



Being a UCU activist:

How do I get involved?

The one thing potential new activists don't realise in advance of making their first approach to their local association is this: your UCU branch or local association will not reject your offer of help.

The first thing you should do is think about what it is you want to do. Do you want to be the representative for your department, do you want to take up issues of bullying and harassment, racism and sexism, casualisation, or gender discrimination in further or higher education?

Your branch/LA will need people to take forward some element of these campaigns, but it will want you to hit the ground running so you need to be prepared for what might seem like a lot of responsibility coming your way pretty early on.

But don't be put off by that - you'll be offered training, other members of the branch/LA will support you, and UCU produces great materials which help you to get the job done. You don't have to attend meetings or be on the local executive committee, but those options are open to you.

And don't think for one second that the welcome will be any less warm if all you want to do is circulate newsletters, hand out membership forms to new staff, and put up posters - those are really important jobs, the bedrock of activism, and just 15 minutes per week from you helps your local association become stronger.

The branch/LA will probably have a local website with contact details for the members of the local executive committee - try the secretary, president or chair at first, but any member of the executive committee will be happy to help you become an activist.

Jim Guild, DAN member, University of Sussex