

# ACTIVIST EDUCATION GUIDE

**2017-18**

networks

trade union  
approach

accredited  
courses

equality

support

organising

legal  
knowledge

confidence

activism

campaigns

access

collective  
approach

local  
contacts

effective  
branches

YOU

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## WHY SHOULD I TRAIN?

It is UCU policy that all officers and reps, especially those involved in the representation of members, have been trained to carry out the role.

It is an integral part of your role as a rep to attend training and to keep updated with new information and skills.

You have a statutory right to attend training and to be paid. For more information on your statutory rights and for template letters go to: *Being a UCU activist: Facilities and time off for UCU reps*

The role of the rep/officer can be challenging. You are often the first point of call for members in trouble, and if you are new to the role this can be daunting. Enrolling for the reps' programme will give you guidance on how to carry out your tasks and the confidence to do so.

Being a rep can be a isolating at times, therefore having the opportunity to meet and work alongside fellow UCU reps is a real benefit. Courses are run on a regional basis enabling local contacts and networks which may provide invaluable support after the course has finished.

It is a requirement that reps should to be accredited when representing members. Although it is unusual for an employer to ask to see reps' credentials, it does happen from time to time.

# HOW DOES THE PROGRAMME WORK?

## APPROACH

We employ a range of teaching methods for each UCU course to keep them appealing to different learning styles within the group.

Participants learn how to solve problems collectively using a trade union approach. Our aim is to give participants the confidence to return to their workplaces and take part in the work of the UCU branch immediately.

## ACCREDITATION

Most UCU courses are accredited. This takes place through the TUC and partner accreditation centres around the country, enabling reps to gain qualifications through the Open College Network (OCN). These credits can be aggregated to provide access into further and higher education.

## TUTORS

The programme is delivered by TUC-trained tutors who are experienced trade unionists and professionally qualified. Some sessions are delivered by UCU staff and, on occasion, external speakers are invited to take part.

## MATERIALS

UCU courses are designed to be as practical as possible. Typically, participants will be asked to complete pre- and post-course activities as well as use policies from individual workplaces as reference points.

The course materials are regularly revised to incorporate legislative changes, new government initiatives and UCU policies.

## COURSES ARE FREE!

All courses are free to UCU members, and travel and child care costs can be reimbursed.

## ACCESSIBILITY FOR DISABLED MEMBERS

We endeavour to meet all access needs. We ask that members let us know of any adjustments or particular need when they apply.

## OPEN TO ALL

The union is keen to actively encourage black, women, disabled and LGBT members to get more involved and apply for courses. We welcome applicants who self-identify in one of these areas.

## ATTENDANCE

You can apply for a course using the application form at the back of this guide, or online at [www.ucu.org.uk/training](http://www.ucu.org.uk/training)

We will aim to acknowledge your application as soon as we have received it. Final joining instructions will be sent out three weeks before the start of the course. If you cannot attend, please let us know so that we can offer your place to a colleague.

As a UCU rep you have a statutory right to attend trade union training. If you have any difficulties in securing paid release from your employer speak to your branch, your regional office or email [training@ucu.org.uk](mailto:training@ucu.org.uk)

*For more information on the practicalities of registering for UCU training, please see the FAQ section on pages 17–18 of this booklet.*

# TRAINING FOR REPS



## UCU REPS

The Rep 1 induction course\* is aimed at all new UCU reps and branch officers as well as those who have yet to attend any training. Rep 1 and Rep 2 are sequential courses so you will need to attend Rep 1 prior to registering for Rep 2.

### REP 1: INDUCTION

#### THIS COURSE WILL COVER

- ▶ the purpose of UCU, its structure, functions and democratic processes
- ▶ your role and other UCU roles in the branch
- ▶ your rights as a UCU rep
- ▶ how to apply a trade union approach to your work as a UCU activist
- ▶ how to develop a local campaign
- ▶ the relationship between organising campaigning and sustainability
- ▶ equality legislation
- ▶ the support available to you.

*\*We encourage all UCU activists to attend the Rep 1 module regardless of which role they hold within the branch.*

**COURSE DURATION** 3 days

#### DATES AND LOCATIONS

**London** 6–8 September 2017

**Birmingham** 27–29 September 2017

**Oxford** 8–10 November 2017

**Newcastle** 15–17 November 2017

**Exeter** 21–23 November 2017

**Leeds** 22–24 November 2017

**Manchester** 22–24 November 2017

**London** 6–8 December 2017

**Glasgow** 17–19 April 2018

**London** 20–22 June 2018

### REP 2: REPRESENTING MEMBERS

#### THIS COURSE WILL COVER

- ▶ the individual and collective nature of trade union work
- ▶ best practice when advising members
- ▶ how to interview a member
- ▶ key legislation and procedures relating to the representation of members
- ▶ how to raise grievances looking at specific institutions' policies
- ▶ practical advice on preparing documentation, witness statements and representation in casework
- ▶ progressing cases using preparation, negotiation and planning skills
- ▶ best practice guidance on representing members at formal hearings.

**COURSE DURATION** 3 days

#### DATES AND LOCATIONS

**Leeds** 17–19 January 2018

**Oxford** 31 January–2 February 2018

**Birmingham** 7–9 February 2018

**London** 21–23 March 2018

**Newcastle** 25–27 April 2018

**Manchester** 25–27 April 2018

**Exeter** 15–17 May 2018

**London** 2–4 July 2018

# HEALTH AND SAFETY REPS

Every UCU branch should have at least one lead health and safety rep who sits on the branch. In addition it is good practice to have a branch network of health and safety reps to represent members in different buildings, departments and faculties.

## SAFETY REPS 1: INDUCTION ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

### THIS COURSE WILL COVER

- ▶ the role and functions of a safety rep
- ▶ how to obtain facilities and time off to carry out the safety rep's function
- ▶ using the Safety Reps Regulations
- ▶ employers' duties under Health and Safety legislation
- ▶ applying a trade union and equal opportunities approach to health and safety
- ▶ organising UCU members regarding hazards at work
- ▶ developing the skills to become an effective safety rep.

*To achieve accreditation, participants must attend all six days of the course (Safety Reps 1 and Safety Reps 2)*

**COURSE DURATION** 3 days

### DATES AND LOCATIONS

**London** 12–14 September 2017

**Birmingham** 11–13 October 2017

**London** 11–13 December 2017

**London** 14–16 May 2018

## SAFETY REPS 2: ORGANISING AND BARGAINING FOR MEMBERS

### THIS COURSE WILL COVER

- ▶ how to improve health and safety training
- ▶ conducting health and safety inspections
- ▶ using a systematic approach to tackling health and safety problems
- ▶ how to improve the risk assessment process
- ▶ negotiating effective policies and procedures around stress and violence
- ▶ how to build union organisation around health and safety issues
- ▶ further development of key skills to become an effective safety rep.

**COURSE DURATION** 3 days

### DATES AND LOCATIONS

**London** 14–16 March 2018

**Birmingham** 21–23 March 2018

## EQUALITY REPS

UCU equality reps and officers work within branches to promote equality with the employer and union members. This could include looking at issues such as flexible working, absence management, discriminatory practices, equal pay and bargaining for equality.

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- ▶ UCU equality officers
- ▶ equality reps
- ▶ branch officers

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will help reps to use equality legislation to tackle discrimination at work and develop and promote a branch-based equality agenda. It will cover:

- ▶ the role of the UCU equality rep/officer
- ▶ embedding equality within the branch bargaining and organising agenda
- ▶ discrimination legislation
- ▶ improving equality policies/agreements
- ▶ developing good practice
- ▶ promoting equality in the workplace, branch and the union
- ▶ techniques for raising equality issues
- ▶ developing equality networks
- ▶ sharpening negotiating skills.

**COURSE DURATION** 2 days

### DATES AND LOCATIONS

**London** 8 & 22 November 2017

**Birmingham** 7 & 8 March 2018

**Glasgow** 23 & 24 April 2018

**London** 9 & 30 May 2018

**Manchester** 27 June and 11 July 2018

## EFFECTIVE NEGOTIATING AND BARGAINING

Successful negotiating skills are paramount to a branch's effectiveness and strength. This course is an opportunity for reps and officers involved in branch negotiations at all levels to increase their understanding and confidence to better represent UCU members on a whole range of current collective issues.

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- ▶ branch/LA negotiators
- ▶ other branch officers
- ▶ reps involved in local negotiations

### THE COURSE WILL EXAMINE

- ▶ the role of the UCU negotiator and the negotiating team
- ▶ legal rights that may be used to support negotiations
- ▶ links between branch organising and campaigning activity
- ▶ different stages of negotiation
- ▶ techniques for communicating effectively and responding to unfair tactics in negotiations
- ▶ how issues of equality and diversity impact on negotiations
- ▶ how to implement a successful collective bargaining strategy.

**COURSE DURATION** 3 days

### DATES AND LOCATIONS

**Exeter** 1–2 & 22 March 2018

**London** 18–19 April & 2 May 2018

**Oxford** 12–13 & 27 April 2018

**Leeds** 3–4 & 24 May 2018

**Manchester** 20–21 June & 4 July 2018



## COURSES IN SCOTLAND

The UCU education programme in Scotland offers reps the opportunity to acquire new skills in a practical and supportive environment. Our UCU courses are tailored to take account of Scotland's devolved nation status and where possible a member of the Scotland UCU staff team will be present to advise

### REP 1: INDUCTION

This course follows the structure and content of the Rep 1 course offered in England and Wales (see page 6).

**COURSE DURATION** 3 days

**DATES AND LOCATIONS**

**Glasgow** 17–19 April 2018

### REP 2: REPRESENTING MEMBERS

This course follows the structure and content of the Rep 2 course offered in England and Wales (see page 6).

**COURSE DURATION** 3 days

**DATES AND LOCATIONS**

**Edinburgh** 12–14 June 2018

### EQUALITY REPS

This course follows the structure and content of the Equality reps course offered in England and Wales (see page 8).

**COURSE DURATION** 2 days

**DATES AND LOCATIONS**

**Glasgow** 23–24 April 2018



# SPECIALIST COURSES



## TACKLING ORGANISATIONAL STRESS

The incidence of workplace stress has steadily risen among public sector workers since the mid 1990s. Members working in education are at a greater risk of work-related stress than most occupational groups. Substantial government spending cuts leading to widespread redundancy and restructuring throughout tertiary education means the risk to the health and welfare of UCU members at work has never been greater than it is now.

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- ▶ health and safety reps
- ▶ branch officers
- ▶ other UCU reps

### THE COURSE WILL ENABLE YOU TO

- ▶ identify the causes and effects of stress in the workplace
- ▶ apply relevant legal standards and policies to stress
- ▶ consider effective prevention and control measures
- ▶ select appropriate information for tackling stress at work
- ▶ develop UCU campaigns against stress in the workplace.

**COURSE DURATION** 2 days

### DATES AND LOCATIONS

**Birmingham** 7 November & 5 December 2017

**Exeter** 24–25 January 2018

## INTRODUCTION TO PENSIONS

This course is aimed at existing pensions reps and other branch reps or officers who are currently, or will be, offering support to members with pensions enquiries. Every branch should have a least one pensions representative able to give a specialist level of advice to members locally.

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- ▶ pensions reps/champions
- ▶ other branch officers
- ▶ reps involved in advising members on pensions

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course will help you to understand both the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) and the University Superannuation Scheme (USS) and will focus on:

- ▶ changes to these schemes
- ▶ how pensions are calculated
- ▶ additional pensions benefits
- ▶ ill health and redundancy issues
- ▶ pension developments and communications in your branch.

**COURSE DURATION** 2 days

### DATES AND LOCATIONS

**London** 10–11 January 2018

**Birmingham** 4–5 July 2018

## DEALING WITH SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

This course is aimed at branch reps who may be dealing with individual harassment cases, negotiating around policies that protect members or wish to challenge harassment, in particular sexual harassment more broadly in the workplace.

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

There is no requirement to have attended any UCU reps training prior to this course. However, an understanding of your local branch bargaining machinery will be an advantage. If you are a new rep and would like to attend this course please contact your branch chair or secretary to discuss how your branch negotiates policy with the employer.

### THE COURSE WILL COVER

- ▶ legislation covering harassment
- ▶ UCU women's sexual harassment survey
- ▶ Harassing and sexually harassing behaviour, impact, and barriers
- ▶ Policies for dealing with harassment
- ▶ Handling harassment cases
- ▶ Challenging harassment at work
- ▶ Involving members
- ▶ Organising around equality

**COURSE DURATION** 1 day

### DATES AND LOCATIONS

**London** 30 January 2018

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

This is a one-day course for UCU reps who wish to broaden their understanding of, and gain confidence in, dealing with issues around sexual orientation and gender identity.

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- ▶ UCU reps

### THE COURSE AIMS ARE

- ▶ to increase reps' confidence to deal with issues around sexual orientation and gender identity
- ▶ to provide an overview of key legal rights and procedures, sources of information and support
- ▶ to examine existing structures that support equality and identify improvements
- ▶ to increase reps' knowledge of negotiating priorities when considering sexual orientation and gender identity.

**COURSE DURATION** 1 day

### DATES AND LOCATIONS

**Manchester** 8 December 2017

# DEMAND-LED COURSES



## LEARNING REPS

Every UCU branch should have at least one learning rep or education officer. The course will look at your role as a learning rep, and how to extend the UCU organising agenda to build the branch around learning.

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- ▶ new and existing UCU learning reps
- ▶ all branch officers

### DURING THE COURSE YOU WILL

- ▶ discuss why issues relating to learning, training and professional development are trade union issues
- ▶ identify the role of the learning rep in your workplace and within UCU
- ▶ demonstrate an understanding of your legal rights
- ▶ assess your members' learning needs
- ▶ explore what learning and professional development opportunities exist within your college/university
- ▶ discuss equality issues around learning and how to deal with them
- ▶ practice skills to support members to access their rights to time off to learn
- ▶ create an action plan for your first UCU learning event to take to your branch committee.

**COURSE DURATION** 3 days

### DATES AND LOCATIONS

*This course will run on a demand-led basis. To register your interest please go to [ucu.org.uk/training](https://www.ucu.org.uk/training), click on your region and select this course.*

## CHALLENGING AND HANDLING REDUNDANCY

The threat of redundancy has never been more acute for UCU branches. This course is aimed at branch officers and reps who are likely to be involved in challenging redundancies and/or supporting members facing redundancy.

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- ▶ UCU reps and caseworkers
- ▶ branch officers

### THE COURSE YOU WILL ENABLE YOU TO

- ▶ define your role as a rep in relation to challenging redundancies and supporting members
- ▶ plan, implement, and organise around the threat of redundancy
- ▶ identify early indicators of redundancy
- ▶ understand the legal obligations for employers
- ▶ identify the key steps for preventing, challenging and handling redundancy.
- ▶ understand the alternatives to redundancy
- ▶ interview members and develop a representational plan
- ▶ apply a trade union strategy when progressing redundancy cases.

**COURSE DURATION** 3 days

### DATES AND LOCATIONS

*This course will run on a demand-led basis. To register your interest please go to [ucu.org.uk/training](https://www.ucu.org.uk/training), click on your region and select this course.*



## ADVANCED REPS

The advanced reps course is aimed at more experienced reps and branch officers who are actively involved in the strategic direction of the branch. The union is keen to attract activists from our equality strands (black, women, disabled and LGBT) and welcomes applicants who self-identify in one of these areas.

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- ▶ UCU reps and branch officers who have completed the UCU rep 1 induction, equality, or the health and safety induction course

### THIS COURSE WILL COVER

- ▶ an analysis of branch organising
- ▶ how the branch can develop a strategy for recruitment
- ▶ how the branch involves members and develops new activists
- ▶ how the branch can widen participation
- ▶ developing a clear campaign message
- ▶ how we can build union strength through effective organising, campaigning and bargaining
- ▶ planning to take the branch to the next level of activity.

**COURSE DURATION** 3 days

### DATES AND LOCATIONS

*This course will run on a demand-led basis. To register your interest please go to [ucu.org.uk/training](https://www.ucu.org.uk/training), click on your region and select this course.*

## GREEN WORKING

This course is for UCU members and reps who wish to develop their understanding of climate change and ways to protect the environment through change at work. It aims to enable trainees to develop as environment champions or reps.

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- ▶ members who have an interest in climate change issues and want to get more involved in the work of their branch
- ▶ newly appointed environment reps
- ▶ existing reps and branch officers

### THE COURSE WILL COVER

- ▶ environment terminology and the current debate
- ▶ legislation and other environmental information
- ▶ environment management systems
- ▶ current trade union policies and organisation
- ▶ workplace and community strategies.

*This is a three-day course which comprises one day in the classroom followed by two days online learning.*

**COURSE DURATION** 3 days

### DATES AND LOCATIONS

*This course will run on a demand-led basis. To register your interest please go to [ucu.org.uk/training](https://www.ucu.org.uk/training), click on your region and select this course.*

## TACKLING BULLYING AND HARASSMENT AT WORK

Dealing with cases of harassment and bullying in the workplace is becoming an all-too-common task for UCU reps. This course has been designed to support you in handling such cases by increasing your understanding of the issues and giving you the opportunity to consider the practical ways in which harassment and bullying can be tackled in your workplace.

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- ▶ health and safety reps
- ▶ branch officers and other UCU reps

### THE COURSE YOU WILL ENABLE YOU TO

- ▶ define and recognise bullying and harassment
- ▶ understand how employment law 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.

**COURSE DURATION** 2 days

### DATES AND LOCATIONS

*This course will run on a demand-led basis. To register your interest please complete the form on page 19 or go to [ucu.org.uk/training](http://ucu.org.uk/training), click on your region and select this course.*

## MEDIA AND POLITICAL LOBBYING SKILLS

Unions need to campaign effectively, to defend jobs and win the political, moral and economic argument. Increasingly there is an expectation that branches are better equipped to make links with local media and to get their message heard by their local community. This course gives practical tips on how to use the media effectively and how to persuade politicians to support UCU campaigns

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- ▶ communication/media officers and branch officers
- ▶ all UCU reps involved in communications

### BY THE END OF THE COURSE YOU WILL KNOW HOW TO

- ▶ approach the local media and politicians
- ▶ write a press release
- ▶ conduct yourself in an interview situation
- ▶ engage politicians in UCU campaigns.

**COURSE DURATION** 1 day

### DATES AND LOCATIONS

*This course will run on a demand-led basis. To register your interest please complete the form on page 19 or go to [ucu.org.uk/training](http://ucu.org.uk/training), click on your region and select this course.*



## MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

This is a one-day course designed for UCU reps who wish to broaden their understanding of mental health issues. It will cover the Mental Health Act and the Equality Act and raise mental health issues in the workplace.

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- ▶ UCU reps

### THE COURSE WILL ENABLE YOU TO

- ▶ raise mental health issues in the workplace
- ▶ develop your understanding of mental health issues
- ▶ identify how people with mental health conditions experience discrimination
- ▶ represent and support members with mental health conditions at work
- ▶ discuss the role of trade unions in tackling mental health problems at work.

**COURSE DURATION** 1 day

### DATES AND LOCATIONS

*This course will run on a demand-led basis. To register your interest please complete the form on page 19 or go to [ucu.org.uk/training](http://ucu.org.uk/training), click on your region and select this course.*

## BLACK MEMBERS' COURSES

This course is for \*black members who want to get more involved in UCU. Come and meet like-minded black members who want to make a difference at work.

This course is for you if:

- ▶ you are new to activism in UCU
- ▶ you want to get more involved in UCU
- ▶ you self-identify as black.

This course is not for you if:

- ▶ you have already undertaken a UCU reps training course or its equivalent
- ▶ you are not new to activism in UCU.

You will have the opportunity to meet other activists and members of the UCU Black Members' Standing Committee.

### THE COURSE WILL COVER

- ▶ an introduction to UCU
- ▶ professional development session around leadership and mentoring
- ▶ an introduction to UCU campaigns
- ▶ issues facing black members.

#### *\*What do we mean by black?*

*In UCU the word black is used in a political sense to describe people who self-identify as being from a visible minority (more usually from an Asian or African heritage) with a shared experience or understanding of discrimination.*

**COURSE DURATION** 1 day

### DATES AND LOCATIONS

*This course will run on a demand-led basis. To register your interest please go to [ucu.org.uk/training](http://ucu.org.uk/training), click on your region and select this course.*

## UCU TRAINING – FAQs

### HOW MUCH DO COURSES COST?

All courses are funded centrally via members' subscriptions so there will be no cost to you or your branch. You will also be reimbursed for your travel and any childcare costs

### WHERE DO COURSES RUN?

UCU courses run in a variety of regional locations. Members travelling to UCU courses are asked to use the cheapest, easily available standard class rail fare wherever possible. Members travelling by car will receive a payment based on the mileage used. Members are responsible for making their own travel arrangements and bookings, which will be reimbursed after attendance on the course.

### WHAT ARE THE START AND FINISH TIMES?

All of our courses start at 9.30 and finish at 4.30. Members are asked to ensure they book travel early in order to attend the course in full.

### HOW DO I APPLY FOR A COURSE?

You must complete the online application form attached to your chosen course. An email to the course administrator or training officer will not suffice as an application. The online form captures all the information we need to process your application. Once you have completed the online form you will receive an email advising you of your place.

### ARE UCU COURSES ACCREDITED?

Apart from our shorter one-day courses, all of the UCU programme is accredited via the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF).

### CAN I APPLY FOR COURSES RUNNING OUT OF MY REGION?

Possibly. Places are reserved for members and reps who work within that region, however on occasion there may be spare places. If you register your interest with a course out of region your name will be put onto a reserve list. Should a place come available you will be notified.

### WHAT IF A COURSE THAT I WANT TO ATTEND ISN'T RUNNING IN MY REGION?

There is an expression of interest form you can complete which logs your interest. If we receive sufficient numbers we can organise an additional course.

### HOW DO I ARRANGE TIME OFF TO ATTEND TRAINING?

When applying please ensure you have branch approval. This is particularly important as you may need support from your branch in securing your statutory rights to time off.

### IF I WORK PART TIME AND ATTEND TRAINING ON A DAY THAT I WOULDN'T NORMALLY BE WORKING SHOULD I STILL GET PAID?

Part-time staff are entitled to be paid for the same amount of time as full-timers. So, for example, if a part-timer attends a course on a day that they would not normally be working they are entitled to be paid for that day. If your pay does not vary with the amount of time, you are entitled to be paid what you would have received had you been at work excluding overtime pay. If, however, you are employed on an hourly-paid or zero-hours contract you are entitled to receive your average pay.

It will also depend on what your local facilities agreement says or what you can get your employer to agree to. Many institutions will allow it, especially if you argue less favourable treatment than a full-time member of staff.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF I HAVE A PLACE ON A COURSE AND I CAN NO LONGER ATTEND?**

You must let us know as soon as you are able so that we can avoid unnecessary expenditure and offer your place to another UCU member.

### **ARE UCU COURSES RESIDENTIAL?**

Not usually, however requests will be considered if you are attending a course out of region, a non-commutable distance from where you live or in special circumstances. The UCU administrator organising the course will be able to advise you.

### **HOW DO I ORGANISE TRAINING SESSIONS THAT ARE NOT PART OF THE NATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME?**

It is possible that we can run tailor-made training sessions according to the needs of an individual branch. We usually require a minimum of 12 members to run a session. Please contact your regional office to discuss this option.

### **CAN I ATTEND REPS TRAINING WHILE I AM ON SICK LEAVE?**

If you have taken sick leave absence from work we advise you not to attend a UCU course as you may face disciplinary action if your employer were to find out.

*For more information please see the FAQ section on the training pages of the UCU website: [www.ucu.org.uk/4780](http://www.ucu.org.uk/4780)*



Produced by UCU training, Carlow Street, London NW1 7LH  
Tel: 020 7756 2500. Email: [training@ucu.org.uk](mailto:training@ucu.org.uk). [www.ucu.org.uk](http://www.ucu.org.uk)  
September 2017

**ucu**training  
skills knowledge activism