



June 2009

Dear Union Learning Rep,

Welcome, Failte, to the Highland & Islands ULR Resource Pack!

The Highlands & Islands ULR Resource Pack was developed in June 2006 as a pilot project to provide a practical support tool for ULRs in the Highlands & Islands. Feedback about the pack has shown that ULRs found the pack a useful tool in assisting them in their role as a ULR. Now in its fourth year, the pack has been updated and some new additions added.

Whilst the onus of support to ULRs remains within their own union structure, Scottish Union Learning in the Highlands & Islands hope to complement that support to ULRs in the Highlands & Islands with the development of this pack.

The resource pack is designed to provide you and other Highlands & Islands ULRs with practical information: for example, lists of learning providers in the area, useful websites, information about everyday skills, sources of funding etc. The full range of contents is located on the next page. If there is something you feel should have been included in the pack that we have missed, please do not hesitate to let us know.

As a ULR in the Highlands & Islands, we hope that you will find this resource pack a useful and practical tool in assisting you in your role.

If you have any questions about the pack or the work of Scottish Union Learning in the Highlands & Islands, we're only a phone call or an email away!

Pam Urquhart

Development Officer - Highlands & Islands
Scottish Union Learning





Section 1

In this section you will find the following information about Scottish Union Learning:

- ✘ What is Scottish Union Learning and how do you contact the team members of Scottish Union Learning?
- ✘ What are the main functions and priorities of Scottish Union Learning?
- ✘ What are the main priorities of Scottish Union Learning in the Highlands and Islands?
- ✘ How can the Highlands & Islands team of Scottish Union Learning in the Highlands and Islands assist you in your role as a ULR?
- ✘ What assistance can the Marketing Officer of Scottish Union Learning offer you as a ULR?
- ✘ What is the STUC Helen Dowie Award for Lifelong Learning?
- ✘ What support is available to unions from the Scottish Union Learning Fund (SULF)?
- ✘ How you can find our more information about Scottish Union Learning through the Scottish Union Learning website and how you can keep in touch and share your views and news about union learning with other ULRs throughout Scotland through the Scottish Union Learning Online Forum.



What is Scottish Union Learning?

Over the last few years, the STUC has been working towards the development of a new structure to produce a step change in union-led learning in Scotland. Scottish Union Learning was launched in May 2008 in the Glasgow City Chambers. Scottish Union Learning brings together the work of the STUC Skills & Lifelong Learning Team and TUC Education in Scotland. It administers the Scottish Union Learning Fund (SULF) and mirrors the development of the TUC's unionlearn in England. The funding and governance structure for Scottish Union Learning are in place and, through working in partnership with unions, it will drive forward union-led learning in Scotland.

Scottish Union Learning is run by unions for unions. The Scottish Union Learning Board governs the new structure by agreeing and monitoring its business, operational and financial plans. The Board, which is accountable to the STUC General Council, consists of 10 union representatives appointed by the General Council. The General Council has appointed Anne Douglas (Prospect) as the Chairperson of the Scottish Union Learning Board. The STUC General Secretary is an ex-officio member of the Board and Liz Rees, the TUC Trade Union Education Manager, is the TUC's nominee. In addition, the Scottish Government has also appointed an observer to the Board.

The Board is supported by a Scottish Union Advisory Group and a Partners Forum. The Union Advisory Group is open to all STUC affiliated unions with an interest in union-led learning. The Partners Forum is a body of external experts from key learning and skills organisations in Scotland committed to supporting union led learning.

Scottish Union Learning continues to work with unions to support and develop their work on skills and learning. Key areas of work for Scottish Union Learning include the integration of Everyday Skills within union lifelong learning activity and supporting and stimulating lifelong learning initiatives specific to the Highlands and Islands. Union members also continue to benefit from the funding provided to TUC Education in Scotland to support its programme of union rep training.



Scottish Union Learning - Mission Statement

Scottish Union Learning supports trade unions in Scotland to encourage and help workers take up opportunities to develop their learning and skills. Scottish Union Learning is the platform which shapes and develops a range of accessible learning services and activities, within the existing framework of the education sector. In partnership with Scottish unions and organisations, Scottish Union Learning provides services to union members to access everyday skills development and further education opportunities, ultimately to benefit Scottish workers and society as a whole.



Scottish Union Learning Contacts - STUC

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What are the functions and priorities of Scottish Union Learning?

The functions and services of Scottish Union Learning include:

- ✘ Administration, support and continued development of the Scottish Union Learning Fund (SULF);
- ✘ Support for the Scottish Union Learning Board, the Union Advisory Group and the Partners Group;
- ✘ A dedicated Scottish Union Learning website;
- ✘ Everyday Skills support for unions and their members;
- ✘ Support and development of Local Learning Forums;
- ✘ Partnership working to support unions to access information, advice and guidance services;
- ✘ Support for the implementation of clear progression routes for individual members in collaboration with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework;
- ✘ Links to partnership organisations, including establishing a Memorandum of Understanding if appropriate;
- ✘ A research function;
- ✘ Brand development of Scottish Union Learning and the general promotion of union learning;
- ✘ Improving access to, and uptake of, Everyday Skills provision, including literacy and numeracy skills and English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL);
- ✘ A Skills Network for unions in Scotland;
- ✘ Enabling recognition of achievement in learning through accreditation;
- ✘ European Social Fund (ESF) Projects to support delivery of learning in Scotland, including specific support for migrant workers in the Highlands and Islands;
- ✘ Improving the skills and knowledge of union representatives at the workplace and in the union;
- ✘ Developing effective personal/study skills and improving the confidence of workplace reps;
- ✘ Developing the knowledge base around retention, progression, and educational achievement of trade union learners who participate in TUC Education.



The key priorities of Scottish Union Learning for the next two years are to:

- ✦ Establish Scottish Union Learning as the facilitator of a high profile, strategic direction for union learning in Scotland;
- ✦ Manage the two ESF bids in Highlands and Islands Scotland and Lowlands and Uplands Scotland;
- ✦ Continue the administration and development of SULF 7;
- ✦ Improve the performance of union representatives at the workplace and in their role within the union;
- ✦ Facilitate further training via a trade union pathway to Higher Education;
- ✦ Improve the quality of provision of the TUC Education Service in Scotland.



I am a Highlands & Islands ULR. Can you provide me with more information about Scottish Union Learning in the Highlands & Islands?

Scottish Union Learning in the Highlands & Islands is made up of two team members: Pam Urquhart, Development Officer and Vicky King, Administrator. Pam and Vicky are based in the Unison Building at 53 Shore Street in Inverness. Scottish Union Learning in the Highlands & Islands was previously known as both the STUC Lifelong Learning Unit and the STUC Skills & Lifelong Learning Team. Funding for Scottish Union Learning in the Highlands & Islands has been secured from the Scottish Government until March 2011.

A key priority of Scottish Union Learning in the Highlands & Islands is to support trade union members and ULRs in the region with the aim of encouraging and helping workers based in the area to develop their learning and skills.

Some of the main priorities for Scottish Union Learning in the Highlands & Islands are to:

- ✘ Support unions in increasing the number of Highlands & Islands ULRs.
- ✘ Increase the number of local cross union ULR forums in the Highlands & Islands, establish a pan Highlands & Islands ULR network and organise the annual Scottish Union Learning Highlands & Islands ULR Conference.
- ✘ Assist in the development and expansion of a trade union education infrastructure in the Highlands & Islands.
- ✘ Support unions, including those with SULF activity in the area, to increase the number of union members in the Highlands & Islands who access learning and skills opportunities.
- ✘ Co-ordinate and develop good practice models of cross union working to overcome potential barriers, such as remoteness and low density population, which characterise the region.
- ✘ Work in partnership with trade unions, local colleges, learning centres and other key partners to develop union led learning across the Highlands & Islands.
- ✘ Ensure the needs of the Highlands & Islands are incorporated in the development of Scottish Union Learning.



What actual support can Scottish Union Learning in the Highlands & Islands offer me as a Highlands & Islands ULR?

Scottish Union Learning in the Highlands & Islands can:

- ✘ Keep you informed of union learning activities in the Highlands & Islands, the work of the Scottish Union Learning and other relevant information via a bi-monthly e-newsletter.
- ✘ Put you in touch with other ULRs in your area through cross union ULR forums. Local cross union ULR forums allow ULRs from different unions in a particular town/area to get together to share information and develop good practice.
- ✘ If there is no cross union ULR forum in your area, Scottish Union Learning may be able to help you start one and can work with you to develop other means, such as the use of video conferencing, to allow you to keep in contact with other ULRs in the Highlands & Islands.
- ✘ Offer you the opportunity to attend the annual STUC Highlands & Islands ULR Conference and any other events being organised in the area.
- ✘ Provide you with advice and or assistance on a range of subjects: whether it's organising a union learning awareness event in your workplace, identifying opportunities for cross union learning, or getting your ULR workplace poster laminated!
- ✘ Act as a sign post to local learning providers/organisations/ individuals who may be of assistance to you in your role as a ULR.
- ✘ Assist you in accessing funding to support learning for your members through the ESF Scottish Fund for Union Learning Highlands & Islands (see Section 3).
- ✘ Help you and your members participate in cross union learning activities and courses.
- ✘ Lastly, provide you with updates to this useful ULR resource pack!



What assistance can the Marketing Officer of Scottish Union Learning offer me as a ULR?

The Marketing Officer for Scottish Union Learning can:

- ✘ Offer you support in planning a tailored marketing plan, including a schedule for advertising your courses and events.
- ✘ Help you establish different ways of communicating with your members, such as online and through the post.
- ✘ Be a resource for you in the area of marketing, communication, and advertising for your projects, both small and large.
- ✘ Provide you with templates for posters and other useful information to advertise courses events in your workplace. **Please see attached CD for examples of poster templates that may be of some help to you.**
- ✘ Let the rest of the trade union movement in Scotland know about the good work you and your union are involved in through the Scottish Union Learning News, a quarterly newsletter that is distributed nationally. Email learning@stuc.org.uk with any learning stories or photos you would like to share with others!



What is the Helen Dowie Award for Lifelong Learning?

The STUC Union Rep Awards consist of three awards: The STUC Helen Dowie Award for Lifelong Learning, the STUC One Workplace Equality Award and the STUC Health & Safety Award. The STUC Helen Dowie Award for Lifelong Learning was established in 2006 to commemorate Helen Dowie's lifetime achievements in lifelong learning and to recognise other outstanding trade unionists who continue to demonstrate their commitment to union values and lead the learning movement forward in Scotland.

Who was Helen Dowie?

Helen Dowie was involved in the trade union movement in Fife for most of her adult life. She worked in Rosyth Dockyard for almost 20 years and was active within her union. Through her union, Helen organised the yard, campaigned and supported many workers. She took the union into the community through the organisation of the Rosyth festival and music events to highlight important union campaigns. Helen, along with her partner Mike Morris, started the Trades Council News in Fife. By writing, printing, editing and distributing the newsheet, Helen and Mike kept union members involved and aware of the issues and also spread the word more widely throughout Fife. Helen and Mike made many solid relationships and friendships through their union involvement. Helen worked with Mike and many other individuals to support the development of education and learning in Scotland. She was a key player in supporting the development of the lifelong learning agenda that union members know today. Helen's life was devoted to supporting others through the trade union movement.

How do I nominate someone?

Nominations are accepted on an annual basis. Nominees must:

- ✘ Demonstrate a commitment to the trade union movement;
- ✘ Excel in the promotion of lifelong learning within their own organisation, workplace, or community in Scotland;
- ✘ Be a lay union activist (not a paid official of a trade union).

To obtain a nomination form, visit www.scottishunionlearning.com or phone Scottish Union Learning – 0141 337 8111.



What support is available to unions from the Scottish Union Learning Fund (SULF)?

In 2008, the STUC secured a total of £2.4m funding for the financial years 2008/9, 2009/10 and 2010/11 from the Scottish Government to allow trade unions to bid for financial support under round 7 of the Scottish Union Learning Fund (SULF). A total of 16 unions were successful in securing funding for 17 projects, most of which commenced on 1st April 2008.

The Scottish Union Learning Fund (SULF) was established in 2000 by the former Scottish Executive to help promote activity by trade unions in support of its lifelong learning programme. The new round of SULF 7 funding brings the total fund since inception to £8.75m. This investment is recognition of the leading role trade unions can play in raising the demand for workplace learning, through partnership working with employers and other stakeholders, to motivate individuals to participate in lifelong learning.

SULF ensures effective and sustainable activity by trade unions and their partners. The emphasis of the fund is on building up trade unions' capacity to promote people's development and workplace learning by encouraging and supporting learners. Scottish Union Learning provides support to trade unions in delivering their projects. The new round of SULF included an allocation of 12.5% of the total fund to specific activity in the Highlands and Islands and this has significantly contributed to an increase in union learning activity in the area.

The SULF 7 projects are:

ASLEF: Proud to Educate - Scotland

BFAWU: Foundation to Learning

Community: Strategy for Growth Embedding the Learning Agenda

CWU: Learning for Life

EIS: Partnership Through Professional Development*

FBU: Recruitment to Retirement & Beyond

GMB: GMB Manufacturing Sector Project*

NUJ: Digital Convergence Project

PCS: License to Skill



SULF 7 Projects (Continued):

POA: Learning Initiative

RMT: All Aboard for Learning

TSSA: Travel Trade Learning with TSSA**

UCATT: Building Learning - Qualifying the Workforce

Unite: Unite in Learning - Building on Good Practice

UNISON: Learning in the Highlands & Islands

UNISON: Learning (LUPS)

USDAW: Integrating & Embedding Lifelong Learning within USDAW

**TSSA was unable to proceed in the first year; this funding was re-allocated

*EIS - this project commenced at the start of Year 1, Quarter 3

*GMB - this project commenced at the start of Year 1, Quarter 4

Of the 16 unions who were successful in securing SULF 7 funding, 11 unions: **ASLEF; CWU; EIS; FBU; GMB; PCS; POA; RMT; Unite; UNISON** and **USDAW** have included Highlands & Islands activities in their projects.

For more information on SULF in the Highlands & Islands, contact Pam Urquhart, Development Officer - Highlands & Islands.



What information and advice can the Scottish Union Learning website offer me as a ULR?

www.scottishunionlearning.com

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The purpose of the Scottish Union Learning website is to provide ULRs and union members with information on union learning activity or on initiatives that might be of interest to union learners. The site also contains a facility to allow individual unions and partners to create and populate their own sections. Scottish Union Learning updates the site on a regular basis.

The site boasts many resources for SULF, European Social Fund (ESF), Everyday Skills initiatives, Highlands and Islands information and a Media Centre with video clips and photos of past events.

In an effort to develop the site more fully as a resource centre, a learndirect scotland course search was integrated into the Scottish Union Learning website in November 2008. This search links to the current learndirect scotland course database and is tailored to the needs of trade unions and ULRs.

A new facility allowing users to easily access documents, files and resources on the site was developed in January 2009. This facility will be utilised to make even more lifelong learning and skills publications available on the site in the coming months.



As a ULR, how can I keep in touch with other ULRs in the Highlands & Islands?

Scottish Union Learning Online Forum

Scottish Union Learning established the new Scottish Union Learning Online Forum in 2008. You can visit the forum at <http://forum.scottishunionlearning.com> to view and share news on union learning with other ULRs, not just in the Highlands & Islands, but throughout Scotland.

The Online Forum is a resource designed specifically to meet the needs of Union Learning Reps, SULF Project Workers, Learning Officers and Trade Union Officials. You can swap stories, ask questions and give advice through this new online union learning network. There is a specific section dedicated to each Local Learning Forum, along with a section on Everyday Skills, one for the Highlands and Islands and more. The Online Forum is an easy way to communicate with other ULRs, locally and nationally.

The Online Forum provides an ideal opportunity for ULRs in the Highlands & Islands to get online and share information, ask questions and raise issues about union-led learning in the Highlands & Islands.

I am a Highlands & Islands ULR and I want to be able to share information with other ULRs, so how do I go about registering to use the Online Forum?

All you need to do to use the **Online Forum** is log onto <http://forum.scottishunionlearning.com>, click on **register** and fill in the details required. Once you have registered and your account has been verified, click on login, enter your username and password and you will be able to view the discussions and topics currently on the Forum as well as post your own comments/topics.

For further information, contact Scottish Union Learning on 0141 337 8111 or by email at learning@stuc.org.uk.

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