

Organising and Recruiting in Scotland

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<http://www.unison-scotland.org.uk/>

Contents list

Page

1. Glasgow City Recruitment
2. Scottish Branches target new starters
3. Recruitment Stalls - How to make them work.
4. Updated guidance issues on new starter lists.

TV Advert To Show Again in January 2005.

“New Year will mean a new run of the UNISON television advert. The GPF committee has agreed to fund another set of showings of the ad in January 2005.

It gives us the chance to keep up the momentum on recruitment, which has resulted in record membership figures this Autumn. This coming year will be a crucial one for UNISON.

We have a series of ballots - to elect the general secretary; to retain our political funds and to elect the NEC. And of course all the signs are that we will have a general election this year too.



There's never been a better time to raise the union's profile and to make the most of that profile to recruit in our workplaces and branches. Look out for more details of the ad - one repeat you won't want to miss!”

Dave Prentis General Secretary.

Struggling to recruit new members?

Unsure how to ask potential members to join the union?

Tips, Techniques and Tools: Recruitment Training Course.

A new course to update all your recruitment needs is available, if you are interested in attending contact

p.campbell@unison.co.uk
or
j.mccarey@unison.co.uk

500 Student Nurses in Scotland sign up for UNISON membership in 2004.

Scottish UNISON Health Branches used Autumn to target Student Nurses. The students, starting courses in colleges and universities, have the opportunity to sign up at fresher fairs all over Scotland.

Branches used stalls and presentation to get the message across. Pay not Poverty; the campaign for a fairer deal for Nursing and Midwifery students alongside the expert representation on offer from UNISON both on clinical experiences, professional rules and regulations, health and safety and travel expenses.

Mary Samson Chair of Lanarkshire Health branch and Nursing Assistant, Uddingston Hospital has been organising the recruitment of student nurses to the branch for the last five-years, primarily focusing on Bell College, Hamilton.

This year recruiting 115 student nurses, Mary shared her experiences on what works.

“We take advantage of the opportunity to present our case to the students alongside other organisations, the best selling point is our local structure. We have 52 stewards covering 100 locations. If any student requires advice or representation we can offer telephone support within ½ hour or a steward with them in 2 hours. Only UNISON offer that level of workplace support and that is why student nurses join.”

The branch signed up over 90% of student nurses at Bell College; having as many stewards as possible present to meet the students as they leave the presentation and sign them up.

Glasgow Health Branch also used a stall with a mixture of UNISON staff and branch stewards present to rustle up support - signing up over 150 student nurses - proving UNISON is the trade union for Nursing Students.

New Starters Lists – Scottish Branches Report

Guidance on requesting new starters information was produced by UNISON nationally this year. Follow up guidance is included in this newsletter providing all the ammunition branches need to challenge any employer refusing to provide list of new starters on the basis of protecting employees rights under the data protection act. Branches using this method of contacting potential new members have already begun to reap benefits in terms of new members and profile in the workplace.

Midlothian Local Government Branch has been receiving lists from the employer and contacting New Starters for the last four years. **Lesley Greig, Branch Secretary and Secretary of the Joint trade union committee** attends all corporate induction events. Following that the branch receives a corporate induction list, allowing them to individually follow up each new employee.

“A personal addressed letter signed by me is sent to every new start and the branch also send out a full list of new starters to all stewards. This allows stewards to personally introduce themselves to any new members of staff”.

This systematic approach had paid off with Midlothian Branch recruiting 39 new members by this method alone in the last 2 months.

Learning from this, the branch has turned their attention to those leaving the union. Contacting leavers by phone to check that they no longer want to be members. This ensures that any mistakes by payroll and in the RMS system are rectified speedily, keeping the branches records up to date.

New branch **Ayrshire and Arran Heath** have recently started contacting new starters. **Barbara Stevenson, Branch Administrator** told us

“After the first mailing to the new starters list, the response rate was slow, but we were not marking the application form properly allowing us to monitor it. After the second mailing we received approx. 20 new members so it has definitely proved worth it.”

Ayrshire and Arran Health branch also highlight the hidden benefits in contacting new starters - that the information you supply may be shared with other non-members in that office and encourage them to join also.

Question and Answers on AGM's - Ensuring Grassroots Democracy.

Is your branch planning its Annual General Meeting? For questions and answers on organising your branch AGM Click the link below

http://www.unison.org.uk/activists/pages_view.asp?did=1497

Click below for a **guide to help branches organise annual general meetings**, part of our branch development toolkit.

<http://www.unison.org.uk/acrobat/14486.pdf>

NEW STARTERS LISTS - Update on Guidance

Data Protection legislation does not provide the right to obtain new starters lists from employers and some employers have used the legislation as grounds for not providing these.

Such denials are usually based on the argument that a list of new starters contains *personal data* about the individuals listed and that they are not allowed to disclose such personal data without the consent of the individuals concerned.

There was some validity behind this claim although it has always been possible to argue that one of the conditions for processing personal data could apply to new starters lists allowing employers to provide them to the union. That is, “the processing is necessary for the purpose of *legitimate interests* pursued by the data controller or by the *third parties* to whom the data are disclosed...”

However, clarification on the meaning of *personal data* has been provided by a Court of Appeal case, (Michael John Durant v Financial Services Authority [2003] EWCA Civ 1746, Court of Appeal (Civil Division)). This makes it unnecessary to depend on the above condition because by clarifying what constitutes personal data, it can now be argued that new starters lists do not contain personal data and hence are not covered by data protection legislation.

In examining the impact of this judgement the Information Commissioner looked at its implication for what constituted personal data. It concluded that “personal data is information that affects a person’s privacy” and that in determining this, one needs to determine whether “the information is *biographical in a significant sense*”.

The Information Commissioner went on to say that, “mere reference to a person’s name where the name is not associated with any other personal data” will “not normally be personal data”.

New starters lists provide the names of individuals who have recently begun employment but do not provide any other information, which is biographical in a significant sense. As such, a new starters list will not contain personal data and therefore will not be covered by the provisions of data protection legislation relating to personal data.

This should be brought to the attention of any employer who claims that they can not provide new starters lists because of data protection requirements.

Issued by Maurice Dutton, Data Integration Manager UNISON National Office.

UNISON Glasgow City Council - Land Services On Tour

Glasgow City Branch took part in the UNISON Autumn recruitment campaign with a number of branch-wide activities. In Land Services Department, a UNISON stall went on tour to six locations throughout the city. It gave Chris Stevens the Unison Departmental Convenor the opportunity to reconnect with existing members and recruit some new faces. In the Albion Street office 10 new members signed up, representing 20% of the workforce.

The branch organised a prize draw for new members. This provided an incentive to sign up immediately. Overall the stall really paid off for the branch. Chris Stevens Convenor states in conclusion,

“It is an activity I would definitely plan quarterly. With so much change taking place in the public sector it is an excellent way to keep in touch with existing members and recruit new ones.”

Recruitment Stalls – How to make them Work.

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Scottish Electricity Branch right on target

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On Thursday the 4th of November, Scottish Electricity Branch pressed all the right button on their recruitment stall.

The branch held a stall in the canteen in Scottish Power Headquarters in Cathcart. The stall was staffed from 8am through till 3.30pm, offering direct access to many new employees

On the day the branch recruited 47 new members, 25 of them were young members, with another 21 completed forms being returned in the post later.

The Joint Utilities Service Group had identified Cathcart as a priority - along with the call centre at East Kilbride.

A team of UNISON staff and Electricity activists worked together. Staff members Janet Stewart, Gerry Crawley & Sheila McGeoch, worked alongside branch activists Graham Denholm-Carswell (Young Members Officer within Branch) & Janice Paterson (one of Branch Convenors).

Janice Paterson Branch Convenor gives us her view on an effective recruitment stall

“Sometimes you have to speculate to accumulate, by providing goodie bags to those who joined on the day. With staplers, keyrings and mouse mats there was an incentive to sign up straight away. The success of the day was definitely being well prepared, having the stall in a good spot right outside the canteen helps. Its important to have a positive outlook don't be afraid to stop people and talk to them.

Having Graham Denholm-Carswell, as the branch young members officer really helps as Graham targets younger members of staff effectively.

Building a recruitment team with activists

and staff helps share experience and encourages newer activists to speak to non-members

Recruitment is not a one-off activity for this branch.

As convenor, Janice regularly attends all staff induction meetings arranged by Scottish Power and the branch have already identified the next two targets. A call centre in East Kilbride and a new office soon to open in Blantyre with 120 new staff.

With a branch already thinking and preparing about the next step, better start ordering the goodies.

Links to Recruitment Hints and Tips.

Preparing for effective recruiting

http://www.unison.org.uk/recruitment/pages_view.asp?did=1377

Recruiting new members

http://www.unison.org.uk/recruitment/pages_view.asp?did=1372