



Wales
TUC
Cymru

Could you be a **ULR**?

A guide to becoming Union Learning Rep
Wales TUC Cymru

Could you be a Union Learning Rep?

What is a ULR?

A Union Learning Rep (ULR) is an elected and trained workplace learning advocate. It means that you would work with your colleagues to find out what kind of learning most interests them and what kind of courses they'd like to attend, and then work with your union, employer and learning providers to offer those courses, or signpost learners to where they can access them. You will be the voice for learning and skills within your workplace and union branch.

You could also get involved in national campaigns like Learning at Work Day or the Reading Challenge to promote the benefits of lifelong learning.

It is important to point out the difference between the ULR role in workplace learning and the employer's role in workplace training. There may very well be times when ULRs and employers work together to deliver courses, but the ULR role is not to help employers with the training staff require in order to do their jobs. The ULR is there to help colleagues upskill and access learning opportunities relevant and of interest to them.

Who is suitable to be a ULR?

Any union member with an interest in learning and skills would be suitable as a ULR.

What training is involved?

The Wales TUC offers full training for ULRs, at no cost. The initial ULR stage 1 is six days long, usually run as one day a week for six weeks, although this can be tailored to suit. The course is delivered by experienced tutors in an informal setting and there are no exams or tests, just an ongoing portfolio of work that you will build up as the course progresses. Courses can be delivered almost anywhere where a suitable room is available, including at your own workplace if required.

The kinds of things covered on the course include:

- Negotiating on learning
- Accessing funding for courses
- Setting up a learning agreement
- Learning surveys and interviews
- The business case for learning

What support is available?

In the same way as health and safety reps and shop stewards, union learning representatives are an essential part of any union structure and are therefore given the same rights under the ACAS Code of Practice. This means that you have the right to paid time off to complete the training and reasonable paid time off to carry out your duties.

After you have completed the course you will join a network of over 1,000 ULRs across Wales. The Wales TUC offers full support to reps in the form of additional training opportunities and events, access to network meetings and one-on-one assistance if needed, in addition to the support you will receive from your own union.

What's in it for me?

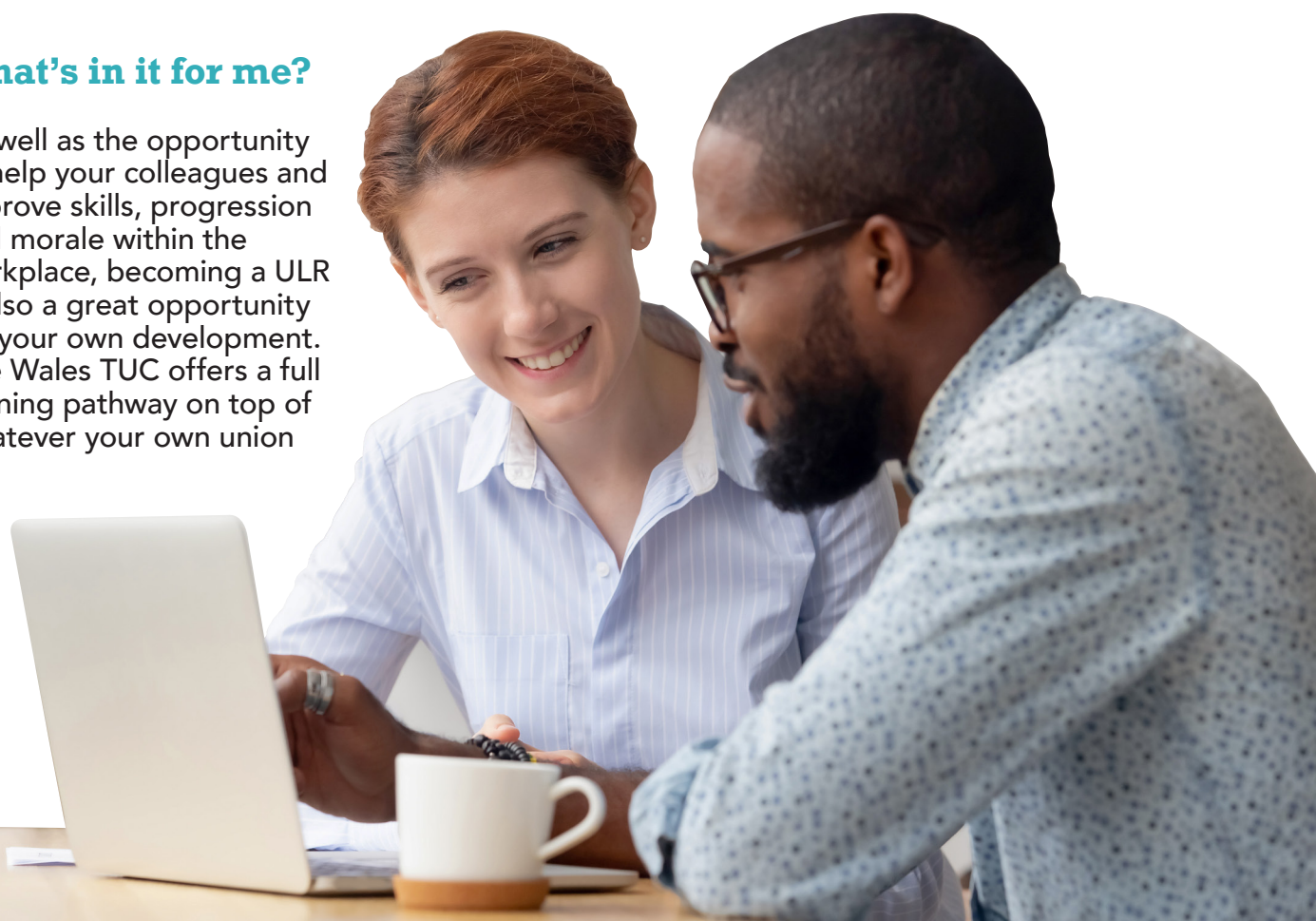
As well as the opportunity to help your colleagues and improve skills, progression and morale within the workplace, becoming a ULR is also a great opportunity for your own development. The Wales TUC offers a full training pathway on top of whatever your own union

may provide. You will also have the chance to form strong links with the wider union movement through attendance at meetings and conferences.

Many ULRs have gone on from their volunteer role to forge new career paths in the field of adult learning and skills.

I'm interested. What next?

If you would like to sign up for a ULR course speak to your own union in the first instance and then contact the Wales TUC Learning Services team at wulr@tuc.org.uk or on 02920 347010.



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This publication is also available in the Welsh language.

All TUC publications can be provided for dyslexic or visually impaired readers in an agreed accessible format, on request, at no extra cost.

This toolkit will be regularly updated, so we would welcome any comments or suggestions on how it could be improved.

Please let us know if you notice anything that is out of date, unclear, or that you think may need correcting or updating.

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Published by:
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