

# 2023 National Disabled Members' Conference Bulletin

May 2023

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This bulletin contains the timetable for 2023 Disabled Members' Conference

**Please note that both motions and delegations can only be submitted online. However, the Conference Guide will be printed and sent to all delegates in advance, as in previous years. There are no paper forms for registration.**

**UNISON's Disabled Members Conference 2023 will be held at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre, starting at 1:00pm on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October ending 12:45pm on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October.**

Edinburgh International Conference Centre  
The Exchange,  
150 Morrison St,  
Edinburgh,  
EH3 8EE  
Tel: 0131 300 3000

Web: <https://www.eicc.co.uk/>

## Timetable

Deadline for Submission of Motions	5.00pm	Friday, 07 July 2023
Deadline for Submission of Amendments to Standing Orders	5.00pm	Friday, 07 July 2023
Deadline for Submission of Amendments to NDMC Constitution	5.00pm	Friday, 07 July 2023
Publication of Preliminary Agenda		Friday, 28 July 2023
Deadline for Submission of Delegates	12.00pm	Thursday, 03 August 2023
Deadline for online Creche and Babysitting requests	12.00pm	Thursday, 10 August 2023
Deadline for online Reasonable Adjustment requests for access	4.00pm	Thursday, 17 August 2023
Deadline for Submission of Amendments	5.00pm	Friday, 01 September 2023
Publication of Final Agenda		Friday, 22 September 2023
Deadline for reasonable adjustment requests for travel	12.00pm	Friday, 13 October 2023
Deadline for nominations	5.00pm	Friday, 20 October 2023
Deadline for Emergency Motions	5.00pm	Friday, 20 October 2023
Deadline for Submitting Change of Delegates on the OCS	11.59pm	Wednesday, 25 October 2023

Enclosed with this Conference Bulletin, and also available on the UNISON website at <https://www.unison.org.uk/events/2023-ndmc/> are:

- Standing orders for National Disabled Members' Conference
- Advice from the Standing Orders Committee - **this gives you advice on the submission of motions and amendments. The SOC recommends that you read this information before drafting the text for motions or amendments**
- National Disabled Members' Committee Constitution

**There are NO paper forms for motion or delegation submission, including requesting reasonable adjustments. You must use the Online Conference System (OCS) instead. See next section for full information.**

## Information on how to submit motions and delegations using UNISON's Online Conference System (OCS)

**Which branch officers can use the OCS?** Motions can be submitted at branch level by the Branch Secretary, the branch Equal Opps Officer or the Branch Disabled Members' Secretary. Branch employed staff are also able to enter motions but do not have authority to submit them on behalf of a branch. Delegates can be submitted at branch level by either the Branch Secretary or the Branch Chair.

At regional level, the regional secretary is authorised to submit the motion/delegation, with the regional convenors receiving an instant e-mail copy. This process is replicated at national level for national bodies and their relevant chairs and secretaries.

**Which members can use the OCS?** When a member is registered as a delegate to a conference, they will receive an e-mail informing them of this as long as their e-mail address is listed on the RMS. They can then also access the OCS to make online requests for services such as reasonable adjustments, crèche places and babysitting, which should be made by the stated deadline.

**How will these people access the OCS?** Users access the OCS via the UNISON website at [www.unison.org.uk](http://www.unison.org.uk) and clicking on 'My UNISON' - which is located at the top of the front page. Using your UNISON membership number and surname, register once and you will be issued with a password. For subsequent access, simply click on 'My UNISON' and then 'Sign-in now' and you will need your membership number and the password you were issued. Branch employed staff should call their regional contact.

**What if the correct branch people have accessed 'My UNISON' but then cannot access the OCS?** Key to accessing the OCS is ensuring that the data held on UNISON's membership system, the RMS, is correct. It records which members hold the key positions of Branch Secretary and Branch Chair. If this information is incorrect, or if it changes, the branch needs to ensure that the RMS records are updated immediately. Then the individual should call their regional contact.

**What else needs to happen?** It will help the system to function if these key branch people also have an e-mail address stored on their RMS records. Please contact your branch or regional RMS team urgently, to make this happen. Each delegate within a delegation should also have their date of birth stored on the RMS.

**Delegates and Visitors to Conference:** It is important that we collect e-mail addresses for those disabled members wishing to participate in any way in the conference. The e-mail address can be any one that you have easy access to e.g. your personal e-mail, branch e-mail or that of a friend or relative.

- If you already have an e-mail address and access to the UNISON website, the quickest way to update your details is to go to the UNISON website and click on the Update Your Details box – you will need your UNISON membership number.
- If you don't have an e-mail address or don't have access to the UNISON webpage, you can contact UNISONdirect on 0800 0857 857 and provide them with the details of your preferred e-mail address to update your UNISON Membership records – you will need your UNISON membership number.
- Or, you can contact your local UNISON branch and provide them with the details of your preferred e-mail address to update your UNISON membership records – you will need your UNISON membership number.

**Key contacts:**

If you have a 'My UNISON' registration issue: UNISONdirect on 0800 0857 857

If you have an OCS issue, please contact your relevant regional contact:

Listed below are the Conference contacts for each region, who can also assist with online conference registration:

Region	Contact	Tel	E-mail
Eastern	Amanda Tickner	01245 608909	<a href="mailto:a.tickner@unison.co.uk">a.tickner@unison.co.uk</a>
East Midlands	Colleen Forrest (Tues & Fri only)	0115 847 5468	<a href="mailto:eastmidlandsadminteam@unison.co.uk">eastmidlandsadminteam@unison.co.uk</a>
	Wendie Taylor	0115 847 5415	
	Jennifer Rimmer	07545660750	
	Donna Franklin	0115 8475 5414	
	Admin team	0115 847 5435	
Greater London	Shelley Davey	0207 535 6648	<a href="mailto:glrconference@unison.co.uk">glrconference@unison.co.uk</a>
	Lorraine Tant		
	Cally Thompson		
Northern	Allison Jackson	0191 245 0805	<a href="mailto:a.jackson2@unison.co.uk">a.jackson2@unison.co.uk</a>
	Catherine Davison	01912450830	<a href="mailto:c.davison@unison.co.uk">c.davison@unison.co.uk</a>
Northern Ireland	Elizabeth Robinson	02890 270190	<a href="mailto:e.robinson@unison.co.uk">e.robinson@unison.co.uk</a>
North West	Kim Scott	0161 661 6777	<a href="mailto:k.scott@unison.co.uk">k.scott@unison.co.uk</a>
	Gillian Gorman	0161 661 6743	<a href="mailto:g.gorman@unison.co.uk">g.gorman@unison.co.uk</a>
Scotland	Rosaleen Rodgers	0141 342 2816	<a href="mailto:r.rodgers@unison.co.uk">r.rodgers@unison.co.uk</a>
	Jean Fraser	0141 342 2880	<a href="mailto:j.fraser@unison.co.uk">j.fraser@unison.co.uk</a>
South East	Claire Harvey	07545660341	<a href="mailto:communicationsteam@unison.co.uk">communicationsteam@unison.co.uk</a>
South West	Jenn Gollings (Mon – Thurs only)	01823 285336	<a href="mailto:j.gollings@unison.co.uk">j.gollings@unison.co.uk</a>
Cymru/Wales	Beverley Powell	02920 729475	<a href="mailto:b.powell@unison.co.uk">b.powell@unison.co.uk</a>
West Midlands	Claire Kenny	0121 685 3174	<a href="mailto:c.kenny@unison.co.uk">c.kenny@unison.co.uk</a>
	Kate Walker	0121 685 3164	<a href="mailto:k.walker@unison.co.uk">k.walker@unison.co.uk</a>
Yorkshire & Humberside	Joanne Turnbull	01132182322	<a href="mailto:j.turnbull@unison.co.uk">j.turnbull@unison.co.uk</a>
	Laraine Senior	01132182333	<a href="mailto:l.senior@unison.co.uk">l.senior@unison.co.uk</a>

## **Branch Representation**

Each branch may send ten delegates to the conference. All delegates must self identify as disabled.

## **National and Regional Representation**

The following bodies are eligible to send two delegates (at least one of whom must be female): Regional Disabled Members' Groups, National Black Members' SOG, National Women's SOG, National LGBT+ SOG, National Young Members' Forum and National Retired Members' Organisation.

Business submitted for the Conference may only be moved by a delegate from the submitting body. Therefore if your branch or regional disabled members' group submits motions, amendments and amendments to Standing Orders or the Constitution, please ensure you send a delegate to move these items.

Branches and regions are particularly encouraged to plan meetings of disabled members' groups in accordance with the conference schedule to allow their delegates to be better informed of the conference procedures. Regions are also encouraged to hold training sessions on the procedures for conference in advance of conference, this should help increase members participation at the event as well as provide a valuable opportunity for delegates to network on broader organising issues

Regional meetings will be timetabled into the conference programme for 2023. Regional groups are also advised to consider designating one or two of its delegation to act as liaison representatives between regional and branch delegates.

## **Funding of Places**

Branches or regions are responsible for providing funding for their delegates to national self-organised conferences to cover accommodation, subsistence, to meet the costs of dependent care (including babysitting whilst at Conference) and personal assistance costs. Only travel costs will be reimbursed to branches and regions from central funds.

Branches are reminded that they should consider their funding arrangements when determining the number of delegates they are sponsoring to this event. Branches may apply for additional funding from the region to meet the cost of access needs associated with sponsorship to this event, contact your regional officer for further advice. Additional national funding for branches with identified exceptional circumstances may be available to support the attendance of disabled delegates at this event if the branch is at risk of suffering financial difficulties; application should be made in writing to the Finance Officer. Further advice about applying for additional funding is available from Tim Bertuchi on 020 7121 5467.

**Late delegate registrations will not be accepted. There will be no exceptions to this.**

## **Proportionality and Fair Representation**

In line with all other UNISON conferences, the principles of proportionality and fair representation contained in the NEC's Scheme of Branch Representation will be applied to encourage participation of groups such as young and low paid members in particular.

In response to the concerns raised by branches in seeking to fulfil the requirements of proportionality and fair representation, the National Self-Organised Group has changed the thresholds for the low paid female seat and young member seat for this conference.

The 4th seat must be a low paid female  
The 5th seat must be a young member.  
If these seats are not filled, no further delegates may be submitted.

The OCS will not flag up this requirement at the start of the registration process, but will make checks before the delegation is submitted.

We will review the impact this has on branches' ability to send delegations.

- 1) The gender make up of the delegation must be based on the gender make up of the branch.
- 2) If the delegation only comprises one full delegate, then this delegate may be male or female.
- 3) Branches sending 4 delegates must include one low paid female member in the delegation.
- 4) Branches sending 5 delegates must include one young member in the delegation (i.e. age 26 or under at end of conference)

### **Transgender members**

UNISON applies strict rules on proportionality in branch conference delegations, to ensure proper representation of women. Members who are in the process of transitioning gender may not yet have changed their UNISON membership details. For example a member may wish to attend Disabled Members' Conference as a woman, but still be attending work as a man. Members will be registered for Disabled Members' Conference as the gender in which they will attend the Conference, irrespective of their gender recorded on the RMS.

To ensure that branch delegations including transgender members are not rejected on the grounds of proportionality, please contact the Conference Office on 020 7121 5123 with information on any online delegate submissions which include members attending conference in a different gender to that recorded on the RMS. Their confidentiality will be respected at conference.

### **Fitness to Attend Conference**

With the introduction of Fitness to Work, sick notes are slightly different now. Members who are off sick from work may have an illness/condition which means they can't perform some tasks but can perform others. They may have a fitness to work certificate which means they return to work with certain caveats – e.g. places limits on the types of tasks they can perform at work and duration.

So if a member is not at work and off sick and wants to attend the Disabled Members' Conference they need to ask for a note from their GP indicating they are fit to attend the conference (travel/sitting for long periods). We also advise them to get a note from their employer agreeing to their attendance at conference, as this may be a different activity from those at work which they are not able to do.

Members should send a copy of the Fitness to Attend note to the Conference Team in advance of the conference. This information will be treated with confidentiality.

### **My Requirements \*\*\*IMPORTANT INFORMATION\*\*\***

From now on, requesting 'Extras' such as Reasonable Adjustments or Facilitators on the Online Conference System (OCS) can only be done by the registered delegate themselves. Once a delegate is registered, the OCS will automatically send out an e-mail to the person with a web link which they can click on to access the OCS and input the Extras they require. For any

assistance, please contact your regional conference contact from the list in this bulletin, this can be found on page 4.

### **Reasonable Adjustments**

UNISON aims to provide a fully accessible event to disabled members in accordance with our duties under the Equality Act. Requests for reasonable adjustments must be submitted by **4pm, Thursday, 17 August 2023**.

For any reasonable adjustments required, please complete the request online by the stated deadline. Authorisation for personal assistance/facilitation is required from your Branch Secretary that this expenditure will be approved.

**Please remember that BSL Interpreters will only be available if requested in advance.**

While we work within the context of the social model of disability this does not mean that UNISON can automatically provide all resources that are requested as adjustments. We have to consider the finite resources available both in terms of space and finances in order that we can balance our commitment to the social model with the resources available, and channel them to where they are needed most.

Members requesting seating, tables, footrests, which impact on the space available on the floor of conference, will be asked what barriers they face that require this adjustment for their participation.

While not requesting detailed personal information, UNISON will require sufficient information in order to understand the barriers faced to get the right resources to the right people for this Conference. This will assist us in making adjustments that are meaningful and appropriate to the individual.

The union will determine the allocation of limited resources. If necessary, this may include reserving the right to seek additional information.

We will apply a necessary cut off point for requests, as close as possible to the conference while not impacting on the requirements to produce regional seating plans in good time for advance circulation. The deadline is **4pm, Thursday, 17 August 2023**. We will retain a limited ability to respond to unexpected circumstances that affect a delegate at short notice prior to the conference.

### **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)**

If a delegate or visitor from your branch requires a PEEP for the conference venue, please ask them to indicate this with their online request.

### **Crèche and Babysitting**

Please note that crèche provision is available **for delegates only** for children up to and including the age of 16 years. Arrangements have been made for Nipperbout, the company contracted to provide crèche facilities at all UNISON national conferences, to provide babysitting. Should you require this service please complete the online request by **12pm, Thursday, 10 August 2023**. Delegates are reminded that the cost for babysitting is borne by the branch so authorisation is required from your branch secretary that this expenditure will be approved.

## **Please help us to help the environment**

We're doing our best to reduce the environmental impact of our conferences. This year, we are providing all delegates with the chance to opt out of being sent paper copies of our conference materials as part of the delegates' despatch. All these documents will be available online via the conference app, and on the UNISON website. You can then download them onto your laptop or tablet to view online while you are at conference. If you wish to opt out please indicate this on the 'Extras' screen options on the Online Conference System (OCS). If you do not opt out, you will be sent all documentation in hard copy form.

## **Visitors**

Branches can also apply for visitor places, subject to availability, on a first come, first served basis. The National Disabled Members Committee has agreed that UNISON visitors can attend all sessions of conference, which includes service group meetings and caucus meetings. UNISON visitors should only attend the service group meeting which applies to their membership i.e. local government members should attend the local government meeting and Caucus meetings where they identify with that group. Non UNISON visitors can only attend the main conference plenary sessions. All visitors have no speaking or voting rights during all sessions of conference.

## **Change of Delegate**

Branches may change delegates up to the start of Conference. A member registering as a substitute branch delegate must have been eligible to represent the branch at the closing date for registration of delegates on **Thursday, 03 August 2023**. Any changes must be in accordance with the scheme of branch representation.

After **11.59pm, Wednesday, 25 October 2023**, no more changes can be made on OCS. If a branch needs to make an emergency change to its delegation after this date, then an 'Emergency Change of Delegate Form' will need to be completed. This form will be available on the UNISON website from **Thursday, 26 October 2023** and will also be available at the conference desk.

## **Travel Arrangements**

Please consider the impact on the environment when making your decision on how to travel to Conference.

Branches are asked to book all travel arrangements for Conference through Stewart Corporate Travel via email at [unison@stewarttravelmanagement.com](mailto:unison@stewarttravelmanagement.com) or call [0800 091 4272](tel:08000914272). Please advise Stewart Corporate Travel if your delegates have railcards.

Branches are reminded that:

- Travel costs for **Delegates only** will be funded from National Office
- Travel costs for **Visitors** must be paid for by the branch. Please note that a booking fee is applicable – further details from Stewart Corporate Travel.

Conference Travel should be booked by the cheapest possible means.

Driving is discouraged for conference unless delegates are travelling together or as a reasonable adjustment. Total reclaimable will be the cost of standard tickets or cost of car travel – whichever is the lesser.



The 250 mile / upgraded or 1st Class travel rule is not applicable for conference travel

All travel requests (including upgraded or 1st Class Travel) as a reasonable adjustment must be reviewed and authorised by the Head of Conferences.

**Reasonable adjustment requests for travel should be made by 12pm Friday, 13 October 2023**

### **Accommodation**

Booking accommodation – please book any accommodation required with a reputable provider with a generous cancellation policy.

**Please ensure that members have** written confirmation of any booked and paid for accommodation

### **Prepaid Cards**

Union Income Ltd have agreed to provide a corporate version of its prepaid card still with the UNISON branding. If your branch requires a prepaid card then this is the card that is the preferred option above others generally available.

An application will normally take about 14 working days to turnaround and you can request an information pack and application form by contacting:

UNISON Prepaid Plus Customer Services, 39-51 Highgate Road. London NW5 1RT or email [customerservices@unisonprepaid.com](mailto:customerservices@unisonprepaid.com)

### **Credit Cards**

If your branch does not specifically require a prepaid card the other best option is a credit card from Unity Trust Bank called Unity Corporate MultiPay Card. It is more flexible and is linked to branch current account. Details of the Corporate MultiPay card and further information on how to apply are available from their website at [www.unity.co.uk/multipay](http://www.unity.co.uk/multipay). To help branches switch to this Unity Trust credit card, the bank has agreed to waive the one off administration fee of £50 for all current ALTO card customers who apply for a Multipay card.

### **Caucus Group Involvement - Network meetings**

UNISON campaigns to ensure the voices of under-represented groups are heard in society and within our union. Within our disabled members groups we have found that Women, Black and LGBT+ disabled members and Deaf (BSL) members are under-represented and experience particular barriers to access. These national meetings are therefore an excellent opportunity for disabled members from these underrepresented groups to identify motions to submit to national disabled members conference and to organise and network.

There are four caucus groups as follows:

Black disabled members

Women disabled members

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender plus (LGBT+) disabled members

Deaf (BSL users) members

The network meetings are free events with travel and accommodation paid for nationally and the meetings are open to all disabled members who identify as from one of these under-represented groups.

Travel should be booked via Stewart Travel using standard fare – and must be booked well in advance to avoid expensive fares.

All meetings are being held at the **UNISON Centre, 130 Euston Road, London, NW1 2AY**

**The dates and times for the 2023 Meetings are shown below:**

**Meeting to consider the submission of up to three motions**

- Wednesday 21 June 2023, 11am-1.30pm – disabled Deaf (BSL)
- Wednesday 21 June 2023, 2pm-4.30pm – members disabled LGBT+ members
- Thursday 22 June 2023, 11am-1.30pm – disabled women members
- Thursday 22 June 2023, 2pm-4.30pm – disabled Black members

**The deadline to register for meetings is: Friday 2 June 2023.**

**Meeting to consider the submission of amendments to motions**

- Wednesday 9 August 2023, 11am-1.30pm – disabled Black members
- Wednesday 9 August 2023, 2pm-4.30pm – disabled women members
- Thursday 10 August 2023, 11am-1.30pm – disabled LGBT+ members
- Thursday 10 August 2023, 2pm-4.30pm – disabled Deaf (BSL) members

**The deadline to register for meetings is: Friday 21 July 2023.**

**To register for a caucus network meeting please contact Anne Pickard on 0207 121 5517 or email [disabilityissues@unison.co.uk](mailto:disabilityissues@unison.co.uk)**

**Motions, Amendments to Standing Orders, Amendments to NDMC Constitution**

Motions to the National Disabled Members' Conference guide the work of the National Disabled Members' Committee and influence regional and branch disabled members' groups over the forthcoming year.

A maximum of three motions are invited from National Disabled Members' Committee, Regional Disabled Members' Groups, Branch Disabled Members' Groups, and National Caucus Groups. This includes motions to amend Standing Orders and motions to amend the national Disabled Members' committee Constitution.

There is no limit to the number of amendments or emergency motions that can be submitted online by each of the above bodies.

A maximum of two motions and two amendments are invited from National Young Members Forum, in line with rule D.6.2.2

There is no limit to the number of emergency motions that can be submitted by any of the above bodies.

Please refer to the advice from the Standing Orders Committee about submission of motions, enclosed with this Conference Bulletin.

The Preliminary Agenda will be published online on **Friday, 28 July 2023**. The Final Agenda will be published online on **Friday, 22 September 2023**.

**Elections**

The following elections take place during the National Disabled Members' Conference:

- (i) Two delegates to attend each Service Group Conference.
- (ii) Two delegates to attend National Delegate Conference.
- (iii) One delegate to attend National Delegate Conference 2024 as the National Disabled Members' Newssheet Team representative.
- (iv) Four members to serve on the National Disabled Members' Conference Standing Orders Committee for 2024 National Disabled Members' Conference.
- (v) One delegate to attend Trades Union Congress 2024.
- (vi) Two delegates to attend the Labour Link Forum and Labour Party Conference (conditions apply).

The deadline for receipt of nominations for these positions is **20 October 2023** and nomination forms are available online.

### **Order of Business and Prioritisation**

In line with previous years the order of business will be based on a prioritisation process. After the preliminary agenda has been published, all regions, national caucuses and the National Disabled Members Committee will receive an email from OCS. The email will ask these groups to detail, in order of preference, those motions from the final agenda that they consider should be given priority for debate at conference. Individual members can take part in this process by attending the relevant regional or caucus meeting. The deadline for submission of priorities is **1<sup>st</sup> September 2023**.

### **Official Collections at Conference**

This year the Standing Orders Committee has set a deadline of **5.00pm on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2023** for it to be advised of requests for organisations/campaigns to be included in any official collection at Conference.

### **Data Protection**

The information you provide via the OCS, in addition to your information held on UNISON's membership database, will be used for the organisation and administration of Conference. It may also be used for statistical purposes as this helps us plan future conferences. We will process your personal data in compliance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR). You can find out more about how UNISON processes your personal data by going to [unison.org.uk/privacy-policy](http://unison.org.uk/privacy-policy) or emailing [dataprotection@unison.co.uk](mailto:dataprotection@unison.co.uk).

## **NATIONAL DISABLED MEMBERS COMMITTEE (NDMC) CONSTITUTION**

i) Membership of the Committee shall consist of:

two delegates elected from their Regional Disabled Members' Group;

three National Executive Council(NEC) members, two of whom must be the disabled members seat holders;

two co-opted members from the National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Plus Committee;

two co-opted members from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Plus caucus at Disabled Members' Conference;

two co-opted members from the National Women's Committee;

two co-opted members from National Black Members' Committee;

two co-opted members from the Black members' caucus at Disabled Members' Conference;

two co-opted members from the Deaf native British Sign Language (BSL) users caucus at National Disabled Members Conference.

All members of the committee shall be entitled to vote.

At least half of the members elected from each of the above constituencies must be a woman.

A post of a delegate can be job-shared but only one of that job-share team will be funded nationally to attend any meeting. If both job-share delegates attend a meeting, both will have speaking rights but only one will have voting rights.

- iii) UNISON's National Disabled Members' Officer and other UNISON staff attend to support and service the Committee with speaking but non-voting rights.
- iv) The Committee can set up working groups to undertake specific areas of work relating to its work programme.
- v) Convenors of the Committee's working groups will be agreed by the members of the Committee.
- vi) The Committee shall meet formally four times a year, including a meeting for a policy weekend, with provision for extraordinary meetings if business requires it.
- vii) Officer positions within the Committee shall be two Co-Chairs, at least one of whom must be a woman and two Co-Deputy Chairs, at least one of whom must be a woman. As set out in iv) the committee can appoint members of NDMC for specific areas of responsibility aligned to the NDMC work programme.
- viii) Caucus Groups will be able to appoint a liaison representative on behalf of the committee for:

Black Members

Deaf (BSL) Members

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Plus Members

Women Members

Labour Link

All of whom will be accountable to the full committee.

Caucus network meetings for Black members, Deaf (BSL) members, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Plus members and Women members will be held in accordance with standing orders SO3, 3.1 and 3.4 to enable greater participation of underrepresented groups and to enable submission of caucus motions and amendments

- ix) The officers will be elected at the first meeting of the NDMC following Disabled Members Conference. Where the position is contested there will be a secret ballot.
- x) No person can hold the same officer post for more than two consecutive years, but can put their name forward for the same post after a year's break. Any member leaving a post after two years can put their name forward for election to any other officer post.
- xi) Quorum for the meetings shall be 33 per cent of the Committee membership.
- xii) The National Disabled Members' Committee Constitution may only be amended by a formal amendment agreed at National Disabled Members Conference by two-thirds of the delegates present and voting.

# STANDING ORDERS FOR NATIONAL DISABLED MEMBERS CONFERENCE

## SO1 Standing Orders

- 1.1 Standing Orders are the rules which say how conference must be run. They provide every delegate with an equal opportunity to contribute.
- 1.2 These Standing Orders are agreed by the National Disabled Members Conference.
- 1.3 Where these Standing Orders are silent on any issue, practice at National Delegate Conference will prevail.
- 1.4 These Standing Orders may only be amended by a formal amendment to Standing Orders agreed at National Disabled Members Conference by two-thirds of the delegates present and voting.

## SO2 Standing Orders Committee

- 2.1 The Standing Orders Committee will be made up of:
  - 1 Four members elected, by ballot if required, (as stated in SO15.1.1) at the National Disabled Members' Conference;
  - 2 two members elected by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Plus (LGBT+) Caucus;
  - 3 two members elected by the Black Members' Caucus.

At least half the members elected from each of the above constituencies must be women.
- 2.2 The Committee will be advised by a UNISON staff member, who shall be the Committee secretary.
- 2.3 The members of the Standing Orders Committee shall hold office from the end of one National Disabled Members Conference until the end of the next National Disabled Members Conference.
- 2.4 At its first meeting after it takes office, the Committee shall elect a Chairperson and a Deputy Chairperson from amongst its members, at least one of whom shall be a woman.
- 2.5 The functions of the Committee shall, subject to these Standing Orders, be to:
  - 2.5.1 ensure that the National Disabled Members Conference Standing Orders are observed, and notify the Chairperson of any violation that may be brought to the Committee's notice;
  - 2.5.2 draw up the preliminary agenda and final agenda of Conference business, and the proposed hours of business, to be circulated in accordance with a timetable published in the official Conference bulletin;
  - 2.5.3 determine the order in which the business of Conference shall be conducted, subject to the approval of Conference.
  - 2.5.4 consider all motions and amendments submitted for consideration by Conference and, for the purpose of enabling Conference to transact its business effectively the Committee shall:

- 1 decide whether such motions and amendments have been submitted in accordance with the Standing Orders;
- 2 group together motions and amendments relating to the same subject, decide the order in which they should be considered and whether they should be debated and voted on separately or debated together and voted on sequentially;
- 3 prepare and revise, in consultation with the movers of motions and amendments, composite motions in terms which, in the opinion of the Committee, best express the subject of such motions and amendments;
- 4 refer to another representative body within the Union a motion or amendment which in the opinion of the Committee should properly be considered there; the mover shall be informed of the reason for so doing;
- 5 have power to do all such other things as may be necessary to give effect to these Standing Orders.

2.5.5 Any decisions of the Committee which are to be reported to Conference shall be announced by the Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson of the Committee and shall be subject to ratification by Conference. Any section of part of section of the Standing Orders Committee Report can either be accepted or referred back.

2.5.6 Members of the Standing Orders Committee shall take no other part in the conduct of Conference.

### SO3 Motions and Amendments Pre-Conference

3.1 Motions, amendments and other appropriate business may be proposed for the Conference by properly-constituted meetings of the following:

Branch Disabled Members Groups

Regional Disabled Members Groups

National Disabled Members Committee

National Disabled Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Plus (LGBT+) Caucus

National Disabled Black Members' Caucus

National Disabled Women's Caucus

National Deaf (native British Sign Language Users) Caucus

National Young Members Forum

3.2 Each of the above bodies may submit up to 3 motions, with no limit on the number of amendments that may be submitted, except for the National Young Members Forum which may submit up to 2 motions and up to 2 amendments (as per Rule D6.2.2).

3.3 Motions and amendments shall be submitted in accordance with the timetable and by the method specified in the official conference bulletin.

3.4 The caucus groups set out in SO.3.1 shall be entitled to meet in accordance with the National Disabled Members' Conference timetable to submit motions and amendments of concern to their respective member groups.

### SO4 Attending, speaking and voting at Conference

4.1 Only branch disabled delegates are entitled to speak and vote in debates at conference.

4.2 Representatives of the following have speaking rights only in debates:

Regional Disabled Members' Groups

National Disabled Members Committee

Black Members Self-Organised Group

National Disabled Black Members' Caucus

National Deaf (BSL) caucus

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Plus Members' Self- Organised Group

National Disabled Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Plus members' caucus

Women Members Self-Organised Group

National Disabled Women members' caucus

National Young Members Forum

National Retired Members Organisation

4.3 The following may address Conference:

Conference Co-Chairs

Co-Chairs of the Standing Orders Committee

UNISON staff called to speak by the Conference Chair

Speakers identified in a Standing Orders report that has been accepted by conference.

SO5 Chairing of conference

5.1 The Conference co-chairs shall be members of the National Disabled Members Committee.

5.2 The Conference Chair decides on any procedural motions and points of order. The Conference Chair's ruling is final and binding.

5.3 The Conference Chair may at any time propose that Conference be adjourned for a specified period. Conference will immediately vote on this proposal.

SO6 Voting Procedure

6.1 The method of voting shall be by a show of the voting card which is provided to each branch delegate.

6.2 If the Chair cannot make a clear declaration s/he may call for a count or at least 20 delegates present may also call for a count.

6.3 The count must be completed and the result reported to Conference before proceeding to the next item of business.

SO7 Withdrawals of motions and amendments



- 7.1 A motion or amendment which is shown on the final agenda may not be withdrawn without the consent of the Standing Orders Committee, whose decision shall be reported to Conference for a formal vote on whether to accept that Committee's decision, or refer it back to them for further consideration.

#### SO8 Emergency motions and amendments

- 8.1 Emergency motions and amendments are those items of business which are submitted after the relevant scheduled deadline and relate to matters which have occurred after the relevant deadline.

- 8.2 Emergency motions may be submitted by properly-constituted meetings of the following bodies, in accordance with the procedure set out in the official conference bulletin:

Branch Disabled Members' Groups

Regional Disabled Members' Groups

National Disabled Members' Committee

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Plus (LGBT+) Members' Caucus

National Black Members' Caucus

National Women Members' Caucus

National Deaf (BSL users) Caucus.

National Young Members' Forum

- 8.3 If the Standing Orders Committee gives its approval to the emergency motion or amendment being considered by Conference, copies will be made available to delegates at least one hour before Conference is asked to decide whether to consent to the Emergency Motion being added to the Conference agenda.
- 8.4 An emergency motion will not be given a higher place in the order of business over other motions and amendments on the agenda except where the Standing Orders Committee decides that its purpose would be frustrated if it were not dealt with earlier in the Conference.

#### SO9 Points of Order

- 9.1 A Point of Order draws Conference's attention to a breach of the Rules or Standing Orders.
- 9.2 A Point of Order may be raised by a delegate at any stage during Conference if s/he considers that business is not being conducted in accordance with UNISON's Rules or the Conference's Standing Orders.
- 9.3 The Point of Order must be raised as soon as the alleged breach occurs, or at the earliest practicable moment.
- 9.4 The Point of Order shall not be debated or amended, and the Conference Chair shall make an immediate and final ruling.

#### SO10 Procedural Motions

- 10.1 The following procedural motions may be moved at any time without previous notice on the agenda:

10.1.1 "That the question be now put," provided that

- i) the Conference Chair may advise Conference not to accept this motion if in her/his opinion the matter has not been sufficiently debated.
- ii) if this procedural motion is carried, it shall take effect at once, subject only to any right of reply under these Standing Orders.

10.1.2 "That the Conference proceed to the next business"

If this is carried it means that the matter being discussed immediately falls from the agenda and Conference proceeds to the next item of business.

10.1.3 "That the debate be adjourned".

10.1.4 "That the Conference (or part of Conference) be held in private session."

10.1.5 The only people permitted to attend a private session of Conference are:

- i) Delegates
- ii) Members of the National Disabled Members' Committee
- iii) Members of the Standing Orders Committee
- iv) Representatives as set out in SO 4.2
- v) Personal assistants working with any of the above
- vi) Members of staff who have been authorised by the National Disabled Members' Committee or the UNISON General Secretary to attend Conference
- vii) Any other people as the Conference Chair shall determine.

10.2 Procedural motions are put to the vote immediately without discussion and no amendment is allowed, except for motion 10.1.4, where the Conference Chair may allow debate and/or amendments.

10.3 A person who has already spoken on the motion or amendment in question shall not move one of the procedural motions above.

SO11 Conduct of debates

- 11.1 The mover of a motion or an amendment may speak for no more than five minutes, and each subsequent speaker may speak for no more than three minutes.
- 11.2 The Chairperson may exercise their discretion to extend speaking times for delegates whose access requirements, in the Chairperson's judgement, would otherwise impact on their contribution, up to a maximum of double the speaking limits set in 11.1.
- 11.3 When an amendment to a motion is moved no further amendment may be moved until the first one is disposed of, except during grouped debates.
- 11.4 When an amendment to a motion is carried, the motion, as amended, becomes the substantive motion, to which a further amendment may be moved.
- 11.5 A delegate may not move more than one amendment to any one motion. The mover of a motion may not move an amendment to their own motion.

- 11.6 No delegates shall speak more than once on a motion or amendment, except that the mover of the original motion may exercise a right of reply for not more than three minutes. No new material may be introduced during a right of reply.

#### SO12 Grouped debates and sequential voting

- 12.1 The Standing Orders Committee may propose grouped debates or sequential voting on motions or amendments which deal with the same subject matter.
- 12.2 The following procedure will be followed:
- 12.2.1 The Conference Chair will advise Conference of the order of business and of the sequence in which motions and amendments will be moved and voted on following a general debate, and of the effect of certain proposals on others;
- 12.2.2 All motions and amendments included in the debate shall be moved;
- 12.2.3 The general debate shall take place;
- 12.2.4 The Conference Chair shall again state the order of voting and advise Conference which, if any, motions and amendments will fall if others are carried;
- 12.2.5 Voting will take place on motions, preceded by relevant amendments, in the order in which they were moved.
- 12.2.6 A grouped debate may not be adjourned until after all the motions and amendments have been moved.

#### SO13 National Disabled Members' Committee at Conference

- 13.1 At the start of each Conference the National Disabled Members' Committee shall present its report for the past year, which shall be circulated to delegates prior to Conference.
- 13.2 Any report which contains proposals or recommendations requiring approval and adoption by Conference shall be submitted in advance in the form of a motion, in accordance with the timetable.
- 13.3 The National Disabled Members' Committee will indicate its policy on all items to delegates, in advance of a vote on the item.

#### SO14 Reference of outstanding items to the National Disabled Members Committee

- 14.1 Any motions not reached on the agenda shall stand referred to the National Disabled Members' Committee and reported on after the first meeting of that Committee after conference.

#### SO15 Elections at Conference

- 15.1 The following elections will take place at Conference:
- 15.1.1 National Disabled Members Conference Standing Orders Committee
- 15.1.2 Two delegates to the union's National Delegate Conference
- 15.1.3 One newsheet representative for the union's National Delegate Conference
- 15.1.4 One delegate for UNISON's delegation to Trade Union Congress
- 15.1.5 Two delegates to each of the union's service group conferences

- 15.1.6 Two delegates to Labour Party Conference and are Labour Party Members, and, who shall also be delegates to the Labour Link Forum
- 15.1.7 Two delegates to the National Disabled Members Committee from each of the following caucuses:
- (i) the disabled lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus members' caucus;
  - (ii) the disabled Black Member's caucus;
  - (iii) the Deaf (native British Sign Language users) caucus.
- 15.2 Nominees for these posts must be eligible to stand in the relevant capacity and be amongst those registered to attend Conference as:
- (i) delegates from branches or regions;
  - (ii) the National Disabled Members Committee;
  - (iii) the Standing Orders Committee;
  - (iii) Representatives of Self-Organised Groups;
  - (iv) Representatives of the National Young Members Forum.
- 15.3 Any contested election for positions under 15.1.1, 15.1.2, 15.1.3, 15.1.4 will be decided by ballot. Only those registered as conference delegates from branches or the National Disabled Members Committee shall be entitled to vote.
- 15.4 Any contested positions under 15.1.5, 15.1.6, or 15.1.7 will be decided by the meetings convened at Conference for members of those constituencies.
- 15.5 All elections will be subject to proportionality for women members.
- SO16 Selection of motions for National Delegate Conference
- 16.1 A ballot will be conducted at Conference to determine from amongst those motions carried by Conference, which two shall be submitted as proposed business for National Delegate Conference.
- SO17 Suspension of Standing Orders
- 17.1 Any one or more of these Standing Orders may be suspended by a resolution of Conference in relation to a specific item of business before the Conference or to the proceedings of Conference, provided that at least two-thirds of the delegates present and voting vote for the resolution.

# ADVICE FROM DISABLED MEMBERS' STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE ON SUBMISSION OF MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

## 1. WHO CAN SUBMIT MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS?

Branch Disabled Members' Groups  
Regional Disabled Members' Groups  
National Disabled Members' Committee  
National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Plus (LGBT+) Caucus  
National Black Members' Caucus  
National Women's Caucus  
National Deaf (native British Sign Language Users) Caucus  
National Young Members Forum

## 2. HOW MANY?

Each body, except for National Young Members Forum, may submit a maximum of three motions (this includes Amendments to Standing Orders and Amendments to NDM Constitution), all of which have the same deadline for submission.

There is no limit to the number of amendments to motions each body may submit, except for National Young Members Forum.

National Young Members Forum can submit up to two motions and two amendments (in line with Rule D.6.2.2).

## 3. HOW?

A motion or amendment must be agreed at a properly convened meeting of the submitting body. The text must be sent to the Standing Orders Committee, via the Online Conference System (OCS).

## 4. COMPETENCY OF MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

A competent motion is one that works within the rules of the union and the Conference. Only competent motions are allowed on to the agenda for Conference. The Standing Orders Committee decides whether motions are competent.

To qualify as a competent motion, the text of the motion must contain action. Action points should be clear, showing exactly what type of action is required and who needs to do it. A motion should ideally contain the following elements:

Who; What; When; Where; Why and How.

Who: Who does the motion affect?  
Who is causing the need for change?  
Who can achieve/initiate/resolve the required action?

**Important:** Action should be directed via the National Disabled Members' Committee. Do not use phrases such as "We believe that UNISON should do something" or "We call on Conference to do something" or "Conference resolves to do something".

Who should be instructed? Remember you may only instruct the National Disabled Members' Committee.

Motions that instruct the National Executive Council or other bodies in the union are not competent. Instead, use a phrase like “Conference asks the NDMC to call on the NEC to do something”.

- What: What is the issue?  
What is its effect?  
What action is required?
- When: When did the issue arise? (An important consideration for emergency motions). When does the action need to be taken?
- Where: Where is the problem? (A particular region or area?)  
Is there a particular place the action is needed?
- Why: Why is it an issue?  
Why is the action needed?
- How: How can the issue best be resolved?

Your motion may not need to contain all of these elements. It is sometimes better to make these points as part of your speech when moving the motion at Conference. Making a bullet point list under each of these headings will help focus on the issue, preferred action and outcome. Make the list and then tick off each point as you put it into the text of your motion.

The Standing Orders Committee will check that the motion:

- (a) is received within the published deadline as well as being submitted by an appropriate body, via the Online Conference System (OCS) by the deadline stated.
- (b) is appropriate for the NDM Conference. It must deal with issues specifically related to disabled members, and not issues of a general nature (citizen issues) that are the business of the national delegate conference; service conditions/service sector issues that are the business of the service sector conferences; or regarding UNISON's policies for the Labour Party that are the business of the Affiliated Political Fund Members' Conference. Motions may relate to disabled members' specific views on general issues;
- (c) only instructs the NDMC, not other bodies or UNISON as a whole. May instruct NDMC to liaise with/call upon other sections of the Union;
- (d) does not commit the Conference to spend National Funds, either directly or through the NEC. However general campaigning commitments may be made, as Conference decides policy and the NDMC interprets how to achieve the policy;
- (e) does not contravene Union rules, for example, on offensive language;
- (f) does not contain instruction for unlawful action.

If the Standing Orders Committee satisfies itself that the information on which the motion is based is not correct, it will rule the motion out of order.

All the above is also applicable to amendments. In addition:

- (g) amendments must refer to an original motion;

- (h) amendments cannot change a positive motion into a negative one;
- (i) amendments must not contradict the intention of the motion;
- (j) a mover may not amend their own motion;
- (k) amendments must not introduce substantially new subject matter to the extent that they unduly change the balance of the motion;
- (l) amendments must not delete the main point of a motion and introduce completely different issues instead, thereby changing the substance of the motion.

Regional Disabled Members groups may be in a position to give further support or guidance to branches groups on how to construct competent motions.

## **5. WHAT ARE EMERGENCY MOTIONS?**

Emergency motions relate to events or issues that arise after the deadline for motions or amendments.

The Standing Orders Committee may invite the submitters of an emergency motion to meet with the Committee at Conference, for them to explain why in their view the motion constitutes an emergency, prior to taking a decision on competency.

In addition to complying with ordinary criteria, emergency motions:

- (a) should only refer to issues/events that occurred after the closing date for motions or amendments. In particular, the action called for must be something that could not have been included in a motion and submitted within the normal deadlines;
- (b) must state why the motion was not submitted within the normal deadlines.

The Standing Orders Committee will want to satisfy itself that the subject matter of the motion cannot be dealt with in another way.

## **6. WHAT ARE CAUCUS MOTIONS?**

The Black Members' Caucus, LGBT+ Caucus, Women's Caucus and Deaf Members' Caucus have rights, within the Standing Orders, to submit motions, amendments and emergency motions to the agenda.

Each of these caucus groups prior to Conference may submit up to three motions. There is no limit on the number of amendments, or emergency motions.

For caucus motions, if an issue affects one member of caucus, it could legitimately affect the whole caucus, and therefore the subject matter is valid. However the actual text of the motion must contain sufficient content and context to make it specific and relevant to the caucus.

For example:

- (a) the action called for should affect or benefit caucus members;

- (b) the action called for could include working directly with organisations or campaigns specifically relevant to the caucus;
- (c) it is not sufficient to make a single mention of caucus members in the body of the motion.

## **7. SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY**

UNISON policy on the Social Model of Disability derives from Motion 117 at 1995 National Delegate Conference and Motion 131 at 1996 National Delegate Conference.

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“Conference believes it is a basic fundamental right of all to have equality of opportunity and access to the employment of their choosing. Conference further believes that this right is denied disabled people, not because of any medical conditions, but because of inherent institutionalised discrimination. Society must remove the socially constructed barriers that create and perpetuate such discrimination.”

“Conference calls for the immediate adoption and implementation of the following measures:

d) The abolition of the registration scheme and disabled employees and the outdated traditional medical individual model or ‘disability’ that underpins this and the Government’s Department of Employment interventions. This would be replaced by self-definition according to the Social Model definition of disability which would recognise that it is the physical, structural, economic and political barriers in society that disable people with impairments face.”

“This Conference resolves to adopt the Social Model definition of disability to underpin all its policies and practices on disability issues. This model demonstrates that disabled people are disabled by society not by their conditions.”

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Branch and regional disabled members’ groups and the National Disabled Members’ Committee are therefore urged to take the following points into account when drafting texts for conference:

- (a) emphasis should be placed on the way society organises to exclude, segregate, disenfranchise disabled people, for example in areas such as transport, education, employment, health care provision, social activities;
- (b) motions and amendments should not refer to peoples’ impairments as being responsible for problems in relation to exclusion, segregation, disenfranchisement and discrimination;
- (c) UNISON does not support a hierarchy of disability and does not promote one form of exclusion above another and is committed to opposing all forms of discrimination against disabled people.

The Standing Orders Committee hopes that the above guidance on the Social Model will assist branch and regional disabled members’ groups and the National Disabled Members’



Committee to draft motions and amendments that reflect UNISON's Social Model of Disability.

**This guidance document was last updated: May 2012 (to reflect the introduction of the Online Conference System).**