

1. ****
2. How to run an
effective branch

November 2023

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# Learning outcomes

* To understand the role of the branch
* To understand the roles within a branch
* To be able to recruit members to be reps
* To be able to structure a branch
* To be able to engage members

## Activity A: What are the duties of a branch?

Write down what you think are the duties of the branch

# The duties are laid down the Prospect rule book

* to maintain and /or improve the conditions of employment of Branch members and the relations between them and their employers
* to promote the policy of the Branch as agreed at a Delegate Conference or General Meeting of the Branch
* to further the objects of the Union
* to carry out the policies of the Union
* to protect and promote the interests of its members
* to recruit and maintain membership
* to keep members informed of all matters advised by the National Executive Committee
* to consult with the appropriate members body who may be affected by any proposals concerning pensions in payment
* to hold an Annual or Biennial Delegate conference

## Activity B: What are the roles within a branch?

Write down the roles within your branch

# The roles from the Rep’s handbook

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * **General governance**
 | * **Specialist reps**
 |
| * President/chair/convenor
 | * Health and safety rep
 |
| * Vice President/chair
 | * Union Learning rep
 |
| * Secretary
 | * Equality rep
 |
| * Membership and recruitment secretary
 | * Pension rep
 |
| * Branch organiser
 | * Environmental rep
 |
| * Treasurer
 | * Casehandler
 |
| * Auditor
 | * Communications rep
 |
|  | * Young workers’ rep
 |

## Activity C: Which roles have legal standing?

Discuss as a big group the following:

What roles have legislation that requires an employer to recognise and give paid time off for?

Does your recognition agreement have any variations to the legal minimums?

What are the minimum roles that need to be filled in a branch?

## Activity D: Who needs to be on a branch committee?

In a big group discuss who you would have on your branch committee?

Think about the following:

* Consultation
* Reporting
* Recruitment
* Campaigning

# Who would make a good rep?

* They are interested in getting involved with the branch
* They agree with beliefs and values of the trade union
* They are listened to and respected by colleagues
* They have a particular skill or passion for the role
* They are willing to devote time to the role

We are always conscious that reps are volunteers. Some can give a little, others can give a lot. Each person must find their own boundaries. But to most people, the role of a local representative includes one or more of the following elements:

**Advice:** not necessarily able to answer all the questions, but knowing where to look for the answers.

**Representation and advocacy**: standing by a member’s side or speaking on their behalf.

**Negotiation**: helping to improve local working conditions.

**Liaison and consultation**: passing information upwards, downwards and sideways; representing members’ views to management.

**Organisation**: organising the branch, strengthening its position in the workplace.

**Democracy**: representing members’ views in developing the union’s policies.

# Useful links

[Course resources – Prospect | Prospect](https://prospect.org.uk/course-resources/?s=branch%20health%20check&f=all) where the branch development template and the branch health check

[Rep's and negotiator's guides (prospect.org.uk)](https://members.prospect.org.uk/resources/guides-factcards/guides) including the guide to being treasurer and the reps handbook