

Training and your role as a learning Rep

Training for learning reps

Learning representatives have, by law, to complete an accredited training course. The TUC course lasts five days and courses are run all over the West Midlands Region. You will work closely with your GMB regional education department who can provide support and help you get access to ULR training.



As a union learning rep you are the public face of GMB in the workplace, so you have an important role to play not just in promoting learning but in promoting GMB in the workplace.

The Role fully explained

While the tasks you take on will reflect your interests - and perhaps other union roles you may have - the list below will give you an idea of the range of activities a union learning rep might be involved in. These fall under three main headings:

1. Promoting learning

- ☐ Promote learning opportunities
- ☐ Identify members' learning needs
- ☐ Talk to members about the union
- ☐ Give support to members and help them overcome barriers to learning
- ☐ Signpost members to other sources of advice and support
- ☐ Work with learning providers - eg. local further education colleges
- ☐ Work with organisations such as Unionlearn.

2. Working with the union

- ☐ Work with other trade union reps
- ☐ Report to the branch committee
- ☐ Build links with the wider union
- ☐ Gather and record information
- ☐ Submit information to the GMB Education department

3. Raising learning issues with the employer

- ☐ Develop awareness of government policies and priorities
- ☐ Find out about the skills needed within the local labour market
- ☐ Work with your employer to improve learning opportunities
- ☐ Negotiate on learning and skills as part of the bargaining process.

The role of the union learning rep can differ between branches.

If you hold another position in the branch (such as branch secretary or shop steward) you may also negotiate with your employer on learning issues.

Who you will deal with as a local learning representative will depend on a number of factors but will include:



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- ☒ union members
- ☒ other workers
- ☒ other union learning reps
- ☒ other union reps
- ☒ GMB Education department
- ☒ managers / human resources staff

It is important that union learning reps regularly submit information about their activities and successes to the GMB Education department. This allows the union to demonstrate the effectiveness of the project and secure future funding.

A union learning rep should ensure that they work towards recruiting more members into GMB, so hold a supply of application forms and signpost queries to the relevant GMB rep. As an elected union learning rep you are expected to support democratic decisions taken by union members and to adhere to union policies.

Union learning reps are sometimes approached by non-members asking for your help. This is an opportunity to discuss union membership with the non-member and to encourage them to join.



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