

Welcome and thank you!

You've agreed to act as a UCU rep for your branch, and this guide provides you with some useful links for how to find information and support in your new role. It would probably be a good idea to save it somewhere handy that you can refer to it when you need to.

UCU represents over 120,000 academics, lecturers, trainers, instructors, researchers, managers, administrators, computer staff, librarians, technicians, professional staff and postgraduates in universities, colleges, prisons, adult education and training organisations across the UK. The union has a central infrastructure that has many departments that operate to cover policy, training, campaigns and collective bargaining policy amongst others.

It is also then organised into Regional areas that directly support members and branches.

We are the Eastern and Home Counties UCU regional office and we're here to support you and your branch with your union activities.



The Regional Office

The regional office is comprised of staff who work for the union rather than for a local employer. In the office there are:

Lydia Richards Regional Official (RO)

Jenny Kermally – Regional Support Official

Michael Kyriacou Regional Support Official

Pete Monaghan Branch Development Officer

Kate Servant Regional Caseworker

Lorraine Collins Regional Administrator

The RO and RSOs are responsible for supporting reps and branches in the region in anything from recruitment to casework to collective bargaining and have lead responsibilities for different employers in the region and are known as your link Officials.

If you require guidance; firstly, discuss it within your branch committee/reps' network. If you require further support, then contact your link Official via their direct email address or eastern@ucu.org.uk which goes to the whole regional team.

Admin support to the regional team is by Lorraine who you can email at easternadmin@ucu.org.uk

We also have a regional casework specialist in our Eastern office, Kate, to support the casework that you carry out within branches plus Pete, our Branch Development Organiser that works with branches on development and recruitment. However, both Kate and Pete are precious resources and can only be accessed through your link official so please go via them to request their support. 😊

Our team and the geographical area and thus the UCU branches we support are further explained at <https://ehc.web.ucu.org.uk/>

However, we also have our own regional website www.ehc.ucu.org.uk

And you can keep up to date with our regional activities on our social media -

Instagram @easternucu <https://www.instagram.com/easternucu/>

Senior Reps

The Regional Office communicates to Branches via its “Senior Reps.” mailing list. Senior Reps are defined as the elected lead committee members of a branch e.g. Secretary, Chair, President etc. or where this structure is not in place then it will be a lead branch contact/rep.

The main use of this list is

- Email important information for the Senior reps to disseminate/forward to branch members as appropriate such as training opportunities etc. Recruitment and campaign info etc.
- Regular Senior Reps Meetings to update them further on any important issues they need to be aware of and get feedback from them on behalf of their branches.

These meetings are run and administered by the regional office for information giving purposes to branches so please find out who goes to those meetings from your branch and if no one does then you would be very welcome to join us and meet other reps from around the region. You can also email Lorraine to check - easternadmin@ucu.org.uk



Regional Committee

We are lucky to have an active regional committee in this area, which is made up of reps from the region’s branches and is part of the democratic structure of the union that meets online a minimum of once a term.

As well as foster solidarity across UCU regional branches and sectors, the EHCR Regional Committee is also one of the ways that Branches can participate in the democratic structures of UCU as it has entitlement to send delegates and motions to Congress that may form UCU National Policy. The RC can also nominate to send delegates and motions to Regional TUCs and other appropriate regional bodies.

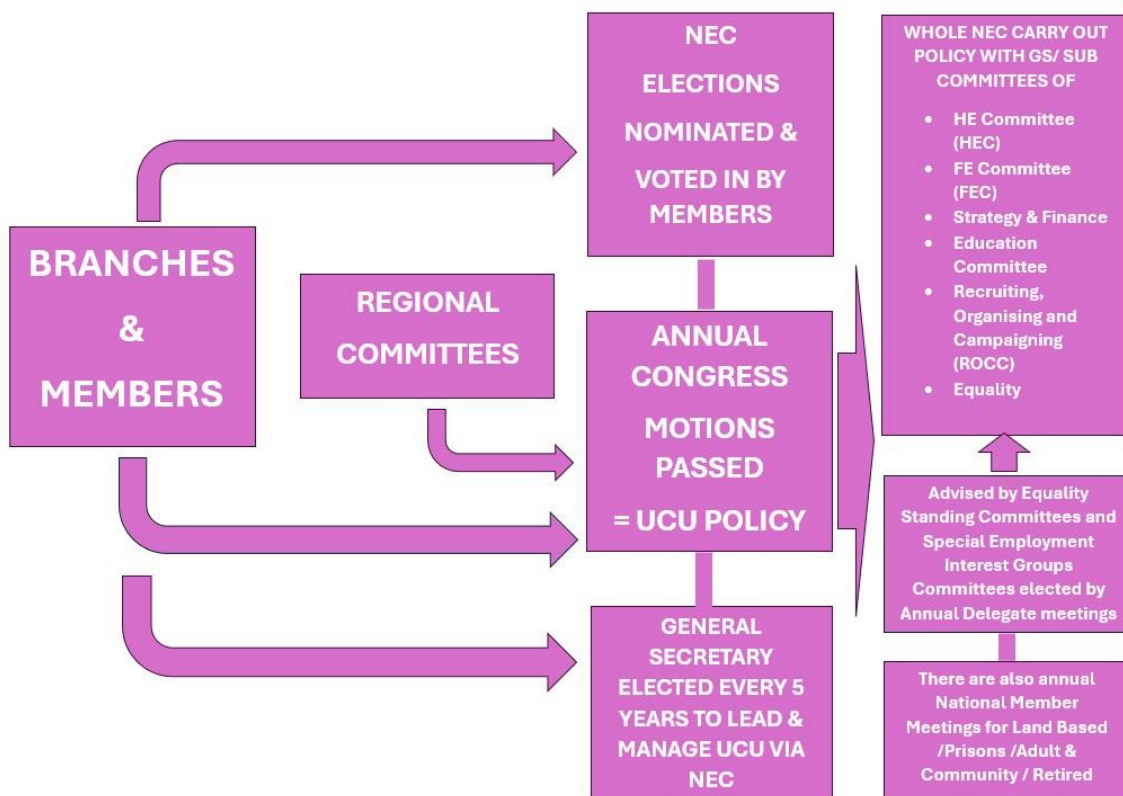
Check if your branch sends a delegate and if not email the committee Secretary, Averil Young to request to be put on the mailing list and get a big welcome to the next meeting. More info here - <https://ehcr.web.ucu.org.uk/>

Email - Averil.Young@easterneducationgroup.ac.uk

UCU Structures

Our **Eastern & Home Counties** regional office is in turn are part of the national UCU structure. National activities and support info can be found at www.ucu.org.uk. UCU’s national decision-making Congress and the democratic process to attend this as a delegate is explained at <https://www.ucu.org.uk/structures> All these structures are covered by rules and standing orders which can also be found in this section on the website.

The national UCU website is www.ucu.org.uk.



Membership

Every Branch should have an BMC – Branch Membership Contact which might be a dedicated officer / rep position in larger branches such as a Membership & Recruitment Rep, or it may be an additional duty of another rep in smaller branches. The BMC will be the appointed person that would maintain the branch membership database and have direct access to the UCU membership team at UCU. Other Reps can also have access to the membership list if they require it depending on their role but it should be limited as read only (e.g. caseworkers may need it to check current status of a member) If there is not one currently at your branch and you need access to the membership list, please speak to your link official ASAP as access as use of the membership list is a vital starting part of any branch action.

Members can update or create their own MY UCU membership profile via this link [MyUCU](#) if they don't have one. More recent joiners and new joiners will have one created automatically as part of the joining process. A [MyUCU](#) profile means they can amend their details such as address, income or branch transfer without having to contact the BMC.

Other info on membership that you might find useful are

- [UCU - How much does it cost to be a UCU member?](#) info on subscription rates can be found here
- [UCU - Eligibility Details](#) of whom is eligible to join -
- [UCU - Joining UCU FAQs](#) There's also an FAQ section about membership here.

Branch funding

Does your branch have its' own bank account?

Ideally your branch already has a bank account administered by an elected Treasurer, but this may not be the case if you have become a rep in a new or smaller branch. You can check with your link official if one has ever been activated. It's useful for a branch to have its own funding as you may want to fund attendance at external union events, training, social event or bespoke resources etc.

There are various ways in which branches can develop its' own funding, but they must first have Unity Trust bank account. You can contact the UCU Finance Team -via Marion Strachan – MStrachan@UCU.ORG.UK who will give you instructions and advice on opening a Unity Trust Bank account which is the compulsory bank account any branch must have to have its own funds.

Methods of Funding are -

1-Local Subscriptions -

Some of the larger UCU branches have a local fee for members called Local Subscription which is additional monthly amount added to each members standard subscription. This additional

amount is filtered directly into the branch bank account. To find out if you have such a local fee or to discuss whether it would be appropriate for your branch, please speak to your Link Official.

2-Capitation funding per member –

UCU can provide funding to help with branch activities. Branches can apply for initial funding of 75p per member per year. This can be extended up to a maximum of £2.75 per member per year.

3-One-off Branch Development Grants –

UCU also operates a Branch Development fund for one off larger payment for initial resources/projects - more info here <https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/13245/Branch-Development-Fund>

Casework – Members asking for help

When individual members are supported by branch reps we call this casework.

The caseworker role can be very different in different branches. For large branches a caseworker is generally a separate role. For smaller branches it could very well be someone who has volunteered as a rep and / or committee member and finds themselves expected to do casework as well, or even being the only person doing casework in the branch.

Until a rep/contact has completed training or is being mentored by an experienced caseworker then they should not be carrying out casework. However, all Reps should be aware of their branch casework system / who their caseworkers are etc. so if asked by members for support they know who to refer them to.

If you don't know at this stage, please ask your branch.

Other sources of info can be found on our regional website -
<https://ehc.web.ucu.org.uk/help-with-an-issue-at-work/>



Recruiting, Organising and Campaigning

Whilst you wait to complete a training course the UCU national website and our regional website both contain lots of useful resources to assist in recruiting, organising, and campaigning. There is a lot of information on recruiting and organising on both websites, but you might find it easier to start at our regional website where we have extracted the main highlights as an introduction-

Regional website –

<https://ehc.web.ucu.org.uk/info-for-reps/>

This includes links/sections on

- Developing Your Branch and Dep Rep Networks
- Build The Union
- Casework Support
- How To Approach Members During a Recruitment Campaign
- H&S Support
- Support For Reps Accessing Branch Membership Lists Through the National Membership Database.
- Support Info for New Reps
- TPS Advice for Reps

NOTE – password for Rep access to these resources is **ucurep2017**; please keep this confidential amongst your branch reps.

National website –

- [UCU - Build the Union Month Build](#) the Union month (contains helpful guides on recruiting conversations and mapping)
- [UCU - Building UCU](#) -info on Building UCU -

Campaigning - Guidance on local campaigning - [UCU - Guide to local campaigning](#)

Ordering Campaign Resources - <https://www.ucu.org.uk/promote>

Training

Training for your role is offered through both the regional and national UCU offices. Please see <https://www.ucu.org.uk/training> for national offering or email easternadmin@ucu.org.uk and we will keep you updated with the latest training courses being organised by the regional office. There is also more info on regional training here <https://ehc.web.ucu.org.uk/training/>

Other national events can be accessed via <https://www.ucu.org.uk/events> or for a back catalogue of interesting webinars see our national UCU YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/c/ucuorguk/videos>

There is also the UCU CPD courses that are open to all members on a wide range of topics from mental health in the workplace to sustainability in the curriculum. Full Catalogue can be accessed here <https://cpd.web.ucu.org.uk/>

As Branch Reps you are entitled to paid time off for training and completing trade union duties – apply early so that if there is any issue you can seek branch or regional office support to get permission to attend

<https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/4903/Facilities-and-time-off-for-UCU-reps>

Once again thank you so much for becoming a UCU Rep and please don't hesitate to get in touch with the Regional Office if you have any questions about any of the above

We are grateful for your support to the union activities of your branch and hope that you value the skills and experience that this role will provide. We look forward to working together.

UCU Eastern and Home Counties regional office
Eastern@ucu.org.uk

