



TUC Education Update

February 2017 issue

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TUC Education Update

Welcome to the February edition of TUC Education Update, which we aim to mail three times a year to union education officers, TUC course co-ordinators and tutors, and everyone with an interest in union education and training, with news and views from TUC Education. The Update is also available as an e-bulletin, register via the TUC [unionlearn](http://www.unionlearn.org.uk) website.

Over 7,500 people have subscribed to the Update, receiving up to date news as soon as it is published.

New TUC Education Offer

TUC Education has been working hard to reshape its offer for reps training. The new offer consists of recently developed online courses alongside blended/classroom courses, bringing contemporary technologies into classrooms.

The newly available online TUC Union Reps Stage One course is now freely available online and can be accessed by reps as soon as they take office, where and when most convenient and from a mobile, tablet or PC. This new course is available at www.tuceducation.org.uk/newonlinecourses.

Feedback from focus groups of reps that have tested the new programme indicate the course is also very useful as a refresher for reps that have been in post for some time.

New online Health and Safety Stage 1 and Union Learning Reps Stage 1 and 2 courses are in development and will be launched in summer.

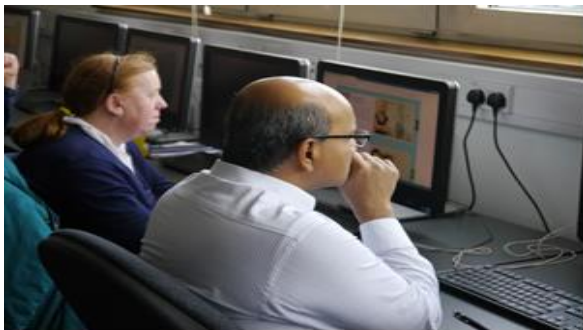
The TUC Education website hosts the new online course directory and online application process which allows reps to enter their details and apply directly for courses. Just register at <https://www.tuceducation.org.uk/> to access all courses and TUC resources.

TUC Union Reps 1 Online course - NEW

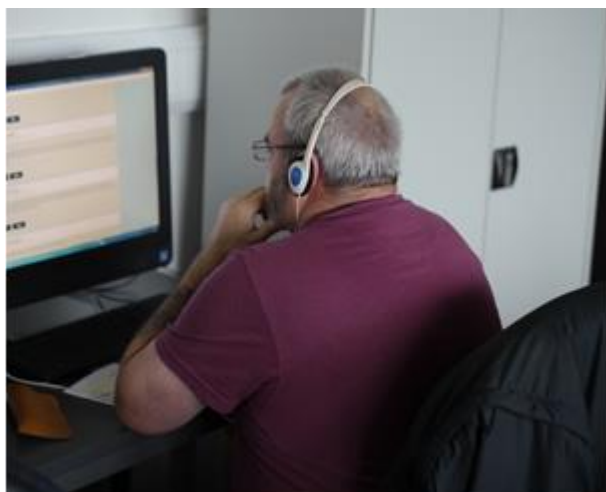
TUC Education are pleased to announce the launch of our new TUC Union Reps 1 online course. This completely new course provides a fresh approach to learning.

The online provision also enables reps to do the training they need as soon as their appointment/election has been confirmed.

Late last year, we invited two groups of reps to help us test the new material. The very detailed feedback we received was really informative.



“Very easy to use with navigation buttons. Lots of detailed information. Much better than the “previous system.”



“Love that some videos had transcripts. If using this on your lunch at work you can't always hear.”

We have taken the unique step of developing a course which is suitable for brand new reps, and more experienced ones – who perhaps just need a refresher on a particular topic – but don't need to go through the whole programme again.

“Really impressed with this section. It's been a while since I have completed the classroom based training and it is unlikely that I would refer back to my course notes. This section is well organised and delivers information in a way that is easily accessible and supportive to the union representative.”

The new online course can be used alongside existing classroom provision, and enable reps to spend more time on any aspect which is of particular interest to them individually, at a time which is convenient to them.

Further information on the new online course offer is available [here](#).



Health and Safety and Organising – A guide for reps

This resource is designed to help you achieve an increase in members and a more active

membership, with a greater number of health and safety representatives. It will make you more effective on the ground – where real gains can be made – and help create a greater culture of safety in your workplace.

We know that union health and safety representatives make a difference in the workplace: those with union representatives and joint safety committees have half the major injury rate of those without.

Health and safety is one of the main reasons that people join a trade union. Over two million people have an injury or illness that was caused or made worse from work and more than 28 million working days are lost every year as a result of work related injuries and ill health. The HSE estimates the cost of injuries and ill health from current working conditions to be £14.2bn, but of course the human cost is much greater.

There is a lot to be done and, of course, if there are a number of union representatives in your workplace you can work together to get the most out of any organising campaigning.

This guide contains a number of different sections that can be used together, or individual ones may be of particular use to

your needs and situation. The [guide](#) is available as a pdf from the TUC website.

Our latest eNotes

eNotes are a great resource to help reps keep up to date on key workplace issues. These short online self-contained elearning modules are a mixture of text, video and quizzes. They last between 20 and 45 minutes and can be returned to as many times as you like.

To access eNotes and more, register at <https://www.tuceducation.org.uk/login/index.php>

Take a look at our the **NEW** enotes

Health and Safety and Organising

A supplement to the guide for reps (see above)

Health and safety is a core union concern, but is it a good one for organising? This eNote will help you to use health and safety to develop a strong and active membership in the workplace.

This eNote will also:

- Explain why health and safety is a particularly good organising issue
- Describe how health and safety can be used as a recruitment tool
- Explore the importance of teamwork, workplace mapping and building networks

This is also an excellent resource for branches going through organisational change, as health and safety reps can use it in collaboration with other branch reps to create action plans.

Religion or belief

We are all different. Some people have a religion or belief, others do not. But we all have a right to a religion or belief and the right to be treated fairly.

The Religion or Belief eNote was developed in partnership with the Equality and Human Rights Commission, and gives practical advice on how to deal with some of the issues which arise increasingly in our workplaces. The selection of case studies provides a good starting point for reps who are new to handling workplace issues and concerns around religion or belief. This is also a good resource for equality reps and those involved in policy making.

Language support for workers

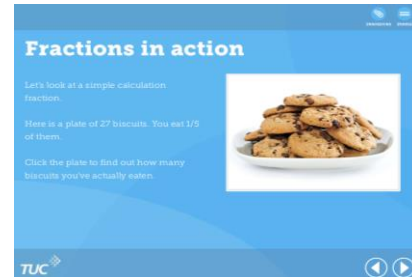


This eNote will help reps recognise that English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learning is an opportunity to gain new members by demonstrating how the support of a union can have a positive impact.

This eNote will:

- Describe the benefits of ESOL learning on the lives of many workers
- Help reps argue the business case for ESOL learning to employers and highlight why this is a union issue
- Suggest ways to set up and support union activity.

Working with Figures



The Working with Figures eNote will:

- Describe how to use a calculator to add up, subtract, multiply and divide
- Enable you to calculate a basic ratio, average, fraction, percentage and percentage change
- Help you to calculate overtime payments.

Mental health in the workplace

This eNote raises awareness of the impact of mental health issues in the workplace and how union reps can support members affected by issues associated with mental health.



The Mental Health in the Workplace eNote will:

- Describe common mental health illnesses and help reps recognise when colleagues may have mental health issues
- Summarise the law and mental health in the workplace
- Help reps support and represent members with mental health problems.

Other available eNotes include:

- Work-related upper limb disorders
- A Living Wage
- Domestic violence
- Supporting mid-life review
- Fit for work
- Building a stronger workplace union
- Facility time
- Bargaining for Skills
- Equality Law
- Apprenticeships
- Additional paternity leave
- Understanding Universal Credit
- The Climbing Frame
- Supporting learners
- Vulnerable employment
- The Sick Note
- European Works Councils.

Counting on skills

Not sure what standard your maths is at nowadays? Have a look at [Unionlearn's Five Free Steps to Better Maths flowchart](#), where you'll find useful tips for identifying your maths learning needs.



Macmillan Cancer Support - Rights at Work Campaign

In our last edition, we advised you that there are currently over 750,000 people of working age living with cancer in the UK. This figure is set to rise to 1.7 million by 2030 with almost 120,000 adults of working age diagnosed each year. A You Gov survey for Macmillan Cancer Support found that only 44% of people diagnosed with cancer in the last two years were aware that cancer is considered as a disability under the Equality Act 2010. Workers who are living with cancer therefore have additional rights at work from the point of diagnosis which continue after treatment.

If you, or someone you know, have an interest in health and safety at work; managing sickness or disabilities/equalities – have a look at our [Cancer in the Workplace eNote](#) for additional information and support.



Citizen Maths



Hands up if you haven't been a maths student for more than 5 years!

Most of us know how to do straightforward maths calculations. Then a simple task comes along and suddenly it doesn't look so simple anymore.

- Supporting a young relative with their homework
 - Converting imperial measures to metric and vice versa
 - Adding/subtracting a deviation in a mileage expenses claim
 - Doing an entrance exam for a new job
- It can all feel just that bit out of reach.

[Citizen Maths](http://www.citizenmaths.com) is an online resource anyone can use to discover how maths can be a powerful tool for solving those problems that come up at work and in your life.

Each section of Citizen Maths is a mix of online video tutorials and hands-on activities. You will be able to:

- Fit your learning around other commitments
- Do much of it at any location – even on the move
- Work at your own pace
- Review any parts you want, as often as you want.

For more information and details on how to access the course visit www.citizenmaths.com

There is also a TUC Education eNote introducing [Citizen Maths](http://www.citizenmaths.com)

Farewell to Liz

After 26 years TUC bid a fond farewell to Unionlearn Director Liz Rees in January 2017. Liz came to the TUC National Education Centre in Hornsey in 1990 before moving across to head up TUC Education in Congress House, her dream job. Liz has been an amazing ambassador for the TUC and TUC Education. We wish her the very best for a long and happy retirement.



Unionlearn Supporting Learners

Unions and ULRs do a brilliant job of changing lives through learning and helping colleagues to improve their skills at work. These are great stories but often unions and their reps don't have the time or opportunity to shout about the good work they do.

This is where Unionlearn can help. Keith Hatch is Unionlearn's Projects Support and Communications Officer (PSCO). His role is to help promote the value of learning and spread the message that learning and skills are core union aims. He can:

- Publicise the valuable work reps are carrying out in the workplace

- Work with unions to share and disseminate good practice and success stories
- Help identify and publicise key skills issues
- Support wider engagement with media of all kinds to promote the value of learning
- Highlight the impact of union-led learning.

To do this, Keith will look for stories about union success in the workplace, so these can be shared across the internet, social and mainstream media. If you have a story to share then contact Keith.

Unionlearn PSCO – Keith Hatch
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Unionlearn Supporting Learners Events 2017

Following the success of the Unionlearn Supporting Learners events last year, two additional venues have been added for this year. Here are the dates and locations for the rest of this year:

- 22 February 2017 – Hull
- 7 March 2017 – Newcastle
- 8 March 2017 – Penrith

If you are interested in attending any of these events, bookings can be made from the Unionlearn website using the following link:
<https://www.unionlearn.org.uk/events>.

For any other information, contact one of the Unionlearn Project Officers.

Union Professionals courses 2017

The 2017 Union Professionals programme will roll out after Easter including two new courses:

- An Introduction to Trade Unions
- Managing Budgets.

Dates and venues will be available on [the TUC Education website](#) at the end of February.

These new courses will sit alongside the established programme which includes:

- Employment Law Online Module One
- Employment Law Online Module Two
- Employment Law Online Module Three
- Employment Law Update
- Project Management
- Understanding Social Media
- Mental Health in the Workplace

Coming soon

- eNotes: *Trade Union Act 2016; Sexual Harassment; Equality Audit*
- Online courses: *TUC Health and Safety 1; TUC Union Learning Reps 1; TUC Union Learning Reps 2*

Who to contact in TUC Education

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