

## Branch health check exercise

This exercise is to help get a general sense of the strength of your branch so that you can plan your priorities for organisation and recruitment. The characteristics are a little arbitrary and you will probably find you have achieved some targets at each level – but you need to consider which most closely resembles your local association so that you can set realistic goals for activity.

Mark each item with '✓' if your branch/LA already does this, '?' if you're not sure and 'X' if it's an item to work on.

### Level 1 – starting out

- Has a full complement of branch officers
- Has an accurate local membership database
- Invites members to contribute their ideas and opinions at general meetings
- Receives monthly lists of newly employed staff
- Has information about the union sent out by the college/university with induction materials
- Has a local recruitment letter to send to all staff
- Sends recruitment material and contact information to all new staff each month
- Has a local letter of welcome for new members which tells them how to get involved
- Sends out induction packs to all new members within two weeks

### Level 2 – moving on

- Has a committee of 10 or more which meets monthly
- Has a local representative for all departments/areas
- Receives annual lists of all eligible staff
- Calculates overall membership density and membership densities for different staff groups
- Sets membership recruitment targets annually

- Develops a recruitment plan and evaluates it monthly
- Campaigns actively around workplace issues and negotiations
- Has a plan to increase the number of committee members and departmental reps
- Makes presentations at all induction meetings and training events for new staff
- Handles basic individual representation locally
- Provides lists of members and non-members to departmental representatives
- Has a means for departmental representatives to communicate with each other
- Has increased overall membership by 5% since this time last year

### **Level 3 – reaching targets**

- Has a committee which reflects the profile of the institution in terms of job category
- Has a committee which reflects the profile of the institution in terms of race
- Has a committee which reflects the profile of the institution in terms of gender
- Has a committee which reflects the profile of the institution in terms of age
- Has a mentoring system for new committee members and officers and a plan for leadership turnover, transmitting skills and devolving responsibilities
- Has a variety of ways that members can get involved at different levels
- Holds regular departmental meetings to solicit opinions and ideas from members
- Has regular meetings for departmental representatives (at least once a term)
- Participates in training for local representatives including departmental representatives
- Involves all local reps (staff group, departmental, etc) in decision making
- Offers new reps mentoring and shadowing opportunities with more experienced representatives
- Sets goals for membership density by department and staff group each year
- Evaluates membership retention rates in the branch
- Uses individual representation effectively for organising and recruitment
- Sends at least five members a year to external training events who report back to the branch
- Increased membership by 10% since this time last year

## Other items?

Have you identified any other activities (not listed above) that contribute to effective organisation and recruitment? Which level would they fit?

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## Review

Having considered the exercise, note down the priorities for the branch

**1** \_\_\_\_\_

**2** \_\_\_\_\_

**3** \_\_\_\_\_