

unionlearn

with the TUC

Equal



Unionlearn

Developing a Strategy for Supporting Learners

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The role of Trade Unions

- **Developing a culture of lifelong learning in the workplace**
- **Improving access and overcoming barriers**
- **Providing outreach services**
- **Increasing individual confidence, motivation and awareness of opportunities**
- **Assisting workers to deal with change**
- **Promoting the use of ICT based learning and IAG**
- **Negotiating with employers to broker and set up flexible workplace learning opportunities**
- **Attracting new members to the trade union movement**



What is unionlearn?

- The TUC's learning and skills organisation
- Supports union learning and workforce development
- Helps unions to become effective learning organisations
- Helps unions to broker learning opportunities for members
- Helps unions to have an impact on learning and skills policy



What are ULRs?

- **Union Learning Representatives**
- **Voluntary trade union activists (16,000)**
- **Carry out role as part of full time jobs**
- **Statutory rights**
- **Work with employers, providers and union members**
- **Supported by resources and training provided by TUC and their unions**



What is the role of the ULR?

- Identifying learning or training needs
- Supporting, coaching, mentoring and signposting
- Providing information about learning or training
- Arranging learning or training in consultation with employers
- Promoting the value of learning or training
- Negotiating learning agreements with employers



What does this mean for union learners?

- **Have access to all the information they need about learning**
- **Know where to get help about learning opportunities**
- **Can talk to others about planning their own progression**
- **Know where to find specialist help about work and career decisions**



Feedback from union learners

- 342 union learners responded to a survey
- 77% of union learners would contact a Union Learning Rep (ULR) to find out about learning
- 82% were encouraged to make enquiries about learning by seeing a notice at work or by receiving a brochure or leaflet
- 69% preferred support face-to-face from a tutor in a group



Feedback from ULRs

- 219 responded to the survey
- 93% agreed the skills set is appropriate for ULRs
- ULRs agreed that they were already using all of the identified skills in their work with learners
- ULRs provided valuable feedback about the skills they need more training on



The unionlearn network model

- ULRs and other union representatives
- Unionlearn and union websites
- Unionlearn/ learndirect website and helpline
- Unionlearn and workplace learning centres
- Learning and training providers
- Nextstep face-to-face services
- Employers
- Sector skills Councils (SSCs)



ULR skills, training and support

- Set of skills agreed with ULRs
- TUC training materials, courses and progression routes for union reps
- Handbook and resources that can be customised by unions
- Unionlearn Climbing Frames
- Strong links with network services
- MOUs and joint action plans
- Regional and union working groups



Quality assurance

- **Matrix quality standard**
- **Accreditation or working to the standard**
- **Matrix Excellence Award**
- **Occupational standards and qualifications in Advice and Guidance, Mentoring and Coaching**
- **Training and CPD (Continuous Professional Development)**



Sustainability

- **Unionlearn funding from government**
- **Development work funded through EQUAL**
- **Investigating ways of mainstreaming**
- **Currently no funding for capacity building or supporting volunteers, only for delivery of careers guidance**



What are the key messages?

- **Unions have a very important role to play in reaching and supporting new learners**
- **Unions can contribute to the career development of their members**
- **Exciting dimension to the union agenda and attracts new members and activists**
- **Other organisations often do not know how to work with unions – awareness raising is vital**
- **Development and capacity building funding helps!**