

Lifelong Learning

The Usdaw Union Learning Rep



UNION LEARNING REPS ... PART OF THE USDAW TEAM

Every year Usdaw helps more than 15,000 members return to learning. This would be impossible without the hard work and dedication of nearly 1,000 active Union Learning Reps. They are chosen by members and trained by Usdaw. They get time off to do their training and play their role in the workplace. They are part of the union team in the workplace and are involved in other Usdaw campaigns and carry out organising initiatives in the workplace.

What are Union Learning Reps?

Union Learning Reps (ULRs) are Usdaw members who are elected to support the Lifelong Learning campaign. The campaign helps Usdaw to work with employers, organise and deliver for members.

ULRs promote learning and encourage members to get involved. They have legal rights to help them including:

- Paid time off to receive training.
- Reasonable paid time off at work to undertake their duties.
- Facilities they need — such as a noticeboard or somewhere private to meet members.

Udaw helped to win these legal rights for ULRs and they are now part of the rep team on site and in the Union. They work with the employer but focus on members' needs. They are crucial in helping to make learning more accessible, affordable and sustainable.

What do I need to become a ULR?

ULRs have to be Usdaw members but don't need any union experience. The most important quality is to be interested and enthusiastic about learning and willing to help people get the learning they want. ULRs receive full training and support.

What do ULRs get from the role?

ULRs learn lots of new skills and knowledge, build their self-confidence and improve their own ability to learn and develop. These qualities and skills help them at work and in other parts of their lives as well. But the biggest buzz for most ULRs is helping people get back into learning and seeing the impact that has. As one ULR said, *“learning changes lives and it's great to know you played a part in that.”*

If you want that buzz — read on and find out a bit more!

“ I get a real buzz out of being a ULR — it's great to be able to help people and see them succeed. ”

Find out learning and training needs ...

ULRs need to know what people are interested in to best set up and promote learning in their workplace. They set up workplace promotions, give out learning surveys and have one-to-one chats, in confidence, with people to talk about their learning needs. ULRs also arrange for members to get specialist advice on issues such as English, apprenticeships, computing or dyslexia.

Consult with the employer about learning ...

Most ULRs work closely with their employer to promote and organise learning. In larger workplaces, ULRs can be part of a formal Learning Committee with managers. In smaller workplaces, arrangements will be more informal. In retail ULRs play a part in existing store, regional or national forums to consult on these issues.



A RECENT INDEPENDENT SURVEY SHOWED THAT 78% OF MEMBERS WOULD NOT HAVE GOT INVOLVED IN LEARNING WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF THE UNION.

USDAW TRAIN AROUND 150 NEW UNION LEARNING REPS EACH YEAR AND HAS ALMOST 1,000 ACTIVE UNION LEARNING REPS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

Promote, arrange and support learning ...

ULRs can be involved in everything from raising awareness about the value of learning to helping to organise courses in the workplace. They often work with local providers to set up courses, either in or close to the workplace, at a cost that members can afford. ULRs support and encourage members who want to return to learn but are a bit worried about what's involved.

Give information and advice about learning ...

ULRs give information on different types of learning; everything from leisure and personal development courses, to work-related learning like apprenticeships. They also tell people about the learning available through local providers and signpost members to other sources of advice and guidance on learning for personal, work or career development.

“ All new starters visit the learning centre as part of their induction. We find out what they are interested in and tell them what we can offer. ”

If you are interested in becoming a ULR, have a chat with the reps in your workplace to find out what's going on. Your Lifelong Learning Project Worker can tell you more about the role. You can contact them at the Divisional Office. You can also use the Usdaw website to show you are interested. Go to **www.usdaw.org.uk/bealearningrep** and fill in the form.

ULRs are chosen in the same way as other Usdaw reps, usually through an election in the workplace. Your Area Organiser or Project Worker will take care of the arrangements.

Once elected, you will get the help and training you need. Your Project Worker will induct you into your new role using the Usdaw ULR Handbook. You will get to know the other reps and work with any other ULRs on learning campaigns already in place.

You will also be booked onto a training course and get paid release for the course. This is usually a five day introductory course which can be followed up by more specialist training within six months.

“ I became a ULR because I'm passionate about learning. I think everyone can learn something new and I like to help them find out what it is. ”



EVERY DIVISION HAS AN ACADEMY ORGANISING OFFICER WHO STARTED AS A UNION LEARNING REP

USDW UNION LEARNING REPS HAVE WON THE TUC ULR OF THE YEAR AWARD THREE TIMES – MORE THAN ANY OTHER UNION.

“

I worked with our local college to set up a basic computing course in the workplace. It worked a treat and people are now moving on to other courses.

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USDAW PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN GETTING UNION LEARNING REPS THE SAME STATUTORY RIGHTS AS ALL OTHER REPS

Getting Learning Started

Your Project Worker will help you get learning started once you've completed your first training course. You will get support from the other reps in the workplace. You are now part of the Usdaw Union Learning Reps network. You:

- Get regular information, advice and help on Usdaw campaigns.
- Receive email alerts to keep up-to-date with the latest developments.
- Share experiences at ULR forums.
- Improve your knowledge and skills through learning and development.

Visit the Lifelong Learning section of the Usdaw website to find out more about the latest learning campaigns and read more about the work that ULRs do at www.usdaw.org.uk/Campaigns/Lifelong-Learning

You can have a look at the courses members can access through our Online Learning Gateway at www.usdaw.org.uk/LearningGateway

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I take part in our rep team surgeries so anyone can come and talk to me about the learning we offer through the learning centre.

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GET ORGANISED FOR LEARNING

Further details are available direct from your Union Learning Rep or Lifelong Learning Project Worker via your Divisional Office or Usdaw's Education and Training Department:

South Wales and Western Cardiff Office

Tel: 029 2073 1131
email: cardiff@usdaw.org.uk

Eastern

Waltham Cross Office

Tel: 01992 709280
email: walthamx@usdaw.org.uk

Midlands

Redditch Office

Tel: 01527 406290
email: redditch@usdaw.org.uk

North Eastern Leeds Office

Tel: 0113 232 1320
email: leeds@usdaw.org.uk

Scottish

Glasgow Office

Tel: 0141 427 6561
email: glasgow@usdaw.org.uk

Southern

Morden Office

Tel: 020 8687 5950
email: morden@usdaw.org.uk

North West

Warrington Office

Tel: 01925 578050
email: warrington@usdaw.org.uk



For further information, contact:

Education Department

Ushaw
188 Wilmslow Road
Manchester M14 6LJ

Call: 0161 224 2804/249 2400
email: education@usdaw.org.uk
Web: www.usdaw.org.uk/training

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