

**UNISON**  
**JOB BRIEF: REGIONAL SECRETARY**  
**REF: R2/1**  
**EAST MIDLANDS REGION**

**Introduction**

1. UNISON is Britain's largest public service trade union, with over 1.3 million members working in the public services, private, voluntary and community sectors and in the energy services. We employ 1200 staff, approximately 370 at our national centre in Euston, central London and the remainder in our twelve regions across the UK, including Northern Ireland.

The East Midlands Region has a working membership of 94,435 people, 71 members of staff, 66 branches and approximately 3,420 lay activists.

**Strategic Development**

2. The Regional Secretary is the senior official in the region. The Regional Secretary leads the Regional Management Team and is a member of the union's Senior Management Group. The SMG is chaired by the General Secretary and is responsible for the overall strategic and operational management of the union. Its role is to:
  - assist the General Secretary in the development of organisational strategy and planning to achieve UNISON's internal and external objectives and priorities.
  - co-ordinate functions and activities across the union to ensure effective campaigning, integrated working and efficient delivery of key services to regions, branches and members.
  - work to build UNISON's public profile and external influence.
  - communicate the work and achievements of the union to our members and staff; to ensure regular communications with staff and between managers and staff, and provide effective mechanisms for developing staff and involving them in decision making.
  - develop good management practice.
  - develop performance standards and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.
3. UNISON structures its work programme to provide for the systematic implementation of policies adopted by its democratic lay member structures. Senior managers are responsible for contributing to the prioritisation of work plans and programmes arising out of the four key objectives determined by the National Executive Council:
  - Recruiting, organising and representing members.

- Negotiating and bargaining on behalf of members and promoting equality.
  - Campaigning and promoting UNISON on behalf of members.
  - Developing an efficient and effective union.
4. As the senior official in the region, a key aspect of the work of the Regional Secretary is the development, in partnership with senior regional lay officials, of an operational plan for the region, to ensure that the resources of the region are directed towards the achievement of the NEC's objectives and priorities and maximise resources on recruiting and organising members and supporting branches. The plan identifies regional priorities and establishes progress or performance indicators to enable effective monitoring and evaluation of all work and achievements.
  5. The key aims of the union as detailed in our Rule Book seek to:
    - i) Extend and promote our influence in the workplace and in the Community.
    - ii) Promote, safeguard and facilitate participation by all members in the union's democracy, with special regard to fair representation for women, black members, disabled members, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members.
    - iii) Provide effective standards of service in the areas of representation and advice, information to members on the work of the union, the provision of financial benefits and the maintenance of educational facilities for members.
  6. To further these aims, candidates must be able to demonstrate an ability to oversee the political development of the region and implementation of national campaigning objectives; they will have had considerable experience of handling the media and developing a media strategy, and will have excellent presentation and public speaking skills. They will also be expected to demonstrate an understanding and commitment to partnership working within an organisation, and a strong commitment to public service ethos.
  7. Candidates will also have knowledge of an industrial relations environment, with practical experience of representing individual or collective issues and leading major negotiations with employers. They will be a competent advocate and possess strong interpersonal skills and an ability to get on with people at all levels. These include government ministers, regional and national politicians, civil servants, public and private sector managers, and a diverse range of occupational groups and other trade unionists.

### **Managerial**

8. It is essential that the person appointed to this role possesses a dynamic and enthusiastic style of management and leadership that is able to encourage and motivate a wide range of staff and lay member activists. The Regional Secretary provides leadership for the Regional Management Team to ensure the efficient

and effective deployment of the region's resources in the implementation of national policy objectives and priorities.

9. Candidates will have worked as senior managers in the public or voluntary sector, for a trade union or for a political or campaigning organisation with similar aims and values to UNISON.
10. UNISON regions are currently undergoing a period of major change to meet the union's developing recruitment, organisation and campaigning agenda. Candidates will need to be skilled and experienced in leading major change management projects. They will have considerable experience of selecting, motivating, developing and managing staff to improve their performance.
11. The union is accredited under the Investors in People Standard. The Regional Secretary will therefore be highly committed to maintaining IIP standards within the region and be able to show commitment to team and staff development, together with experience of developing regional, team and individual work programmes, including setting standards, monitoring and evaluation.
12. While the Regional Secretary post is a demanding position, requiring occasional attendance at meetings outside of the conventional working day, UNISON is a strong supporter of the work/life balance ethos. Candidates will therefore be expected to prioritise their working arrangements in such a way as to demonstrate by example their personal commitment to these aims in partnership with senior regional lay officials.

**UNISON**  
**REGIONAL SECRETARY**  
**REF: R2/1**  
**EAST MIDLANDS REGION**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

Grade: Grade 1

Location: Regionally Based

Reports to: Assistant General Secretary

Responsible for: Regional Managers

**Summary**

The post is a member of the Senior Management Team and the chief representative of the General Secretary in the region. Through the SMG she/he contributes to national strategic direction and promotes and delivers the union's objectives and priorities in the region. She/he is the manager of the Regional Management Team (RMT), overseeing the implementation of national policy in the region and ensuring that regional resources are maximised on organising and recruiting members and supporting branches. Ensures effective management and deployment of staff in the region and leads on strategic organisational change projects under the direction of the General Secretary. Fulfills Rule Book requirements and works in partnership with lay members.

**Key tasks and responsibilities**

- Oversees the development and implementation of regional strategy and the regional operational plan to achieve UNISON's national objectives and priorities, including meeting agreed national and regional performance indicators and targets. Promotes partnership working with lay members through the region's lay structures to develop and achieve regional priorities and objectives. Champions and leads implementation of strategic change in the region.
- Manages and provides strategic leadership to the Regional Management Team to develop and implement the regional operational plan and achieve national priorities, objectives and targets. Ensures management of region's staff is in line with good management practice and that staff and the region's resources are effectively deployed to maximise organising and recruiting members.
- Develops and ensures implementation of strategic recruitment and organising plans to increase membership across the region's public services. Oversees the development and building of branch capacity and influence in the workplace to support lay activists, develop new activists and deliver key services to members.
- Builds UNISON's external public profile and influence in the region and oversees implementation of key national and regional campaigns. Leads on complex

negotiations with external bodies to achieve UNISON's collective bargaining and policy objectives and ensure the union's influence is maintained and members' interests protected during major public service reorganisation and change.

- Responsible for ensuring communication of the union's objectives, priorities, achievements are effectively communicated to managers, staff, lay members and branches
- Responsible for preparing, managing, reporting and monitoring of regional budget and resources within framework set by NEC and SMG. Ensures effective management of regional facilities, IT, e-communications, information, monitoring, quality assessment and reporting systems in line with national guidance.
- Responsible for development and implementation of the region's Staffing Plan to achieve union's priorities and objectives. Ensures good management practice in the region, implementation of staff training and development programmes and annual training and performance review mechanisms including development reviews and regular staff/manager meetings to discuss progress on achieving work objectives and targets.
- Ensures Rule Book duties are carried out, including servicing of lay structures and delivery of proportionality and fair representation in lay structures in the region.
- Undertakes other duties as required by the grade descriptor and/or job profile of this post

**UNISON**  
**REGIONAL SECRETARY**  
**REF: R2/1**  
**EAST MIDLANDS REGION**

**PERSON SPECIFICATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA**

UNISON is an equal opportunities employer, committed to providing equal opportunities regardless of race or ethnic origin, gender identity, family situation, sexual orientation, disability, religion or age. This person specification is designed to help members of Interviewing Panels judge the qualities of interviewees in a systematic and consistent way and in accordance with UNISON's equal opportunities policy. It is given to all job applicants for information.

**Assessment code**

**A – application form**

**PI – panel interview**

**ST - selection tests**

Heading	Selection criteria	Assessment		
<b>1. Thinking skills</b>	• Experience of undertaking strategic planning, organisational development and management of change, including ability to evaluate and improve organisational performance	A	PI	ST
	• Ability to oversee the political development of the region and implementation of national campaigning objectives.			ST
	• Commitment to and understanding of equal opportunities	A	PI	
	• Commitment to and understanding of UNISON's aims and values and trade unions	A	PI	ST
	• Ability to work in partnership with senior lay activists to achieve national and regional objectives		PI	ST
<b>2. Inter-personal &amp; Communication skills</b>	• Excellent presentation, facilitation and public speaking skills			ST
	• Experience of dealing with the media and developing a media strategy.	A		ST
	• Ability to communicate effectively with managers, staff and lay members at all levels including complex report writing and presentation skills	A	PI	ST
	• Ability to represent the union externally at a senior level to national and regional organisations			ST
	• Able to demonstrate emotional resilience, self awareness and self management		PI	ST

<b>3. Initiative and independence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of developing, managing, monitoring, controlling and evaluating strategic services, systems, and/or structures</li> <li>• Ability to act as key advisor to senior managers and senior lay committees as appropriate</li> </ul>	<b>A</b>	<b>PI</b> <b>PI</b>	<b>ST</b>
<b>4. Staff management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management experience at senior level</li> <li>• Experience of managing multi-functional units or teams including managing strategic projects and co-ordinating the work of others</li> <li>• Experience of effectively managing systems and resources</li> <li>• Ability to contribute effectively to the Senior Management Group and to lead the Regional Management Team</li> <li>• Experience of selecting, motivating, developing and managing staff and their performance.</li> <li>• Experience of developing work programmes including setting standards, monitoring and evaluation</li> <li>• Experience of managing and prioritising work under pressure (both self and others)</li> </ul>	<b>A</b> <b>A</b> <b>A</b> <b>A</b> <b>A</b> <b>A</b> <b>A</b>	<b>PI</b> <b>PI</b> <b>PI</b> <b>PI</b> <b>PI</b> <b>PI</b> <b>PI</b>	<b>ST</b>      <b>ST</b>
<b>5. Resource Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of securing, monitoring, controlling and reporting on complex departmental/regional budgets</li> <li>• Ability to ensure value for money and effective use of resources</li> </ul>	<b>A</b> <b>A</b>	<b>PI</b> <b>PI</b>	
<b>6. Physical Skills</b> (with DD modification where necessary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to drive</li> <li>• ICT skills – draft own reports/correspondence/keep e-diary</li> </ul>	<b>A</b> <b>A</b>		<b>ST</b>
<b>7. General Knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to operate flexibly under the direction of the NEC, General Secretary and Senior Management Group</li> <li>• Detailed knowledge of the political, economic, social and legal environment in which the Union operates.</li> <li>• Detailed understanding of employment and trade union law.</li> </ul>	 <b>A</b> <b>A</b>	<b>PI</b> <b>PI</b> <b>PI</b>	<b>ST</b> <b>ST</b> <b>ST</b>