

# UNISON

## Job Brief: Area Organiser

### Introduction

1. UNISON is Britain's largest public sector 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.

### Developmental

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

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

- **Organising:** Area organisers will work in and across branches to build recruitment 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. They will also undertake casework under supervision, advising, supporting and mentoring branch officers and stewards in representation and negotiation; providing help with case preparation and administration.
  - Organisations of 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.
  - **Representation:** Area Organisers support Regional Organisers and local activists in collective negotiations, researching relevant agreements and employers, writing up claims and 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 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 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, Area Organisers have a clear understanding of equalities and how to increase participation in a member based 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, organisation 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 annually reviewed in discussion with the area organiser to meet the needs of the organisation and services to branches and members.

## UNISON

### AREA ORGANISER REF: R4/86

#### JOB DESCRIPTION

Grade: 5

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

- Organising
  - Recruitment Planning and Campaigning
  - Recruitment in Greenfield and Infill sites
  - Membership Mapping across Branches
  - Organising and developing lay member organisation
  - 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 eg systems, communications, press releases, newsletters, websites and building local and media profile.
- Representation
  - Collective bargaining at workplace level that includes negotiating of
    - Shift rotas
    - Working Patterns
    - New working arrangements
    - 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.

## Area Organiser 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.

Heading	Selection criteria
<b>Thinking</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Experience of developing solutions to resolve problems including:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 analysing information and statistical data</li> <li>1.2 research including carrying out workplace mapping</li> <li>1.3 drafting action plans</li> <li>1.4 developing materials e.g. publicity</li> <li>1.5 developing campaign plans</li> <li>1.6 drafting statements of case.</li> </ol> </li>   <li>2. Learning and Development               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 ability to identify training needs of others</li> <li>2.2 can demonstrate continuous personal learning development.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<b>Interpersonal and Communi-cation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Experience of motivating people to participate in activities including:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 making presentations</li> <li>3.2 influencing outcomes at meetings</li> <li>3.3 mentoring and coaching</li> <li>3.4 writing newsletters, leaflets etc.</li> </ol> </li>   <li>4. Experience of giving advice and representing members including:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.1 conciliation skills to resolve disagreements</li> <li>4.2 responding effectively to people who are angry or upset</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. Experience of effective team working.</li> </ol>
<b>Initiative and Independence</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Experience of prioritising own workload including:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6.1 decision making within guidelines</li> <li>6.2 following policies and procedures</li> <li>6.3 devolving work to others appropriately.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

<b>Resource management</b>	<p>7. Experience of project co-ordination including:</p> <p>7.1 time management  7.2 controlling expenditure  7.3 maintaining confidential information.</p>
<b>Physical Skills</b> <i>(with DDA modification where necessary)</i>	<p>8. Occasional light lifting of materials</p> <p>9. Ability to travel</p>
<b>General knowledge</b>	<p>10. An understanding of and commitment to the principles of equality and democracy.</p> <p>11. A Working knowledge of Employment Law.</p> <p>12. An understanding of the role of trade unions and the social and political environment in which the union operates.</p> <p>13. ICT packages including Microsoft Office suite.</p>

[http://teams.unison.org.uk/departments/OSD/HRMAN/Pay and Grading/Job Brief, JD and PS AO FINAL MARCH 2011.doc](http://teams.unison.org.uk/departments/OSD/HRMAN/Pay%20and%20Grading/Job%20Brief,%20JD%20and%20PS%20AO%20FINAL%20MARCH%202011.doc)