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# Midlands News 01 **unionlearn**

with the Midlands TUC

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May 2015

## In this issue:

- Update from Project Workers Forum, April 15 in Nottingham
- New Learning Campaign Support Officer in Midlands and Yorkshire and Humber regions to promote the value of union learning
- Regional NARIC offer
- Supporting you to support your learners
- Dates for your diary
- And don't forget the unionlearn website [www.unionlearn.org.uk](http://www.unionlearn.org.uk)
- Contact Midlands unionlearn

## Update from Project Workers Forum

Project Workers in attendance included Unity, Communitas, Usdaw, BFAWU, RCM, Unison and URTU.

### Unionlearn update:

New unionlearn Midlands regional structure in place with Lisa Stones and Mick Brightman as Senior Union Support Officers, the role now includes ULF Projects support. New Learning Campaign Support Officer's role introduced to the region with main focus on promoting union learning.

### TU Ed update:

Derby College will not be offering trade union educational courses from September 2015. Two full time members of staff will be redundant from the end of May, with the co-ordinator covering the courses until the end of July.

### Stoke-on-Trent College

After forty years of trade union education, Stoke College have served notice that they intend to close the TU Ed unit and are currently in consultation according to their legal obligations. The TUC, along with the co-ordinator, are currently looking at ways to save the unit and maintain the TUC education at Stoke-on-Trent College. However, if this fails, discussions are taking place for another provider to take over the provision. This would mean that TUC education would still be delivered in Stoke area, hopefully by the same people but in a different



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Midlands Senior Union Support Officers

venue. Further meetings are arranged between the principal of the College, the TUC REO and the TUC National Education Officer.

### Solihull College

Notice was given from the college in late April with the intention of closing the Trade Union Education Unit on the 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2015.

The latest two closures are directly linked to the 17- 25% cut in the adult skills budget that was announced at the end of February. In fact both Stoke and Solihull colleges claim because of the structures the cut is closer to 32% of their adult skills budget.

Further changes of funding come into force from August 2015 and affect ULR training, the Level 2 awards and Level 3 diplomas will no longer exist. Colleges will be looking to join Part 1 and Part 2 to enable the ULR to achieve a new Level 2 certificate. This means that the ULRs will be required to commit to and attend both five day courses which would be spread over the academic year.

### Stress busting session

Lisa Stones and Mick Brightman delivered the session and explained how unionlearn could either support the Project Workers with delivery or to train ULRs to deliver it going forward.

### ULR Training and Development

There were concerns raised about the difficulties filling ULR courses, potentially compounded by the new funding restrictions, unions then shared their own union's approach to courses, where they are delivered and if other unions could potentially attend.

Unionlearn reassured the forum that we remain committed to offering support to ULRs and will continue with the ULR Forums in the region, PWs emphasised the need for a training element to be included in the forums to give a greater chance of release for ULRs and help ULR development. It was agreed to change the invitation and agenda to clearly demonstrate the training / development aspect. Also it was

agreed that stress busting and social media training would be in the next round of forums, the dates for which are:

- 16<sup>th</sup> June - Coventry, Koco Resource Centre, CV1 3JQ
- 17<sup>th</sup> June - Stoke, Unity the Union, ST1 2AB
- 18<sup>th</sup> June - Leicester, Alliance House, LE1 6AF
- 23<sup>rd</sup> June - Shrewsbury, TU Ed, SY2 6PR
- 25<sup>th</sup> June - Birmingham, Unison, B3 2PA
- 2<sup>nd</sup> July - Northampton, Community the Union, NN6 0HF
- 7<sup>th</sup> July - Derby, Unite the Union, DE24 8BX
- 8<sup>th</sup> July - Lincoln, Loudor Guest House, LN6 8RB
- 9<sup>th</sup> July - Nottingham, TU Ed, NG1 2LH

## Regional Naric offer

Unionlearn has a licence which enables team members and union's Project Workers the use of the UK NARIC databases of international education comparison.

UK NARIC is the National Agency providing the only official source of comparison information and advice on international education and training systems and overseas skills and qualifications.

Working with affiliates via the Union Learning Fund, unionlearn has delivered hundreds of qualification comparisons across Midlands workplaces and communities.

Since 2004 many people from all over Europe have settled within the Midlands bringing with them high levels of qualifications whilst undertaking less skilled jobs. Unionlearn Midlands team has for many years worked with new communities to enable workers to fulfil their economic potential. Various projects over the years have enabled many migrant workers to establish themselves in workplaces and utilise their potential across the region.

If you would like to find out more information or have access to one of the five unionlearn Naric licences please contact Midlands Senior Union Support Officers:

Lisa Stones [lstones@tuc.org.uk](mailto:lstones@tuc.org.uk) 07884 186083

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## New Learning Campaign Support Officer to promote the value of union learning

There were 3 three new Learning Campaign Support Officers appointed across the country in unionlearn, with Jurgita Pranculyte covering the Midlands and Yorkshire & Humber regions. For the last 10 years Jurgita Pranculyte had the privilege to work on various organising, learning and development projects and has met many inspiring and passionate people.

Jurgita's new role as a Learning Campaign Support Officer is to support unions and ULF projects in enhancing their promotional and communications work around union learning.

The main focus of the job will be to promote the great work that unions and ULF projects are doing in the region to create, encourage and support learning in the workplace.

This will best be achieved with your contribution of sharing good practice and success stories with wider audiences using social media channels such as websites, blogs, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

No success story is too small, if the union learning experience changes even one life, that is already an inspiring story in itself.

Union learning is making a positive impact on working people's lives every day and Learning Campaign Support Officer's job is to make sure that it's celebrated, heard and shared within wider audiences.

Share your success stories so the unionlearn team can bring them to a wider audience by writing about your:

Learning events and activities

Case studies

News stories

Courses

Individual stories

Please contact Jurgita Pranculyte [jpranculyte@tuc.org.uk](mailto:jpranculyte@tuc.org.uk), 07887 797148 to share the excellent work that you are doing and the positive impact that you are making in workplaces around the region.



## Supporting you to support your learners

ULRs are at the centre of workplace learning and staff development, giving colleagues the opportunity to realise their full potential. Unionlearn recognise the value of ULRs and will continue to provide development, training and information to encourage and support the growth and development of workers across the region. In previous years, unionlearn has used the ULR forums to maintain face to face contact with ULRs, empowering them to develop a strategic approach to learning. With the changing face of unionlearn, we recognise these face to face meetings as a strategically important part in the role we play in ULR development.

Building on the success of the ULR forums, we aim to introduce beneficial and relevant training elements to the day whilst retaining the opportunity for ULRs to network and share best practice. The development days offered across the Midlands region twice a year will have a common theme and agenda to harmonise the

## Midlands News 01

days, meaning ULRs can attend the venue which is most convenient to them.

For the full details for the ULR Development Day and booking form please contact  
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## Dates for your diary

Please see below the dates for all the ULR Stage 2 courses currently available in the Midlands. Unionlearn team would strongly encourage anyone waiting to do the training to sign up for one these courses as they can only go ahead if we reach the minimum number of 10 people.

### NOTTINGHAM:

Dates: 5 Mondays from 8 June 2015

Venue: Central College Nottingham, City Learning Centre, Norwich Union House, 8-12 South Parade, Nottingham NG1 2LH

### BIRMINGHAM:

Dates: 5 Fridays from 12 June 2015

Venue: South & City College, Birmingham Trade Union Education Centre, High Street, Deritend, Digbeth, Birmingham B5 5SU

### LEICESTER:

Dates: 5 Fridays from 26 June 2015

Venue: GMB, Alliance House, 6 Bishop Street, Leicester LE1 6AF

For the full details for the ULR Stage 2 courses and booking form please contact  
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And don't forget the unionlearn website

<http://www.tuc.unionlearn.org.uk/midlands>

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