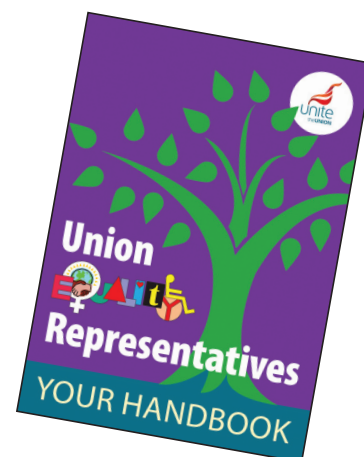


For more information on equality at work and in the community refer to **Union Equality Reps Handbook** <https://tinyurl.com/39h2uscw>

Unite Branch Equality Officers and Workplace Equality Reps should have a Unite Equality Reps Credential.

Please contact your Regional Officer.



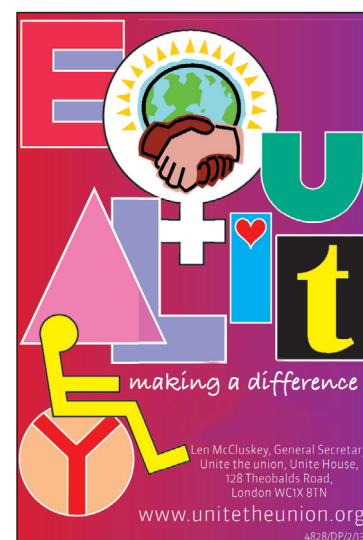
Contacts

Regional Women's and Equalities Officers

North West	0151 559 2004
North East, Yorkshire and Humberside	0113 236 4830
West Midlands	0121 553 6051
East Midlands	0116 253 2020
London and Eastern	0208 800 4281
South East	01753 313 820
South West	0117 923 0555
Scotland	0141 404 5424
Ireland	Belfast 028 90 232 381 Dublin 01873 4577
Wales	02920 394521

National

equality@unitetheunion.org
020 7611 2500
www.unitetheunion.org/equalities
Unite the Union, 128 Theobald's Road, Holborn,
London WC1X 8TN
Facebook: Unitetheunion1
Twitter: @UniteEqualities



Branch Equality Officers Guide



Unite the Union
128 Theobalds Road
Holborn
London
WC1X 8TN

equality@unitetheunion.org
www.unitetheunion.org/equalities
Twitter: @UniteEqualities
020 7611 2500



Equalities is at the centre of our Industrial Strategy and it is put firmly on the bargaining table.

I understand the clear and urgent need for our union to action all Unite equalities policies to move forward. Branch Equality Officers by Rule should be elected in every branch. They play a very important role in building a strong campaigning union for all.

We continue to call for collective statutory rights for all union equality reps which can include Branch Equality Officers who make a real difference in the workplace, in the wider community and in the union.

Sharon Graham

Sharon Graham
General Secretary



Branch Equality Officers Guide - Contents

branch equality officer's role **page 4**

The following 6 steps covered in this Guide are vital to ensuring Branch Equality Officers play the positive role needed in our union:

Step 1 **know your branch** **page 5**

Step 2 **know your members** **page 6**

Step 3 **consider ways of extending involvement in the union** **page 6**

Step 4 **work with others** **page 8**

Step 5 **keep informed and further reading** **page 9**

Step 6 **checklist for Branch Equality Officers** **page 10**



Unite Equality Reps take the campaign for statutory rights to Parliament - April 2023



Union Equality Reps and Branch Equality Officers Conference held during lockdown 2021

branch equality officer's role

In Unite Rules, every branch *"shall have for its management ...an equality officer..."*. This includes workplace, sector, national and geographical branches as well as retired members and Unite community branches.

Your role as a branch equality officer is to:

- Know your branch and diversity of your members
- Ensure Unite equality agenda is recognised and is an integral part of the Branch
- Work with other branch officers and reps to promote equality and tackle discrimination and to recruit, organise and involve women, black and Asian ethnic minority (BAEM), LGBT+ and disabled members
- Disseminate relevant information
- Become involved in Unite campaigns
- Work with regional Women's and Equalities Officer and Education Officer
- Where you can, work with your negotiating committee to develop negotiating aims that will improve the workplace for women, BAEM, disabled and LGBT+ and young members
- Keep yourself informed and up to date

Remember, as an elected branch equality officer, you are entitled to support from your union, Unite.

Step 1 know your branch

NOTES:

- When and where does your branch meet? Are these times and places suitable for all members? Particularly consider the needs of women, black and Asian ethnic minority members, those with caring responsibilities and disability access.
- Who attends Branch Meetings? Do women attend? Do black and Asian ethnic minority members attend? Do disabled members attend? Do LGBT+ members attend? Do young members attend?
- Who is in the branch? Which women workers does it cover? Which black and Asian ethnic minority workers does it cover? Are disabled workers in the branch? Are there LGBT+ workers in the branch? Are members of all ages active in the branch? What about young members? Are there migrant workers? Agency workers? Part-time workers? Zero hours contract workers? Are they in the union?
- What kinds of issues does the branch discuss? Is equality on the agenda? Has the branch discussed any issues particularly affecting women, black and Asian ethnic minority workers, young workers, disabled workers, or lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans+ workers?
- Consider conducting a survey on members' views of the time and place of branch meetings, how meetings are publicised and the issues that are on the agenda.
 - o Check the views of all members are included, and that you identify any issues raised particularly by women, by BAEM, disabled, LGBT+ or young members, or any under-represented members.

- Arrange discussion of the results of the survey at the next branch meeting.
- Consider producing agendas and minutes in appropriate alternative languages or formats.
- Ensure discriminatory comments are challenged if ever they occur at meetings and ensure members are aware of equal opportunities clauses in the standing orders.
- Try to get your branch to allocate resources for equality issues to be pursued seriously.

Step 2 know your members

- Find out where women, black and Asian ethnic minority workers, disabled workers, LGBT+ workers and young workers, are in the workplace and the jobs that they do.
- Talk to these members about issues that are important to them both in the local community and at work.
- Find out what views they have of the Union and its activities in the workplace.
- Find out if there are any particular problems they are facing in the workplace.

Step 3 consider ways of extending involvement in the union

- Are there women, black and Asian ethnic minority workers, disabled workers, LGBT+ workers or young workers who are not members of the Union? Talk to them about what would encourage them to join.

NOTES:

- Consider conducting a survey of women, black and Asian ethnic minority workers, disabled workers, LGBT+ workers or young workers on their views and experiences of issues such as childcare and caring, health and welfare (cancer screening, menopause, Sickle Cell Anaemia and Thalassaemia), harassment, discrimination, bullying, training, hours of work and access to buildings.
- Consider arranging a speaker or film/video at the branch on a subject you know potential or existing members would be interested in.
- Find out if women, black and Asian ethnic minority, disabled, LGBT+ or young members have friends and/or family in unorganised workplaces. If so, ask them to invite those friends/family to get involved.
- Encourage women, black and Asian ethnic minority, disabled, LGBT+ and young members to take up Union benefits and services, such as education courses, free legal advice and affiliated services – arrange a speaker.
- If existing members have gained something from their Union membership ask them to let others know and encourage them to join.
- Encourage active women, black and Asian ethnic minority members, disabled members, LGBT+ and young members to run for election to branch and workplace positions.
- Use the Checklists in the Union Equality Reps Toolkit on Involvement of Women, black and Asian ethnic minorities, Disabled Members, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans+ Members and Young Members. <https://tinyurl.com/waafrezp>

NOTES:

Step 4 work with others - know your community

- Get to know the other officers in your branch particularly your local shop stewards, workplace representatives, safety representatives, union learning reps, union equality reps, convenor, branch secretary, branch chair and committee members.
- Get to know your **Regional Officer and Regional Women's and Equalities Officer**
www.unitetheunion.org/equalities
- Make sure you have the contact details for your Regional Education Officer who can be good sources of help and advice
<https://tinyurl.com/3mnjyrr4>.
- Make sure you know who the elected reps are to different Regional Women's, BAEM, Disabled, LGBT+ and Young Members Committees. Find out about equality campaigns and activities for eg International Women's Day, Black History Month, Disability History Month, LGBT+ History Month and Pride events, Young members activities.
- Find out about local, regional, national or international campaigns on equality in which the Branch could participate, raising its profile in the sector, the region/nation and the community.
- Where you can, work with your negotiating committee to develop negotiating aims that will improve the workplace for women, black and Asian ethnic minorities, disabled, LGBT+ and young members.

NOTES:

Step 5 keep informed

- Go on Unite education courses to help you extend your knowledge, confidence and skills.
- Keep up-to-date with Union Publications on the Unite webpages www.unitetheunion.org, such as Unite Works. See below for suggested further support.

further support

- Unite Equalities
www.unitetheunion.org/equalities
- Union Equality Reps Handbook and Toolkit
<https://tinyurl.com/waafrezp>
- Shop Stewards Handbook
- Safety Representatives Handbook
- Unite Guide to Dealing with Harassment, Discrimination and Bullying
<https://tinyurl.com/49ufeb5u>
- Unite Guide to Family Rights at Work
<https://tinyurl.com/4x5dbck9>
- Unite Pay Up Guide <https://tinyurl.com/re9t9hn7>
- Unite Women's Health and Safety guide
<https://tinyurl.com/yxwbdnkz>
- Unite Race Equality Negotiators Guide and Race Forward Campaign
<https://tinyurl.com/6exm2rkx>
- Unite Race Forward Action Pack
<https://tinyurl.com/k8md9fa5>
- Unite Disability Equality at Work Negotiators Guide <https://tinyurl.com/rtuae6y4>
- Unite Pride - LGBT+ equality
<https://tinyurl.com/55sf6xzb>
- Unite Trans+ Equality Guide
<https://tinyurl.com/7hwy23w8>

NOTES:

Step 6 checklist for branch equality officers

Please complete the missing details for your Branch

Branch
Number _____

Branch Equality Office and/or Noticeboard
Name: _____
Address: _____

Tel: _____
Email: _____
Involvement in Unite Equality/other courses? _____

Branch Membership - NUMBER/PERCENTAGE
Total in Branch _____
Women _____ Men _____
Gender Identity (as defined) _____
BAEM _____ White _____
Disabled members _____ LGBT+ _____
Young _____

Branch Equality Officers in Retired Members Branches
What are the opportunities to encourage more women, BAEM, disabled and LGBT+ members to join the Retired Members' branch?

What activities or issues would be of interest for retired women, BAEM, disabled and LGBT+ members?

Branch Equality Officers in Community Branches
What are the opportunities to encourage more women, BAEM, disabled and LGBT+ people in the community to become members of the Community branch?

What activities or issues would be of interest for women, BAEM, disabled and LGBT+ people in the community?

NOTES:

BRANCH EQUALITY OFFICERS IN WORKPLACE BRANCHES OR BRANCHES WITH MORE THAN ONE WORKPLACE
Branch Membership checklist to support equality and workplace equality reps in the workplace or workplaces in the Branch
Total in Workplace:
Women Members _____ Non-Members _____
Men Members _____ Non-Members _____
Gender Identity (as defined) _____
Members _____ Non-members _____
BAEM members _____ Non-members _____
White members _____ Non-members _____
Disabled Members: _____ Non-members _____
LGBT+ members: _____ Non-members _____
Young members: _____ Non-members _____

Shop Stewards/Workplace reps at the workplace
Total shop stewards/ reps:
Women _____ % _____ Men _____
Gender identity (as defined) _____
BAEM _____ % _____ White _____
Disabled shop stewards/ reps: _____
LGBT+ shop stewards/ reps: _____
Young shop stewards/ reps: _____
Have they attended Unite Equality courses and other Unite education courses?

NOTES:

Unite Workplace Union Equality Reps

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel _____

Email _____

Has Unite Membership Department been notified of this election?

Has a Unite Equality Representatives Credential been issued?

Have they attended Unite Equality courses and other Unite education courses?

Workplace Equal Opportunities Committee or Diversity Committee – is there one?

If no – what about identifying steps to getting one set up?

If yes – What does it do? How often does it meet?

Is it effective? What would improve it?

Details of Unite members of the Committee

Name _____

Unite position held _____

Address: _____

Tel _____

Email

Have they attended Unite Equality courses and other Unite education courses?

NOTES:

KNOW THE WORKPLACE (or workplaces) IN YOUR BRANCH

Workplace Equality Audits

- Find out if any have been carried out, and what issues have been highlighted. If not, encourage an equality audit to support building a stronger union and strengthening representation of all members.
- Union Equality Reps Handbook**
<https://tinyurl.com/yj55b2u7>

Equality Impact Assessment

- Find out if any have been carried out, and what issues have been highlighted. If not, the Unite Guide to Equality Impact Assessment will assist you. <https://tinyurl.com/4yxjt9f3>

NOTES:

What next?

UNITE PRIORITIES FOR EQUALITY

Making a real difference at the workplace – Statutory rights for Union Equality Reps and Branch Equality Officers to time off with pay to promote equality, to prevent and deal with harassment, discrimination and bullying, and to attend union equality courses.

Family friendly policies with children at the heart, action against pregnancy discrimination, recognition of rights for carers and grandparents, and fair procedures to support the choice for secure flexible working, action in the community.

Strong and effective link between equalities and industrial sectors – powerful workplace equality agenda/charter including bargaining ‘targets’ for equalities in every Industrial Plan agreed by fully resourced Shop Steward-led Combines in every sector.

Strong and effective link between equalities and retired members and community members – campaigning together to advance equality for all.

A strong effective Equality Act that works for all of us – action on rights removed, equality pay gap reporting and action to close pay gaps, socio-economic duty to tackle class inequality and reduce poverty enacted, protection from third party harassment reinstated and new duty on employers to prevent harassment, discrimination and bullying introduced, questions procedure brought back and equality duties strengthened.

Fair and robust employment and trade union rights, accessible to all – attacks on trade union and employment rights disproportionately affect people who already face discrimination and those most vulnerable to exploitation in the workforce. Trade union freedom and rights from day one are a force for equality and fairness. So is sectoral collective bargaining.

Opportunities for decent jobs, pay, pensions and social security for everyone and services that meet the diverse needs of everyone in the community - it's time for equality.



NOTES:

[illegible]