

UNISON
POLICY & BARGAINING SUPPORT ORGANISER
NORTHERN IRELAND REGION
REF: R5/37T

JOB BRIEF

UNISON is the UK's leading 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. The Northern Ireland Region has over 45,000 members working primarily in health, social care, education and the community & voluntary sectors.

This is a key post in the UNISON NI staff team. The post holder will work with the Regional Management Team helping to meet the aims and objectives of UNISON Northern Ireland.

UNISON is committed to improving the working lives of its members and securing equality and rights for their families and communities. This role is at the heart of our mission - helping to develop and support the research, policy interventions and projects that will enable us to meet our objectives.

The role

Working with the Regional Management Team and Policy Officer in Northern Ireland your role will involve undertaking research, policy and project work in accordance with the Regional Plan. This translates into a wide range of activity supporting the union internally and externally. It involves work with the senior team, the whole staff team, senior union activists and, where appropriate, direct assistance to branches. The post will play an important role in developing UNISON data bases to assist the wider staff team and lay structures and requires excellent research and communication skills.

To expand on the information contained in the job description and person specification we set out below some of the key functions of this post as it currently operates in UNISON Northern Ireland. Functions include:

- supporting both national and regional UNISON policy and bargaining objectives, including from an equality and human rights perspective;
- drafting responses to NI Government and, where appropriate, UK and international, consultation documents, calls for evidence and draft legislation - with a particular emphasis on equality and human rights - and disseminating a concise summary of UNISON's responses through the activist base to relevant external organisations and, where appropriate, through the media;
- supporting UNISON's democratic structures, including providing briefings for branch and regional delegations to UNISON and wider trade union conferences and providing regular updates for UNISON NI Regional Committee and Regional Council;
- contributing to the development of key UNISON policy across all our objectives and providing staff, activists and branches with concise, accessible guidance;
- liaising with employers and external organisations, political parties and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions as appropriate;
- liaising with UNISON HQ and, in particular, UNISON's Policy Department as appropriate;
- keeping the UNISON team updated on relevant developments in EU, ETUC, ILO, UN treaty monitoring bodies and wider programmes, policy and legislation as it affects membership and public services in Northern Ireland;
- undertaking lobbying and advocacy as and when appropriate;
- contributing to the co-ordination of UNISON NI strategies on equality and human rights across our organising, bargaining and campaigning objectives and programmes of work;
- working with our wide range of allies and partners in the equality and human rights field;
- assisting with developing UNISON NI's unique partnership programme – designed to improve service delivery and the working lives of UNISON members;
- supporting UNISON's recruitment, organising, bargaining and campaign activities;
- engaging with the print and broadcast media as appropriate.

UNISON's Aims

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, 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.

Working Time

While the Policy & Bargaining Support Organiser post can be a demanding position, requiring some attendance at meetings outside of the conventional working day, UNISON is a strong supporter of the work/life balance ethos and has a cross union flexible working policy. Post holders will therefore prioritise their working arrangements in such a way as to demonstrate by example their personal commitment to these aims.

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JOB DESCRIPTION

Grade: 5
Hours: 35 per week
Location: Belfast Office
Reports to: Policy Officer

Overall Summary

The role of the Policy Support Organiser is to assist in the development of policy advice to UNISON's lay member structure, support negotiating initiatives with employers, and to participate in campaigning activities. They will provide administrative and related support to the RMT and service lay member structure as appropriate.

Key Tasks and Responsibilities

This is a generic post and the duties will be drawn from the job brief and the following:

Policy support

- Researching and preparing draft papers and reports for the lay members structure or for submission to employers and outside organisations.
- Drafting survey questionnaires, assisting as appropriate in their distribution, and analysing results.
- Undertaking statistical analysis as may be required, using electronic IT systems where appropriate.
- Preparing relevant circulars, bulletins and other publicity material for the region, branches or members.
- Assisting with the development and provision of information and advice to the region and branches.
- Assisting with the development and organisation of policy campaigns and related activities.

Organisational, communication and research

- Assisting with the co-ordination of regional recruitment, organising, bargaining and campaign activities and undertaking appropriate work, as may be required.
- Assisting in the development and organising of physical and virtual meetings, seminars and conferences.
- Liaising with appropriate staff and lay representatives.
- Liaising with employer organisations and other outside bodies or individuals as required
- Using electronic IT systems, e.g. e-mail, social media and websites to communicate with other external organisations, individuals and the general public.
- Contributing content for the relevant sections of UNISON's website and social media.
- Engaging with the print and broadcast media as appropriate.

Administrative

- Preparing reports, agendas and minutes and undertaking executive action following meetings, as appropriate.
- Maintaining appropriate files and storage of records/information and retrieval systems, using electronic IT systems where appropriate in line with the union's procedures.
- Organising meetings. internally and externally. with a wide range of relevant bodies.
- Preparing reports, and other materials, for the Regional Management Team.

General/Other

- Any other duties relevant to the overall responsibilities of the post
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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
1. Thinking	<p>1.1 Experience of developing solutions to resolve problems including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analysing information and statistical data; • research; • drafting action plans; • providing policy advice and interpretation; • considering ways of progressing action through meetings; • developing campaigns. <p>1.2 Learning and Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can demonstrate continuous personal learning and development.
2. Interpersonal and Communication	<p>2.1 Excellent communication skills including ability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to communicate effectively in range of formats and circumstances; • to contribute to discussions at meetings; • to facilitate meetings; • to write speeches, produce reports, bulletins etc. • to work effectively with branches, regions and other departments. <p>2.2 Experience of effective Team working</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working effectively with other staff, lay reps and external organisations
3. Initiative and Independence	<p>3.1 Experience of prioritising own workload including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decision making within guidelines • following policies and procedures • devolving work to others appropriately

4. Resource management	<p>4.1 Experience of Project co-ordination including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time management; • controlling expenditure; • maintaining confidential information.
5. Physical Skills <i>(with DDA modification where necessary)</i>	<p>5.1 Keyboard skills</p> <p>5.2 Occasional light lifting of materials</p> <p>5.3 Ability to travel</p>
6. General knowledge	<p>6.1 An understanding of and commitment to the principles of equality and democracy.</p> <p>6.2 An understanding of the role of trade unions and the social and political environment in which the union operates.</p> <p>6.3 Knowledge and understanding of the Peace Process, devolved Government in Northern Ireland, and related agreements, policy, strategies and legislation.</p> <p>6.4 Ability to recognise the political dimension of issues both in terms of UNISON's structures/policies, those of other unions and employers with whom UNISON deals.,</p> <p>6.5 Understanding of UNISON's policies and procedures or demonstrable capacity to develop such understanding based upon previous experience and/or interests.</p> <p>6.6 ICT packages including Microsoft Office suite</p>

Other Information

Please send your completed application form together with the NI Equality Monitoring Form to Michele Bradford - m.bradford@unison.co.uk quoting ref: R5/37T

The closing date for applications is 2nd June 2021