



## **BVU BRANCH COMMITTEE JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

Branch Committee members will be added to a closed facebook discussion group, which they are expected to contribute to regularly. We also communicate by email, whatsapp, text message and phone. BC members must attend quarterly Branch Committee meetings, which will be held on the same day, at the same venue as the quarterly Branch meetings. Expenses will be paid in accordance with Unite's lay member expense policy.

The time required for these roles can vary, and may increase at times when the profession is experiencing specific challenges. Typically, we expect members to be able to dedicate around 10 hours a month, but welcome applications from those who are able to offer less time. Please let us know when you apply what your constraints are, and we may be able to tailor the role to you, or organise a job-share.

### **Organising Representative (formerly OPC rep)**

In this role, you would be expected to:

- Help collect data from our members and the wider profession on issues affecting the veterinary industry
- Keep abreast of current affairs that may affect our members
- Keep abreast of current Unite policies that may affect the BVU
- Discuss and debate issues affecting the veterinary industry
- Write motions for submission to the Branch and Branch Committee
- Contribute to, and sometimes lead, smaller projects with the BVU to help better represent our members
- Organise events
- Contribute to the development of policy or position statement on behalf of the BVU, in conjunction with the Branch Executive
- Liaise with other members of the Branch Committee to ensure their experiences are represented in policy or position development.

It is not mandatory, but will help with this role, if you attend some of the educational courses provided by Unite to better understand the work we do, and the way we operate.

## **Health and Safety Representative**

In this role, you would be expected to:

- Keep up to date with H&S issues in the veterinary industry
- Keep the rest of the Branch Committee up to date with these issues
- Promote the improvement of H&S in the veterinary industry – through developing and organising campaigns (once agreed by the Branch)
- Develop information for BVU members on their rights with regards to H&S
- Liaison with the Equalities Officer to ensure the equalities aspect of H&S at work is taken into account
- Liaison with, and feedback to the Branch of, regional and national H&S initiatives within Unite
- Help members with individual H&S queries

In order to undertake this role, you will need to complete training provided by Unite on employment law and workplace representation. There are four courses you will need to attend, each is held over 5 consecutive days (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm) and they are spread throughout the academic year. These courses are provided free of charge by Unite, count as CPD and you will be able to claim some expenses for them (in accordance with Unite's lay member expense policy). You may be entitled to paid release from your employer to attend these courses – if not, you may take unpaid leave and Unite *may* be able to help cover the equivalent of your normal wages. *You must have attended at least one of these courses within 1 year of successful election to this position, or you will automatically lose your position (in accordance with Unite rule 18.4).*

## **Workplace/ Companion Representative**

In this role, you would be expected to:

- Assist members by giving telephone or email advice
- Attend workplace meetings with members
- Attend grievance or disciplinary meetings with members
- Attend RCVS disciplinary hearings with members
- Liaise with other workplace/ companion reps
- Report at Branch meetings on common themes or issues you have encountered
- Maintain complete confidentiality regarding member issues
- Ask for help when you need it, from senior representatives, or the Regional Officer, to ensure members are always given the best possible advice

You will be supported in this role by the Branch Executive, other workplace/companion reps, and the Regional Officer. More complicated cases will be handled by the Regional Officer and other paid members of staff of Unite. You will always have the full support of the BVU and the wider union in your role as a workplace/companion representative.

**Workplace Reps** represent members within their own workplace or company. The BC welcomes new reps from any workplace that does not already have a workplace rep; as such, the number of workplace reps is likely to vary according to the activity of our members. If your workplace already has a representative, and you would still like to get involved in representing individual member cases, you can apply to represent members with your larger company, if applicable, or as a companion representative.

**Companion Reps** represent members within their geographical region. The BC should consist of one companion rep from each of Unite's geographical regions: South East; South West; London and Eastern; East Midlands; West Midlands; North West; North East, Yorkshire and Humberside; Scotland; Wales; Northern Ireland.

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## **Learning Representative**

In this role, you would be expected to:

- help facilitate access to Unite's educational resources to BVU members
- ensure members of the Branch Committee have undertaken the required courses for their roles, in conjunction with the Branch Executive
- discuss and develop ways to tailor Unite's education resources to the veterinary industry, including liaison with our Regional Officer on improving course accessibility
- keeping records of which members have undertaken which courses, and when they are due for re-validation
- talking to other Branch Committee members about their ongoing educational needs