# REPS Part 1 (key skills) online version (BECTU freelance version)

## Tutors’ notes

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Current version | 3.1 |
| Date of last update | May 2023 |
| Author(s) | Martin Roberts, Kathryn Sharratt, Marie McGrath |
| Version history | * 1.0 May 2020, 2.0 Oct 2020, 3.0 Mar 2023 |

## Introduction

This was the new reps training course for 2020 which has been adapted from the classroom version to be run online over 3 hour long sessions using zoom or some other video conferencing service. One of the aims for this training is to offer training for new reps who are currently working from home due to the restrictions from COVID-19. In the spirit of supporting our members time in hour should be allowed for everyone to have a bit of social interaction which they may be missing at this time. As with the classroom based course there is an action plan running through the online course. We would then suggest Organisers/Negotiators follow up and encourage this activity as much as possible before attending further training.

The original work is unchanged but not all activities are possible to run online or run the same. The course is split into three parts and the end of each part having an element of homework to be completed offline. Where possible we have tried to have the main delivery as face to face as video group. The activities completed as a big group with the PowerPoint presentation cut down to a minimum with the tutor sharing the screen. It is assumed for the delivery of the course that the reps do not have a hard copy of the workbook so editable parts can be shared to enable everyone to participate. The video’s are not included in this version of the course for ease of delivery. **Please note the PowerPoints are slightly different for each division and the questions on activity F vary for A&E and the suggested answers are at the end of these notes.**

## How these notes work

There are 4 core resources associated with the course:

1. The PowerPoint presentation, which includes visual aids, but also maintains the structure/order of the course
2. The participants workbook, which covers logistics, background information and activity sheets
3. The tutor’s notes which explain the activities, suggest discussion-prompts, give (loose) timings, and ‘index’ the other resources, tying the whole thing together. The words in bold are the changes from the classroom course delivering the online version.
4. As tutors who’ve committed to delivering this course, we would suggest a small amount of preparation time ahead of the course to ensure you’re familiar with the session, activities and tutor instruction.

## Tutor Notes/Course Structure

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Session** | **Slide no/WB page** | **Notes** | Resources |
| **Online session 1**  **Welcome** | no Slide / pg1-10 | * **The PowerPoint is not used at the beginning of the session.** * **You may need to help people with technical issues such as sound, Invite people, as they arrive online, to skim through introductory section of workbook (History of Prospect/ Trade Union Terminology) and check they received it ok** | **Tutor to ensure you have joined conference call slightly earlier than the start time; Have the following opened up on the computer:**  **PowerPoint for session 1**  **Activity D word doc.** |
| **Session 1 –** Introductions and objectives | No Slide / refer to  pg 2/9 | * Introduce tutor here * Pronoun to be mentioned and refer if necessary page 9 about letting people speak * Go through Learning outcomes on page 2 * Interactive course and reps are encouraged to discuss, raise items and participate in the sessions |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 15 mins | No Slide/p9 | * **Session 1. Activity A.** * **On the online version it is easier for everyone to introduce themselves.** * **Job role** * **Role in the branch and how long for** * **One word you would use to describe yourself** * **What would success look like for your career** * **What do you want to get out of the course?**   **I think at this present time it worth asking the extra question:**  **What do you do to stop being bored stuck at home?**   * **Added in how long they’ve been a rep as this should guide the tutor in terms of reference to the pitch of the sessions** * **Introductions should be quick, giving most of the time to a bit of social interaction** * **Write down answers to what they want to get from the course. This can be referred to during the day but also covered by next steps, further courses perhaps. The most important point is that these are the outcomes of the delegates and to recap over them at the end of the 3 sessions to ensure they’ve been met wherever possible.** * **Finish session by summing up traditional image portrayed by media of trade union reps. Reality is a highly skilled, diverse group backed by interesting facts.** * **Emphasise all delegates have one thing in common, you want to help your work colleagues and that is an excellent thing.** | Workbooks pens  Pen & paper to make notes |
| **Session 2 – What is a trade union?** | Slide 1/p10 | **Share the PowerPoint here and deliver at a quicker pace than normal**   * Session 2 what is a trade union? * Outcome of session 2; the session is designed to find out what the delegates think a trade union is and how it can help them to help with recruitment * Ask the question and then go onto the next slide | 4 activities for delegates included in this Session  PowerPoint |
|  | Slide 2/p10 | * The dictionary definition * Explore perception of what a trade union is and why it is still relevant today * Explore what delegates think what is meant by interests (rights not yet recognised) in terms of what else delegates can work towards as reps * The sort of answers we are looking for are: a safe place to work; environmental issues; robust procedures that help members (bullying and harassment) |  |
|  | Slide 3/p11 | Activity A: What doe success for the branch look like?   * A freelance branch is different to a branch centred around one particular employment * Using the whiteboard try to define what the branch wants to achieve |  |
|  | Slide 4/p10 | * Your right to join a trade union – go over points on pp (no one should be penalised by being part of a trade union and career should not be affected.) * The law gives everyone the right to join a union. |  |
|  | Slide 5/p10 | * The benefits of union membership (most recent figures) **Tutor - may wish to update if changed** * Slide has two clicks * Firstly; trade union figures * Secondly; Prospect figures * Prospect negotiates with more than 400 different employers * Lists of historical union victories & link to successes for Prospect (p13/14) * Facts to back up value of membership and value for money * The more local an issue the more difference it’ll make to members directly (keep the issues relevant) * Most recent published figures and sources are listed for delegates information | Updated figures |
| 10 mins | Slide 6/p11 | **Session 2, activity B**  **There is a slight change to normal delivery of this activity by combining some of the scenarios from Activity I below flick out of the PowerPoint**  **• I can look after myself**  **• I get the benefits anyway**  **• I don’t believe in trade unions**  **• I had a problem a year ago and Prospect/Bectu didn’t help**  **• nobody has asked me to join**  **• the union doesn’t do anything**  **• I can’t afford it**  **• unions are no use for a freelancer**  **• the management here looks after us and treats us well**  **• I don’t want to join.**   * Compare a trade union to other options – (learning outcome – no real alternative to a trade union) * Keep as a one large group, tutors act as moderator for discussion * Social media an example Facebook (not private) and many social media policies in work now – could face disciplinary. Based on opinion and not facts * Worker forum - could be a tactic from employer to get to know issues. Limited action from employees if employer doesn’t do anything * Individual – no collective voice and for individual with an issue you get support from union (including possible legal and financial) * Professional bodies – may set professional standards but not terms and conditions with an employer * To sum up this section trade union is there to protect rights and interests include H&S and work life balance * Will help raise points when recruiting and in the recruitment activity later in the day | Comparisons;  Facebook, single employee, employer forum |
| 15 mins | Slide 7/p11 | * **Session 2, Activity C What can a union negotiate on? 15 mins slightly changed to a big group and sharing the whiteboard or word document sharing facility rather than putting the PowerPoint back up but you can use slide 7 to introduce the activity** * **In a big group focus on the area, information, consultation, negotiation** * Following on from our previous discussion on the rights, the benefits of trade union membership and based on comparisons to other options, * Explain that negotiating is finding a compromise that both sides agree with. (For reference; Campaigning is persuading others that something needs to be done.)   Suggested answers (use local examples where possible)   * Strong agreements and negotiating concepts * A widely agreed set of definitions of key negotiating concepts & penalties – “Overtime”, “Time off the clock”, “broken / delayed rest periods”, “travel time”, “Prep & Wrap”, “Grace Periods”, “Resident Location” etc. * Strong union norms   + A Union branch ratecard for each sub-sector of the industry   + A means of discouraging ‘undercutting’ and rewarding co-operation   + Negotiating guidance – e.g. “don’t include any prep or wrap in your daily rate”, “always agree overtime in advance” etc | Use the shared white board or a word document  Refer to the action plan on page in workbooks and ask reps to find out what these 3 things mean for their branch |
|  | Slide 8/p 12 | **Set the homework to watch the How Prospect works video on the website and complete Activity D open the Activity D word Doc which page 15 on the workbooks so everyone is clear on what they have to do.**   * Session 2 Activity D - Servicing or Organising (introduce the main difference between without giving any opinion) 10 mins * For brief overview –Servicing focusses on the service element of of a union and tends not to rely on member’s involvement and election of reps is usually done by union leadership and organising which involves members at all levels and reps are elected by co-workers. * Ask delegates to put a tick next to the statement they feel best describes their workplace or ideas of the union from colleagues/themselves. * Ask delegates which column had the most ticks and what they feel based on their results may be the best approach. (we would hope they say organising) * The main points are that some parts of the union will always be servicing heavy (i.e. home workers) but the organising approach allows for more activity, greater empowerment and a greater longevity of the union * This will lead into later activity about how organised their workplace is. | Questionnaire in workbooks Page 15)  Activity D word doc |
| **Finish the session** |  | * **Try to encourage a bit of social interaction before everyone goes offline and confirm the time and date of session 2** | Refreshments |
| **Online Session 2** |  |  |  |
| **Session 3 -**  **How Prospect Works** | No Slide  p13 | **Once again we want to make these sessions as social as possible so spend 5 or 10 mins talking about how things are working from home. Ask if everyone has done their homework?**   * Learning outcome; Knowledge of union structure. A union is democratic and its’ structure should reflect that and make that possible. Any member gets to have a say on their workplace no matter how big their employer is. * As video points out, every branch has a right to raise an issue at their own conference, sector conference or national conference * A branch is made up of different offices, roles and sometimes many locations. * It also has a committee made up of elected positions. |  |
|  | Slide 1/ p13 & 14 | **Once everyone is settled bring up session 2 PowerPoint This is a different image for each division**   * Outcome to be achieved; how the branch is set up * The diagram shows a branch at one location but with 3 different departments * According to rules branch has to have a chair, secretary. * Branch meeting where an issue can be raised and discussed and a democratic decision can be voted on. The majority of the vote is the course of action a representative(s) takes up   with management on behalf of the members.   * It is sometimes difficult to attract members to branch meetings, apathy rules in most cases. Decisions still need to be made on the day to day business of the branch and to facilitate this, the branch of members elect a committee. * It’s important that all areas, grades, department and shifts all have representation on the committee. | PowerPoint online session 2 |
|  | Slide 2/p 13 | * Which branch – does it matter? * Prospect branches come in all shapes and sizes. They evolve to fit the needs of the members. Most are designed to match the organisation structure of the employer. * Regional branches – too small to form a branch (under 21 members) or there is no recognition from the employer. * TU act 2015 for a ballot of members to be legal it has to have all of the members who are affected by the outcome balloted and this can be called into question by the employer * Basic principle of this section is that delegates start to understand the structure and democratic structure of union * Running a union democratically can be difficult, but it’s worth it * Takes balance between pure-representation, and leadership * About giving members a say… * …and making sure they KNOW they have a say, and how. * Gives them ownership of THEIR union * If we can unite members behind an issue raised by them, chosen by them, that’s important to them, it gives us the foundation for VISIBLE union activity * One of the main roles of the rep is guiding new members into the right branch | Look at application forms if time. (where is branch needed) |
|  | Slide 3/p13 | * What happens when a member joins?  1. Where they work to be relevant for their workplace 2. Who they work for so pay and conditions can be improved 3. What their role is, so working conditions can be compared with others |  |
|  | Slide 4/ p13 | **This will be a different image for each division**  • Complete action plan if they know their branch chair/secretary etc…. | Refer to the action plan on page 41 in workbooks and ask reps to find out who fill these roles in their branch |
|  | Slide 5/p14 & 15 | * Outcome to be achieved: what can happen at a meeting or a committee meeting   A meeting needs to be in quorum for a decision to be made and action taken at the meeting. A quorum is enough members to be a reasonable representation of the branch total number; it can be set to reflect the branch, so 10% for instance.  Emphasise that the committee acts upon the will of the members at the meeting. It is generally the case that the committee has to steer the members into making a decision and keep expectations realistic. |  |
|  | Slide 6/p16 | **This will be a different image for each division**   * How do branches target their resource/efforts at the right issues * Steer discussion towards reflecting the issues of interest to the majority of membership * Then challenge with consideration for importance/urgency, e.g.   + Issue 1 = Co-vid measures (all divisions)   + Issue 2 = Feeding back into changes to the BBC drama agreement (LPD, RPD)   + Issue 3 = PACT agreement not being followed (LPD, RPD) no proper breaks (A&E) |  |
|  | Slide 7/p14 | **BECTU structure Division slide different for each division** |  |
|  | Slide 8 / p14 | **BECTU Sector** |  |
|  | Slide 9 / p15 | * Diagrams of support and the structure of Prospect (Member contact centre MCC) * So delegate understands what support is available   + Orange = access from all members   + Yellow = access from all members but reps training Officer to be notified   + Green = access for or via reps/ committee members   Pink = access via officer | Action plan (p41) – find out who is your Negotiation Officer and Organiser for your branch |
|  | Slide 10 / p17 & 18 | Structure in more details and shows the link between the member and the union (the influence is at the hands of the members) |  |
|  | Slide 11 /p32 | What a motion is refer to the appendix for guidance |  |
| **Session 4 –**  **The role of a rep**  (12.20 - 13.00) | Slide 12/p22  Slide 13/ p22  Slide 15/29/p25  Slide 16  Slide 17-19  Slide 20-21  Slide 21-22 | * Basic of rep’s role in more detail as they are key link between members and union * Prospect/Bectu prides itself on its reps and the good work they do.   (Many reasons members become reps)   1. They are good communicators and other members think they would be best for the job 2. Feel strongly about issues and want to change things for the better 3. Dissatisfied with something at work and wants the rights of a rep to influence members and management 4. Persuaded by another rep 5. Give something back as a member who’s been helped by Bectu 6. No one will step forward and a rep is needed.  * **Activity E What do union reps do? (20 mins for activity) share Whiteboard after you have explained the activity do as a big group this will have slightly different emphasis for a freelance branch** * In a group make a list of all the things a rep may do as part of their duties * Reinforce that to look what they would want a rep to be in ideal world * Make a list of the skills needed – no one will have all skills so split role if possible so focus on individual strengths. Refer to jigsaw to what a strong branch looks like * Pick the 4 most important and get a delegate to feed back * Union reps; negotiate agreements with employer bodies on pay and conditions, discuss major changes, discuss members concerns with employers, help member with legal and financial problems (with support of Prospect/BECTU) * Skills; Empathy, Good listener, Persuasive, Good communicator, tenacious. * Highlight no every rep can be good at everything, play to your strengths and don’t burn out.   Some things to consider when inviting someone from the branch to be a rep   * Go through slide * Overview of GDPR – do’s don’t and pitfalls. Suggest reps also look at their workplace policy regarding their role as a rep and what they can use and are entitled to. * Overview of eSite system – ensure delegates know of the pitfalls as new reps and for the most GDPR compliant way of emailing and contacting members, use the eBranch. * **Set home work** * **Sign up to the Prospect website so the rep can access their e-branch** * **Activity H How well organised is your workplace?** * **Following on from the previous activities – this is an opportunity for reps to access**   **where they feel their branch is at present in terms of how well organised, does the delegate feel the branch has adopted the right approach to recruiting and organising and union activity**   * **Where would the reps like to see if going in the future** * **Following on from activities which have asked you to complete element of the action plan, please look at the 4th point in the action plan and use ideas from the following activity to help complete it** * **Reflecting back to the questionnaire on servicing and organising on activity 4 and the previous activities, please add your responses into point 4 in your action plan** * **On a scale of 1 – 10 how organised do you feel your workplace is?** * **How is your workplace organised?** * **How do you feel your workplace could be improved in the following areas?**  1. **Building Membership** 2. **Communication with members**  * **Getting members active** * **Before finishing the session encourage some social interaction (chit chat)** | Use whiteboard facility  Mention further training  One crucial point all reps need to be aware of GDPR more information in the appendix |
|  | Slide 14 / p19 - 21 & 24 | show rep roles  Recap over the different types of reps and ensure delegates know there are pathways open to their future learning (jigsaw of different rep roles – page 24) |  |
|  | Slide 15, 16 & 17 / p 22 | Go through slides of the code of practice and expected values |  |
|  | Slide 18 | Picking the right reps  Go through slide |  |
|  | Slide 19  Slide 20 /p33  Slide 21  Slide 22 / p23 | GDPR explain that reps have to be aware of the duties under GDPR   * Go through slide * Overview of GDPR – do’s don’t and pitfalls. Suggest reps also look at their workplace policy regarding their role as a rep and what they can use and are entitled to. * Overview of eSite system – ensure delegates know of the pitfalls as new reps and for the most GDPR compliant way of emailing and contacting members, use the eBranch. Refer them to Appendix 4 |  |
|  | Slide 23 /p25 | **Activity F What would you do if? (For A&E questions see end of these notes)**  **In the same groups look over the following situation below and decided which action should be taken (can give each group a problem each if time is short)**  **Answers that we are looking to get**  **A member is starting a new job and wants to know what rate and box they should charge.**  Answer: Refer to the branch rate card or consult committee and advise based on experience.  **A member is starting a new job under the TV Drama Agreement and has a query about how OT is calculated.**  Answer: Carefully check the wording of the agreement and relay the information to the member. If unsure check with an official.  **A member has had their contract cancelled and wants to know how much notice pay they should be given.**  Answer: Get the member to check their contract terms carefully which should set out the notice period or check the .gov website Handing in your notice: <https://www.gov.uk/handing-in-your-notice/giving-notice>  **Several members have raised a complaint about catering on a particular production.**  Answer: This could be an organising opportunity, if the situation is not improved by raising a complaint with production get the members to network with other departments and raise a collective complaint to add weight. Collective organising helps to raise the profile of the union and creates a collective mentality amongst the crew and encourages non-members to join.  **A member raises a complaint about being bullied by a producer.**  Answer: Bullying complaints are serious and should be passed on to an official. The same if a complaint has been made about the member.  **A member hasn’t been paid and their invoice is overdue by 30 days**  Answer: Sign post to the union’s monies owed service [Can you help me with monies owed? | Bectu](https://bectu.org.uk/article/can-you-help-me-with-monies-owed/?s=monies%20owed&f=all)  **A member hasn’t been paid and their invoice is overdue by 20 days**  Answer: Advise member that the debt needs to be 30 days overdue before it can be picked up by the union’s monies owed service.  **A member is working on a sub-30 million independent feature and wants to know which agreement they should use.**  Answer: There is no collective agreement for cinematic release features with a budget below 30 million. However, this means that terms can be negotiated on an individual basis. Check deal memos and contracts carefully before signing.  **A member contacts the branch confused about pension contributions.**  Answer: Signpost to the Bectu website [Pension basics | Bectu](https://bectu.org.uk/topic/pension-basics/) if they still have questions contact your official and they can get advice from the union’s pension officer or freelance research officer.  **A member has a campaign idea and they want support from the committee.**  Answer: Discuss with your committee, whether is the issue widely felt, deeply felt, and winnable. Run a survey with the branch members and discuss it at a branch meeting. Contact your official who can advise on creating a campaign plan. |  |
|  | Slide 24 / p27 | **Activity G - Why don’t people join a union?**  Mention that a TUC survey found the top reason for people not being in a union is they were never asked.  **It may be worth pointing out the 10 good reasons to join on page 27**  **Also the joining the gym example on page 27** | 6 ingredients as on powerpoint/workbook |
| **Action Plan** | Slide 25 | * Ensure everyone has a clear focus on their action plan when going back into the workplace. * Suggest how the mapping can be transferred to the workplace * What will they stop, continue or start to do | Action plan |
| Summary of the course | Slide 26 | **As with all the other online sessions finish with the reps being able to talk about their situations or social time for them**   * Go over learning outcomes from delegates at beginning of the day * Clarify links and further information & appendix if needed |  |
|  |  | * + End of the course |  |
|  |  | **Activity F What would you do if? A&E questions**  **In the same groups look over the following situation below and decided which action should be taken (can give each group a problem each if time is short)**  **Answers that we are looking to get**  **A member is starting a new job and wants to know what rate they should charge.**  Answer: Refer to the branch rate card or consult committee and advise based on experience.  **A member is starting a new job under the UK Theatre/Bectu Agreement and has a query about how OT is calculated.**  Answer: Carefully check the wording of the agreement and relay the information to the member. If unsure check with an official.  **A member has had their contract cancelled and wants to know how much notice pay they should be given.**  Answer: Get the member to check their contract terms carefully which should set out the notice period or check the .gov website Handing in your notice: <https://www.gov.uk/handing-in-your-notice/giving-notice>  **Several members have raised a complaint about per diem payments on a particular production.**  Answer: This could be an organising opportunity, if the situation is not improved by raising a complaint with production get the members to network with other departments and raise a collective complaint to add weight. Collective organising helps to raise the profile of the union and creates a collective mentality amongst the crew and encourages non-members to join.  **A member raises a complaint about being bullied by a producer.**  Answer: Bullying complaints are serious and should be passed on to an official or qualified case handler. The same if a complaint has been made about the member.  **A member hasn’t been paid and their invoice is overdue by 30 days**  Answer: Sign post to the union’s monies owed service [Can you help me with monies owed? | Bectu](https://bectu.org.uk/article/can-you-help-me-with-monies-owed/?s=monies%20owed&f=all)  **A member hasn’t been paid and their invoice is overdue by 20 days**  Answer: Advise member that the debt needs to be 30 days overdue before it can be picked up by the union’s monies owed service.  **A member is working on a production that is not covered by the UK Theatre/ Bectu agreement, what do they use.** Answer: There is no collective agreement. However, this means that terms can be negotiated on an individual basis. Check deal memos and contracts carefully before signing.  **A member contacts the branch confused about pension contributions.**  Answer: Signpost to the Bectu website [Pension basics | Bectu](https://bectu.org.uk/topic/pension-basics/) if they still have questions contact your official and they can get advice from the union’s pension officer or freelance research officer.  **A member has a campaign idea and they want support from the committee.**  Answer: Discuss with your committee, whether is the issue widely felt, deeply felt, and winnable. Run a survey with the branch members and discuss it at a branch meeting. Contact your official who can advise on creating a campaign plan. |  |