

Job Brief: Regional Organiser (Education)

Introduction

1. UNISON is the UK's leading public sector trade union, with over 1.3 million members working in the public services, private, voluntary and community sectors and in the energy services. We employ 1200 staff, approximately 370 at our national centre in Euston, central London and the remainder in our twelve regions across the UK.

The Northern Ireland Region has over 43,000 members working primarily in health, social care, education and the community & voluntary sectors. UNISON College offers activists and members free training spanning 90 topics over 200 sessions annually for personal and professional development. In addition UNISON contributes to strategic organisational and training initiatives across Health & Social Care and the statutory Education Sector.

Leadership Role

2. The Regional Organiser is the key generic organising role in the region, with responsibility for recruitment, retention and organisation of members. They act as a powerful advocate of organising and building branch and membership organisation, and the profile and reputation of UNISON in the branches and with employers. The Regional Organiser (Education):
 - leads on the development and delivery of the UNISON activist and member learning programme under the UNISON College brand, including
 - planning and ensuring the effective implementation of a programme that reflects the needs of members in fragmented workplaces,
 - working with the wider organising team to ensure that reps are followed up and supported in putting their learning into practice,
 - facilitating training and education in relation to the organising agenda or other relevant areas as appropriate with organisers and lay representatives,
 - delivering training as appropriate. This may include tutor briefings and staff development;
 - provides leadership ensuring that branches, activists and members are aware of and act in line with UNISON rules and policies;
 - supports, guides and develops branches and activists through major periods of change in the delivery of public services. Ensures union organisation, education and training and influence is maintained and developed through these periods and that training is flexibly delivered to meet the needs of activists in dispersed workplaces;
 - promotes activist development across their area of responsibility. Persuades and mentors branch activists on how to establish an organising approach, identify suitable organising initiatives, evaluate the outcome of initiatives, design and adapt recruitment campaigns to build work place organisation, increase membership density, establish and work to membership targets;
 - builds branch organisation and performance, identifies training and development needs of activists, adapts established courses to meet local needs and provides ongoing support through coaching and mentoring of stewards and branch officers;
 - leads collective negotiations across the range of sectors which UNISON organises in at local, regional or national level, or in their area of special responsibility, in this

case activist and member education, analysing complex data and presenting this in an accessible and persuasive fashion;

- represents members individually and collectively, assists branches to develop systems and processes for managing and undertaking their casework effectively.

The Regional Organiser (Education) work package

3. Regional Organisers provide leadership to a group of branches within a locality, service group or work area which in the case of Education will be region-wide to ensure that branches have the strongest possible workplace organisation. They undertake a work package drawn from a combination of different elements of the leadership role such as:
 - providing leadership to a specialist area such as a service group or lay committee, and managing delivery in relation to this area across the region;
 - running and managing projects, using project management techniques;
 - undertaking region or organisation wide specialist responsibilities for the development of policy, or work of a service group or cross sector committee;
 - managing a small team, e.g. casework team, team of area and/or local organisers. Supervising the work of area organisers and local organisers when they are engaged in organising projects with the Regional Organiser's branches or in line with regional remit
4. UNISON structures its work programme to provide for the systematic implementation of policies adopted by its democratic lay member structures. Regional Organisers are responsible for implementing the work plans and programmes arising out of the four key objectives determined by the National Executive Council:
 - Recruiting, organising and representing members.
 - Negotiating and bargaining on behalf of members and promoting equality.
 - Campaigning and promoting UNISON on behalf of members.
 - Developing an efficient and effective union.
5. The Regional Organiser (Education) is a key deliverer of the operational plan for the region, which ensures that the resources for their areas of responsibility are directed towards the achievement of the NEC's objectives and priorities. The plan identifies regional priorities and establishes progress or performance indicators to enable effective monitoring and evaluation of all work and achievements.
6. The key aims of the union as detailed in our Rule Book seek to:
 - i) Extend and promote our influence in the workplace and in the Community.
 - ii) Promote, safeguard and facilitate participation by all members in the union's democracy, with special regard to women, members of all grades, black members, disabled members and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members.
 - iii) Provide effective standards of service in the areas of representation and advice, information to members on the work of the union, the provision of financial benefits and the maintenance of educational facilities for members.
7. To further these aims, Regional Organisers make a significant contribution to the political development of the region and implementation of national campaigning objectives. They regularly handle media and media relations connected with their areas of responsibility and have strong presentation and public speaking skills. They have a strong understanding and commitment to partnership working within an organisation, to the public service ethos and a keen membership focus. The Regional Organiser

(Education) will in addition be expected to promote, cascade and deliver political education and learning activity which supports and builds campaigning skills.

8. Regional Organisers have considerable knowledge of an industrial relations environment and experience of representing individual or collective issues. They have strong advocacy skills.
9. UNISON regions are currently undergoing a period of major change to meet the union's developing recruitment, organisation and campaigning agenda. Regional Organisers need to be committed to leading change and helping branches and lay activists to do likewise.
10. While the Regional Organiser (Education) post is a demanding position, requiring attendance at meetings outside of the conventional working day, UNISON is a strong supporter of the work/life balance ethos. Post holders will therefore prioritise their working arrangements in such a way as to demonstrate by example their personal commitment to these aims in partnership with senior regional lay officials.
11. The role of the Regional Organiser is generic and the allocation of their areas of work is the responsibility of the Regional Secretary and designated Regional Manager. Areas of work are interchangeable and are annually reviewed in discussion with the Regional Organiser to meet the needs of the organisation and service.

**UNISON
REGIONAL ORGANISER (EDUCATION)
NORTHERN IRELAND REGION
REF: R5/31**

JOB DESCRIPTION

Grade: 3

Location: Regionally based

Reports to: Regional Manager

Overall Summary

- To identify, in association with regional lay education structures, the Regional Committee and the Regional Management Team, policies, strategies and methods for developing and delivering a regional activist education and member learning programme (including the continuing professional development agenda).
- To interact with the organisational and collective bargaining processes of the Union and to provide necessary support to members, activists and organisers, using education methods, outside the framework of planned programmes of courses.
- To be responsible for overseeing and the administration of the activist education and member learning programme and to be accountable for the regional education budget, including the monitoring of costs and expenditure.
- To act as tutor on regional and branch based courses when required.
- To assist in the implementation of national education policy and to co-operate with the national education service in the development of education policy, courses and materials.

Key Tasks and Responsibilities Managerial

- To develop, in association with regional lay education structures and the Regional Committee, an education and member learning programme for the region and to manage and facilitate the delivery of the programme, including overseeing its administration and teaching where appropriate.
- To oversee the work programmes of administrative/secretarial/clerical staff associated with education provision.
- To manage, or be a participant in, project teams established to pursue educational or other related aims and objectives of UNISON as required.

Financial

- To manage, and monitor the application of, the regional education budget and to act as secretary to the appropriate regional lay education structure.
- To develop additional income streams to support the delivery of the programme

- To complete all appropriate financial monitoring documentation for internal and external initiatives

Communications/Co-ordination (Internal)

- To develop and maintain links with UNISON branches and members in relation to education developments within the region.
- To ensure education support for Union campaigns at regional level.
- To develop and promote effective communication systems with members and potential members including social media, web based apps, workplace initiatives

Communications/Co-ordination (External)

- To liaise with the TUC/ICTU regional education service and to represent UNISON on the TUC/ICTU Regional Education Advisory Committee.
- To facilitate access for activists and members to the regional TUC/ICTU programme of courses and to assist, where appropriate, in securing release with pay for course applicants.

Development/Strategic

- To work with the Regional Management Team in developing the role, direction and strategy for regional education including the UNISON College brand
- To assist service groups and self-organised groups in determining their education aims, needs and priorities and to facilitate appropriate educational provision.
- To assist with in-service training for staff – including field organisers – as necessary.
- To work with organisers, activists and members outside the framework of the formal education programme in assisting them, through education methods, to respond to problems, issues and challenges confronting them as trade unionists in their employment or in their communities.
- To represent UNISON on external partnerships and committees to further the aims of UNISON and our members

Specialist/Technical

- To work with the national education service in the development of education policy, courses and materials and to engage in a professional relationship with the national education service and other regional education organisers.
- To develop lay tutors in the region.
- To maintain a system for monitoring the performance and effectiveness of UNISON education in the region including research and data analysis.
- To work with the national education service in developing the UNISON Member Learning programme at regional level, including facilitating the participation of UNISON members in the programme.

General

- The post holder may, exceptionally, following consultation and agreement between the Regional Secretary and the Head of LAOS, and after consultation with the post holder, they may be required, on a short term basis to carry out the full range of duties of a Regional Organiser.

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Person Specification and Selection Criteria

UNISON is an equal opportunities employer, committed to providing equal opportunities regardless of race or ethnic origin, gender identity, family situation, sexual orientation, disability, religion or age. This person specification is designed to help members of Interviewing Panels judge the qualities of interviewees in a systematic and consistent way and in accordance with UNISON's equal opportunities policy. It is given to all job applicants for information.

Assessment code

A – application form

PI – Panel interview

Heading	Selection criteria	Assessment
1. Thinking	1.1 The ability to develop strategies, solutions or plans to solve difficult problems using <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research • The analysis of complex information including statistics & financial information • An awareness of the political environment 	A & PI
	1.2 A commitment to personal and staff development that supports the region's objectives	A & PI
2. Interpersonal & Communication	2.1 Highly developed interpersonal skills including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Team Working • Mentoring and coaching • Handling difficult relationships • Handling complaints • Ability to work in partnership with lay members 	A & PI
	2.2 A track record of designing and delivering high quality education and training for a wide range of participants	A & PI
	2.3 Experience of a variety of education, facilitation methods and an understanding of learning styles and approaches, and experience of negotiations in a relevant field	A & PI
	2.4 Experience of influencing people at all levels internally and externally including the ability to influence and respond to national and regional media using <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation skills • Writing correspondence, reports newsletters 	A & PI
	2.5 Awareness of and the ability to use Information and communications technology	A & PI

3. Initiative & Independence	3.1 Track record of using initiative and independence over a broad area of activity involving decision making and discretion	A & PI
4. Staff Management	4.1 Motivating and encouraging innovation including the ability to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and review performance • Delegate and supervise work • Build teams 4.2 Demonstrable leadership skills gained in a bargaining and organising environment	A & PI A & PI
5. Resource Management	5.1 Ability to work on and manage projects including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and evaluation • Time management • Evidence of contributing towards budget management including monitoring progress and resource control • Setting clear objectives 	A & PI
6. Physical Skills <i>(with DDA modification where necessary)</i>	6.1 Keyboard skills 6.2 Driving	A A
7. General Knowledge	7.1 Understanding of and commitment to UNISON'S aims and objectives including the principles of equality and democracy 7.2 A detailed knowledge of the issues in adult learning and development and the current challenges and opportunities 7.3 In depth understanding of the role of trade unions and the national and local social and political environment in which the union operates 7.4 Knowledge of ICT packages including Microsoft Office suite.	A & PI A & PI A & PI A & PI

Other Information

Please send 4 copies of the completed application form along with Recruitment and Disability monitoring forms to Human Resources Department, UNISON Centre, 130 Euston Road, London NW1 2AY quoting ref: **R5/31** by no later than **12pm on 14 February 2020**.