

# University and College Union

**To** Council  
**From** Margaret Phelan  
**Date** 10 Oct 2014  
**Agenda Item**  
**For** Agreement  
**Subject** Wales Organising Strategy 2014/15

1. For a number of years our strategy has focussed on the key areas of Recognition, Facilities and Mapping. This year we intend to focus our efforts on organisation at branch level and recruitment. A UK priority will be recruitment of representatives in branches and promoting the use of **Build the Union Resources**. In Wales we are being specific about the representatives we would like to develop and encourage a level of activity which supports our policy work and recruitment.
2. Mapping remains one of our key priorities going forward, but we will be targeting those institutions with a density of less than 50%.

## Organising Priorities

### **Priority 1 – Recruitment Drive**

3. In line with a UK wide Campaign we are asking branches to continue to focus their efforts on recruitment and we would remind you of the need to be careful with printed lists as we do not want reps unintentionally breaching the Data Protection Act. We will be supporting branches and LA where the current membership density is less than 50%. Priority will be given to branches or LAs who have an updated map which has been amended to include starters and leavers for 2013/4. This will allow us to effectively target non members and new starters. The future of the union depends on your efforts to maintain density and be able to argue that we are the voice of staff in FE & HE.

We would like to think that all branches are doing the following:-

- Attend inductions
- Identify and target non-members
- Hold regular recruitment exercises
- Directly contact non-members at least once per term
- Identify an activist to be responsible for recruitment

The **Build the Union** resources can be found on the web site

<http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2815>

## **Priority 2 – Support recruitment activity in institutions with less than 50% density**

4. We will contact branch officers offering support to address the issue of low density as we believe that increasing density is a prerequisite for decent bargaining arrangements within the institution.

## **Priority 3 – Equality Work**

5. The Equality objectives for the academic year 2014-2015 have been developed by the Wales Office in conjunction with the Wales Equality Committee.

## **UCU Wales Equality internal structures**

6. Resources will be allocated to work with the Equality Committee on developing a framework for its work. This would include consideration of how the Equality Committee feeds into UCU Wales lay structures and how Equality representatives at Branches/LAs feed into this process.

## **Disability Leave Policies**

7. In FE, a disability leave policy will be tabled with ColeaguCymru for adoption at a national level.

8. For HE, the UCU national guidance on negotiating for a disability leave policy will be complemented with a model policy for Branches/LAs to table locally.

## **Local Equality network pilot**

9. UCU Wales will undertake targeted work at a single HE Institution around setting up equality networks at a local level to increase participation and activism of under-represented groups. If the pilot is successful in increasing participation and activism it will be used as a model and will be extended to all Institutions (FE and HE) for the academic year 2015-2016.

## **Priority 4- Increasing the number of Reps**

10. The office will provide support for any branch to encourage new activists to become representatives and case workers.

## **Priority 5 – Organising Rep for each Branch**

11. We are encouraging each branch to recruit/designate an Organising Rep. Where the LA appoints to this role consideration should be given to the need for a lay rep. The role of an Organising Rep can be many and varied, but particular focus is on ensuring organising remains on the agenda for branches; co-ordinating organising activity within the branch and acting as a point of contact for organising related matters.

## **Priority 6 – Quality Rep (FE)**

12. Current developments within the FE sector, with regard to the formation of the Education Workforce Council and the review of the Estyn Common Inspection framework for FE, have emphasised the focus on 'quality'. However the definition of quality and what that entails is dependent on differing perspectives.

13. We are asking Branches to nominate a member to take on a new role as UCU Branch Quality Rep. This might be an existing or new member of the Committee, but we are looking for someone who has an understanding of the key principles of quality from both the wider college perspective as well as that of the practitioner; we are aware that these points of view are not always the same. Branch committee members, who are already perhaps members of cross-college quality groups, may make ideal first choices, as they will be in a position to feedback college perspectives and balance that with the view of UCU.

14. The reason for asking that branches make provision for a Quality rep. is that we would like to ensure that Branch members have a channel to increase the opportunity to voice their opinions on the quality of educational provision in FE.

15. We would like, in future, for meetings with TU Quality Reps. to form part of the Estyn inspection process. We also need to be able to inform debate and decision making within the new education Workforce Council and within the Welsh Government. This role will also help to inform the direction of campaigning for increased recognition and respect for the professional opinion of lecturers.

16. The new role will be developed with the support of the UCU Wales Policy and Communications Officer and we ask that you forward nominations to Lisa Edwards in the UCU Wales Office by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014.

### **Training**

17. Getting training events off the ground continues to be challenging but we are committed to the principle of holding relevant training events in Wales where possible.

18. We will be running a Media training course for reps involved in press and media engagement.

19. The Pensions training from 2013/14 has been carried over to this academic year and will take place in both North and South Wales (numbers permitting) in Spring 2015 in time for the changes which are taking place in April 2015.

20. Whilst we are aware that there is a cohort of reps in Wales who have yet to undertake Reps 2 training (having already attended Reps 1), we have, over the last two years, had to cancel two Reps 2 courses, owing to poor take up. We have therefore decided not to schedule a further Reps 2 for the academic year 2014/14 but suggest that instead those wishing to continue the Reps pathway look at the Reps 2 training opportunities offered by UCU nationally in the UCU Activist Education Guide  
<http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=3311>

21. We are intending to offer a Reps 1 course, so ensure that new reps can access the training they require to become active within the branch.

Training	Dates	Location
Media Training	TBA (Autumn term 2014)	TBA
Pensions	TBA (Spring term 2015)	North Wales South Wales
Reps 1	TBA (Summer term 2015)	South Wales

22. We will also be offering some bespoke organising workshops in relation to recruitment activity within branches in furtherance of priorities 1 and 3 of the Wales Organising Plan. The bespoke workshops will be provided geographically – one in the North, North East, North West, Mid, South East and South West where numbers justify it. A minimum of 8 participants will be required in each geographical location. The workshops will be open to all representatives and members interested in assisting UCU with its organising and recruitment activities.

23. Each institution will be provided with a file with resources from 'Build the Union' campaign to support the strategic development of their Branches/LA. We have been trying to persuade branch officers who attend regional meetings of the need to address membership numbers, density and representative ration to members.

24. This year the file will provide figures that will be monitored monthly and shared with head office termly. There are too many institutions who do not meet the 50% density target. We must ensure that UCU can legitimately argue that we represent the majority of academic members to ensure that we are able to improve the terms and conditions of our membership.

**Agreed by Council**

*R. J. Williams*  
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**Date**

10 Oct 2014  
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