

### A BRIEF GUIDE

A key way to increase turnout in industrial action ballots is to have a plan that involves as many reps and members as possible. The plan should include:

- communicating with members
- allocating key roles
- timescales
- membership lists and mapping.

### AIM FOR A HIGH TURNOUT

Aim for more than the 50% legal threshold – as a 70% turnout, for example, will send a stronger message to your employer.

### SEEK VOLUNTEERS EARLY

Have specific tasks they can carry out: helping ensure members' membership details are correct; speaking to members about the ballot; recruiting new members in time for them to vote or take part if industrial action is called; distributing leaflets and posters.

### UPDATE YOUR MEMBERSHIP LIST

Update your list several weeks before the ballot opens. Having a correct membership list is essential – it can prevent legal challenges, will help make a successful outcome more likely and allow you to focus on getting out your message during the ballot period. Make sure one or two branch officers are Branch Membership Contacts (BMC) and have online access to their branch membership list. Contact your regional office if you need to request BMC access.

### INVOLVE REPS AND MEMBERS IN CHECKING MEMBER LISTS

Involve reps and members in checking the lists of members in their areas. Remove those who are ineligible to vote due to them not being able to take part in any action called eg no longer employed, long-term sick leave, parental leave, sabbatical, retired.

Ask members to check they have included their mobile phone numbers on their membership record – or ask for mobile numbers and offer to update the record yourself (pass it onto the BMC). Mobile numbers are needed if you want to use ThruText – the web-based facility to quickly send texts to members and respond.

### SPEAK TO COLLEAGUES INDIVIDUALLY

Although it is important to use all forms of communication, including holding meetings and regular local emails, the most effective way is to speak with colleagues individually. This can be done in person, by phone or online. Conversations are really powerful and are a key part of succeeding in getting a large majority of members to vote. A guide overleaf will help you to structure your conversation.

## GIVE REPS & VOLUNTEERS A LIST OF 10 MEMBERS + THEIR PHONE NUMBERS

Outline data protection rules about treating the data confidentially, and ask them to phone members about whether they have voted and ring again until they speak to every member on their list. They record the replies and send to the rep responsible for keeping a spreadsheet of which members have voted and which haven't. This has proven to be a very successful way of achieving high turnouts.

## OFFER GUIDANCE ON WHAT VOLUNTEERS MIGHT SAY...

when talking to members about the ballot. Be open that it might take sustained action to win concessions – give examples of branches that have recently taken strike action and won improvements. See: <https://www.ucu.org.uk/your-support-is-needed>

**If a member says they have voted or will do, ask them to remind colleagues to vote too.**


**Remember, a decent proportion of members vote in the first 24 hours**, so start with a blitz to maximise early voters and then systematically work on the rest.

**Leave something when you visit colleagues who are out**, nothing high tech, just a note under the door saying: we called to remind you to vote in the ballot, if you have lost your ballot envelope, have a question or want to help us Get The Vote Out contact: \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact your students' union and seek their support** – if you have any problems, tell your regional office.

**For more resources including a longer Get The Vote Out guide:** <https://www.ucu.org.uk/gtvo>

## TALKING TO MEMBERS - SOME POINTERS

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- Introduce yourself and say you are calling from UCU about the ballot for strike action.
  - Ask if the member has received their ballot paper.
  - If they have received their ballot paper, ask if they have voted yet.
  - If they have voted: "That's great, please can you remind colleagues to vote too or to join and take part in the campaign if not a member"
  - If they haven't received their ballot paper, give details about how to order a replacement ballot paper.
  - If they have received their ballot paper but not voted yet, ask if they are aware of the issues and have any questions. Explain that their branch wants a negotiated solution but a high turnout and yes vote is needed to show management that members are united and strongly back their negotiators.
  - Afterwards record key information and report back to whoever is collating the list of who has and hasn't voted.