







Strengthening Skills, Strengthening the Workforce



Learners' Quotes

"I love this course; I now want to do a diploma in counselling."

I would have."

"As an electrician of
35 years, I found this course contained
lots of new and useful material."

"I would recommend this course. The trainer helped break down issues I had regarding CV and interviews."

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Introduction

Peter Hunter, Chair Scottish Union Learning Board



The labour market is now laden with risk for workers and their families - locally, regionally and internationally. Learning is only one element of the trade union response but it

is essential that our members have the skills required to respond to change.

In partnership with the Scottish Government's Fair Work Directorate, Scottish Union Learning has supported unions in making Workforce Development a priority during the year. Learning activity undertaken by unions, as a result of the Development Fund and Learning Fund, has resulted in over 6,000 workers increasing their skills, benefiting them and their employers. Many unions have successfully developed partnerships with employers which have allowed them to negotiate paid time off for learning during working hours, with the costs of learning being met through the Learning Fund, or other funding secured by Union Learning Representatives.

Recognising the learning needs of young workers, who are often in low paid and precarious jobs, the Board agreed to fund a Young Workers' Learning Project this year. The aim of the project was to address the learning needs of young workers who have little opportunity to access workplace training, with the nature of their employment often making it financially and organisationally difficult to access learning.

Courses and other activities organised through the project have been successful both in delivering skills and in demonstrating the advantages of trade union membership to younger members of the workforce.

Developing leadership capacity within the trade union movement in Scotland has also been a priority for the Board, and funding has again been secured from the Scottish Government and made available to unions specifically to develop leadership capacity. This is being done by building upon existing leadership programmes or developing new activities, which focus on enhancing development for Union Reps and Stewards, full-time officials, or young activists.

This has once again been a successful year for trade unions in delivering learning opportunities and qualifications for their members, and in their efforts to promote Fair Work for workers across Scotland. With the ongoing support of Scottish Union Learning and the Scottish Government we hope to continue and develop this work in the coming years.



Structure

Scottish Union Learning was established by the STUC General Council to deliver trade union learning in workplaces across Scotland in line with STUC policy on learning and skills. This is taken forward in partnership with unions.

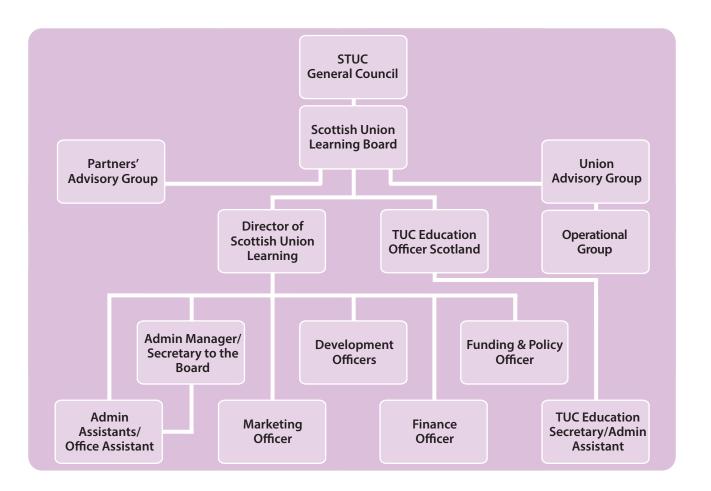
The Scottish Union Learning Board was established to direct and oversee the strategy and work of Scottish Union Learning. The Board includes members of the General Council, representatives of affiliated trade unions, the STUC General Secretary and a TUC nominated member.

The Board is supported by a Union Advisory Group and a Partners' Advisory Group. These provide advice and information on strategic and operational matters.

The work of Scottish Union Learning is delivered by members of the Scottish Union Learning Team. Members of the Team are located in the STUC/Scottish Union Learning offices in Glasgow and in Inverness.

Statement of Purpose

Scottish Union Learning supports trade unions in accessing skills and lifelong learning opportunities for their members that contribute to collective prosperity, fairness and equality, for workers across Scotland.



The Board

Appointed by the STUC General Council, the Scottish Union Learning Board oversees and directs the work of Scottish Union Learning.

The Scottish Union Learning Board approves the Business Plan which outlines the strategic objectives of Scottish Union Learning for the year, and agrees and monitors the annual work plan. The Board has responsibility for all Scottish Union Learning funding. As well as agreeing the annual budget, the Board oversees the allocation of funding from the Development Fund and Learning Fund, and monitors the use of any additional funding secured to support the work of Scottish Union Learning.

Chair: Peter Hunter, UNISON

Vice Chair: John Brown, CWU

Members: Paul Bennett, UCATT; Jackson Cullinane, Unite; Karen Foster, PCS; Brian Linn, Aegis; Lyn McClintock, EIS; Robert Mooney, Disabled Workers' Rep; Zoe Streatfield, Young Workers' Rep; Grahame Smith, STUC General Secretary; Liz Rees, TUC Education Manager

Staff in Attendance:

Wendy Burton, Director Gus Grubb, TUC Education Officer Ann Garscadden, Secretary to the Board

Observer: Christine Hamilton-Rice, Scottish Government

The aims and objectives of Scottish Union Learning are to:

- promote trade union-led learning and skills development in line with STUC Policy on learning and skills;
- support unions in identifying and meeting the skills and learning needs of their members and in organising workplace learning opportunities across Scotland with specific resources dedicated to the Highlands and Islands;
- assist unions in identifying the needs of Union Learning Representatives and provide appropriate support;
- provide assistance to unions in accessing Everyday Skills opportunities for their members;
- work with unions to increase digital participation in workplaces across Scotland;
- promote the development of leadership capacity within unions;
- promote learning or action which increases equality awareness and tackles inequality and under-representation at work;
- encourage and support employer engagement in delivering learning and upgrading skills;
- establish relationships with partner organisations in the provision of learning and skills;
- continue to develop resources for unions, ULRs, and learners; and
- work with the TUC in ensuring the provision of a comprehensive trade union education service suitable to the needs of unions in Scotland.

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Advisory Groups

Union Advisory Group Partners' Advisory Group

The Union Advisory Group and the Partners' Advisory Group provide advice and information to the Board on strategic and operational matters.

Union Advisory Group

The Union Advisory Group supports the Board by:

- providing operational information that will inform the Board in making strategic decisions;
- identifying strategic or operational issues for the Board to consider;
- advising the Board of changes in the strategic direction of individual unions;
- providing the Board with examples of good practice in trade union learning.

Co-Chairs

Wendy Burton, Director Gus Grubb, TUC Education Officer: Scotland

Membership

Membership is open by nomination from all STUC affiliated organisations.

Partners' Advisory Group

The Partners' Advisory Group supports the Board by:

- contributing to discussions about the strategic direction of Scottish Union Learning;
- advising Scottish Union Learning on ways in which it could develop in order to better achieve its objectives and further its role;
- sharing information on the strategic direction of partner organisations;
- championing the value of union learning in the wider world of learning and skills.

Chair

Grahame Smith, STUC General Secretary

Membership

BBC Scotland Dyslexia Scotland Education Scotland Equate Scotland Glasgow Kelvin College Highlands and Islands Enterprise Learning Link Scotland Newbattle Abbey College Scottish Adult Learning Partnership Scottish Book Trust Scottish Enterprise Scottish Government **Skills Development Scotland SCQF** Partnership SCVO SQA The Open University WEA Scotland Zero Waste Scotland

The Board reviews membership of this Group on an on-going basis.





Ministerial Visit

Aberdeen City Council Workers Celebrate New Qualifications

UCATT and Unite organised learning and support for 297 Aberdeen City Council Workers over the last two years through their Development Fund projects. Learning was delivered free to workers through financial support from the Learning Fund, which is administered by Scottish Union Learning and supported by the Scottish Government.

In October 2016, UCATT organised onsite assessment for 23 Aberdeen City Council tradespeople, including joiners, painters, plasterers, slaters and masons. The programme provided workers who had no formal qualifications with an opportunity to demonstrate their considerable skills and experience. Candidates were assessed at work, and also completed portfolios to obtain NVQ Level 2 qualifications. The Council funded 10 places and ensured the workloads of candidates were suitable to evidence their wide-ranging skills; the other 13 places were funded through the Learning Fund. The unions invited Jamie Hepburn MSP, Minister for Employability and Training, to celebrate the achievements of the learners at Aberdeen City Council during a workplace visit that was organised by Scottish Union Learning in November 2016. The Minister presented the learners with certificates and toured disused Council properties to view examples of the work completed by the learners, including partitioned walls, plastering, and brickwork.

Minister for Employability and Training Jamie Hepburn said: "Trade unions play a vital role in up-skilling our workforce and delivering trade union learning, so it is great to hear first-hand from those who have benefitted from the programme and to celebrate in their success. Having the right people with the right skills is essential to our economy, and that is why the Scottish Government is pleased to continue supporting this programme with almost £2.3 million this financial year."



The Development Fund

The Development Fund complements existing trade union learning strategies and supports developmental work in workplace learning by increasing the capacity of unions to deliver courses to members.

Funding was allocated to eighteen union projects in Scotland during the year; of those, fifteen were based in the Lowlands and Uplands area and three in the Highlands and Islands. The projects have used the funding to build strong relationships with existing and new employers, and develop a range of accredited and non-accredited learning opportunities across different sectors including food and drink, retail, transport, engineering, film/television, and healthcare.

"The mock interview was really helpful and has made me more confident in my interview ability. Overall the course has been very useful and enjoyable."

Lowlands and Uplands Projects

- Aegis: Developing Skills in Financial Services
- ASLEF: ASLEF Education
- BECTU: BECTU Vision
- BFAWU: Creating Pathways to Progress
- Community: Engaging with Employers on Workforce Development
- NUJ: Dynamic Media for Digital Times
- PCS: License to Skill
- Notional Strategy
- RCM: Developing the Maternity Workforce in LUPS
- RMT: Developing Skills in Rail Infrastructure, Rail Passenger and Ferry Passenger
- TSSA: Better Skills in Scotland
- UCATT: Addressing Skills Shortages in the Construction Sector
- UNISON: Upskilling in Health & Social Care & Developing Young People
- 🕸 Unite: Learn with Unite
- Usdaw: Byte Sized Learning -Workplace Digital and Everyday Skills Development

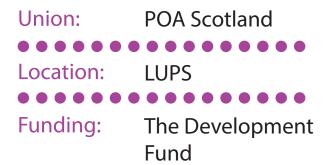
Highlands and Islands Projects

- NUJ: Building for the Future: Sustainable Strategies for the Media Industry
- RMT: All Aboard for Learning
- UNISON: Upskilling Healthcare Workers and Enhancing the Infrastructure for Trade Union Led Learning in the Highlands and Islands





Case Study The Development Fund



Scotland has one of the highest prison populations in Western Europe with 8,000+ prisoners incarcerated at any one time. For the workers employed in the prison sector, this provides huge challenges in supporting prisoners who face many problems ranging from mental health issues, addiction problems, issues of low educational attainment, and economic and social disadvantage. The work undertaken by staff in prison is a vital public service. In recent years, the role of prison staff has evolved from a predominantly control and security role into one with a much greater emphasis on supporting prisoners to understand their

own behaviour and acquire skills which can help them integrate back into society.

In order to do this, the skills of prison staff have to develop and evolve. Alan Golightly, POA Learning Organiser, said: "The POA Learning Project is fully integrated into a wider union strategy of professionalising the prison service and gaining recognition for the skills workers in the sector have. This includes organising learning which complements professional development and provides workers with the tools to undertake further learning. One example was organising a series of reflective practice courses in the autumn designed to empower prison staff to reflect on their own behaviour and analyse the way their actions can help prisoners change destructive patterns of behaviour."

Additionally, the POA project has engaged in developing leadership training amongst members to support its wider skills agenda.



Case Study

Expanding Modern Apprenticeships in CalMac with the RMT

Union:RMTLocation:Highlands & IslandsLevel:SVQ Level 2

With encouragement from the RMT Development Fund project, apprenticeships in the maritime industry have grown within CalMac over the last few years. In 2016, when the company brought the college-based training of apprentices to Scotland for the first time, it was discovered that there was no relevant Modern Apprenticeship for onboard retail operations. Along with the City of Glasgow College, CalMac has undertaken a pilot of a Hospitality Modern Apprenticeship, which has added maritime enhancements including Firefighting, First Aid and Personal Survival Techniques. Ten hospitality apprentices were recruited to join the existing 2016 intake of six deck and four engine apprentices. The apprenticeship

is the first of its kind in the UK maritime industry. When the pilot is complete, the RMT will push for the Onboard Hospitality Apprenticeship to be incorporated into the Maritime Occupations Modern Apprenticeship Framework.

CRMT

EARNIN

Dan Henderson, RMT Learning Project Worker, said: "The work between RMT and the employer is providing an opportunity for young people to pursue a career in a position that's never been available as an apprenticeship in Scotland or the UK. It's a welcome step in how CalMac recruits future employees, but more importantly, it's shaping the future of recruitment in the UK maritime industry."

Kathleen MacDonald, a Modern Apprentice from North Uist, said: "What attracted me to the apprenticeship was the fact it was college based and on-thejob training onboard a ship. The brilliant part has been meeting so many great people; the only thing that took a bit of getting used to was living and working in the same place...and also, getting over the seasickness!"







Case Study The Development Fund

Union: UNISON Location: Highlands & Islands Funding: The Development Fund

Against a background of the integration of health and social care, SSSC registration and the increasing need for innovation in service delivery, UNISON has placed support for healthcare workers at the centre of its Highlands and Islands Development Fund Project. Marta Chaba, UNISON Project Worker, said: "Learning needs surveys of the membership revealed a strong demand for dementia courses to enhance the skills of healthcare workers. The project worked with the Open University to deliver one-day Dementia Awareness workshops in several locations. In Inverness, this was followed up with an accredited 'Caring for

People with Dementia' course, to provide progression for learners, and this has been the model that we have adopted in other areas of the Highlands and Islands." Healthcare workers require a range of skills to manage their relationships with patients and their families, service users, carers, colleagues and others, and UNISON has provided a range of courses to meet this demand. Courses delivered include Mental Health Awareness, Autism Awareness, Managing Challenging Behaviour, Alcohol Abuse and Dependency Awareness and Understanding Sight and Hearing Loss. Workers in many rural and remote areas of the Highlands and Islands, including Lochgilpead, Lochaber, Kirkwall and Shetland, as well as population centres like Inverness, have benefitted from UNISON's programme. The wide geographical spread of course delivery reflects the project's focus on recruiting ULRs to provide workers with the opportunity to learn new skills through courses organised through the union learning project.

UNISON



The Learning Fund

Lowlands and Uplands Scotland

The Learning Fund is financed by the Scottish Government and is accessed by unions, through Scottish Union Learning, to offer workplace learning opportunities to learners throughout Scotland.

The Learning Fund is an innovative source of funding that enables learning to be delivered in the workplace to meet the needs of learners. The approaches of individual unions reflect the diversity of the needs of workers, resulting in a wide range of provision, including Everyday Skills, employability skills and vocational and trade skills. Learning is arranged to take account of learners who, for example, work complicated shift patterns, live in a rural area, or have caring responsibilities. There is a great demand for unions to facilitate delivery of learning in the workplace, to ensure that opportunities are available to all workers who want to develop their skills, and to progress within the workforce.

The Learning Fund aims to support up to 3,500 learners each year, through around 300 courses, to develop new skills or improve their existing skills. The level and type of learning requested by unions through the Learning Fund reflects the broad range of industries and sectors in which learners are employed throughout Scotland, from the Lowlands to the Highlands and Islands. The Learning Fund enables learners to gain recognised qualifications which can help them protect and enhance their employability in a challenging labour market. The Learning Fund also helps learners to gain recognition and accreditation of existing skills through workplace assessment.

The learning undertaken ranges from low level, non-accredited courses to higher level, accredited courses. Many of the learners who took part reported that they had gained confidence and skills to help them to progress in their current career or had developed new, transferrable skills. Courses included Social Media and digital skills, management, mentoring and counselling skills, dyslexia, dementia and deaf awareness, and a wide range of vocational and trade skills.

"Very dilligent assessors made sure that I understood everything before my test. I now feel that I am well qualified to carry out my duties correctly."

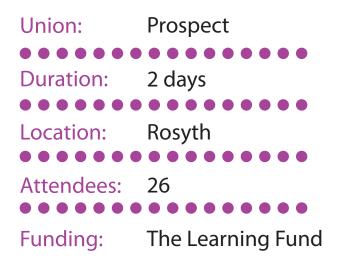
"I would definitely recommend this course to others. I would love to continue my learning."





Case Study

Women Moving Forward with Prospect



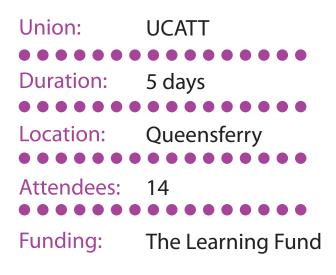
As the current large engineering contract of assembly and commissioning of the UK's new Aircraft Carriers at Babcock International Group in Rosyth is nearing conclusion, there is a need for diversification of work into new areas. Prospect has organised a series of positive action courses to prepare workers from under-represented groups to progress within their workplace to meet these new demands. Supported by the Learning Fund, Prospect led the development and delivery of on-site learning to 26 women. The course was aimed at addressing the known under-representation of women within the organisation's management and leadership roles.

Claire Grant, Prospect member, said: "I started my career as an apprentice Mechanical Fitter with Babcock. I became a production planner for pipe work and have been a planner for around four years. It was exciting to start with, but I soon hit a lull in my career and was feeling demotivated. I saw an advert for the Women Moving Forward course and thought it was a great opportunity. Not only were we getting taught valuable skills to move our careers forward, it was delivered to help us realise the path we wanted for ourselves. The course was organised by Prospect and I wanted to be a part of that, so I signed up to become a rep. I love being able to help people and get involved with bigger issues as a branch. The course allowed me to fulfil my own potential."



Case Study Qualifications for the

Qualifications for the Queensferry Crossing



UCATT overcame many logistical challenges to support six deck hands who work for Galliford Try, within dangerous shore waters in the Firth of Forth to obtain the STCW95 qualification in September and again in December 2016. These deck hands required the STCW95 qualification to comply with future changes in Maritime and Coastguard Agency law.

Michael Conroy, UCATT Learning Organiser, said: "With the work on the Queensferry Crossing coming to an end in 2017, the likelihood is that these workers



will be made redundant. Therefore, this qualification was imperative for workers to obtain future employment in the future." STCW95 is a safety qualification which was gained by completing five Units spread over a five-day period. The Units included Personal Safety and Social Responsibility, Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting, Personal Survival Technique, Elementary First Aid and Proficiency in Security Awareness. The Units were delivered as practical sessions that simulated real life experiences, such as with learners participating in firefighting in 200+ degree heat, and righting a capsized life raft.

Brian Conjoice, UCATT member, said: "In particular, the practical elements of the Firefighting Unit were excellent. We were on a rescue mission in a smoke filled room which we thought covered a huge area. In reality, it was only four feet by four feet. This course was by far the best I have ever been on."





The Learning Fund

in the Highlands and Islands



The Learning Fund in the Highlands and Islands plays a vital role in helping workers access learning opportunities, supporting innovative approaches which bring workers and learning together despite the challenges of the mostly rural, sparsely populated region.

The Learning Fund supported a variety of courses in 2016 across the breadth of the Highlands and Islands. Courses ranged from Sage 50 Accounts for HMRC workers in Inverness (PCS) to an SVQ in Moving Engineering Loads for oil and gas sector workers in Sullom Voe (Unite), reflecting the diversity of workers' learning needs and their desire to acquire the skills and qualifications to progress in their career, to meet the challenges of changing workplaces.

Enhancing service to clients, supporting co-workers and developing resilience are themes that can be seen in the increasing number of courses which raise awareness in the areas of developmental disability, sensory impairment and learning difficulties. Subjects including Autism, Dyslexia, Neurodiversity and Sight and Hearing Loss, represented 29% of all Learning Fund-supported courses in 2016.

In 2016 there was a trend towards shorter unaccredited courses, with over 60% being unaccredited. There are a number of contributing factors, including the popularity of Planning for Retirement courses, during a period which has seen extensive restructuring in public sector workplaces in the Highlands and Islands.

The predominance of female learners, reflecting the known gender balance in public sector workplaces and gendered trends in sectors such as healthcare, has increased in 2016. It is not clear whether this is part of a longer-term trend.

The age range of learners also reflects an ageing demographic in the majority of workplaces engaged in union learning, with 70% of learners aged 41 and over.

Learners were postiive in their ratings of what they had learned of gaied from their course.





Case Study Providing Opportunities for Workers to Progress

Union:	PCS
Duration:	
Location:	
Attendees:	8
Funding:	H&I Learning Fund

Louise MacBean, a PCS ULR, works for Bòrd na Gàidhlig. She organises learning in her own workplace, and in the Crofters' Commission and Scottish Natural Heritage, which share Great Glen House, Inverness. Louise said: "I had conducted a learning needs assessment in the three organisations which, combined with feedback from one to ones, demonstrated a clear demand for an accredited course which would help workers develop effective communication skills to support their progression at work." Within the CMI Level 3 syllabus in First Line Mangement, there is a CMI unit 'Management Communication.' This met the learners' needs by providing an opportunity to take a first step towards a management gualification, enhancing their effectiveness in their role and helping them to move forward in their career. Unfortunately, withdrawals from the course due to illness meant the start date had to be put back. Through her involvement in the Inverness Local Learning Forum, Louise took the initiative, and offered places to workers in other organisations which allowed the course to go ahead. Louise said: "We had to reschedule the original dates as a number of participants had to withdraw at the last minute. This was unusual, but a challenge that we were able to overcome by opening up the course to other unions and workplaces. We were also grateful for the flexibility shown by Inverness College UHI. The learners all praised the tutor, Nicola MacDonald, and thoroughly enjoyed the course."



Improving Everyday Skills

Scottish Union Learning promotes Everyday Skills activity through Development Fund Projects, the Digital Unions Project, STUC Conferences, Learning Conferences, Everyday Skills Events and Local Learning Forums.

Scottish Union Learning works with Scottish Government, Education Scotland, Dyslexia Scotland, Scottish Book Trust, WEA and other partners to raise awareness of Everyday Skills needs and suitable means of support.

Everyday Skills Group

Through the Scottish Union Learning Everyday Skills Group, unions are encouraged to engage with Scottish Government strategies, such as Adult Literacies in Scotland (ALiS) 2020, Digital Participation: A National Framework for Local Action, and Scottish Government Mobile Action Plan. Unions are also supported in participating in national initiatives such as Adult Learners' Week, Book Week Scotland and Dyslexia Awareness Week. The Group is comprised of members from affiliated unions, Scottish Union Learning, Dyslexia Scotland, Education Scotland and Workers' Educational Association. The Group meets guarterly to discuss all aspects related to workplace literacies, digital participation and dyslexia; it is also responsible for contributing to the planning of the annual Everyday Skills Event.

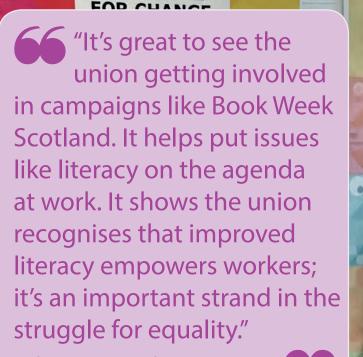
Everyday Skills

Scottish Union Learning defines Everyday Skills as the language, literacy, numeracy, and basic IT and digital skills required both in the workplace and at home. Everyday Skills activity also includes English language learning for those who do not have English as their first language and support for learners who may have dyslexia and/or other learning differences and disabilities.









Usdaw

UNION LEARNING INFORMATION DAY with a free book!! Friday 25th November

ETS

Richie Venton, Usdaw Convener **IKEA Glasgow**

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Case Study UNISON Raises Dyslexia Awareness



Union: UNISON Location: Glasgow Attendees: 12

Dyslexia has been recognised by UNISON at a local and regional level as having a significant impact on peoples lives, both in and out of the workplace. UNISON has had an increasing number of requests for Awareness Raising Workshops over the years and has put dozens of learners through the workshops during this time.

As the impact of the workshops spread, more and more disciplinary and grievance cases began to come to UNISON's attention involving members with dyslexia, where there appeared to be a lack of in-depth understanding of dyslexia as well as how to support members with dyslexia. After approaching members who worked in Learning, Development and Human Resources roles in workplaces to gauge interest in developing their skills in working with people with dyslexia, UNISON had sufficient interest to start a PDA in Working with People with Dyslexia.

Part 1 of the PDA was completed in December 2015, and Part 2 completed in December 2016. There was significant commitment required from learners, as the course required home learning as well as attending the face-to-face sessions. Upon the completion of the course, feedback was highly positive, with many of the learners already being able to put in to practice their learning back in the workplace.

Carol Massey, SVQ Assessor at Bon Accord Care in Aberdeen, said: "I passed the PDA and I am delighted to have had the opportunity to learn more about supporting my colleagues with dyslexia. It was a worthwhile piece of learning which I have been able to use already."





Digital Unions

As a result of the sweeping changes brought about by communication technology, increasingly Everyday Skills has developed to include digital skills.

An additional round of funding from Scottish Government Digital Directorate has enabled Scottish Union Learning to build digital skills capacity with unions in workplaces by providing themed digital taster skills workshops and information stands.

Digital Unions Project

Scottish Union Learning successfully applied for funding from the Scottish Government Digital Directorate to further develop the Digital Unions project during 2016-2017. The objective of the project is to build digital skills capacity within unions and workplaces in line with Scottish Government's Digital Scotland agenda, 'Digital Participation: A National Framework for Local Action' (2014).

The funding was secured from September 2016 to deliver a series of Digital Unions Roadshows providing project promotion and digital skills advice at information stands for up to 4,000 workers, and more in-depth scheduled digital taster workshops for 500 learners across Scotland.

During the first three months, much progress was made.



- Over 2,000 workers visited stalls at STUC conferences, the Scottish Union Learning Conference, and 10 workplaces. Over 600 workers registered their interest in attending further digital training workshops.
- Over 200 learners from 12 unions, Aegis, ASLEF, CWU, Community, EIS, POA, PCS, RCM, RMT, UNISON, Unite and Usdaw participated in digital taster workshops. The workshops took place in workplaces and learning centres, and at the Scottish Union Learning Conference. Training was provided on Adobe Connect, basic digital skills, cyber security, digital photography, digital storytelling, introduction to coding for the web and social media.
- Stalls were set up and workshops took place in the central belt, Dumfries and Galloway and the Highlands and Islands. The project engaged with workers from a range of workplaces including Aegon, BT Alexander Bain House and Dial House, Dawnfresh, R R Spink & Sons, HMRC, Sainsbury's, Abellio ScotRail, Scottish Natural Heritage, Further Education colleges and local authorities.



Highlands and Islands

ds

A key objective of Scottish Union Learning in the Highlands and 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.

The Highlands and Islands covers some 15,000 square miles, which is more than half of Scotland's landmass. It includes more than 90 inhabited islands but accounts for less than 10% of Scotland's population. Of the 448,000 people living there, half are under 44. The region is also home to more than 21,000 businesses and over 8,000 voluntary and community groups.*

Recognising both the challenges and opportunities of supporting union members in accessing learning opportunities in this predominately rural, sparsely populated region, Scottish Union Learning has a dedicated Highlands and Islands Team based in Inverness.

The Team's activities focus on:

- Working with unions to increase the number of ULRs and developing the ULR infrastructure to create opportunities for workers to participate in union-led learning;
- Establishing and maintaining ULR Forums across the region, which provide opportunities for networking and support and for organising courses;
- Developing and co-ordinating good practice models of cross-union working to extend the reach of union learning;

- Identifying innovative ways to deliver learning programmes which help overcome potential barriers such as remoteness and low density population;
- Working with government agencies to contribute to economic strategies for the Highlands and Islands which reflect workers' aspirations in workforce development;
- Supporting unions and ULRs to build collaborative working relationship with employers, to develop more productive and rewarding workplaces;
- Working in partnership with trade unions, local learning providers and other key partners to develop learning provision that meets the needs of unions; and
- Ensuring that the needs of the Highlands and Islands are incorporated in the development of Scottish Union Learning.

The ULR role is the pillar of the union learning infrastructure, leading the skills and learning agenda in the workplace. In the Highlands and Islands, typically workplaces are smaller with often a sole ULR, who may organise learning across more than one workplace, employer and union. Consequently, Scottish Union Learning prioritises support for this crucial role though the provision of guidance and resources for organising courses at Local Learning Forums and events throughout the year, including the annual Highlands and Islands ULR Conference. The Scottish Union Learning Team is in regular communication with unions through email and the quarterly newsletter eNews. The Highlands and Islands ULR Facebook group provides another forum for ULRs to discuss and organise learning.



The Leadership Development Fund

The STUC obtained funding from the Scottish Government's Fair Work Directorate in 2015-2016 to help develop leadership capacity within the trade union movement in Scotland. Building leadership capacity within unions is essential in taking forward the Fair Work agenda.

This funding was made available to unions, through Scottish Union Learning, to develop leadership capacity by building upon existing leadership programmes or developing something new, with a focus on enhanced development for union reps and stewards, full-time officials, and young activists. Following discussions with the Fair Work Team at the Scottish Government, the criteria and application process for accessing this funding was established. A total of nine applications were approved for unions to deliver leadership in 2015-16. An evaluation and feedback event was held in March 2016 to allow unions to share their learning from their leadership courses and events. It was clear that several key areas had emerged as priority areas for union leadership work: the use of social media, equality and inclusive leadership, encouraging underrepresented groups to identify as leaders and the differentiation between leadership and management.

Following additional funding for the 2016-17 period, 13 bids were approved. Many of the courses built upon previous work, with unions which had received funding before showing clear progression and new unions identifying proposed areas of work. It was clear from the number of applications and attendees on the courses that leadership was an area of great interest to unions and their members. Scottish Union Learning has applied for more funding in 2017-18 to continue work through the Leadership Development Fund.



Equality Rep Development Project



Scottish Union Learning has worked with many unions and employers to look at the best ways to improve the number and effectiveness of Equality Reps across Scottish workplaces.

Between August 2015 and March 2016, Scottish Union Learning worked with many unions and employers to look at the best ways to improve the number and effectiveness of Equality Reps across Scottish workplaces.

It was clear that the biggest barrier to increasing the number was the lack of facility time and the related lack of training and development provision that was available to Equality Reps. The pilot project showed that work was most successful where a partnership with the employer was established, and the sharing of good practice between Equality Reps was seen as key to improving understanding of the role and maximising impact across unions and sectors. This links strongly into the wider principles of Fair Work and the aims of Scottish Union Learning. Since the pilot project, Scottish Union Learning has set up the National Equality Rep Network and co-ordinated regional and national meetings to share good practice. A model for Equality Rep Development Days has been developed, and discussions are ongoing with unions and TUC Education on the delivery of the training provision required.

To date, the project has engaged with a total of 103 Reps from across 19 affiliate unions across many Scottish workplaces and sectors of the economy. The project has helped to provide continued and comprehensive training and development opportunities for new and existing reps, peer support and accessible ways to share information.

With access to training proving a useful catalyst, discussions are ongoing to secure formal agreements with other unions and employers across a variety of sectors.



Young Workers' Project

The Young Workers' Project was established in August 2016 to continue addressing the learning needs of young workers who have little opportunity to access workplace training, and the nature of their employment makes it financially and organisationally difficult to access union learning.

The project is administered by Scottish Union Learning on behalf of unions, and is funded through the Development Fund. The aims of the project are to identify the learning needs of young workers, deliver appropriate courses, support events and school visits, and develop a social media strategy for reaching young and vulnerable workers.

In 2016, the project facilitated two STUC Unions into Schools training sessions for new reps and continues to support the school visits. In conjunction with the Better than Zero campaign, the project also organised an event held in the STUC in December, with over 40 pupils from two schools coming along to the event "Standing Up for Yourself, Standing Up for Others." One of the six planned "Mobilise - Know Your Rights at Work" courses took place in Glasgow in December, with others scheduled to take place in 2017. The course brings together young workers to give them confidence and know where to get advice about their employment rights, and ensure that they feel empowered enough to enforce these rights.

The Project Administrator meets with an appointed person from each affiliated union every quarter to keep them updated about the education courses and share information together. This has led to development work with various unions and the Project Administrator can support cross-union work. A number of workshops are planned for 2017. These will be advertised through targeted social media, through union networks and the Better than Zero campaign.



Learner of the Year Award

Scottish Union Learning

r Award

The Learner of the Year Award was established by Scottish Union Learning to recognise the range of learning journeys currently undertaken by lay learners in the workplace, supported by trade unions.

Scottish Union Learning presented the 6th Annual Learner of the Year Award to Lauren McDonald, a CWU member who works at BT Dial House in Glasgow. Lauren was chosen as the 2016 Learner of the Year because of her strong commitment to learning. This has been demonstrated through her achievements during a CISCO CCNA course, which is an advanced IT course, and her subsequent entry on to a Modern Apprenticeship at SVQ Level 3. The CWU has organised three CISCO CCNA courses in BT in Glasgow over the last few years through the Learning Fund from Scottish Union Learning. Entry to the course was highly competitive, but Lauren managed to secure a place.

Lauren was working in the Business Billing Department, and after starting the CISCO CCNA course, she successfully applied for a three-year Level 3 Apprenticeship within BT Wholesale. Her application was strengthened by the CISCO course, making her the strongest candidate for the role. Lauren admits that she did find the introduction to technology daunting. Lauren has scheduled six hours per week for study in her own time, over and above her weekly three hours of tutor-led study. She has also embarked on additional training for her apprenticeship, consisting of six blocks that include various features, protocols and standards within the telecommunications world.

Lauren is determined to gain full CISCO accreditation, finish the six training blocks organised through BT, and complete her three-year Modern Apprenticeship. She also plans to progress to the advanced CISCO CCNP course, an internationally recognised qualification which would validate her ability to plan, implement, verify and troubleshoot local and wide area networks.





STUC Union Rep Awards

STUC Helen Dowie Award for Lifelong Learning

The STUC Union Rep Awards consist of four awards: the STUC Helen Dowie Award for Lifelong Learning, the STUC Equality Award, the STUC Health & Safety Award and the STUC Organising Award. Two of these awards are administered by Scottish Union Learning.

The recipient of the 2016 STUC Helen Dowie Award for Lifelong Learning was Julie Atkinson, an Aegis ULR at Aegon UK, based in Edinburgh. Sponsored by Skills Development Scotland, the award was presented at STUC Annual Congress by First Minister Nicola Sturgeon MSP.

Julie became a ULR to support her fellow workers to gain access to learning and development opportunities within the workplace. The union, in partnership with the employer, has now established a learning programme in which Julie plays a crucial role. With access to the funding provided by Scottish Union Learning, Julie has organised a wide range of courses that were delivered in the workplace, ranging from basic Excel courses to PRINCE2 Project Management courses. Julie was heavily involved with the introduction of the Modern Apprenticeship programme into Aegon UK, which was driven by Aegis. Following a pilot project, where Aegon agreed to take on a small number of Modern Apprentices, the programme has developed to a point where over 30 Modern Apprentices have been trained and this number will increase over coming years. Julie also suggested, and helped to develop, the mentoring programme within Aegon UK.

Grahame Smith, STUC General Secretary, said: "Julie's achievements in promoting trade union learning in her workplace, and in successfully driving forward the proposal to introduce Modern Apprenticeships within Aegon, are to be admired. Her commitment and enthusiasm have contributed to the successful learning partnership between Aegis and Aegon, and this has led to a wider change in culture within the company."







STUC Equality Award

The recipient of the STUC Equality Award for 2016 was Scott Mowat, an EIS Equality Rep based at Mosspark Primary School in Glasgow. Administered by Scottish Union Learning, the award was presented at STUC Annual Congress by First Minister Nicola Sturgeon MSP.

Scott has had an active role within the EIS since 2010. He was elected as a delegate to the national AGM in 2013, 2014 and again in 2015. He was also elected to the EIS National Equality Committee and has subsequently represented the EIS at national partner events, both as a delegate and as a panel guest, speaking on how schools might support LGBT teachers.

Scott took a lead role in the first of the EIS Equality Rep Network national meetings in the early part of this year, presenting to the whole Network on the Stonewall Teachers' Report and its importance to schools. From his interest in Equality/ LGBT issues, Scott became involved in the EIS LGBT Network five years ago and has made a significant contribution in growing its membership steadily over the years from two members to 50.

Scott was initially motivated to focus on LGBT issues because he felt teachers did not uniformly feel empowered or confident in supporting LGBT equality within schools. His dissertation at university was about homophobia in primary schools which meant he had a good knowledge of the issues as they affected teachers. Since then he has become more aware of the issues from the perspective of LGBT teachers, many of whom experience a fear of coming out, in addition to reticence about being proactive in challenging homophobia and homophobic bullying, and about promoting other equality issues in schools.

Grahame Smith, STUC General Secretary, said: "Scott's achievements in promoting equality and tackling homophobia in his workplace, and in the wider trade union movement, are exceptional. His commitment to equalities work, and the partnerships he has created between union, employers and other groups, have gone a long way to educating many other workers on this very important issue."



Conferences and Events

Scottish Union Learning Conferences 2016

Scottish Union Learning organises conferences and events throughout the year to support Union Learning Reps and trade unions promoting and accessing learning opportunities.

Scottish Union Learning Conference 2016

The 9th annual Scottish Union Learning Conference was held on Tuesday, 8 November 2016 at the Glasgow Marriott Hotel. The theme of the Conference was: "Organising Union Learning: Developing Workforce Skills." The Conference was chaired by Peter Hunter, Chair of the Board and addressed by Grahame Smith, STUC General Secretary. Jamie Hepburn MSP, Minister for Employability and Training, also addressed the Conference and presented the Learner of the Year Award to Lauren McDonald of the CWU.

The Conference included a panel session on organising learning and sharing good practice, which was chaired by Peter Hunter. Workshops were delivered on Organising Union Learning, Equality and Learning, Digital Unions and Organising Learning for Young and Precarious Workers. Katie Hutton of Skills Development Scotland, addressed the Conference on Modern Apprenticeships. Frances Higson, a Filmmaker and BECTU member, also addressed the Conference in a session on her own learning journey. The Conference was sponsored by Skills Development Scotland.

Highlands and Islands ULR Conference 2016

The 9th Scottish Union Learning Highlands and Islands ULR Conference was held at Inverness College UHI, on Friday, 10 June 2016. The theme was: 'Unions and Online Learning – Making Learning Accessible to All' and delegates were addressed by Tara Morrison, Programme Leader MSc HRM, Lecturer Business and Computing, Inverness College UHI and Catherine Deveney, Author, NUJ Project Worker and Award-Winning Journalist. In addition, Grahame Smith, STUC General Secretary outlined Trade Union Priorities for 2016 and Beyond, and Catherine Garvie, SUL Development Officer gave a presentation on Digital Unions. Workshops on a range of subjects were delivered by The Open University in Scotland, Inverness College UHI and Citizens Online.

Everyday Skills Event 2016

The 8th Annual Scottish Union Learning Everyday Skills Event was held on Thursday, 25 February 2016 in the City Chambers in Edinburgh. Sponsored by Skills Development Scotland, the theme of this event was 'Everyday Skills: Developing the Workforce.' The Event included discussions and interactive sessions around digital participation for people with sensory loss; access to online numeracy and science resources; and information about online tools to support workers in the waste management industry. The Event was addressed by Wendy Burton, Director, Scottish Union Learning, and Fiona Craig, Training Advisor, Zero Waste Scotland. The closing address was made by Grahame Smith, STUC General Secretary.



Local Learning Forums

Local Learning Forums have evolved into important vehicles to support the skills development of ULRs through delivery of focused workshops on specific topics. ULRs also continue to have an opportunity to network and share practice, on a cross-union and crossemployer basis.

Lowlands and Uplands Scotland

ULRs in the Lowlands and Uplands attended Forums in Dumfries, Edinburgh, Fife, Glasgow, Lanarkshire and Tayside. During 2016, the focus was on the Digital Unions and Equality Projects. The Digital Unions workshops explored the use of social media within a trade union context, and supported ULRs in understanding how to stay safe online. The Equality Rep **Development Project supported ULRs in** gaining a better understanding of how equality issues can be tackled through learning, and how they can ensure uptake of learning is reflective of the workforce. The evolution of the Local Learning Forums to include developmental workshops has proven popular and feedback from ULRs has encouraged further implementation of this model.





Highlands and Islands Scotland

In the Highlands and Islands, Scottish Union Learning continued to support local ULR Forums in Inverness, Caithness, Orkney and Western Isles. These meet guarterly, face to face or via Skype/ video conference. The Forums make a unique contribution to the provision of union learning in the Highlands and Islands, pooling demand for courses across small workplaces and providing a support network for ULRs. The breadth of courses organised through the Local Learning Forums reflects the diversity of workplaces and unions involved. Courses delivered in 2016 included an accredited IT and Communications course in Orkney, Microsoft Academy units in Inverness, Creative Writing in Caithness, and Planning for Retirement, which was delivered in Inverness, Thurso and Fort William. The buzz from courses delivered can also spur demand in another area; for instance, the SQA "Introduction to Counselling Skills" unit that was delivered for the Inverness Learning Forum in 2016 was delivered for the Western Isles Forum in 2015. The Local Learning Forums offer development opportunities for ULRs, with speakers and workshops on learningrelated topics, to support them in their role and extend the range of learning opportunities they offer to workers.

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Working with Partners

National Strategic Adult Learning Forum

Scottish Union Learning has been working with partners on the National Strategic Adult Learning Forum to take forward the Statement of Ambition for Adult Learning in Scotland. This has included Scottish Union Learning representation on two operational groups of adult learning practitioners working on the development of professional learning and wider access and participation, with an initial focus on the new Scottish Adult Achievement Award.

Scottish Book Trust

Scottish Union Learning, in partnership with the Scottish Book Trust, celebrated Book Week Scotland which took place in November 2016. The overall aim of Book Week Scotland is to encourage more people from all walks of life to read, or to read more for pleasure. A series of workplace reading events and activities took place with RMT and Usdaw in LUPS and UNISON in the Highlands & Islands, and over 500 free books were distributed to reps and members. As a result of the success of the Book Week Scotland reading event with UNISON members in Inverness, the Branch provided £500 to purchase more books and organise similar activities in other parts of the Highlands and Islands.

Open Educational Practices in Scotland (OEPS)

Scottish Union Learning has been working in partnership with OEPS to develop the skills of ULRs in their understanding of Open Educational Resources and how these can be utilised in workplace settings.

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership (SCQF)

During 2016, Scottish Union Learning continued to work closely with SCQF Partnership with a particular focus on establishing workplace pilots around credit rating internal employer training. The first pilot was established in the Spring, delivered by Aegis the Union at Aegon, and Scottish Union Learning plans to roll this work out to further workplaces in 2017.

Open University in Scotland

Scottish Union Learning is working with the Open University to deliver A range of learning opportunities for workers in Scotland. One example of this is the delivery of a degree programme at Rolls-Royce in conjunction with Unite and Rolls-Royce. The unique funding arrangement between the union, employer, and learning provider has provided members at Rolls-Royce with 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.

Colleges in Scotland

Scottish Union Learning has continued to work in partnership with colleges throughout Scotland, providing opportunities for workplace learners to improve their existing skills and develop new skills, helping them to secure their existing jobs and/or further their career advancement. Colleges have provided accredited and non-accredited training at different levels for learners in unionorganised workplaces using face to face, online and blended learning models on a wide variety of subjects.



Partner Spotlight

Newbattle Abbey College and WEA Scotland

Following Newbattle Abbey College's presentation at the Everyday Skills Group in April 2016, Scottish Union Learning worked with the Communication Workers' Union and the the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) to develop a pilot Adult Achievement Award (AAA) at SCQF Level 6. The AAA allows the skills achieved and developed in non-accredited courses to be recognised. The AAA can be delivered at SCQF Levels 3, 4 or 6.

The CWU had developed a 'Script to Screen' programme of literacies and digital skills learning which was being delivered by WEA, paid for through the Learning Fund from Scottish Union Learning. The initial stage of the programme supported learners in developing film scripts. This 10-week course provided the learners with 30 hours of classroom-based lessons

which acted as a catalyst for the writing which they undertook in their own time. Subsequently, the learners came together over three full Saturdays to rehearse, act, film, and edit a number of scripts which the learners had written.

The WEA worked with the learners to complete the AAA reflective journals, which were provided by Newbattle Abbey College. The learners successfully gained their AAA.

More unions are now looking at the potential for bringing the AAA into their workplaces. The CWU has started work on a new Script to Screen programme, which has evolved to include a research element, and learners are working towards having a film screened at the Radical Film Festival in 2018.





TUC Education

Across the United Kingdom, the TUC Education Service provides training for more than 40,000 union representatives, Health & Safety representatives and Union Learning Reps each year.

In recent years the provision of learning and training opportunities has expanded to include learning for union full-time officers, union members and their families. The Trade Union Education Centre is part of a network of TUC approved providers across the UK through which learners achieve nationally recognised education credits and awards.

The TUC has four education centres across Scotland, at City of Glasgow College, Edinburgh College, Fife College and West College Scotland, which provide access to trade union education for trade union reps.

Inclusive and Welcoming

TUC Education is committed to equal treatment of all regardless of gender, race, disability, sexuality or age. The aims of the TUC programme include equal participation by all groups undertaking learning by delivering skills, knowledge and understanding through a variety of teaching methods and group activities. The purpose of the programme is to deliver a quality learning experience, with a system of accreditation which points to future learning opportunities.

TUC Education in Scotland

TUC Education in Scotland works with the TUC tutor team, which is made up of approximately 20 TUC trained tutors across Scotland to support affiliated unions' learning programmes whilst ensuring the quality and range of courses meets expectations. Each year around 2,500 union reps attend a full range of TUC courses, including the Union Reps pathway and the Health and Safety pathway. TUC Education also works closely with Scottish Union Learning to develop and train union reps, with a particular focus on ULRs and Equality Reps.

eNotes

TUC Education continues to develop short, topic based e-learning modules, (eNotes) for union reps who wish to study online and without the need to join a formal college course. eNotes are a convenient way for reps to get up to speed on fast moving topics such as: Cancer in the Workplace, Mental Health in the Workplace, Facility Time, Health and Safety and Organising as well as other relevant themes. All eNotes can be accessed online at www.tuceducation.org.uk/eNotes.

New Course Directory

Union reps can now find information and how to book a place on their next TUC training courses as well as how to access any of the current 35 TUC eNotes on the new TUC Education Course Directory at www.tuceducation.org.uk.



Resources and Communications

Scottish Union Learning has continued to raise its profile in 2016 through social media, publications and the website, as well as through trade union and partner websites.



Scottish Union Learning website scottishunionlearning.com

The new Scottish Union Learning website was launched in November 2015. The website provides access to resources, publications, events and information and is a valuable resource for unions, ULRs, learners and partner organisations.

Scottish Union Learning News Flash

scottishunionlearning.com/content/ newsletter

Scottish Union Learning distributes an electronic newsletter on a regular basis. This news flash highlights union learning information and photographs, and is sent to unions, ULRs, partners and others who have an interest in learning. Follow the link above to sign up.



Find us on Facebook facebook.com/scottishunionlearning



Follow us on Twitter twitter.com/unionlearning

Scottish Union Learning can be found on Facebook and Twitter at the addresses above. There is also a Facebook Group for ULRs in the Highlands and Islands, acessible via our main Facebook page.

Scottish Union Learning Highlands and Islands e-news

Scottish Union Learning in the Highlands and Islands distributes an e-newsletter on a bi-monthly basis that is designed to keep ULRs in the Highlands and Islands and Development Fund Project



Workers up-to-date with local learning activities. This is sent to every known ULR in the Highlands and Islands, local union members with an interest in learning, Development Fund Project Workers and partners in the Highlands and Islands.



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Learners' Quotes

"I thoroughly enjoyed the whole of the course and the least enjoyable for me, was it ending." "Helpful, practical
course. Felt more
equipped to
do my job."

"Really enjoyed the course and feel I have benefitted professionally and personally. I would like to take this further. Diploma?"

"I enjoyed the style of learning; I can learn at my own pace and assessments are done at my right pace. I am finding out I can be good at this." "A concise, wellpresented course. It has given me plenty to think about."

"The whole experience was amazing. I feel much more confident in going forward to apply for jobs. The whole course was better than four years at university."



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