

**B. WRITTEN REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL: JANUARY 2011**

REPORT FOR JANUARY 2011 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Report completed by:	Jim Mowatt
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1. INTRODUCTION

The “2011 Unite Education Programme” witnesses the culmination of over two years work arising out of the union-wide audit of education provision and resources in Unite and the implementation of the recommendations for a way forward that unified education across our two merged unions. Published as “Education in Unite” in November 2008 and examined and accepted by the Executive Council in January 2009, our aspiration to serve Unite by developing the skills, knowledge and confidence of our workplace representatives (whether union reps, health and safety reps, equality reps and union learning reps), full-time officers, staff and activists by enabling all of them to act in the interests of Unite and the wider movement.

Progress so far has been encouragingly good and will, I am confident, get significantly better in 2011.

Three Pillars

Effective leadership management and staff development are vital to ensure that learners have access to the guidance, skills and experience necessary to meet Unite’s needs. This is true for all organisations offering learning provision. For Unite, we have an additional priority for our education workforce – to ensure that Unite’s priorities identified as our 3 pillars are fully understood, conveyed to our activists and put into practice throughout all regions/countries and sectors.

Recognising our obvious ambitions in Organising and for International Solidarity, often our 3 pillar “politics” can be misconstrued and misinterpreted by some reps. A not uncommon response on our courses for Health and Safety Representatives is the question “what has the politics got to do with Health and Safety in our workplace?”

In the foreword to Unite's "Safety Representatives' Handbook (due for publication in late January 2011), the first-ever Unite General Secretary, Len McCluskey cogently describes the political context in which Legislation, Enactment, Regulation impacts on each and every Safety Rep and in every workplace.

Structure of Education Department

Having reorganised the various educational strands to create a Unified Education Structure all the necessary functions and responsibilities have been identified and professionally managed. Diagrammatically this is replicated as Appendix II; the role of the Education Organiser (EDO) as a driver is crucial as is illustrated in Appendix III our "National Plan with the Activist at the Centre".

Based on the regions/countries the national functions are being undertaken through matrix management of the national team with each Education Organiser taking national responsibility for both management of a specific issue and change management projects.

2. REGIONAL AND NATIONAL STATISTICS

The quarter October to December 2010 statistics will be available prior to the Executive Council meeting on 24 January as they are currently being collated. In addition we shall furnish you with a year to year comparative analysis. And we shall put all these education statistical returns on to our section of the Unite web-site.

3. SECTOR SPECIFIC COMBINE COURSES

Having built up an expertise in designing a whole range of very specific courses for combine committees, sectors and district committees, an offer has been presented to each National Secretary for all 23 sectors. Encouragingly, a handful have responded very positively. The rest, I shall chase up – mercilessly. For these "Change at Work" courses are at the very heart of what Unite Education is all about – building a sustainable workplace organisation. In addition to those companies/sectors we have added Serco, Babcock and DHL on our target list.

In the meantime, as Director, I have visited most regions, Scotland, Ireland and Gibraltar, plus made regular visits to Hayes Court, Eastbourne and Esher Place.

4. BURSARY APPLICATIONS

Applications from activists below for our £350.00 Bursary National Award.

Name	Course	College	Membership No. & Region
John Darcy	Cert. in Health & Safety at Work	Dublin Institute of Technology	40085974 Ireland
Mr John Futter	NEBOSH National Construction Cert in Occupational H&S	Deeside College	32462683 Wales
Stephen Hayward	BALTUS	London Met University	09175016 South East
Ann Jane Millen	HNC Computer Aided Draughting & Design	Motherwell College	32519025 Scotland
Liam Quigley	DTTLS	Stockport	32139571 North West
Damian Reid	Cert. of Foundation Studies Humanities & Social Science/Access Course	Belfast Metropolitan College	30705429 Ireland
Derek Watson	NEBOSH General Certificate	Motherwell College	SCIII/15603507 Scotland

All the above are positively recommended to you for our Bursary National Award.

5. HEALTH & SAFETY

Our ten day Certificate Course is being piloted for Safety Reps and our Unite Health & Safety Reps Handbook is in final draft. Because of the geography of our reps a Distance Learning provision is being examined for those Safety Reps for whom day release, block release and even residential provision is not entirely suitable – Guernsey, Isle of Man, Gibraltar, Western Isles and isolated rural communities in the Celtic countries all have good Unite reps who could benefit from e-learning programmes and delivery. So, too, for those reps with carers' responsibility. Another advantage is that tranches of our reps (and members) undergo training by their own employers using Distance and e-

learning with which our reps are comfortable. Fortuitously the TUC Education Service in the North West is piloting a pensions course for full-time officers in a Distance Learning format – we have agreed to take advantage of this offer.

6. WORKERS UNITING: USW/UNITE LAY LEADERSHIP COURSE

The first tranche of nine Unite Senior Lay Reps, in harness with their North American counterparts, are about to embark on the second leg of their course at the USW facility in Pittsburgh. Reports are positive and it was agreed to canvass for a second tranche of Unite lay reps to undertake this Leadership Course.

In the aftermath of the administrative kerfuffle last year, the General Secretary has instructed the Director of Education to supervise this selection process personally and present the Education Sub-Committee with recommendations for consideration and debate and for the Education Sub-Committee to submit their view to the Executive Council for confirmation.

7. PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

Generally these have proven very positive and lucrative for trade union education. Nevertheless, recent experience at City of Manchester College – which we are still awaiting for the Employment Tribunal to be undertaken – and London Metropolitan University – where we have demanded a concrete conclusion to our discussions – Partnership Agreements have been investigated by Micks' McCartney and Bond. Our policy is that no new Partnership Agreements are to be entered into – save those scrutinised and authorised by the Executive Council via the Education Sub-Committee.

In the meantime, our H.R. and Legal Department in concert with the Senior Management Team are formulating a policy to deal with the changed contours of funding arrangements. And to this end, the SMT is working very closely with the TUC as this is a perennial situation of nearly all TUC affiliates and of course, the TUC itself via its Education Service.

Arising from discussions at the Education Sub-Committee it was agreed to look into all of our arrangements with Further Education Colleges (CFEs) and specifically Southampton where we have encountered a few hiccoughs recently.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Our 2011 Education Programme was circulated to much acclaim. Work continues to develop our offer, our facilities and expertise.

Political Education is being developed to confront the myriad of situations facing our Union. Durham, as our flagship, is being organised around the Miners' Gala in July. Our courses in Bargaining and the Law, Grievance and Discipline are finalised and to be launched. Our courses for specific sectors have been

welcomed and our Tutor Training and Briefings have been consolidated. And my next Report – with a full Statistical Evaluation - will feature Sector Courses and Tutor Training. At all times we must always remember that Unite is a PEOPLE organisation. We care – so our thoughts are with our Chairman, Tom Cashman – who is in intensive care and with all our staff and their families who give so much to make Unite Education a success.

In solidarity

JIM MOWATT
Director of Education

Appendices:

- I 2011 Unite Education Programme
- II The Role of the Education Organiser
- III National Plan with the Activist at the Centre

Encs. Statistical report October – December 2010
Statistical report 2010

Educ/education team national/2011/verbal and written education report to the january executive council