

Unite Model Agreement for Union Equality Representatives

.....and Unite are jointly committed to promoting equality, diversity, inclusion and dignity at work through effective collective bargaining and meaningful workplace negotiations.

The parties recognise that equality is a fundamental trade union issue and that decisions on pay, terms and conditions of employment, recruitment, promotion, training, job security, health and safety, workplace policies and working practices all have equality implications that must be negotiated and implemented in a way that promotes fairness, prevents discrimination and advances equality of opportunity for all workers. Collective bargaining is one of the most effective means of preventing discrimination, tackling inequality and improving outcomes for all workers.

..... recognises Unite's Union Equality Representatives and acknowledges their important role in ensuring that equality is embedded across all aspects of collective bargaining, consultation and workplace decision-making.

The organisation/company recognises that Unite will elect its Union Equality Representatives in accordance with its rules and will notify the organisation/company in writing of their names and workplace locations as soon as reasonably practicable.

This agreement reflects the statutory framework for Union Equality Representatives taking effect from October 2026.

Role of Union Equality Representatives

Union Equality Representatives are elected representatives of Unite whose role is to promote equality through collective bargaining, representation, consultation and workplace organisation.

Their functions include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting, advising, representing and negotiating on behalf of members experiencing discrimination, harassment, victimisation or unequal treatment,
- Working alongside workplace representatives, health and safety representatives and Unite officers to ensure equality is fully integrated into collective bargaining on jobs, pay, terms and conditions of employment.
- Negotiating with the employer on equality policies, workplace practices and procedures.
- Ensuring equality considerations are incorporated into negotiations concerning pay, grading, recruitment, redundancy, restructuring, redeployment, flexible working, family leave, working time, attendance management, performance management, promotion, training, disciplinary and grievance procedures and all other matters affecting members.
- Ensuring equality implications are properly considered during organisational change and restructuring.
- Monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of equality policies, action plans and workplace agreements.

- Promoting compliance with equality legislation and encouraging best practice that exceeds minimum legal requirements.
- Undertaking equality impact assessments and equality audits jointly with the employer where appropriate.
- Analysing workforce equality data, including recruitment, retention, progression, pay, discipline and grievance outcomes, to identify and address inequalities.
- Promoting inclusive workplaces by tackling discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation.
- Raising awareness of equality issues and supporting campaigns that promote fairness, dignity, respect and inclusion.
- Encouraging participation by under-represented groups and promoting diversity throughout the workforce.
- Representing Unite on equality committees, forums, working groups and consultation bodies.

Collective Bargaining on Equality

..... recognises that equality is a collective bargaining issue.

Union Equality Representatives shall be consulted and involved, at the earliest possible stage, in negotiations and consultations relating to policies, procedures, organisational change and workplace practices that have actual or potential equality implications.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Pay, grading and job evaluation
- recruitment and selection
- promotion and career progression
- learning and development
- redundancy, restructuring and redeployment
- attendance management
- flexible working
- family-friendly policies
- health, safety and wellbeing
- workplace adjustments
- dignity at work
- artificial intelligence, technology and surveillance where equality impacts may arise
- any proposal that may disproportionately affect protected groups or otherwise impact equality of opportunity.

The employer will provide appropriate information, subject to legal requirements relating to confidentiality and data protection, to enable meaningful consultation and collective bargaining on equality matters.

Training and Paid Time Off

..... recognises that effective Equality Representatives require sufficient time and training to fulfil their statutory and trade union responsibilities.

Union Equality Representatives will be granted reasonable paid time off during working hours to undertake their duties and to participate in trade union activities associated with their role.

Paid time off shall include, but not be limited to:

- completing initial and continuing Unite training for Equality Representatives
- attending statutory training and development relevant to equality law and collective bargaining
- preparing for and participating in negotiations and consultation meetings
- meeting members and prospective members
- accompanying and supporting members in equality-related matters
- attending meetings with Unite officers and other representatives
- attending union conferences, committees and equality forums
- undertaking workplace equality audits and equality impact assessments
- analysing equality information and preparing bargaining proposals
- meeting newly recruited employees to explain the role of the trade union and Equality Representatives
- carrying out any other duties reasonably associated with the role

Facilities

Union Equality Representatives shall be provided with reasonable facilities necessary to carry out their functions effectively.

These facilities shall include:

- suitable accommodation for confidential meetings
- access to office facilities
- access to employer email systems, intranet and other agreed electronic communication methods for legitimate trade union communications
- the ability to distribute and display official Unite communications
- reasonable access to workplace noticeboards, including electronic notice boards
- secure storage for confidential documents