

Scottish Union Learning

# 2013

## Annual Report



Union Learning:  
Developing Scotland's  
Workforce

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# Introduction

Anne Douglas, Chair  
Scottish Union Learning Board



Scottish Union Learning continues to work with trade unions in Scotland to support and develop their work on skills and learning, providing

individual learning opportunities which, collectively, contribute to the development of the Scottish Workforce.

The Board identified priority areas of work for Scottish Union Learning during the year, which include the promotion of Everyday Skills, Modern Apprenticeships, Employer Engagement and Workforce Development. Progress is being made in all of these areas.

Scottish Union Learning is working in partnership with Skills Development Scotland on a range of issues including Modern Apprenticeships, with a focus on addressing occupational segregation and under-representation in the programme

of BME and Disabled workers. Information on work with other partner organisations can be found throughout this report.

The work of Scottish Union Learning and the learning opportunities offered by unions have continued to be supported by funding from the Scottish Government and the European Social Fund. This support is crucial and both the STUC and the Scottish Union Learning Board are working to secure the funding which will ensure that it will continue in future years.

The Board is proud of the achievements of the unions engaged in delivering learning for their members and proud of the learners who are making the most of the learning opportunities offered to them. Learning, from basic everyday skills courses to further and higher education courses, is being delivered in workplaces across Scotland. The benefits to individual workers, employers and Scotland's economy are there for all to see and we hope that this will continue to develop in the future.

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# Structure

Scottish Union Learning works in partnership with unions in Scotland to deliver learning, upgrade skills, promote apprenticeships, engage employers in the learning agenda and develop Scotland's workforce.

Scottish Union Learning secures and manages the funding which is available to unions to develop the required infrastructure to identify and meet the learning needs of workers across Scotland.

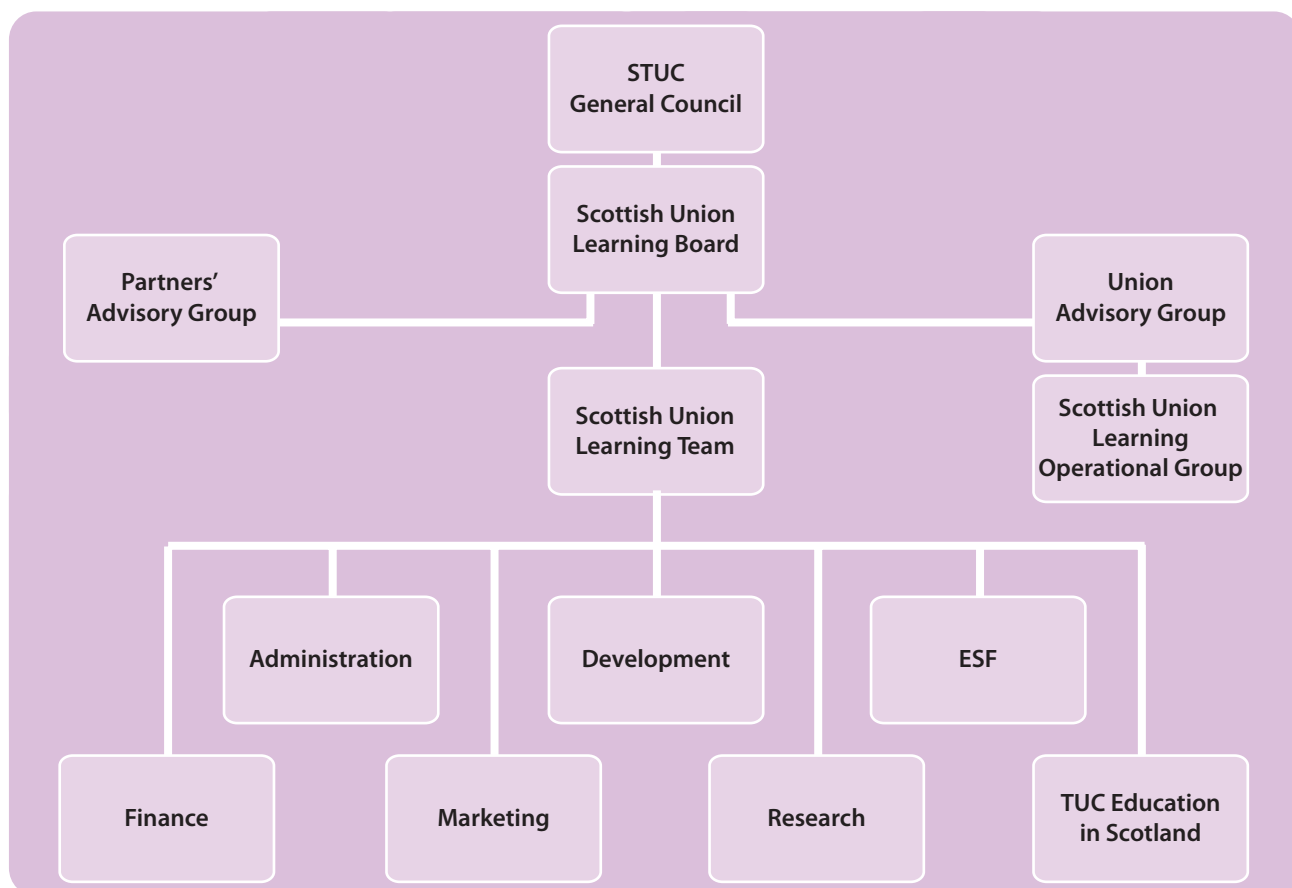
Scottish Union Learning was established by the STUC to promote trade union-led learning and skills development in line with STUC policy on learning and skills.

The Scottish Union Learning Board was established by the STUC General Council to direct and oversee the work of Scottish Union Learning.

The Board, which is made up of General Council Members, representatives of affiliated trade unions, the STUC General Secretary and a TUC nominated member, is supported by a Partners' Advisory Group and a Union Advisory Group which provide advice and information on strategic and operational issues.

## Statement of Purpose

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



# The Board

The Scottish Union Learning Board governs Scottish Union Learning by agreeing and monitoring its business, operational and financial plans.

The Scottish Union Learning Board has the following responsibilities:

- ✦ to agree strategic objectives and approve and monitor the business plan, operational plan and the annual budget of Scottish Union Learning;
- ✦ to oversee the allocation of ESF and other funds obtained to support learning by union members; and
- ✦ to oversee the allocation of funds to support the trade union education provided by TUC Education in Scotland.

**Chair:** Anne Douglas, Prospect

**Vice Chair:** John Brown, CWU

**Members:** Jackson Cullinane, Unite; Harry Donaldson, GMB; Harry Frew, UCATT; Lynn Henderson, PCS; John Keggie, UNISON; Kevin Lindsay, ASLEF; Mark Lynch, Young Workers' Rep; Lyn McClintock, EIS; Grahame Smith, STUC General Secretary; Liz Rees, TUC Education Manager

**Staff:** Sylvia O'Grady; Harry Cunningham; Ann Garscadden

**Observer:** Rona Sweeney, 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;
- ✦ 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.



# Advisory Groups

Partners' Advisory Group  
Union Advisory Group

Each of the Board's advisory groups has a distinct and important role in advising and informing the Board on issues that influence the strategic direction of Scottish Union Learning.

## Union Advisory Group

The Union Advisory Group meets quarterly. The role of the Union Advisory Group is to support the Board's development of future strategy 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

Sylvia O'Grady, Lifelong Learning Manager  
Harry Cunningham, TUC Education Officer:  
Scotland

### Membership

Membership is open by nomination from all STUC affiliated organisations.

## Partners' Advisory Group

The Partners' Advisory Group meets bi-annually. The Group supports the Board in the development of future strategy by:

- ✦ contributing to discussions about the strategic direction of Scottish Union Learning;
- ✦ identifying ways Scottish Union Learning 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, Dyslexia Scotland, Dyslexia Scotwest, Education Scotland, Glasgow Kelvin College, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Inverness College UHI, Open University, Scotland's Learning Partnership, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Government, Scottish Book Trust, SCQF, SCVO, Skills Development Scotland, SQA, SRC (Napier University), WEA

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





UCATT organised an “Introduction to Signwriting” course in Glasgow, supported by the Learning Fund. Thirteen workers completed the course in March 2013.

One learner said: “This course was excellent in both content and pace. The work undertaken was of a very high standard. The tutor was excellent, extremely competent and an excellent communicator.”

Another learner commented: “I enjoyed this course and feel more comfortable after expanding my knowledge in signwriting.”



# TUC Education

TUC Education has an unrivalled reach into Scotland's workplaces to provide education and training for workplace representatives. In 2012, TUC Education in Scotland trained nearly 3,000 union reps through its partnership with further education colleges across Scotland.

## Number of Reps Trained

Overall, UK figures for union rep training have produced another outstanding year with over 50,000 workplace representatives accessing TUC Education training. The TUC Education programme offer includes core and additional courses with increasing flexibility of access to suit the needs of union reps. The vast majority of affiliated unions participate in the programme, with some unions commissioning bespoke training courses to meet their specific needs. One in four of the UK's union reps access TUC Education courses each year.

## The TUC Education Programme

TUC Education runs a fully accredited programme for union reps and despite increased pressure on release, overall enrolment numbers are holding up reasonably well in the 14<sup>th</sup> year of the TUC programme. Accreditation and gaining workplace qualifications through the TUC route is widely taken up by workplace reps and their achievement is recognised within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).

Continuing difficulties for trade union representatives in obtaining paid release and the decline of industries and sectors with strong, traditional release arrangements mean that the 10-day union rep programme and the 5-day course for Union Learning Reps continue to show a slight downward trend, despite the fact that there are legal rights to paid release in place to support reps' workplace activities.

Most union reps access their union learning through the TUC Education short course programme. Shorter courses are now vital to the programme, supporting TUC Education priorities and the work of affiliates. The wide range of short courses now offered includes Organise, Workplace Accident and Investigation, Mental Health Awareness, and Handling Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures.

Employers' support is vital to delivering the programme through release arrangements. Union presence in the public sector is well known. However, research carried out during 2011 showed that leading employers in the private sector also sent union reps to TUC Education courses. This support is a further indication of the importance placed on high quality training for union reps. To improve take up of paid release, a new booklet, 'An Employers Guide to Trade Union Training', designed to be a tool for reps, is now available.

The hard work and dedication of TUC tutors, union education officers and their colleagues is vital to the success of the delivery of trade union education and is key to maintaining high levels of quality and demand.





## New Course Development

The newly launched Certificate in Employment Law (Union Reps Stage 2) has been welcomed by experienced trade union reps in Scotland whose role benefits from a wider understanding of workplace employment issues. The new Certificate is a practical training course that approaches the law, including the 2013–14 changes, from a workplace perspective to develop union reps to be able to use employment law to improve workplace bargaining.

## Union Learning Representatives

In 2012, TUC Education in Scotland trained 197 Union Learning Reps. Numbers for 2012 are slightly down on the previous year with many ULRs reporting increased pressure on release for training. This reflects a trend across Scotland and the wider UK that ULRs and other union reps are finding increasing difficulty in obtaining release for training.

## TUC Education Online

TUC Education Online is now established as a genuine alternative to its classroom based equivalent. It offers a convenient and effective solution to union reps who seek to develop their skills and knowledge. Around 500 learners in Scotland accessed TUC Education training online in 2011. Pauline Russell (pictured) of the GMB has successfully completed several TUC courses and is the 2013 recipient of the STUC Frank Maguire Award for Health and Safety.

## eNotes

TUC Education continues to develop short, topic based e-learning modules, (eNotes) for union reps who wish to study online. eNotes are a convenient, informal way for reps to learn about Facility Time, Understanding Universal Credit, Equality Law and The Sick Note. eNotes can be found online at [www.tuclearning.net](http://www.tuclearning.net).

# Highlands and Islands

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 - more than half of Scotland's landmass, includes over 90 inhabited islands, but accounts for less than 10% of Scotland's population.

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.

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

- ❖ Support unions in increasing the number of Highlands and Islands ULRs and develop the Highlands and Islands ULR infrastructure to create opportunities for workers to participate in union-led learning;
- ❖ Support ULR participation in union-led learning initiatives by increasing the number of local cross-union ULR forums in the Highlands and Islands and organising the annual Scottish Union Learning Highlands and Islands ULR Conference;
- ❖ Support unions, including those with Development Fund activity in the area, to increase the number of union members in the Highlands and Islands who access learning and skills opportunities through the ESF-funded Learning Fund;
- ❖ Co-ordinate and develop good practice models of cross-union working and explore and develop innovative ways 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 and Islands; and
- ❖ Ensure the needs of the Highlands and Islands are incorporated in the development of Scottish Union Learning.







“Joan became a Prospect Union Learning Rep in 2008. Joan has brought various learning opportunities to Dounreay workers including ETHOS courses, IT courses and assertiveness training for women workers.

“It’s fantastic when you find a course that interests someone who has not engaged in learning for many years. Even if that person on completing the course chooses not to continue learning, it’s great they were motivated to give it a go in the first place.”

Joan Docherty, Prospect ULR  
Application Controller at Dounreay, Caithness





# Highlands and Islands Awards

Celebrating 10 Years of Union  
Learning in the Highlands and Islands

To celebrate a decade of union-led learning in the Highlands and Islands, a Union Learning Awards event was held at Inverness College in March 2013.

The event was supported by Inverness College, Deaf Communication Project, Highland Council, High Life Highland, University of the Highlands and Islands, RMT, Lighthouse Financial Advice, The Open University, SCQF Partnership, Skills Development Scotland, SQA and NHS Highland.

Learner awards were presented to:  
Tracey Campbell, UNISON  
Phyllis Henderson, PCS  
Teresa Kobylska, Usdaw  
Jim Maclean, PCS  
Ronald Payne, ASLEF  
Paul Shaw, RMT  
Roksana Ulas, Usdaw

Awards were also presented to ULRs in recognition of the valuable contribution each had made in their own unique way to union-led learning in the Highlands and Islands and the trade union movement.

ULR awards were presented to:  
Julie Beattie, UNISON  
Joan Docherty, Prospect  
John Evans, Unite  
Andrew Gardiner, ASLEF  
Karina Liptrot, PCS  
Colin Macdougall, CWU  
Calum Mackenzie, GMB  
Roxana Meechan, UNISON  
Marjory Shane, PCS

In the Employer Category, Caledonian MacBrayne was recognised for making a positive contribution to union learning in the Highlands and Islands. Scottish Union Learning works with many learning providers across the Highlands and Islands to provide a positive learning experience, and the Deaf Communication Project and Inverness College were recognised for delivering a consistently good service.



John Paul

# Learning Spotlight

Highlands and Islands  
Union Learning Award Winners



Award Category: ULRs  
Name: Karina Liptrot  
Union: PCS

Karina works in Inverness as an administrator for the Crofting Commission. She is the youngest ULR in the Highlands and Islands. An active trade unionist, Karina is both a ULR and Branch Organiser for PCS Highlands and Islands. She is a valued contributor to Inverness Local Learning Forum, and actively promotes cross union learning opportunities across her networks.

Karina said: "I like to help people so I felt that the role of ULR suited me well. Most staff didn't know that courses were available to learn a wide range of skills and best of all, the courses were usually fully funded, so they had nothing to lose. I arranged for several members to do IT training at the college and since doing the course they appear much more confident using a computer at work. Being able to help people better themselves by learning a new skill is one of the best things about being a ULR."



Award Category: Learners  
Name: Roksana Ulas  
Union: Usdaw

Roksana is Polish and like many migrant workers, she has had a supermarket job for the last couple of years. She always wanted to be a photographer. While on a self-funded ESOL course, she was given information on unions and union learning by Marta Chaba, UNISON's Migrant Worker Field Worker. This led Roksana to complete a union-led Photography course in 2011

and Business English course in 2012. The Business English course was particularly demanding and required a lot of work at home. In June 2012, she passed the Cambridge BEC exam. Roksana said, "Courses can be very expensive but union learning is for everyone. I want to stay here and I know what I want to do in the future. It's fantastic that I was able to learn English and photography which I need in my job and my life." Both courses gave her the confidence and skills to set up a photography business.



Award Category: Learners  
Name: Paul Shaw  
Union: RMT

Paul was keen to progress from his role as a catering rating in the retail department on board CalMac ferries. As a ULR, Paul attended the 2009 Scottish Union Learning Highlands and Islands ULR Conference where he discussed his options with UHI staff in attendance. This led to a two-year post-graduate distance learning course in Leadership and Management.

On completion of the course, Paul successfully applied for promotion to a management position in the retail operations department with CalMac, and is now the assistant to the onboard services manager on one of the newest and largest ships in the CalMac fleet. Paul has no doubt that without the opportunity and support given to him by trade union lifelong learning and funding from the RMT, he would never have had the opportunity to progress to the employment position he is in now.

# Supporting ULRs

Scottish Union Learning  
Events and Conferences

A Union Learning Representative (ULR) is a union activist who is trained to identify the learning needs and aspirations of members and advise them about potential learning opportunities. ULRs drive the Skills and Learning agenda in workplaces, which benefits both workers and employers. ULRs liaise directly with fellow workers, employers and training providers to identify a range of learning opportunities and make them available to the workforce.

## **Scottish Union Learning Highlands and Islands ULR Conference**

The 6<sup>th</sup> Scottish Union Learning Highlands and Islands ULR Conference took place on 21 June 2013 in Eden Court, Inverness. The Conference theme was "Union Learning in the Highlands and Islands: Celebrating the Past, Navigating the Future" and it was funded through the European Social Fund. It was aimed at Highlands and Islands ULRs and union members interested in union learning. The Conference theme focused on the last 10 years of union-led learning in the Highlands and Islands, and looked at some of the successes as well as some of the lessons learnt. Conference delegates participated in a range of workshops and sessions. A total of 45 delegates participated in the conference with representation from ASLEF, BECTU, CWU, GMB, NUJ, PCS, Prospect, RMT, UNISON, Unite and Usdaw.

## **Scottish Union Learning Everyday Skills Event**

The 5<sup>th</sup> annual Scottish Union Learning Everyday Skills Event was held in the COSLA Conference Centre in Edinburgh on 28 February 2013. The theme was "Everyday Skills: Making a Difference". The event was attended by 80 delegates from 14 different unions and was addressed by Grahame Smith, STUC General Secretary. Koren Calder of Scottish Book Trust gave a presentation on the work of SBT and how trade unions can encourage more people to read, and Alastair Campbell of Texthelp Ltd gave a demonstration of the Read&Write Gold software developed to support people who have difficulties with reading and writing.

Scottish Union Learning holds conferences and events throughout the year to support ULRs and trade unions in lifelong learning and Everyday Skills.

## **Scottish Union Learning Conference**

The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Scottish Union Learning Conference was held on 20 November 2013 in the COSLA Centre in Edinburgh. Supported by SQA, Skills Development Scotland and the OU. The theme of the Conference was "The Diversity of Learning". The Conference was addressed by Angela Constance MSP, Minister for Youth Employment, Grahame Smith, STUC General Secretary, and Ewart Keep, Chair in Education, Skills and Training at the Department of Education in the University of Oxford. More than 150 delegates attended.





## Other Events in 2013

Scottish Union Learning supported and contributed to many events, such as:

### February

- ✦ Scotland's Learning Partnership: Conference
- ✦ Promoting Youth Employability and Rights Conference
- ✦ The Future of Funding the EU and EU Funding in Scotland
- ✦ Positive on Employment Conference,
- ✦ Rethinking Skills and Education - EU Investment and Employment Growth 2014 2020 in Inverness

### March

- ✦ Newbattle Abbey National Adult Learning Conference

### April

- ✦ Using Open Educational Resources for Social and Economic Inclusion Symposium
- ✦ STUC Annual Congress
- ✦ STUC LGBT, Youth, Black Workers', Disabled Workers', and Women's Equalities Conferences

### May

- ✦ Learning at Work Day
- ✦ British Computer Society Roadshow

- ✦ European Structural Funds Annual Publicity Event

- ✦ Scotland's Learning Partnership Awards in the Scottish Parliament

- ✦ Modern Apprenticeship Week

### September

- ✦ Royal Society of Edinburgh Employability and Digital Participation Roundtable
- ✦ International Literacy Day
- ✦ Scottish Training Federation Conference
- ✦ Presentation to Finnish Adult Educators with Scottish Government

### October

- ✦ SDS/BEMIS Get Connected: Stay Connected Event
- ✦ Unionlearn Conference

### November

- ✦ Dyslexia Awareness Week
- ✦ Scottish Government Workforce Development Event
- ✦ Modern Apprenticeship Awards Dinner
- ✦ SCQF Recognition of Prior Learning Conference
- ✦ Book Week Scotland
- ✦ STUC Unions Into Schools Songs Festival

### December

- ✦ Modern Apprenticeships in NHS Scotland Event
- ✦ Bite Size Briefings Series, Winter 2013

# Supporting ULRs

STUC Local Learning Forums

Local Learning Forums give Union Learning Representatives and other union officials who are interested in the union learning agenda an environment where they can meet and discuss the issues they face in the workplace.

Local Learning Forums are a positive and effective method of bringing together local ULRs from different unions and workplaces to swap good practice, discuss obstacles and explore ideas for new learning opportunities. Forum members put forward their ideas around learning and invite guest speakers to attend meetings to help provide ideas and solutions to further develop local union-led learning activity.

## Lowlands and Uplands Scotland

Local Learning Forums meet quarterly in Dumfries, Edinburgh, Fife, Glasgow, Lanarkshire and Tayside. In response to a drop in attendance in Lanarkshire, Glasgow and Edinburgh, Scottish Union Learning changed the focus of the Forums in consultation with Forum members. In August, the Forums invited the University of Glasgow to give a presentation on Creative Writing. A session was also given in Glasgow by the Glasgow Bike Station to promote workplace cycle days. The Tayside, Fife and Dumfries Forums are also developing particular learning themes. The Tayside and Dumfries Forums have organised around 'Learning and Equalities' themes, and have arranged a combination of speakers and workshops from One Workplace Equal Rights, EHRC, Show Racism the Red Card and Nil by Mouth. The Fife and Tayside Forums held workshops on 'Rethinking Dyslexia', delivered by Scottish Union Learning and Dyslexia Scotland.

## Highlands and Islands Scotland

In the Highlands and Islands area, the Local Learning Forums established in Inverness, Caithness, Orkney and the Western Isles met in December 2012, September and November 2013. The Forums have invited various speakers on learning-related topics, such as Unions into Schools, which resulted in union reps in Stornoway being trained as Unions into Schools reps. The Forums have also arranged local cross-union courses. Courses organised through the Local Learning Forums included an Awareness of Environment Technologies course in Inverness and Planning for Retirement courses in Orkney, Caithness and Inverness.







## Case Study

Council workers are introduced to counselling in Unite



**Union:** Unite

**Duration:** 3 days

**Location:** East Dunbartonshire

**Attendees:** 14

**Funding:** The Learning Fund

Two groups of workers at East Dunbartonshire Council completed an introductory course in Counselling Skills, funded through the Learning Fund and delivered by Reid Kerr College. The groups consisted of a range of workers, including those in social work, the care sector, learning support, and facilities and property maintenance.

Learners were introduced to the concept of counselling, including the three major counselling approaches: Psychodynamic, Humanistic and Cognitive/Behavioural, and the application of basic counselling skills. There was a strong emphasis on practical skills and group work throughout the course.

Jackie Smith, Unite Rep at the Broomhill Depot, said: "The Counselling course provided me with valuable skills I can use at work and in my own time, and also gave me an insight into communicating with people and my own morals and principles. It was a very positive learning experience all round."

This is the first time this course has been delivered through the Learning Fund, and it has been very well received. One learner commented: "Excellent beginners' course with great tips and skills learned. I would like to move to the next stage." The group is now embarking on the next level of training.



# Funding Learning

The Learning Fund  
Lowlands and Uplands Scotland



The Learning Fund is financed with support from the European Social Fund (ESF), one of the European Union's Structural Funds. The ESF was set up to improve employment opportunities in the European Union and to help people fulfil their potential by giving them better skills and better job prospects.

Following successful delivery of ESF funded projects since 2008, the STUC has secured an extension to delivery of the current project until 31 March 2014. The project, which commenced in April 2011, is supported under ESF Priority 5 Strategic Skills Pipeline.

The project has a core aim of developing and embedding an infrastructure which will provide learning opportunities for up to 4,500 individuals enabling them to upskill and remain competitive in the current and future economy. This embraces the overall aim of Priority 5, to "equip individuals with the flexible competencies they require to access and hold onto jobs now and prepare them for the job opportunities of the future".

The Learning Fund is an innovative source of funding which allows learning to be taken to the learner in the workplace and delivered at a time and place which suits their needs. The approaches of individual unions have reflected the diversity in the needs of workers and resulted in a wide range of learning provision, including support with numeracy and literacy skills, vocational training and personal development including CV writing. Delivery of this ESF project has only proved to confirm that there is a huge demand for learning in the workplace across Scotland and there is much that still needs to be done to ensure that lifelong learning opportunities are accessible to all workers who want to develop and progress.

The types of applications received from projects in Lowlands and Uplands Scotland are detailed in the table (left).

## Learning Fund Applications April 2012 to Oct 2013

Course Type	Number of Courses
British Sign Language (BSL)	52
IT (including European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) and Microsoft Office Specialist)	51
Modern Languages	14
Personal Development (including Accounting and Management)	52
New Technologies (including Digital Filming & Editing and Web Design)	33
Everyday Skills (including ESOL)	68
Vocational Training	65
Total (all LF)	335



The current ESF project, which commenced in April 2011, has supported over 3,200 learners to access training and learning opportunities. This is towards an approved target of supporting 4,500 by March 2014. In addition, over 700 learners have attended more than one course or undertaken a progression route in order to achieve a recognised qualification.

The project also aims to support a total of 1,900 to achieve a part qualification and 500 people to achieve a full qualification during the three-year project, providing people with a recognised qualification to support their progression through employment. Courses supported by the Learning Fund have been delivered all over Lowlands and Uplands Scotland including Cupar, East Kilbride, Kilmarnock, Melrose, Perth, Livingston and Peterhead.



“Overall learning experience was good, it was hard doing class after full day at work but I believe this also spurred me on. I now have a greater understanding of the steps I need to take to further progress.”

PCS Union Learner Feedback  
CMI Introductory Certificate in  
Management, Student  
Loans Company, Glasgow



# Case Study

Taxi Drivers Pass the Test  
with Unite



**Union:** Unite

**Duration:** 40 hours

**Location:** Dundee

**Attendees:** 18

**Funding:** The Learning Fund

A group of Unite taxi drivers in Dundee completed an NVQ 2 in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving, funded through the Learning Fund. The eighteen drivers are the first to undergo this qualification, which is aimed at improving health and safety, and passenger service. The drivers were presented with their certificates by Lord Provost, Bob Duncan, in the City Chambers.

Dundee is the first local authority to recognise the professionalism of the taxi industry and is impressed with the course.

Chris Elder, Secretary of Dundee Taxi Branch, said: "All of the taxi drivers who completed the course said that they have learned something new. They enjoyed the group discussions and agreed that it was good to meet other taxi drivers, many of whom they only knew on sight because of the solitary nature of their profession. There was a general feeling that getting a new qualification was good for the taxi trade in Dundee on a whole, because it had been a long time since they had to put pen to paper for learning. As a result, Dundee City Council is expected to make the course compulsory, and every taxi driver will have the opportunity to upskill."

Taxi drivers are many people's first point of contact when they arrive in the city, and give a first impression of Dundee. The regeneration of the Victoria Albert dock will add to the other tourist attractions in Dundee, and the local authority is therefore aware of the advantages of a fleet of professional drivers being ambassadors for the city. A second group of 19 drivers recently started the NVQ.







## Case Study

A Fresh Look at Equalities  
with the BFAWU



**Union:** BFAWU

**Duration:** 1 day

**Location:** Uddingston

**Attendees:** 294

**Funding:** The Learning Fund

The Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU) supports workers and the employer's wider skills and employment strategy at Dawnfresh Seafoods in Uddingston. The workplace's first Learning Agreement was signed in 2012, which gives workers access to a range of work-based courses organised by the BFAWU. The Learning Agreement also established a joint employer/trade union steering group, which commits both parties to work together to support the learning development of the Dawnfresh

workforce. This work is supported by the Learning and Development Funds, accessed by the BFAWU, through Scottish Union Learning.

In April 2013, BFAWU supported a course which aimed to provide workplace communication skills to workers in the area of equality and diversity. Nine learners attended the one day workshop, delivered by the Open University. The workshop used a variety of different activities and group exercises to learn and stimulate discussion. One learner commented: "The workshop exceeded my expectations. Everyone was involved, everyone voicing their ideas and everyone felt they belonged."

Following on from the success of this course and with the support of the BFAWU and the employer, all staff at Dawnfresh will be given the opportunity to attend this workshop when a series of five workshops will be delivered over a week in the workplace in January 2014.

# Funding Learning

The Learning Fund  
Highlands and Islands Scotland



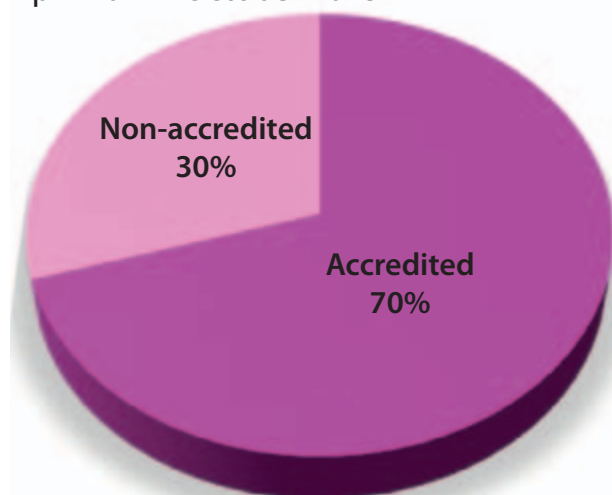
Scottish Union Learning was successful in securing £415,000 European Social Funding (ESF) for the period April 2011 to March 2014 in the Highlands and Islands.

Over three years, the funding will support:

- ✦ a Learning Fund to provide the opportunity for 900 workers to upskill and for a further 100 workers to benefit from workplace initiatives;
- ✦ a two-year Migrant Worker initiative to support migrant workers in the workplace;
- ✦ a 2-year part-time study programme for workers with no or low qualifications to gain a Higher National Certificate; and
- ✦ a Ready Study Go pilot, providing opportunities for ULRs to train as tutors to deliver this pre-access course in their workplace.

At the core of the ESF Highlands and Islands project activity is the Learning Fund, which is supported by Priority 2 ESF - to aid workers progress through employment. The overarching aim of Priority 2 is to "improve the skills of the workforce to enhance employability, productivity, adaptability, inclusion and entrepreneurial expertise." The Learning Fund is also supported by Scottish Government funding. Where demand exists and all other avenues of funding have been exhausted, trade unions can submit applications to the Learning Fund to support collective learning opportunities in the Highlands and Islands.

**Figure 1: Courses Supported by the Highlands and Islands Learning Fund**  
April 2012 - October 2013



For the period April 2012 to October 2013, 64 applications for courses were approved by the ESF Advisory Panel. As Figure 1 shows, a third (19) of the courses were non-accredited, while two thirds (45) were accredited, resulting in a part or full qualification being awarded to those workers who successfully completed the courses.

The Ready, Study, Go pre-access course has begun as a pilot initiative in the Highlands and Islands. The first three workers to successfully complete it, Joanna Kucharczyk, Patricia Colgan and Joanna Lange, are pictured (right).

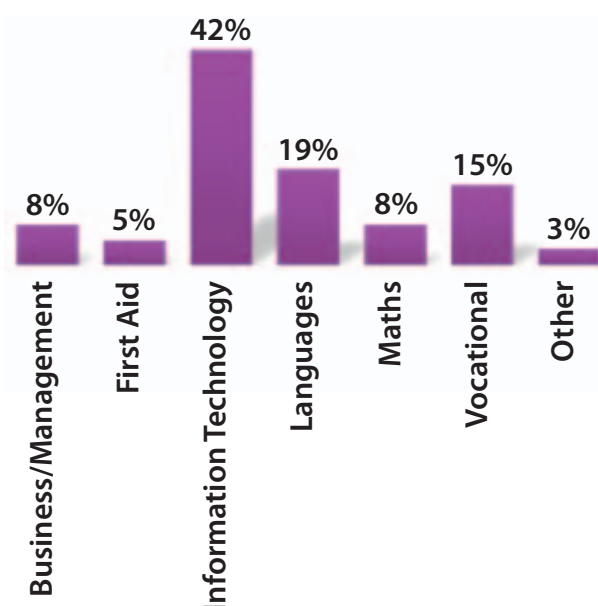
Courses have been delivered across the Highlands and Islands from Inverness to Campbeltown, Thurso to Portree, Orkney to Brora, and Dornoch to Fort William. Most courses have been delivered in a traditional format, such as face to face in local colleges, learning centres or in workplace training rooms. However, 25% of the courses were delivered either completely online, by distance learning or with a blended approach that incorporated a number of these methods.



As Figure 2 shows, IT courses were the most popular course choice among workers as 42% of all courses applications were for IT courses. IT courses included PC Passport and European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL), as well as bespoke courses covering a range of topics including social networking and internet research. Eighteen per cent of course applications received were for language courses, predominately British Sign Language courses, which remain popular with workers, particularly learners who have been out of formal education for some time and are taking their first steps back into learning.

It is anticipated that over the three years of the ESF Highlands and Islands project, 1,000 workers in the region will benefit from the Learning Fund. As of 30 September 2013, 835 workers have benefited from the project.

**Figure 2: Types of Courses Supported by the Highlands and Islands Learning Fund April 2012 - October 2013**



Interestingly, for every man who participates in union-led learning in the Highlands and Islands, there are two women!



# Case Study

Certificate of Higher Education  
Open in the Highlands and Islands



Union: UNISON

Location: Orkney

Funding: The Learning Fund

Since October 2012, the European Social Fund has supported a part-time Certificate in Higher Education Open (CHEO) course in business management. One of the successful applicants for the over-subscribed pilot course was Angela Prestwood, who lives in Orkney.

For sixteen years, Angela, who is head cook at a Kirkwall school, has run a busy school kitchen with a small team serving meals to nearly 200 pupils and staff. She has just started the third of the four modules which make up the two-year HNC-level flexible learning course delivered by the Open University.

Angela said: "I first heard about the course from an email sent to me and I thought it would be a good opportunity to gain a qualification and would maybe lead to a different job within the Orkney Islands Council."

She continued: "My biggest challenge is finding time to study and sticking to a timetable. Studying at home seems a brilliant idea but getting it into practice is challenging."

Angela had advice for other potential learners: "The best aspect is meeting everyone involved with the course. We all come from different parts of the Highlands and Islands and we all have different careers, but we are all trying our best. My advice to others would be to give it a try. You get to meet nice friendly people and get good support. It has given me, so far, a bit more confidence and that I am doing this for me...and there is no age limit to learning new skills."



# Funding Learning

The Development Fund

The Development Fund supports trade unions to establish learning infrastructure and build strong relationships and structures with employers. The Development Fund does not directly fund learning, but supports activity which improves the capacity of trade unions to deliver learning and skills development, the upgrading of basic and occupational skills and the reduction of skills gaps.

The Development Fund complements existing union strategies on lifelong learning. It supports developmental work which increases the capacity of trade unions to deliver courses that are funded by both the Learning Fund and external funding for learning that unions can access. It is also used to support unions with a range of other activities such as skills utilisation, employer engagement, Union Learning Rep training, opening up new sectors and developing new innovative approaches to delivery.

A total of £728,000 was allocated to a total of 18 projects that started in the period 2013/2014. Fifteen projects are in the Lowlands and Uplands Scotland area and three are in the Highlands and Islands. Projects are delivering in a range of sectors from retail and transport to media and journalism. Unions continue to use the fund to expand their activities into new workplaces and sectors.

## Lowlands and Uplands Projects

**Aegis:** Developing Skills in Financial Services

**ASLEF:** ASLEF Education

**BECTU:** Vision Project

**BFAWU:** Employer Engagement through Workforce Development

**Community:** Community the Union for Life

**CWU:** Improve Your Skills Too!

**NUJ:** Facilitating Culture Change within the Media Industry

**PCS:** Licence to Skill

**POA:** Engaging with Employers, Developing Hubs, Delivering Skills

**RCM:** Personal and Professional Learning in the RCM Scotland

**TSSA:** Building and Delivering Effective Learning and Skills in Scotland

**UCATT:** Engaging New Learners within the Construction Industry

**UNISON:** Enhancing Lifelong Learning

**Unite:** Organising the Workplace through Learning

**Usdaw:** Embedding a Sustainable Learning Strategy through Delivering Essential Skills

## Highlands and Islands Projects

**NUJ:** Extending Media Skills for Flexible Working in the Digital Age

**RMT:** All Aboard for Learning

**UNISON:** Enhancing Lifelong Learning in the Highlands

# Case Study

Innovative Learning in the Finance Sector

**Aegis**  
the union



**Union:** Aegis



**Location:** Edinburgh



**Funding:** The Development Fund

In changing from a Staff Association to becoming an independent trade union and affiliate of the STUC, Aegis has organised within the Finance Sector in a period of unprecedented economic turbulence. In this environment, Aegis has had to demonstrate the value of union membership to appeal to workers. Central to this appeal is the approach Aegis has developed around learning.

In April this year, Aegis was successful in securing a project and appointed its first Learning Organiser, Maria Clark. In the six months that have followed, the project has advanced at a breakneck pace, both in terms of learning delivered and the structures established.

Within Aegon, nine ULRs were recruited by the project. It established a ULR forum and agreed time off, with training plans, for all ULRs. Aegis also established a Steering Group which is attended by the Aegon Head of Employee Relations. This was fundamental in establishing a dialogue on workforce development.

Brian Linn, Aegis General Secretary, said: "The funding Aegis has received from Scottish Union Learning has enabled us to expand our work within Aegon by providing workplace learning opportunities to permanent, temporary and agency staff. Union learning gives every worker a better chance to secure long-term employment, enhance their transferable skills, seek advancement and increase the potential to earn more."

A host of learning has been delivered by Aegis. With the support of Skills Development Scotland, the Steering Group agreed to introduce the very first Modern Apprenticeships within the company in January 2014.







## Case Study

Enhancing Lifelong Learning  
in the Highlands



**Union:** UNISON

**Location:** Highlands & Islands

**Funding:** The Development Fund

Tackling basic skills needs among low paid and low skilled workers has seen UNISON project workers Philippa Clark and Marta Chaba travel to workplaces in every corner of the Highlands over the last few months. The health and social care sector with its predominantly female, part-time workforce is a key focus for the UNISON project which aims to engage with workers in one of the largest employers, NHS Highland, but also to reach out to workers in the 83 mainly private care homes across the region.

To engage with the mainly non-union organised care home workers, Philippa and Marta cold-called care home managers to arrange visits to talk to the workers about union learning opportunities.

Their direct approach has resulted in courses in subjects including basic IT and British Sign Language (BSL) being delivered for the first time to care home workers in locations such as Wick, Mallaig and Campbeltown. One BSL learner commented: "Course was excellent, found new skills which hopefully will enable me to do my job a little better."

Philippa said: "Many care home staff and home carers feel they do not have the necessary skills to do their job as well as they want to. Some employers try to arrange shift patterns to support attendance on courses, but generally obtaining time off is a fundamental barrier to learning for these workers."

# Improving Everyday Skills

## General Information

Scottish Union Learning is actively involved in Everyday Skills. Scottish Union Learning promotes Everyday Skills activity through Development Fund Projects, Everyday Skills Events, Learning Conferences and Local Learning Forums.

Scottish Union Learning works with the Scottish Government, Education Scotland and other partners to raise awareness of Everyday Skills needs and suitable means of support, and to assist unions in developing relationships with delivery partners, for example, Local Authority Literacies Partnerships, Workers' Educational Association and further education colleges.

### **Scottish Union Learning Everyday Skills Group**

The Scottish Union Learning Everyday Skills Group is comprised of members from affiliated unions, Scottish Union Learning and some partner organisations, including Dyslexia Scotland and Education Scotland. The Group meets regularly to discuss all aspects related to workplace literacies, digital participation and dyslexia, and is responsible for planning the annual Everyday Skills Event, and other events throughout the year which enable unions to take part in national initiatives such as Adult Learners' Week, Dyslexia Awareness Week and Book Week Scotland.

Scottish Union Learning nominated Robert Higgins, the 2012 Learner of the Year, for an Adult Learners' Week Award

### **Everyday Skills**

Scottish Union Learning defines Everyday Skills as the language, literacy, numeracy and basic IT 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.

from Scotland's Learning Partnership (SLP) in May 2013. Robert attended the SLP Awards Ceremony at the Scottish Parliament during Adult Learners' Week, where he was presented with the award in recognition of his remarkable learning journey. Robert left school with no qualifications, and poor reading and writing skills. He now works as a cleaner at First Bus, where he has received literacy and numeracy support through his ULR in the Unite workplace learning centre. Supported by his tutor, Robert gained an SVQ level 2 in reading and writing, and is working towards an SVQ level 2 in numeracy, and an SVQ level 3 in literacy.



# Event Spotlight

## Dyslexia Awareness Week

Scottish Union learning worked with unions and local dyslexia organisations to deliver a series of events throughout Dyslexia Awareness Week.

- ✿ UNISON organised a Dyslexia Awareness Workshop for 18 members from a wide range of occupations in NHS Lanarkshire. Those attending were able to learn more about what dyslexia is and how it can affect people in their particular workplaces, and discussions explored potential ways of supporting colleagues with dyslexia. Further workshops were organised to run throughout the year.
- ✿ The STUC screened the film 'Rethinking Dyslexia' for trade union reps and members, followed by a Panel Session to discuss issues surrounding dyslexia in the workplace. The FBU, Dyslexia Scotland, Glasgow Dyslexia Support Service and Scottish Union Learning were represented on this Panel.

- ✿ Dyslexia Awareness Sessions took place at the Fife and Tayside Learning Forums, with opportunities to discuss the film 'Rethinking Dyslexia', to explore relevant workplace issues for adults with dyslexia and the support ULRs can offer.
- ✿ As part of a ULR Training Forum, Usdaw delivered a Dyslexia Awareness Session to 17 ULRs. Campaign stalls were also organised throughout the week at Lightbodies in Hamilton and at a Morrisons "Weekend Get Together" Event which involved over 60 Reps from Morrisons stores across Scotland.
- ✿ A Dyslexia Discussion Panel took place at the STUC Disabled Workers' Committee to raise awareness and explore relevant issues. Dyslexia Scotland, Unite the Union and Scottish Union Learning were represented.

In addition, several unions distributed the Scottish Union Learning Dyslexia Guide for Union Learning Reps to raise awareness of dyslexia in their workplaces during Dyslexia Awareness Week.





# Case Study

ESOL Learning  
with Usdaw



**Union:** Usdaw



**Location:** Various



**Attendees:** 50+

English language learning is a crucial Everyday Skill for those who do not have English as a first language. Usdaw has been actively promoting ESOL to workers in various different workplaces throughout Scotland, including Kettle Produce in Fife, Tesco Depot in Livingston and Lightbody in Hamilton. Usdaw Learning Reps have organised workplace ESOL classes at Kettle Produce delivered by Dundee College through the Learning Fund. This was a six-week introductory course, delivered across two sites and complex shift patterns, but despite these challenges it has been so successful that the Training Manager has requested a further course.

At the Tesco Depot in Livingston, the Workers' Educational Association has delivered an ESOL course to Agency staff on site. This is the first time such learning has been made available to this particular group of staff. The ULR has worked with the Agency management on site to identify what learners would benefit from this intervention, and when to schedule the class times. One class has been held during a late evening shift, which has helped to overcome additional barriers that agency staff on night shift can face in accessing learning opportunities.

The Workers' Educational Association is also providing ESOL classes at Lightbody in Hamilton. This is a very challenging workplace, as 75% of the workforce is composed of migrant workers with over 25 different languages spoken on the factory floor!



# Modern Apprenticeships

Scottish Union Learning received funding from Skills Development Scotland in 2013 to undertake work on Modern Apprenticeships with a particular focus on equalities.

## **Project 1: Modern Apprenticeships - Identifying best practice in employing under-represented groups**

This project is identifying best practice in targeting under-represented groups. The project is also identifying individuals from under-represented groups to be 'apprenticeship champions', who then share their experience and promote apprenticeships via case studies and other routes, as an effective way to progress their career.

The focus is on occupational segregation and under-representation of BME and Disabled Workers. Scottish Union Learning organised panel sessions on Modern Apprenticeships at the 2013 STUC Black Workers' Conference, Disabled Workers' Conference, Women's Conference and Scottish Union Learning Conference.

## **Project 2: Modern Apprenticeships and the Role of HR Professionals**

This project sees Scottish Union Learning work in partnership with Strathclyde University to work with HR managers and recruitment managers to identify and develop a recruitment toolkit, to help recruitment practices ensure that women, disabled people, ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged groups are not discouraged from taking up apprenticeship opportunities.



## **Project 3: Modern Apprenticeships and Unions into Schools**

Scottish Union Learning is working in partnership with the STUC's Unions into Schools programme to redevelop the 'Better Way to Work' pack. A new section will be added which will focus on Modern Apprenticeships for young people and will cover equality and diversity. Real life case studies will be utilised within this section.

## **Additional Work**

Scottish Union Learning organised a meeting with the STUC and the secretariat from the Wood Commission in October 2013, focusing on the equalities strand of the Commission's work.

A presentation was delivered to Angela Constance MSP at the Trade Union Working Party on Lifelong Learning meeting in October. Additionally, the Skills Development Scotland Equality Management Committee invited Scottish Union Learning to give a presentation on the project.

Scottish Union Learning is updating the Modern Apprenticeship Toolkit and accompanying materials to reflect the changes in the programme since the pack was launched in 2011.

# Working with Partners

Scottish Union Learning meets its objectives by working with partner organisations and has established a number of programmes of work with many leading organisations.

Scottish Union Learning works with many partners, including various departments of the Scottish Government, SCQF, Sector Skills Councils, TUC Education Departments, the Workers' Educational Association, colleges and universities.

## **Dyslexia Scotland / Dyslexia Scotwest**

Scottish Union Learning works with local dyslexia organisations to increase awareness of dyslexia in the workplace, and to arrange support and advice for workers, their families, and for employers. Several awareness sessions were delivered to trade unions throughout the year, and during Dyslexia Awareness Week.

## **Education Scotland**

Scottish Union Learning continues to work with Education Scotland through the Adult Literacies in Scotland 2020 (ALIS 2020) Strategic Group. This Group is working on a range of projects, including 'Literacies for Employability and the Workplace' and a 'Professional Development Framework' for adult literacies practitioners.

## **Scottish Book Trust (SBT)**

Scottish Union Learning has been working with Scottish Book Trust to encourage more people to read. During Book Week Scotland, SBT supported workplace book swaps, author events and other book-related events for trade unions, and distributed its 2013 campaign book 'Treasures' to thousands of readers.

## **Skills Development Scotland (SDS)**

Over the last year, Scottish Union Learning has built upon a successful relationship with SDS to engage on several activities. Scottish Union Learning met with the SDS Industry Advisors in July 2013 to exchange information on each other's work and forge links that would facilitate and support the work Scottish Union Learning is taking forward around workforce development and employer engagement. SDS and Scottish Union Learning have also specifically linked up on a Modern Apprenticeship Project with a focus on equalities issues, which officially began in August. SDS attended the Scottish Union Learning Conference as a special partner in November and discussions are underway to work more closely on potential funding sources in the future.

## **University of Strathclyde Scottish Centre for Employment Research (SCER)**

As a result of previous joint work to improve knowledge and information on union-led learning in Scotland, a key information gap was identified: a Scotland-wide overview of key aspects of the important role of ULRs was missing from the data. As a result, it was proposed that SCER conduct a survey of ULRs in Scotland and towards the end of 2012, it was agreed by unions to support the survey. Despite being faced with a very detailed survey, 170 ULRs from 19 unions provided responses to a comprehensive range of questions. Professor Findlay attended the Union Advisory Group and the Scottish Union Learning Conference, in order to directly discuss the findings with union officials and ULRs. Scottish Union Learning intends to build on this work in 2014 to inform the support required for ULRs in the future.



# Partner Spotlight

Working with the Open University

The trade union movement has had a close relationship with the Open University since its formation in 1967 by Labour MP Jennie Lee. In 2005, the STUC cemented this relationship by signing a Memorandum of Understanding, which committed Scottish Union Learning and the Open University to work together to promote educational opportunities for union members in the workplace.

As a result, in excess of 500 union learners have enrolled in Open University courses, ranging from Creative Writing to Understanding Law. In May 2013, Scottish Union Learning held a joint event which was attended by 40 delegates from 11 unions.

The event resulted in a renewed emphasis on how the Open University and trade unions can work together to support employer engagement and workforce development. The new emphasis is supported by a new Part-Time Fee Grant, which applies to all part-time study up to 119 credits. The grant means that these modules are free to union members whose income is below £25,000. In addition, the Open University is subsidising the Openings Access modules in Scotland so that they are free to students new to Higher Education. The Open University in Scotland also offers free non-accredited workplace workshop sessions. The event was a resounding success.

Scottish Union Learning is currently working with unions to develop a range of workplace activity to support this new funding environment, with the ultimate goal of providing union learners with a pathway into higher education.



“

“It helped that the classes took place in my workplace. I found out that learning was enjoyable, and it wasn't a burden anymore.”

Paul Mitchell, 2013 Learner of the Year  
Glasgow City Building

”



# Learner of the Year Award

from Scottish Union Learning

The Learner of the Year Award was introduced by Scottish Union Learning in 2011 to recognise the range of learning journeys currently undertaken by lay learners in the workplace, supported by trade unions.

Scottish Union Learning presented the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Learner of the Year Award to UCATT member Paul Mitchell, who is a Painter for City Building in Glasgow. Sponsored by Skills Development Scotland, the award was presented at the Scottish Union Learning Conference in November by Grahame Smith, STUC General Secretary.

Paul has worked at City Building in Glasgow since 1994. When being diagnosed with a repetitive strain injury five years ago meant that he could no longer work in painting and decorating, he began working in the offices of RSBi. It soon became apparent to Paul that

his literacy skills were not up to scratch, and as an individual with dyslexia, he was apprehensive about learning due to his poor prior experience at school. Paul expressed his interest, as well as his apprehension, to the Learning Centre Manager, who in turn arranged for the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) tutors to speak with him.

Community the Union arranged for the WEA to deliver literacies provision for workers within RSBi, and Paul reluctantly enrolled. He received support for his dyslexia and progressed from taking literacy classes to IT learning, and he eventually received an English Higher qualification. From having extensive difficulties in basic reading and writing, Paul was given the support he needed by his tutors to expand his skills into other areas, such as poetry. Paul has even written a short book. To ensure he is qualified and for future job security, Paul began studying for an HNC in Construction Management in September 2013.



Louis Flood



# 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 One Workplace Equality Award, the STUC Organising Award and the STUC Frank McGuire Award for Health & Safety.

The recipient of the 2013 STUC Helen Dowie Award for Lifelong Learning was Sonya Cassidy, a Unite Union Learning Representative at the Royal Bank of Scotland Mortgage Centre in Greenock. Sponsored by Inverness College UHI, the award was presented at the STUC Annual Congress in April by First Minister Alex Salmond MSP.

Sonya works in the finance sector which does not have a strong tradition of trade unionism, and tends to be less engaged. When Sonya became a ULR, she decided to use learning as a tool to engage and educate members, and encourage non-

members to join. She put her ideas forward to the workplace rep, and working together they put together a plan to implement a lifelong learning structure within the workplace. They secured the buy-in of their employer and a learning agreement, facilities for running courses in the workplace, and negotiated with a local college to develop and secure a bespoke programme of courses to best suit the needs of the workforce. Sonya also secured funding through the Learning Fund to deliver additional courses.

Enthusiasm for the courses was enormous, resulting in a five-fold increase in membership on-site. Over 100 people have completed accredited learning in her workplace, and Sonya has also expanded learning into other sites. By demonstrating the benefits union-led workplace learning can bring, Sonya has broken down barriers and brought unions to the heart of the finance sector. As a result, she is currently paid one day a week by her employer to carry out union learning activities within the RBS Mortgage Centre.



Louis Flood

**ic** Inverness College  
University of the  
Highlands and Islands

**stuc** Union Rep Awards  
Helen Dowie Award for Lifelong Learning

# Resources and Communications

The Scottish Union Learning brand has grown since its launch in 2008. Scottish Union Learning has been covered in the learning media, and on trade union, employer and partner publications and websites.

## **www.scottishunionlearning.com**



The Scottish Union Learning website has received over 7,800 hits in the past year and is a targeted

source of resources, publications, events and news for trade union-led learning in Scotland. It continues to be a valuable resource for ULRs and unions.

## **Social Media**

Social media allows users to engage in two-way communication, and is increasingly becoming a tool for real-time feedback for unions. Scottish Union Learning can be found on Facebook and Twitter.



Facebook  
[www.facebook.com/scottishunionlearning](http://www.facebook.com/scottishunionlearning)



Twitter  
[www.twitter.com/unionlearning](http://www.twitter.com/unionlearning)

## **Scottish Union Learning News**

### **[www.scottishunionlearning.com/ulr](http://www.scottishunionlearning.com/ulr)**

The Scottish Union Learning quarterly newsletter, 'Live & Learn - Scottish Union Learning News' is aimed at ULRs and is distributed free of charge. The newsletter is printed twice per year and is available in a digital format twice per year. Demand for this publication is high in unionised workplaces throughout Scotland.

## **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 and Development Fund Project Workers in the Highlands and Islands 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.



## **Bite Size Briefings**

Four meetings took place at the STUC from October 2013 to January 2014 in a series of workshops called "Bite Size Briefings". These workshops, organised by the Scottish Union Learning Marketing Officer, were aimed at Project Workers and union officials interested in learning more about raising the profile of union learning in Scotland.

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[www.unionlearn.org.uk/education/index.cfm](http://www.unionlearn.org.uk/education/index.cfm)



**ASLEF**  
**Communication and**  
**Presentation Skills,**  
**Edinburgh**

"Gained a bit of confidence after doing a presentation and would feel confident doing this again to an audience."



**Learning Fund**  
**Course Feedback**  
**2012 - 2013**

**Community Union**  
**Employability Skills, Fife**

"The tutor was very patient and made me feel at ease. I enjoyed the course and I am now feeling confident to apply for a new job. Thank you so much."

**Unite**  
**Working with Individuals**  
**with Dyslexia, Inverness**

"The course really opened my eyes and has provided me with a much wider and deeper understanding of this subject and its impact on those with dyslexic traits."

**BFAWU**  
**ECDL Word Processing and**  
**Spreadsheets, Motherwell**

"A very useful and informative course which has given me a vast amount of new skills. Well worth doing."

**UNISON**  
**Emergency First Aid at Work,**  
**Dunoon**

"Course was well run and I learned a lot."  
"Course content and the tutor were excellent."

**Cross-Union**  
**Certificate of Higher**  
**Education Open,**  
**Highlands and Islands**

"After initially being very worried about starting learning again after a gap of 20+ years, I was pleasantly surprised at how quickly I was guided back into an educational environment."

**GMB BME Workers**  
**Moving Into Management,**  
**Glasgow**

"Very useful learning opportunity. I recommend this event to all, including non-ethnic minorities."

**CMI Introductory Certificate**  
**in Management, Western**  
**Isles**

"The course was very informative and the lecturers were very attentive and helpful."

**NUJ**  
**Scriptwriting, Inverness**

"Very entertaining. Very informative. Very chilled. Liked it. A lot."



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