

Contents

Health and safety courses cut by LSC

Bullying is a health and safety issue

Corporate killing bill

Fire regulations follow up

Scotland health and safety initiative

Working with young people

National stress conference

UCU training

Safety reps training

Harassment and bullying course

Regional health and safety conference

Health and safety courses cut by Learning and Skills Council

The Learning & Skills Council has cut funding for college health and safety courses. This makes FE colleges will no longer run "health and safety short courses which it is the employer's statutory duty to provide" such as those on www.healthandsafetypractices.co.uk and which have been developed and delivered by UCU members for groups such as farm workers.

The cuts are justified by the LSC on the grounds that it is the responsibility of employers not public purse to provide such training and that it cuts out double funding as there is already H&S on most courses.

UCU has written to the LSC protesting at these plans and to the HSE asking whether they were consulted over these proposals. You can see our press release click on the link below

<http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=1878>

Bullying is a health and safety issue

Employers liable even if they didn't know bullying was going on.

On 7th November (ban bullying at work day) Southampton University UCU and Solent University UCU with Unison colleagues will be holding a lunch time discussion on 'bullying'. After a discussion on the legal framework members will then discuss the monitoring of current policies and procedures. The aim is to set up a lay 'bullying working group' that can identify issues and suggestions that can be brought to the bargaining table.

Bullying is widespread in both Further and Higher Education. The House of Lords ruled earlier this year that an employer can be sued by an employee who was bullied by his manager, (i.e. they are vicariously liable) even if they knew nothing about it. Previously the victim had to show that they had developed a psychiatric illness and also show that the employer could have foreseen the effects of bullying.

Equally interesting, the claim was brought under the 1997 Protection from Harassment Act and has opened up a new front in the campaign against bullying at work. The case was brought by Bill Majrowski against Guys and St Thomas's NHS Trust. Majrowski claimed he was the victim of systematic bullying over an 18 month period, which was prompted by his line manager's homophobia.

The judgement can be found at <http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=1762>

Detailed advice on bullying and in particular a model procedure for handling bullying can be downloaded at <http://www.natfhe.org.uk/?entityType=Document&id=150>

Corporate Killing Bill

The Corporate Manslaughter Bill had its second reading in the House of Commons on 10th Oct. Trade unions have been campaigning for such a measure to resolve the difficulties experienced in holding large corporate bodies to account when their activities lead to incidents that cause fatalities. Labour has been promising legislation since 1997.

A key demand in the campaign was that negligent or criminal company directors should be made liable for the deaths of employees, but the Bill introduced by the Government failed to include this. Only 11 company owners or directors have been jailed for causing deaths at work, but all have been either single owners or partners in small organisations.

For more information about the current bill, and some trenchant criticisms, go to <http://www.corporateaccountability.org/manslaughter/reformprops/main.htm>.

Fire regulations follow up by Oxford students

We have received the following email from the Oxford University student magazine:

"Thank you very much for the email you sent us about fire regulations 'Cherwell obtained the fire risk assessments of over half of Oxford's undergraduate colleges under The Freedom of Information Act and found that several of the colleges were not meeting their own fire safety standards, putting students and staff at potential risk.'

Cherwell actually did an investigation into this area earlier this year and found fire regulations in Oxford colleges to be pretty bad. For further details go to;

http://www.cherwell.org/news/colleges_failing_on_fire_safety

But in any case, thanks for the lead, and we'll keep a track on this issue. We'd be delighted if you could continue to send us UCU-related stories though.

Scotland health and safety initiative

The Scottish TUC together with the Co-ordinating Health and Safety in Tertiary Education Project (CHASTE) is holding a conference later this month on Promoting Health and Safety in Scotland's Colleges and Higher Education Institutions. LAs in Scotland have been alerted to this.

For a general brief overview of what's happening in Scotland, see the TUC Risks newsletter, second item, at http://www.tuc.org.uk/h_and_s/tuc-12516-f0.cfm

Working with young people

European Health and Safety week this year has a theme of safety for young people. UCU sometimes has enquiries from reps in FE regarding issues related to the training of young learners, including the 14-16s, of which safety is one of the concerns raised. One of the solutions to this issue is about insisting on adequate training for those involved, and as such is a good issue for safety reps to work around in the branch together with Union Learning Reps and the branch committee.

Training and related issues, such as adequate liaison with schools, are among the topics covered in guidance agreed by the AoC and contributed to in the past by NATFHE and others. Copies of the guidance were sent to colleges some time ago. It is a starting point for checking whether the guidelines are being followed, and where changes need to be made. Often referred to as the LEACAN guidance, it can be accessed currently via this link:

http://www.aoc.co.uk/Members/learning_quality/younglearners/index_html/view

UCU West & South West Regional Health and Safety Conference, Saturday 11 November

This Health & Safety Conference is taking place at City of Bristol College and is open not only to existing Branch Officers and particularly Health and Safety reps but also branch members who may have an interest in the topics or would like to consider become a H&S rep.

The conference will look at UCU's national plans for expanding its work and effectiveness on health and safety, and have specialist sessions on stress and understanding the framework for dealing with it, look at how local H&S reps can become more effective and trained.

The conference speakers will include John Bamford who is UCU's Health and Safety Consultant and Roger Kline National Head of Equality and Employment Rights who has responsibility for Health & Safety issues.

If you'd like to find out more please contact June Green at jgreen@ucu.org.uk at the UCU Exeter office. We hope some other regions will think about organising similar conferences over the next year.

UCU National Stress Conference

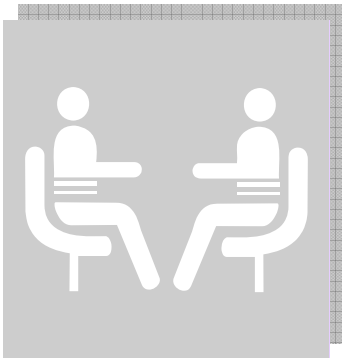
23 November, London

UCU is organising a major national conference on tackling stress in further and higher education. It will take place in London on 23 November. It will be co-sponsored by the Colleges and Universities Support Network, and will include speakers on the causes of the high stress levels in both sectors, and plenary and workshop discussions on how to tackle it.

Meanwhile, UCU has just conducted a major survey of members across FE and HE on stress. The survey will be used to highlight the scale and causes of stress and will inform our bargaining priorities. The initial headline results will be available in late autumn with a full report in the New Year.

Full details of the Conference have been sent to all branches/LAs, and can be downloaded at <http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=1848>

**Book your place now as places will be limited.
Contact Sharon Russell on 020 7520 3242**



About UCU training

UCU Training is UCU's member training programme. It provides a wide range of training opportunities that will develop the skills, knowledge and confidence you need to build and maintain strong, active and representative branches/LAs.

UCU Training courses are open to all UCU members. Whether you are a Branch/LA officer, Rep or Activist or a new member who wants to get more involved, UCU training has a course to suit you.

Branch Officers and elected representatives are entitled under s168 of Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 to time off work with pay for training provided by

the union or the TUC. We also encourage branch members to participate in training and many employers provide paid time for this.

Health and Safety Representatives have additional rights to time off with pay under the Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations 1977, for training to perform their trade union duties.

Requests for time off to attend any of these courses should be made to Management in accordance with ACAS advice, at the same time as your application is made for a place. Any difficulties should be reported to your local Branch/LA and your Regional Official.

Safety reps courses

UCU runs a series of health and safety courses. Full details can be found at <http://www.natfhe.org.uk/?id=tool0001> together with details of how to join.

If you are a safety rep and have not been on a course please ensure you do.

Tackling harassment and bullying at work course

14/15 November, London

UCU is running a 2 day course on tackling harassment and bullying in the workplace. This course is aimed at local reps and/or those who have a role in handling casework, branch and LA officers and health and safety reps.

The course will enable you to:

- Define and recognise bullying and harassment
- Understand how employment law principles 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 and harassment

The course is free of charge to UCU members and expenses are reclaimable from the union. It will start at 9.30 each day and finish at 4.30. Lunch and light refreshments will be provided.

Numbers of participants is **limited to 18**. Anyone wishing to attend the course should contact Linda Ball, Training Admin Officer at lball@ucu.org.uk as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

UCU Health and Safety Advice Line

UCU has set up a Health and Safety Advice Line for safety reps and branch officers offering information about health and safety legal standards, and how they can be applied and advice on dealing with health and safety issues/problems.

The Health and Safety Advice Line is for branch officers and safety reps only, not for individual

members. The advice line will be staffed two days a week only. When you phone the advice line you will be asked to leave a message. You will then be contacted as soon as possible.

The **advice line number** is **0161 636 7558**

Email healthandsafety@ucu.org.uk

Or by post to:

John Bamford

UCU Health and Safety Advice Line

Greater Manchester Hazards Centre

Unit 2.5 Windrush Millennium Centre

70 Alexandra Road

Manchester M16 7WD

UCU's health and safety team

- **John Bamford**
- **Linda Ball**
- **Sharon Russell**
- **Roger Kline**