

## Being a UCU activist: The role of the rep

The main role of the branch/local association (LA) representatives and activists is to sustain the branch/LA. This can be broken down further into five main areas, namely:

### Recruiting

- attending new staff inductions
- following up new staff after induction
- identifying existing non-members
- systematically approaching existing non-members
- encouraging, supporting, training and organising others to do all of the above

### Organising

- talking and listening to members' and non-members' views
- finding out their problems and concerns
- identifying areas with low levels of membership or membership involvement
- educating and informing members on issues of importance to them
- encouraging members to get involved
- keeping track of who wants to be involved
- encouraging them to attend and participate in branch/LA and committee meetings
- identifying, supporting and developing other activists
- arranging and attending branch/LA committee and members' meetings
- distributing leaflets and newsletters
- organising around issues of concern to members
- involvement in establishing strategy for the branch/LA
- encouraging, supporting, training and organising others to do all of the above

### Representing members

Member representation can be either collective or individual. This involves:

- keeping up to date with procedures, agreements, policies and contractual conditions at your workplace
- keeping up to date with where to find information if you, or members, should need it

## **Collective representation**

- attending branch/LA committee, department or other groups of members meetings to listen to their views and help them make decisions about the course of action
- taking up issues with management

## **Individual representation**

- interviewing individuals to listen to their views and help them decide a course of action
- providing or obtaining support, advice and assistance to individuals
- accompanying individuals at meetings or hearings with management
- representing individuals at meetings or hearings with management

## **Campaigning**

Campaigning can be on local, regional or national issues of importance to UCU and may include broad campaigns (so long as they do not contravene UCU policy) – for example against racism or privatisation – and community or other union campaigns

## **Other tasks**

- keeping in contact with your regional officer
- keeping in contact with other unions in your workplace
- keeping up-to-date membership records
- keeping records of the branch/LA
- keeping records of meetings
- keeping records and notes of individual representation work