

## **Student Representation at Work - Trade Union Awareness**

---

### **This Union Notes:**

- 1) Students' unions represent and support students in an educational environment. Trade unions represent and support workers in a working environment.
- 2) Students are vulnerable workers because of being temporary residents.
- 3) Students working on part-time contracts are even more vulnerable at work.
- 4) In the joint NUS and TUC report, "All Work and Low Pay" (2006)<sup>1</sup>, it was found that:
  - Over two thirds of full-time students now work to support their studies.
  - The number of students working has increased by 50% in 10 years.
  - On average, working students work 14 hours a week
  - One fifth of students that work do more than 20 hours a week (effectively full-time workers as well as full-time students).
  - Only 4% of working students are members of trade unions
  - 60% of working students work in retail, hotels and catering; traditionally low paid sectors of the economy with poor working conditions and few guaranteed rights.
- 5) Students are often unaware or are sceptical of the benefits of joining a trade union.
- 6) Many trade unions offer a reduced student membership price.

### **This Union Believes:**

- 1) Students have the right to be treated fairly at work.
- 2) In instances where working conditions are not adequate, trade unions play a fundamental role in pressing for change.
- 3) As a union of students, we believe in the need for collective action and note the benefits of trade union membership.
- 4) That a close, involved relationship between UUEAS and local trade union representatives is crucial to ensuring strong representation for students at UEA
- 5) That students need to be provided with a variety of trade union information to allow them to choose a trade union that will represent them well.

### **This Union Resolves:**

- 1) To set up a working group to bring together all interested parties in order to discuss appropriate ways forward with this campaign, e.g a trade union forum and ways for the Union to facilitate best practice as an employer of union staff.

---

<sup>1</sup> A copy of this report may be found at <http://tuc.org.uk/extra/allworklowpay.pdf>

- 2) To hold a trade union awareness day to inform students of the benefits of joining a trade union where UEA students and local trade unionists can talk about what unions are, answer student's questions about being in a union, how they could join one and which union would be most appropriate to meet their needs.
- 3) To mandate the Communications Officer and the Welfare Officer to work with the Student Advice Centre so they can provide trade union literature and other resources that will enable students to be better informed about trade unions and their working rights.
- 4) Mandate the Communications and Publicity officers to ensure that the NUS/TUC website <http://www.morethanwork.net/> is well publicised.