

# Learning Together in Schools

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UNISON Learning and Organising Services courses and  
learning resources for school support staff

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**A guide for activists and staff**

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## What UNISON Learning and Organising Services courses and resources are there for school support staff members?

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### Teaching Assistants; Catering staff; Administration; Cleaners & Caretakers

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Learning through UNISON can help members develop confidence, skills and knowledge:

- to progress in their career, or for fun and personal development
- to become more active and involved in issues that concern them
- to help them tackle change and uncertainty at work

Our learning opportunities include the award-winning ***Return to Learn*** programme, provided by the union, and others provided through learning partnerships, negotiated with employers and leading education providers.

Some UNISON branches are working with employers to provide courses and informal learning workshops in the workplace with employer support for funding and time-off, particularly for those with few qualifications or little recent experience of learning.

In most cases, training is free and members can be confident of receiving the best possible tuition and support.

**Contact your branch or regional education team for more information.**

**Tel: 0800 0 857 857**

**FREE Courses for UNISON Members**

## What UNISON Learning and Organising Services courses and resources are there for school support staff members?

### Learning in Your Workplace

UNISON is offering members the following free **one day workshops** to help you cope with the challenges life throws at you either at work or in your daily life.

#### **Power to be You: confidence building**

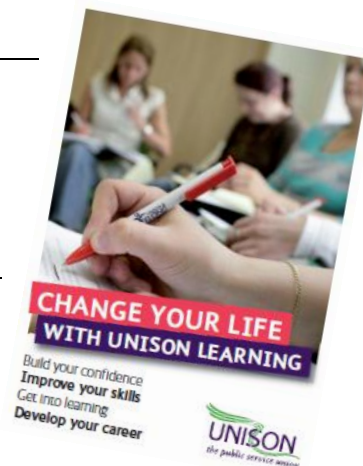
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Would you like to feel more confident or assertive? This workshop will help you improve your self-esteem help you speak up with confidence.

#### **Your skills, your future**

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Are you feeling stuck in your current job? Come along and explore what skills you have, how to make the most of them and how to develop new skills. Whether you want to learn for work or in your personal life, this workshop is for you.



#### **Making the most of the internet**

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Do you have some experience of using a computer but would like some tips to make the most of the internet? Session one covers searching the internet, favourites and email attachments. Session two includes tips for staying safe online, computer spring cleaning and using the internet to save money.



#### **Facing change together**

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Are things changing at work? This session will help give you confidence and will look at practical ways that we, as UNISON members, can help and support each other during times of change or uncertainty.

### Membership Development in UNISON

“Introduction to Study” courses, for **UNISON members only**, are designed for adults to build self-confidence, widen horizons and help progress at work. No exams are involved.

Courses on offer are:

- **Return to Learn**
- **Women’s Lives**
- **Coping with Change** and **Making a Difference** weekend schools

To find out what is available in your region, contact your regional education team: ☎ 0800 0 857 857

## What UNISON Learning and Organising Services courses and resources are there for school support staff members?

### UNISON Activist Courses for Members

UNISON values our representatives and activists, and we welcome new reps in the workplace. As part of the continuous support on offer, we also provide a range of training and development opportunities, including courses and materials to support activists in their roles.

There are many ways in which you can get involved including:

#### Workplace Contact Training:

A course for UNISON contacts – this 1 day course encourages contacts to establish strong connections with members in the workplace and is a great course for members who are interested in finding out more about how they can get involved.

#### UNISON's Workplace Rep/Organising Steward course:

This 5 day course will provide workplace reps with the skills and confidence to develop their role in the branch.

The course is also available as an on-line course with tutor support.

#### UNISON Union Learning Rep (ULR):

If you have enjoyed taking part in a UNISON learning programme that you know colleagues would also get a lot out of, why not join our growing network of union learning reps (ULRs)? We'll train you in the role so you can help spread the message about workplace learning and do your bit to build your branch.

#### UNISON Health and Safety Rep:

An important role to help keep you and your colleagues safe at work. This course will help you to recognise the employer's responsibilities on health and safety and understand how risk assessment can be used as part of a workplace strategy for improving the health, safety and welfare of members.



**Get active in your workplace**



**Take on an official role as a rep or steward**

**To find out more about how to become a workplace rep contact your UNISON branch or regional education team for more information and details of courses,**

or visit [www.unison.org.uk/for-activists/training/](http://www.unison.org.uk/for-activists/training/)

**Learning & organising**

## What UNISON Learning and Organising Services courses and resources are there for school support staff members?

### Organising and Campaigning Workshops

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Learning and Organising Services (LAOS) has developed a range of short workshops around organising and campaigning issues. These workshops can be delivered by UNISON education teams, Union Learning Reps and branches. Activities include:

- Mapping workshop
- Developing and supporting activists
- Follow up your recruitment activity
- Talent spotting and developing activism

### Political Education Workshops

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Find out more about learning and organising services' political education activities which can be run in branches. Resources include 4 wall charts: (*Boom, Bust, Fight Back*: a short history of booms, crises and public spending; *Worth Defending* – a short history of the welfare state; *Forward Still Further to Go*: a short history of women in unions and society; *Cuts, Austerity and You*). Each wall chart is accompanied by a series of short workshops which can be run by ULRs and branches.

### For further information about training and learning opportunities with UNISON:

email: [learningandorganising@unison.co.uk](mailto:learningandorganising@unison.co.uk)

# What UNISON Learning and Organising Services courses and resources are there for school support staff members?

## UNISON's Education Partnerships

UNISON works with a range of educational providers to ensure that courses we provide or support are of high quality and appropriate to the needs and circumstances of members.

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### National Extension College (NEC)

The NEC offers educational opportunities and second-chance learning to people for whom attending regular classes at a school or college would not be possible.

The NEC offers **distance learning courses** which include **GCSEs & A levels**, and qualifications in childcare and early years.

CACHE accredited courses in Early Years Child Education and Care.

### FREE Taster

To help you find out whether distance learning courses are for you, the NEC is offering UNISON members a free taster course, Children's Growth and Development.

### Discounts

The NEC offers a **10% discount** to UNISON members on all its courses.

To find out more, go to: [www.nec.ac.uk/content/nec-working-partnership-unison](http://www.nec.ac.uk/content/nec-working-partnership-unison)

#### Taster course

spotlight: Children's growth and development



Our free taster courses are available exclusively to UNISON members.

They are ideal for use as professional development, or as an introduction to independent study. [Download your free copy here.](#)



working  
**together**  
for education staff

**Learning & organising**



# What UNISON Learning and Organising Services courses and resources are there for school support staff members?

## UNISON – Open University FREE workshops

**One day workshops** facilitated by an Open University tutor can be delivered in most workplaces across the country – check with your regional education team.



### Mental health awareness

This workshop helps members develop a greater awareness of mental health by:

- Understanding a range of mental health problems people face
- Gaining an insight into the experience of living with mental distress
- Exploring strategies for promoting good mental health
- Being able to take increased awareness back to the workplace

### Challenging behaviour

This workshop is aimed at school support staff. The day covers tips and techniques for dealing with challenging behaviour.

### Autism awareness

This workshop is aimed at school support staff. The day covers:

- Understanding autism
- Characteristics of autism
- Areas of difficulty and challenge
- Supporting children with autism

***The Open University and UNISON partnership is based firmly on a shared goal – to widen access to learning opportunities to those who have previously been unable to access them***

### Other Resources

For details of the Open University's education courses, click here:

[www.open.ac.uk/courses/find/education-childhood-and-youth](http://www.open.ac.uk/courses/find/education-childhood-and-youth)

The Open University provides free course materials relevant to the schools sector through its **Openlearn** website:

[www.open.edu/openlearn/education](http://www.open.edu/openlearn/education)



Interested in learning, but not sure which route to take? Try the new Pearl website to help you decide:

[www.pearl.ac.uk](http://www.pearl.ac.uk)

### Open University Grants

Open University Grants are available to UNISON members undertaking 30 and 60 point OU courses **up to and including** under-graduate level at their own expense.

Grants are made as follows:

*60 point courses: £200*

*30 point courses: £100*

Details and an application form can be found here:

[www.unison.org.uk/for-members/unison-learning/financial-support/](http://www.unison.org.uk/for-members/unison-learning/financial-support/)

# Learning & organising

# What UNISON Learning and Organising Services courses and resources are there for school support staff members?

## Skills for Schools website

Skills for Schools is a UNISON website giving school support staff a broad range of information and help about training and career development.

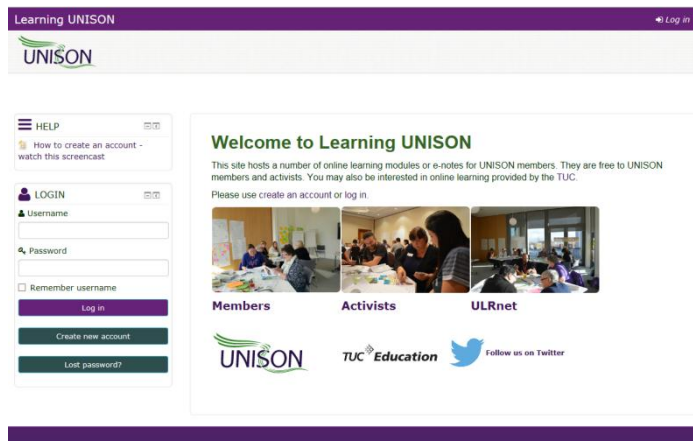
The site includes information on roles in schools covering pupil support and welfare, teaching and learning support, facilities, specialist and technical and admin and management.



**Real life stories : Career Planner : Resource library : Role descriptions**

[www.skillsforschools.org.uk](http://www.skillsforschools.org.uk)

## UNISON Learning website



The UNISON Learning website hosts a range of interactive e-learning courses for UNISON members and activists, including:

**Coping with Care: dealing with health needs in schools.** This course explains Government guidance on supporting pupils with medical conditions.

**Dyslexia Awareness** – e-note coming soon!

To set up an account and enrol go here: <http://learning.unison.org.uk/>

*For further details, please contact your UNISON Regional Education team or email: [LearningandOrganisingServices@unison.co.uk](mailto:LearningandOrganisingServices@unison.co.uk)*

**Learning & organising**