Why should I join the Labour Party as a full member?

Because you can play a full part in all activities. You can vote at meetings on policy issues and in officer elections and you can stand for election to officer positions. You can take part in selections for local candidates for the council, devolved administrations (where relevant) and for your Parliamentary candidate. You can even stand for these positions yourself! If your CLP has GC meetings, you can stand to become a delegate from your Unite branch or your local Labour Party branch.

How do I get full membership?

To join for just £15 for the first year, download a form from the Unite web site at www.unitetheunion.org/joinlabour. Alternatively, join via the Labour Party at https://join.labour.org.uk. Select the option for Trade Union to join at a reduced rate, currently £1.96 a month. Call 0191 246 5004 to join by phone.

Why get involved?

Because you can make a difference! Unite’s political strategy is about:

- Winning working people for Labour – encouraging Unite members to get involved in the Labour Party so that it is truly representative of society.
- Winning Labour for working people – making our voice heard on policy issues that matter to ordinary people, their families and communities.
- Building a broad alliance to beat the Tories – working with others who support our values to fight back against cuts and austerity.
- Most importantly – winning a Labour Government that governs in the interests of working people.

The more union members get involved, the more we can achieve by winning support from other Labour Party members, councillors and MPs for issues that are important to our members, including industrial disputes. It’s your Party, your voice!
**What is an Affiliated Supporter of the Labour Party?**

In September 2013, Ed Miliband announced that he wanted to change the way that trade union members get involved in the Labour Party. The subsequent rule change means that union members now actively choose to be part of their union’s collective affiliation, but can also become individual Affiliated Supporters - a new category of Labour Party member.

Unite now has over 100,000 Affiliated Supporters who signed up to take part in the leadership and deputy leadership elections in September 2015. We want our Affiliated Supporters to do more than cast votes, we want you to take the opportunity to get involved in your local Labour Party.

**What are Labour Party branch meetings?**

Branch meetings discuss local, national and even international issues; plan local campaigning activities; select local council candidates; and can send delegates and motions to Constituency meetings. Each branch will have a set of officers including Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The Labour Party operates a gender balance rule so at least 50% of the officers must be women. All Labour Party members and Affiliated Supporters in the area can attend their branch meeting. If your ward has Labour councillors, they will normally attend as well. Most branch meetings meet monthly although there can be local variations.

**What are Constituency Labour Party meetings?**

Constituency Labour Party (CLP) meetings vary in the way they operate but most meet on a monthly basis. Some are open to all members (All Member Meetings – AMMs); others (General Committees – GCs) allow all members to attend but only elected delegates can vote, whilst some GCs are restricted to delegates only. Delegates are elected from local Labour Party branches, affiliated trade union branches and socialist societies, such as the Socialist Health Association and the Co-op Party.

CLP meetings discuss political issues, plan campaigns and send delegates and motions to Labour Party conference. If your constituency has a Labour MP, they normally attend to give a report, as will Labour Council leaders. CLP meetings often invite guest speakers to talk about topical issues.

Each CLP has the usual officers such as Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer but also has positions such as Black & Minority Ethnic Officer, Political Education Officer, Trade Union Liaison Officer, Women’s Officer and Youth Officer. As with the branches, a gender balance applies to officer positions. The key officers will meet regularly to oversee the running of the constituency and these meetings are known as Executive Committee (EC) meetings.

**What rights do I have as an Affiliated Supporter?**

As an Affiliated Supporter, you are entitled to attend your local Labour Party branch meetings and also Constituency Labour Party meetings that are open to all members. You can speak and contribute but are not allowed to participate in votes either on motions or in elections for local officers.

However, you can vote in any future leadership or deputy leadership election or primaries. You can also attend conferences, such as national Labour Party conference as a visitor but not as a delegate.

**How do Labour Party structures work locally?**

The Labour Party organisation is based on Parliamentary constituencies, i.e. the electoral area for the MP. The Constituency Labour Party (CLP) is made up of branches which are usually based on ward boundaries for councillors.