

UNISON
Area Organiser
Northern Ireland
Ref: R5/10

Job Brief /Job Description / Job Specification

JOB BRIEF

Introduction

1. UNISON is the UK's leading public services 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 Northern Ireland Region has over 53,000 members working primarily in health, social care, education and the community & voluntary sectors.

Developmental

2. The Area Organiser is a key organising role in the region. It covers organising and specified bargaining and representation.

The Area Organiser is managed, supervised or mentored by a Regional Manager or Regional Organiser.

Organising and Campaigning

- The Area organiser will work in and across branches to build recruitment, retention and organising initiatives and campaigns; train and develop stewards; support branch communications; develop "green field" sites or inactive branches and work where necessary to build organisation from scratch.
- The Area Organiser will play a key role in the UNISON strategic organising initiative, working as part of the overall organising team and in partnership with senior Lay Officials.
- The Area Organiser will be involved in delivering specific region wide campaigns and events; prepare information briefings to support organising or bargaining campaigns and support press and public relations work in the region.
- The Area Organiser will be directly responsible for working in partnership with a range of branch and regional based Lay Committees and will play a role in supporting the UNISON College Education programme.

Representation

- Area Organisers may also undertake casework by agreement. However, a core function is developing the capacity of Lay Activists to do so by advising, supporting and mentoring branch officers and stewards in representation and negotiation and ensuring that appropriate training is undertaken.

Bargaining

- Area Organisers support Regional Organisers and local activists in collective bargaining, researching relevant agreements and data bases, preparing claims, making presentations and engaging with employers as required.
3. UNISON structures its work programme to provide for the systematic implementation of policies adopted by its democratic lay member structures. Area Organisers will be working to targets in their work plans arising from 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. The Area Organiser is an important resource in helping the region to deliver its operational plan, which ensures that the resources of the region are directed towards recruitment, retention and organising and the achievement of the NEC's objectives and priorities. 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 women, members of all grades, black members, disabled members and LGBT+ members and in NI In to encourage participation of the two main communities as defined in Fair Employment Legislation,
 - 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 promotion and engagement with the UNISON college education programme.
 6. To further these aims Area Organisers will have a clear understanding of equality and human rights, how to increase participation in a member led organisation, and how to use different kinds of media to raise UNISON's profile. They are highly focused on building the organisation and providing member satisfaction with the services provided. They have enthusiasm and commitment which motivates lay activists, new stewards and members.
 7. UNISON regions are currently undergoing a period of change to meet the union's developing recruitment, retention and organising and campaigning agenda. Postholders must be willing to change and adapt to help and support lay activists to do likewise.
 8. The allocation of areas of work to the area organiser is the responsibility of the designated manager. Areas of work are interchangeable and are regularly reviewed in discussion with the area organiser to meet the needs of the organisation and services to branches and members.

- 9.** The UNISON Regional Centre is in Belfast, but the post may require significant activity in locations across Northern Ireland and will entail daily travel for recruitment activities, meetings and/or training as required.
- 10.** The successful candidate will need to be flexible with their working hours. Reaching members can be challenging during “office hours” so the successful candidate may be required to work in the evening and occasionally at weekends.

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JOB DESCRIPTION

Grade:	5
Salary:	£48,787 per annum, plus £3,629 Annual Subsistence Allowance
Location:	UNISON Regional Centre, Belfast
Reports to:	Regional Organiser or Regional Manager – dependent on local circumstances.

OVERALL SUMMARY

This post is key in supporting Regional Organisers to establish organising frameworks in the region. It covers organising and representation work as set out below.

Work Areas

- **Strategic organising and base organising**, to include:
 - planning and delivering recruitment and retention campaigns;
 - membership mapping and analysis across branches;
 - organising in greenfield sites as well as established areas;
 - organising and developing lay member participation;
 - mentoring and training new stewards;
 - collective bargaining on local workplace issues;
 - developing stewards' committees and local bargaining structures;
 - developing systems to support organising;
 - research and information to support campaigning;
 - co-ordinating campaigns and activities;
 - building branch capacity e.g. systems, communications, press releases, newsletters, websites and building local and media profile.

- **Collective bargaining and representation**

- Collective bargaining at workplace and employer level that will include, but is not exclusive to, negotiations on:

- workers' rights;
- equality agreements;
- general terms and conditions;
- health and safety issues;
- training and learning agreements;
- local facilities agreements.

- Individual representation that covers:

- grievances;
- disciplinaries;
- local workplace issues;
- general advice and guidance to members;
- mentoring and building individual capacity of activists.

- Undertakes other duties as required by the grade definition or job profile of this post.

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NORTHERN IRELAND
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Person Specification and Selection Criteria

UNISON is committed to equality of opportunity. Applicants will be treated equally regardless of gender, marital status, disability, age, sexual orientation, race, religious belief, political opinion and whether or not they have dependants. 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.

Heading	Selection criteria
Thinking	1. Experience of developing solutions to resolve problems including: 1.1 analysing information and statistical data 1.2 research including carrying out workplace mapping 1.3 drafting action plans 1.4 developing materials e.g. publicity 1.5 developing campaign plans 1.6 drafting statements of case. 2. Learning and Development 2.1 ability to identify training needs of others 2.2 can demonstrate continuous personal learning and development.
Interpersonal and Communication	3. Experience of motivating people to participate in activities including: 3.1 making presentations 3.2 influencing outcomes at meetings 3.3 mentoring and coaching 3.4 writing newsletters, leaflets etc. 4. Experience of giving advice and representing members including: 4.1 conciliation skills to resolve disagreements 4.2 responding effectively to people who are angry or upset 5. Experience of effective team working.

Initiative and Independence	6. Experience of prioritising own workload including: 6.1 decision making within guidelines 6.2 following policies and procedures 6.3 devolving work to others appropriately.
Resource management	7. Experience of project co-ordination including: 7.1 time management 7.2 controlling expenditure 7.3 maintaining confidential information.
Physical Skills <i>(with DDA modification where necessary)</i>	8. Occasional light lifting of materials 9. Ability to travel
General knowledge	10. An understanding of and commitment to the principles of equality and democracy. 11. A Working knowledge of Employment Law. 12. An understanding of the role of trade unions and the social and political environment in which the union operates. 13. ICT packages including Microsoft Office suite.