

# **UNISON Cymru Activist Education Programme 2026**

The UNISON Cymru Education team is offering a full range of core activist training from September 2025. Courses are a mix of face-to-face and online.

Your employer should allow for paid time off for all of these training courses under the Employment Relations Act.

Inside is a calendar of training as well as an outline of each course.

Please see additional information on page 7 on how to book.

<https://cymru-wales.unison.org.uk/learning>



# Course Descriptions

## Organising Steward

The course will cover the Stage 1 and Stage 2 workplace representatives course combination and will help new stewards:

- understand the role of an organising union in the public services.
- recognise the importance of equalities in UNISON.
- work with members to tackle issues in the workplace.
- work with members in resolving cases.
- know where and when to seek advice and guidance.
- understand how procedures work in practice.
- handle grievance and disciplinary and similar types of cases as the representative of UNISON members within your workplace.
- be certified as competent to accompany members at a disciplinary or grievance hearing in order to comply with the Employment Relations Act 1999.
- understand the broader roles in which UNISON operates, including internationally.

## **Introduction to Health & Safety**

This course will seek to:

- establish a range of common and specific health & safety (H&S) and welfare issues raised by members.
- identify rights to time off and facilities in the workplace.
- establish a general understanding of the roles and functions of a workplace H&S rep.
- identify an overview of the H&S Six-Pack and identify the rights to form safety committees.
- identify key components and responsibilities under risk assessment legislation.
- understand H&S reps' rights in relation to risk assessments and the 'Five Steps' managers should be undertaking while generating risk assessments.
- establish outline principles and benefits of performing workplace H&S inspections.
- use legislation and techniques established on the course and apply them to an earlier identified issue.
- consider a systematic approach for presenting H&S issues/solutions to an employer/safety committee.

## ERA Refresher

This training will enable existing stewards to retain their Employment Relations Act (ERA) certification in line with the requirements set out in the NEC Accreditation Scheme, i.e.:

*“To ensure continued quality of representation and to maintain ERA certification, stewards/workplace reps are required to:*

- complete the ERA refresher or equivalent course, whether face-to-face or blended or online, at least every 5 years*
- Or have evidence of appropriate training and development which is recorded by the Region on the AMT system within the 5-year period.”*

The ERA Refresher course will seek to:

- update you on new developments internally and externally which impact upon your role as a UNISON rep.
- inform you about changes in the legislative and legal framework which affect our role in representation and organising at local level.
- share our skills and experience to further develop our approach as UNISON reps.
- explore how we build the strength of UNISON in a changing industrial relations environment.
- consider how to utilise your skills and experience to encourage and mentor new UNISON reps.
- plan more personal development opportunities in your role as a UNISON rep.

# Employment Law Training

What the course covers:

- **Introduction to Employment Law:** unfair dismissal; unfair dismissal for redundancy; direct discrimination; victimisation; disability discrimination; time limits.
- **Introduction to Employment Contracts:** contractual terms (expressed, implied, statutory); void contracts; illegal contracts; varying contractual terms; breach of contract; fixed term and part term contracts; discriminatory contracts.
- **Introduction to Race & Sex Discrimination:** direct and indirect discrimination; victimisation; interviewing a member; evaluating evidence; time limits.
- **Introduction to Unfair Dismissals:** right to claim unfair dismissal; types of dismissals; automatically unfair dismissals; fairness of the dismissal (with particular reference to disciplinary and conduct dismissal); time limits; remedies for unfair dismissals.
- **Introduction to Work-Life Balance:** pregnancy dismissals; negotiating parental and dependant leave policies; flexible working and discrimination.

## **Union Learning Representative Training**

This course is suitable for members who are or who want to become UNISON Union Learning Representatives (ULRs) and who are enthusiastic about learning and wish to encourage others to take part in lifelong learning. It will give you the skills and knowledge that you need to be an effective ULR.

The role of a ULR is much more than simply setting up courses in your workplace. It is about working within your branch, with your employer and with providers and funders to widen access to learning and ensure equality of opportunity in your workplace.

The course will teach you:

- The role of trade unions in learning and skills
- The role and functions of the ULR
- Trade union approaches to workplace learning and relevant best practice models
- Key policies and programmes relevant to the adult skills system in Wales
- How to promote learning in your workplace
- How to identify learning needs
- How to work with your branch and your employer to remove barriers to learning and in-work progression

## **Additional information:**

Costs to Branches are as follows:

- face-to-face: £50 per person per day
- virtual: £50 per course

Please note that travel expenses and accommodation must be paid for by Branches.

To apply for any of these courses, please go to [my.unison.org.uk](https://my.unison.org.uk) and log in (you will need to register for an account). Courses can be found under the “UNISON Courses” tab - please make sure you register on Cymru Region courses from the list. Once you have completed your registration interest, your Branch will be able to approve and send through to the Cymru Education Team, who will then be in touch to confirm your place.

The closing date for applications is 3 weeks prior to the start date of the course. Joining instructions will be sent within 2 weeks prior to the start of the course. If you have difficulty registering for a course, please contact us at: [cwactivisttraining@unison.co.uk](mailto:cwactivisttraining@unison.co.uk)

# Course Calendar 2026

<b>Course</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
New Organising Steward	14, 21 & 28 January 4 & 11 February	Virtual	1 full day a week for 5 weeks
New Organising Steward	24 February 3, 10, 17 & 24 March	Virtual	1 full day a week for 5 weeks
New Organising Steward	7, 14 & 21 May 4 & 11 June	Cardiff	1 full day a week for 5 weeks
New Organising Steward	2, 9, 16, 23 & 30 June	North Wales	1 full day a week for 5 weeks
New Organising Steward	8, 15, 22 & 29 September 6 October	Swansea	1 full day a week for 5 weeks
New Organising Steward	5, 12, 19 & 26 November 3 December	Virtual	1 full day a week for 5 weeks
ERA Refresher	12 & 13 February	Virtual	2 consecutive days
ERA Refresher	4 & 5 March	Swansea	2 consecutive days
ERA Refresher	22 & 23 April	North Wales	2 consecutive days
ERA Refresher	14 & 15 October	Cardiff	2 consecutive days
ERA Refresher	1 & 2 December	Virtual	2 consecutive days
Introduction to Health & Safety	1, 8 & 15 July	Virtual	1 full day a week for 3 weeks
Introduction to Health & Safety	3, 10 & 17 November	Virtual	1 full day a week for 3 weeks
Employment Law Training	27 February 6, 13, 20 & 27 March	Virtual	1 day a week over 5 weeks
Employment Law Training	23 & 30 September 7, 14 & 21 October	Virtual	1 day a week over 5 weeks
Union Learning Rep Training	13, 14, 20 & 21 April	Virtual	2 days a week over 2 weeks
Union Learning Rep Training	12, 13, 19 & 20 October	Virtual	2 days a week over 2 weeks