



# Scottish Union Learning Conference

## Programme

15 November 2017  
COSLA Centre, Edinburgh

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# Conference Welcome



**Welcome to the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Scottish Union Learning Conference. The theme of today's Conference is: "The Demands of a Changing Labour Market." Today, we will reflect on these changes and explore the concept of "useful learning".**

When investing in learning and skills, it is important to consider its usefulness or "utilisation" - what do students do with their learning, were new skills put to use, was there an opportunity for progression, did the funder get a return on investment?

At Scottish Union Learning, this is at the forefront of our thinking. In very broad terms, the union learning programme is useful because of the way we respond to diverse demands from members for a range of courses. By fostering interest in learning and responding to the demand, we re-connect workers to the experience of learning – a fulfilling connection that can grow into skills that save jobs and increase earnings. However, it is only a "useful" connection if we also track our learners, build on initial contact, and support progression. Our new Development Fund projects have strengthened those links.

In addition to learning "processes", the work unions do in learning is useful, or perhaps vital, because we can direct course content to meet our members' needs, which is directly linked to the theme for this year's Conference. The labour market is ever changing and there remains a growing threat through the gig economy, Brexit and automation, to the livelihood of workers and their families.

Today you will hear how trade unions, with the support of Scottish Union Learning, are meeting those challenges.

The Scottish Government and the STUC share a determination to address longstanding challenges such as poverty, discrimination and unfair work. Learning has always underpinned the empowerment of disadvantaged groups, and courses organised through the Learning Fund open up the opportunity for learners to be part of the Effective Voice which underpins the other dimensions of Fair Work - which is so desperately needed if we are to replace exploitation with security, opportunity, fulfillment and respect. Today you will hear more about how learning empowers both workers, and their trade unions.

It is important to stress that Scottish Union Learning will always retain its original ethos: to support unions in responding to the interests and demands of individual members, and offer the content and context that encourages workers to become new learners. Above all, we are inclusive and innovative. Union learning is useful, and in a turbulent and hostile labour market, the emphasis on 'useful learning' is stronger than ever before. The role of unions is paramount in ensuring that learning is useful for workers and employers, but also for trade unions and our collective determination to make the economy grow in a fair, equal and inclusive way.

We thank Skills Development Scotland and the SQA for supporting our Conference today, and for their continuing support of union learning. I hope you enjoy the Conference.

**Peter Hunter**  
**Chair, Scottish Union Learning Board**



# Scottish Union Learning

## The Demands of a Changing Labour Market

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>9:30am</b>  | <b>Registration and Coffee</b>   |
| <b>10:00am</b> | <b>Welcome and Opening Remarks</b><br>Peter Hunter<br>Chair, Scottish Union Learning Board   |
| <b>10:05am</b> | <b>Conference Address</b><br>Suzie Bowman<br>Senior Service Designer, Skills Development Scotland  |
| <b>10:20am</b> | <b>Panel Session: "The Demands of a Changing Labour Market"</b><br>Chair: Peter Hunter, Scottish Union Learning Board<br>Panel: Professor Patricia Findlay, University of Strathclyde<br>Helen Martin, STUC Assistant General Secretary<br>Cailean Gallagher, STUC/Young Workers' Learning Project |
| <b>11:00am</b> | <b>2017 STUC Union Rep Awards</b><br>STUC Helen Dowie Award for Lifelong Learning<br>Brian Ronald, Unite the Union<br><br>STUC Equality Award<br>Sharon Sweeney, UCU   |
| <b>11:15am</b> | <b>Invited Speaker</b><br>Jamie Hepburn MSP<br>Minister for Employability and Training   |
| <b>11:25am</b> | <b>Presentation of the Scottish Union Learning<br/>Learner of the Year Award</b>   |
| <b>11:35am</b> | <b>Break</b>   |
| <b>12:00pm</b> | <b>Workshop Session (see page 8)</b>   |
| <b>1:00pm</b>  | <b>Conference Address</b><br>Atta Yaqub<br>Actor & Community Activist  |
| <b>1:15pm</b>  | <b>Conference Address</b><br>Grahame Smith<br>STUC General Secretary   |
| <b>1:30 pm</b> | <b>Closing Remarks</b><br>Wendy Burton<br>Director, Scottish Union Learning  |
| <b>1:40pm</b>  | <b>Lunch, Networking and Exhibitions</b>   |
| <b>3:00pm</b>  | <b>Close</b>   |



# The Scottish Government

## and Union Learning



**Since my appointment as Minister for Employability and Training I have been working with a range of partners to address the current and future challenges of our labour market.**

The economic climate has brought about changes in the needs of our labour market and the skills required to support it. With the emergence of new business models, the very nature of our labour market is also changing. Scotland's workforce has to be equipped to adapt and to thrive in this environment for the prosperity of our people, businesses and economy.

We published Scotland's first ever Labour Market Strategy just over a year ago in recognition of these challenges facing us. The strategy is firmly rooted in our ambitions for inclusive economic growth, and sets out how Fair Work contributes to this aim. A strong and resilient labour market is vital not only to increase productivity and grow our economy, but it is fundamental to improving the lives of people through work.

The Scottish Government recognises the vital role of strong trade unions to our economy and to our society. A high functioning workforce is pivotal, not just for achieving growth, but to respond and meet the changing needs of individuals and business alike. Our people must be equipped with the relevant skills to participate but, critically, to also progress in the labour market. Unions are at the forefront of the workplace learning agenda and play a key role in supporting the learning and training needs of workers.

This Government has supported Scottish Union Learning for many years now, and we are continuing to do so this year by providing dedicated funding to promote workplace learning, allowing members to access learning and training opportunities to upgrade their skills. In the current year, funding is expected to support over 3,000 learners in Scotland with courses being delivered on a wide range of subjects including Career Aspirations and Progression Planning, Filming & Editing for iDevices and CSCS Skilled Worker Card Qualifications.

It is only through supporting people in achieving their full potential that we can deliver the priorities of inclusive growth and Fair Work which will create the fairer, more prosperous Scotland that we all want to see.

I am delighted to participate in the conference today to recognise and celebrate the invaluable work you do to support workers across Scotland. Thank you for your continued dedication and support.

**Jamie Hepburn MSP**  
**Minister for Employability and Training**

*Jamie Hepburn is the elected Member of the Scottish Parliament for the Cumbernauld and Kilsyth constituency - representing the area he lives in with his family. First elected to the Scottish Parliament in 2007 to represent the Central Scotland region, Jamie was elected to represent Cumbernauld and Kilsyth in 2011, and re-elected as the area's parliamentary representative in 2016.*





# 2017 Learner of the Year

**The recipient of the 2017 Learner of the Year is Priscilla Maramba, a member of UNISON who works for Stirling Council.**

Priscilla was born and brought up in Zimbabwe, and worked as a solicitor there until life started to become challenging under the government regime of Robert Mugabe. In 2001, Priscilla came to the UK to study and make a new life for herself and her three children.

Whilst living in various places in England and Scotland, Priscilla worked in many jobs to make ends meet including working in a potato factory, ice cream factory, then as a cleaner, care assistant, and support worker for people with Learning Disabilities, as well as volunteering at the Citizens Advice Bureau.

In 2005 Priscilla moved to Scotland, and whilst working as a Care Worker for Falkirk Council, she became a member of the local UNISON Branch, which supported her return to learning.

Priscilla currently works as a Support Worker for Stirling Council. Despite being a single mother, holding down a job and volunteering, Priscilla has continued her learning journey by completing an HNC in Business Studies and gaining her Masters in Law. In the last year, Priscilla has also completed UNISON's Black Workers into Management Course, supported by the Learning Fund from Scottish Union Learning, and has now started a Chartered Management Institute Certificate in First Line Management through the Learning Fund. She is a UNISON Black Members Committee rep on UNISON Scotland's Learning and Organising Committee, and is working closely with the UNISON Development Fund project.

When she decided to begin a full-time course in Social Work, Priscilla sought funding from the Scottish Social Services Council and chose to change her job to a part-time position with Stirling Council. She will soon complete her Social Work Qualification and hopes to work as a Social Worker in the future.



**Priscilla Maramba, UNISON member, is the 2017 Learner of the Year.**



**First Minister Nicola Sturgeon MSP with Brian Ronald, Unite, and Grahame Smith, STUC General Secretary.**

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# STUC Union Rep Awards

## Helen Dowie Award for Lifelong Learning

The STUC Union Rep Awards consist of four awards, two of which are administered by Scottish Union Learning: the STUC Helen Dowie Award for Lifelong Learning and the STUC Equality Award.

The recipient of the 2017 STUC Helen Dowie Award for Lifelong Learning was Brian Ronald, Unite the Union, who works at Rolls Royce in Innichan. Sponsored by Skills Development Scotland, the award was presented at STUC Annual Congress by First Minister Nicola Sturgeon MSP.

Brian works as an Engineering Inspector and is the Lead Union Learning Rep at Rolls-Royce. Brian was instrumental in setting up a unique learning partnership organising the Open University degree programme that runs at Rolls-Royce in conjunction with Unite, Rolls-Royce, Scottish Union Learning and the OU. The unique funding arrangement between the union, employer, and learning provider has provided members at Rolls-Royce the opportunity to study for a degree at a time that suits them, at their own pace, and at a fraction of the cost of achieving a degree as a regular part-time learner.

Grahame Smith, STUC General Secretary, said: "Brian's ability to lead by example in workplace learning whilst also achieving a degree and working full-time is remarkable. He is a credit to his union, Unite, and to Rolls-Royce and is a fitting recipient of this year's award."

Brian Ronald said: "I am honoured to receive this year's Helen Dowie Award, and would like to thank the STUC for selecting me for such a prestigious award. I think it's great that the STUC formally recognises the work carried out by Union Learning Reps in this way. I would also like to thank my team of ULRs, Unite the Union and Rolls-Royce for their support in such a worthwhile project."

Suzanne Cullinane, Unite Learning Organiser (Scotland), said: "Brian is a dedicated ULR for Unite and is a very worthy recipient of this award. He has played an instrumental role in the success of a unique degree programme in his workplace whilst studying to achieve his own degree. Unite congratulates Brian on winning this award and thanks him for his hard work and dedication over the years."





# STUC Union Rep Awards

## Equality Award

**The recipient of the STUC Equality Award for 2017 is Sharon Sweeney, President of the University and College Union (UCU) Branch at the University of Dundee.**

The award was presented at STUC Annual Congress by First Minister Nicola Sturgeon MSP.

Sharon has been an active trade union representative for a number of years within the Dundee UCU Branch Committee. Sharon has pursued the disability equality agenda, and through negotiations with her employer, successfully negotiated a Disability Leave Policy (one of few in Higher Education Institutions). The policy includes provision of disability leave in long term absence policies, so that disabled staff are not penalised or subject to unfair absence management procedures within the sickness absence process.

Following the agreement of this policy, Sharon then instigated a UCU training session together with UCU's National Head of Equality, and the Human Resources Director of Dundee University, to show the positive

outcomes for good negotiations and best practice around Disability Leave policies. In 2015 Sharon was elected as the UCU Scotland Equality Officer, where she takes forward the union's equality agenda at a Scottish level, and participates in the work of UCU Scotland officers. This has involved raising issues around the gender pay gap and casualisation with the Scottish Funding Council and Scottish Government.

Sharon was elected to the STUC Disabled Workers' Committee a few years ago, and has been a very active committee member contributing effectively to the work of the Committee. Two years ago, her colleagues nominated her to the vice chair role, and in the past year she was elected as the Chair of the STUC Disabled Workers' Committee, leading the work of the Committee in its engagement with the Scottish Government, other unions and third sector organisations. Most recently she has contributed to an STUC briefing paper on epilepsy. In November she chaired the STUC Disabled Workers' conference, ensuring a successful inclusive event.



**First Minister Nicola Sturgeon MSP with Sharon Sweeney, UCU.**

Grahame Smith, STUC General Secretary, said: "Sharon's work in challenging inequality in her workplace and supporting others in her workplace, her union's national structures and the wider trade union movement through the STUC Disabled Workers Committee throughout her years as a trade union rep."

Pam Milne, Head of HR and Organisational Development at the University of Dundee said: The Disability Leave Policy been a really important piece of work for the University which has been really appreciated and really successful."



# Workshops Explained

All delegates will attend one workshop. Each workshop will last for approximately 60 minutes.

1

## Using Learning to Tackle Inequality

Facilitators: Alan White, Scottish Union Learning, and Sharon Sweeney, UCU

Often learning and equality are regarded as two different strands of a union's work, however, union-led learning can be a powerful tool to help to challenge inequality in the workplace. Explore innovative approaches to learning which have tackled inequality or underrepresentation in the workplace, and discuss the ways in which learning opportunities can change our workplaces for the better to the benefit of all.

2

## The Gig Economy - Empowering Workers

Facilitators: Sarah Collins, STUC, and Cailean Gallagher, STUC/Young Workers' Learning Project

Many workers in historically permanent and secure employment are now faced with zero hour contracts, agency work and enforced 'self-employment.' This workshop will look at how Scottish Union Learning can support workers in the gig economy by ensuring that they are empowered to learn and enforce workplace rights, whilst recognising the difficulties and challenges they face in terms of employer threats and wider issues such as automation and a fluctuating labour market.

3

## Personal Cyber Security

Facilitators: Craig Steele, Coderdojo, Dr Martin Goodfellow, Freelancer, and Catherine Garvie, Scottish Union Learning

Nowadays our computers, phones, and tablets are filled with personal information - but how can we keep that sensitive information out of the wrong hands? In this workshop you'll learn about the most common cyber security attacks, but more importantly how to take steps to protect yourself. You'll see live demonstrations of attacks and learn how to spot them. These tips will help you feel more confident about using a computer safely. No technical knowledge is required.

4

## Apprenticeships and Unions

Facilitators: Dan Henderson, RMT, Caroline Barry, CalMac, and Tommy Breslin, Scottish Union Learning

The Modern Apprenticeship programme has undergone a number of significant changes in recent years. This workshop will look at those emerging changes and how unions continue to support apprentices. Delegates will have an opportunity to build their understanding of the apprenticeship programme, the role that unions play in supporting apprentices, and how unions are organising the delivery and introduction of apprenticeship programmes within workplaces.





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# Invited Speakers



**Peter Hunter**  
**Chair, Scottish Union Learning Board**

Peter Hunter joined the Scottish Union Learning Board in 2015 and became Chair in 2016. Peter's involvement in promoting learning to workers dates back to 1990 and his own

adult learning includes subjects as diverse as British Sign Language, psychology, law, recovery and life drawing. Peter has been a legal officer and Regional Organiser with UNISON since 2001 and he now works as a Regional Manager with responsibility for learning and organising. Peter has an unshakable faith in the personal and collective fulfilment that learning has to offer and he has a firm belief that union learning and Fair Work offer hope for a more inclusive Scottish economy - with fairer opportunity and reward for all.



**Helen Martin**  
**STUC Assistant General Secretary**

Helen Martin is the Assistant General Secretary at the STUC for policy and parliamentary affairs. Her responsibilities include supporting the STUC's policy and research function

in a range of areas including the labour market, economic and industrial policy, education and skills and transport and infrastructure. Helen also supports the STUC's political engagement. Helen was a Commissioner on the Widening Access to Higher Education Commission and currently sits on the advisory council of the Scottish Qualifications Authority and Skills Development Scotland's equality advisory group.

**Grahame Smith**  
**STUC General Secretary**

Grahame is a Graduate of Strathclyde University, where he obtained an Honours Degree in Economics and Industrial Relations.

He serves on a number of Boards/Bodies, including: Commissioner for the UK Commission for Employment and Skills; the joint Skills Development Scotland / Scottish Funding Council Skills Committee; Board of Scottish Enterprise; Chairperson of Scotland Europa; PILOT, the UK Government's group for the oil and gas industry, the Scottish Oil and Gas Industry, Leadership Group and the UK Government's Oil and Gas Council. Grahame was a member of the Working Together: Progressive Workplace Policies in Scotland Review Group, and now serves on the Fair Work Convention. He is a member of Glasgow Colleges Regional Board; and a Non-Executive Director of Skills Development Scotland. Following the recent EU Referendum, Grahame was appointed by the First Minister to serve on the Standing Council on Europe which will advise the Scottish Government on its negotiations to retain Scotland's membership of the EU. Grahame has been the General Secretary of the STUC since 2006.



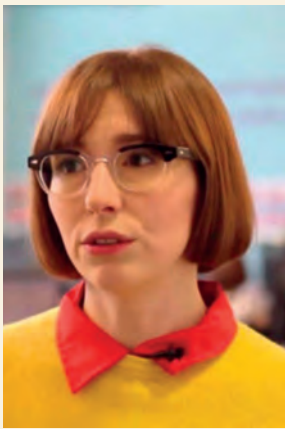




**Jamie Hepburn MSP  
Minister for Employability  
and Training**

Jamie Hepburn is the elected Member of the Scottish Parliament for the Cumbernauld and Kilsyth constituency - representing the area he lives in with his family. First

elected to the Scottish Parliament in 2007 to represent the Central Scotland region, Jamie was elected to represent Cumbernauld and Kilsyth in 2011, and re-elected as the area's parliamentary representative in 2016.



**Suzie Bowman Senior  
Service Designer, Skills  
Development  
Scotland (SDS)**

Within SDS's Service Design and Innovation team, Suzie's role involves leading teams to design and deliver service innovation

within SDS and with partners. Suzie works along with the newly formed Centre for Work-based Learning.



**Cailean Gallagher  
STUC Campaigns &  
Communications Officer**

Cailean joined the STUC in 2017 and is supporting the work of the Young Workers' Learning Project and Better than Zero to equip young workers to challenge precarious

working conditions. Cailean worked for the Yes Scotland campaign, leading on labour movement engagement, before campaigning for a parliamentarian and then organising for the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy.

**Patricia Findlay  
University of  
Strathclyde**

Patricia is Professor of Work and Employment Relations and Director of the Scottish Centre for Employment Research at the University of



Strathclyde. Patricia is a member of the Economic and Social Research Council Peer Review College and the Carnegie Trust Reviewer panel, and she sits on the Editorial Board of the Industrial Relations Journal. She is a member of the British Universities Industrial Relations Association and a long-standing member of the Employment Tribunals Service. Patricia is currently the Academic Adviser to the Fair Work Convention and is also a member of the Scottish Government's Innovation Forum.

**Atta Yaqub  
Actor and Activist**

Atta was struck from obscurity by acclaimed director Ken Loach for his lead role in Ae Fond Kiss.

Having recently appeared in a number of TV, and film productions both in the UK and internationally, Atta continues to act, and also supports many charitable organisations, including Glasgow Ansar (All Nations Sports Arts Recreation), and the Well Foundation. Currently as Education Manager at The Prince's Trust, he is responsible for delivering and growing the Achieve and Team programmes throughout schools and further education colleges in Scotland. He is also responsible for the Mosaic programme, focussing on mentoring with Muslim and minority ethnic communities.







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## Equality Rep Development Project

The Scottish Union Learning Equality Rep Development Project is looking for more reps to get involved, including existing Equality Reps and others!

Since 2015, we have been supporting Equality Reps to access training and development, make the case for equality and diversity to their employers and unions, sharing good practice through our National Equality Rep Network and arguing for facility time for Equality Reps.

If you would like to get involved, contact Alan White, Development Officer, for more information by email at [awhite@stuc.org.uk](mailto:awhite@stuc.org.uk).



TUC Education in Scotland wishes delegates attending the 2017 Scottish Union Learning Conference every success in your discussions and deliberations.

TUC Education runs a fully accredited programme of high quality training to Union Reps, Health & Safety Reps, Union Learning Reps and Union Professionals through a network of Further Education Colleges across Scotland. All TUC Education courses are offered flexibly and our courses are available to study in the classroom, entirely online or through blended learning.

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[www.tuceducation.org.uk](http://www.tuceducation.org.uk)

## Digital Unions: Cyber Resilience Project

Nowadays our computers, phones and tablets are filled with personal information – how can we keep that sensitive information out of the wrong hands? How can we protect ourselves online, spot potential attacks and feel more confident about using technology safely?



Building on the success of the Digital Unions project, Scottish Union Learning has been awarded short-term funding from the Scottish Government to deliver a Cyber Resilience project. The project will develop the cyber resilience capacity and cyber security skills of unions, reps, members and workers across Scotland.

**Cyber Resilience** means being able to prepare for, combat, rapidly recover and learn from deliberate attacks, or accidental events that have a disruptive effect on interconnected technologies.

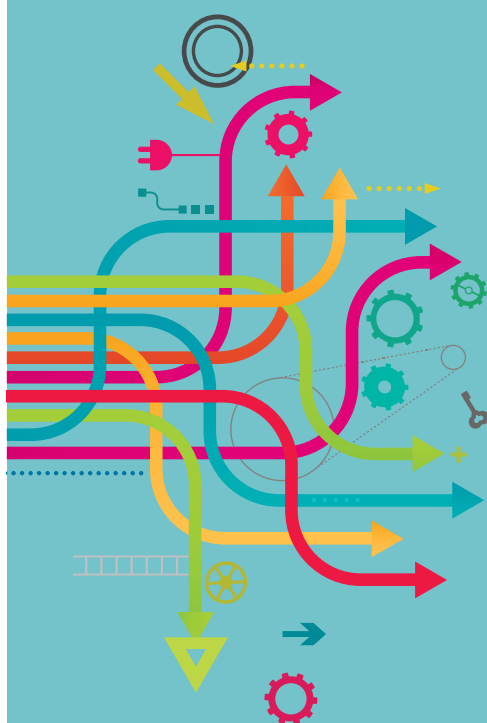
**Cyber Security** is a key element of being resilient, but cyber resilient people and organisations recognise that being safe online goes far beyond just technical measures. By developing understanding of cyber risks and threats, they are able to take the appropriate measures to stay safe online.

For further information and to take part in a workshop, contact your union, or Catherine Garvie, Development Officer, by email at [cgarvie@stuc.org.uk](mailto:cgarvie@stuc.org.uk).



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