-opted will cease to be members of the standing committees if their membership of UCU terminates or lapses during their term of committee membership.

National Executive Committee members holding equality seats are not eligible to stand for election to the corresponding equality standing committee by the annual meeting.

Any member of an equality standing committee (elected by the annual meeting) who takes office as a National Executive Committee member holding an equality seat that confers membership of that standing committee, will serve on the equality standing committee in their NEC capacity only. Any casual vacancy arising will be dealt with under standing order 1.8.

1.5 Term of office

Each year, delegates attending the Annual Equality Conferences will elect five members to serve on the relevant standing committee for a period of two years immediately following the conference. After four or more consecutive years of elected membership there will be a break of one year before a candidate becomes eligible to serve on the committee again.

1.6 Nominations

Each branch/local association will be invited annually to submit to the General Secretary one nomination for membership of each of the standing committees, using a nomination form issued by headquarters. At the time of nomination, candidates will confirm that they belong to and are willing to represent their relevant equality group, and will provide proof that they are in qualifying employment, or have been in qualifying employment within the preceding 12 months, in the same form as the proof that is required for NEC nominations, unless they are a postgraduate researcher under rule 3.1.2 to whom this does not apply. The deadline for receipt of nominations will be 14 days before the annual meeting.

Nominations submitted by branches/local associations must have been approved either by a quorate branch meeting, or by a properly constituted meeting of members from the relevant constituent group, or by a quorate branch committee meeting. The secretary of the branch/local association will confirm that nominations submitted have

received such approval.

1.7 Elections

The election of standing committee members will be determined by secret ballot of all voting delegates present during the relevant annual equality conferences. Voting will be in a single ballot conducted by single transferable vote. Should there be a casual vacancy or an unfilled vacancy at the time of the annual conference it will be filled by the candidate with the next highest number of votes after members have been elected to the full-term vacancies.

1.8 Co-options

The standing committees will have the power to co-opt members where an insufficient number of nominations have been made to the committee at any annual conference, or in the case of a casual vacancy arising between annual conferences. Members co-opted must fulfil the criteria for eligibility outlined in paragraph 1.4 above. Co-options will only occur in these circumstances and will cease at the annual conference following co-option when the vacancy can be filled through the process of election. When co-opting, standing committees (other than the WMC) shall take gender balance into account.

1.9 Voting

Where a decision is not reached by consensus, the chair will take a vote. Any vote will be conducted by a show of hands of those present and voting. Where the vote is tied, the status quo ante will prevail.

1.10 Congress

In accordance with national rule 16.6.4, each national Equality Standing Committee may send two motions and two amendments to National Congress and two motions and two amendments to each Sector Conference.

1.11 Minutes

The minutes and any recommendations of the meetings of the standing committees will be submitted to the Equality Committee and to the National Executive Committee.

1.12 Amendment to standing orders

The standing committees may recommend amendments to these standing orders by a simple majority vote, subject to the endorsement of the National Executive Committee and following reference to the Equality Committee.

2. ANNUAL EQUALITY CONFERENCES

2.1 Date of meeting

The conferences will be held annually on dates specified in the UCU Calendar, following

consultation with the Equality Standing Committees and the Equality Committee.

2.2 Terms of reference

The annual conferences will advise and make recommendations to the National Executive Committee, the Equality Standing Committees and the Equality Committee, on matters affecting Black, disabled, LGBT+, migrant and women members.

The annual conferences will *inter alia*:

- (i) receive the report of the appropriate Equality Standing Committee;
- (ii) debate and vote on motions proposed by branches/local associations and by the standing committees in accordance with section 2.6;
- (iii) elect members of the Equality Standing Committees as described in paragraphs 1.4–1.7 above.

2.3 Composition

In addition to the members attending under paragraph 2.4 below, the annual conferences will include the National Executive Committee members occupying the relevant equality seats, the General Secretary; and those elected members of the Equality Committee who self-define as belonging to the appropriate group.

2.4 Membership

In accordance with Rule 23.2 members may attend subject to a mechanism for determining a maximum size. The mechanism will be determined by the Equality Committee, subject to endorsement by the National Executive committee and may include provision for the attendance of observers. Names of members attending will be notified to the General Secretary not later than 14 days before the meeting.

Unless requested otherwise by the member attending, branch secretaries will be notified of any members of their branch who have attended an annual equality conference.

Members attending an annual equality conference are normally expected to report back to their branch on their attendance and on the content of the meeting. Branch officers should facilitate this reporting back, which may take the form of an oral or written report.

2.5 Chairing

Each annual equality conference will be chaired by the Chair of the appropriate Equality Standing Committee, or, in their absence, by the Vice Chair.

2.6 Motions

Branches/local associations may be invited to submit up to three appropriate motions, using a form provided by headquarters, to the General Secretary which must be received 21 days before the date of the annual conference. The Equality Standing Committees may also submit motions. Motions for consideration and decision will be limited to matters of direct concern to the relevant constituent groups of members

represented at the conferences.

Motions submitted by branches/local associations must have been approved either by a quorate general meeting, or by properly constituted meetings of the relevant groups of Black, disabled, LGBT+, migrant or women members, or by a quorate branch committee meeting. The secretary of the branch/local association will confirm that motions submitted have received such approval.

Resolutions passed at annual equality conferences will be advisory. They will be submitted to the National Executive Committee, together with any advice and recommendations from the Equality and Standing Committees, and a copy of the draft minutes of the annual conferences.

2.7 Voting on motions

Only elected members of the relevant Equality Standing Committee and notified delegates present at each annual conference may vote. Voting on motions will be by show of hands, unless the Chair directs otherwise. Where the vote is tied, the status quo ante will prevail.

2.8 Material for the conferences

The following material will be circulated direct to delegates attending, and made available to branch/local association secretaries for information, before each annual conference:

- (i) an agenda for the meeting;
- (ii) the motions received;
- (iii) the nominations received for the standing committees;
- (iv) a copy of the relevant parts of Congress standing orders covering the conduct of business (para 2.10 below).

2.9 Quorum

Twenty members will constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

2.10 Conduct of business

In managing the conduct of business and rules of debate, the Chairs of the annual conferences will have regard to the relevant parts of the standing orders for UCU Congress.

2.11 Amendment to standing orders

The Annual Equality Conferences may recommend amendments to these standing orders by a simple majority vote, subject to the endorsement of the National Executive Committee and following reference to the Equality Committee.