

UNISON - University of Southampton Branch - FAQs

A. MEMBERSHIP

- How do I join Unison at the University of Southampton?
 - You can join online at joinunison.org or call free on 0800 171 2193 or we can email you a membership form. Email us at unison@soton.ac.uk
- How much does membership cost?
 - It can cost as little as £1.30 a month depending on your salary typically our members pay between £11.50 - £17.25.
- Can my membership subscription be taken straight from my University salary?
 - Yes it can but this may change in the near future.
- How do I cancel my membership*****please note this is only for members at the University of Southampton*****
 - Send us an email at Unison@soton.ac.uk and contact payroll or your bank to cancel your payments, as we cannot cancel payments for you. You may also cancel by telephone at Unison Direct 0800 0 857 857
- How do I get a replacement membership card?
 - Log onto My Unison on the Unison website to request a new card <https://www.unison.org.uk/my-unison/>
- Where do you keep my personal details?
 - Personal data is kept on the Unison central membership database. Email addresses are also stored by the Branch.
- I am retiring. What happens to my membership?
 - Full membership will be cancelled once you stop paying your subscription from your salary. For a one-off payment of £15.00 you may become a Retired Member and enjoy all benefits of being in Unison except for having a vote. Contact the branch for a form.
- I am going on Maternity leave. What happens to my membership?
 - You can amend your status on the My Unison Site and maintain your Unison membership.

- Do I need to tell my Line Manager that I am in Unison?
 - No, Union membership is your own business, but there should be no reason not to tell them if they ask. You cannot be discriminated against for union membership.
- What are the benefits of Membership?
 - Being a member of UNISON gives you a huge range of benefits, from legal and welfare services to financial help for education and training. Members also get discounts on a range of financial services plus special payments on death, accident or fatal accident. All this is on top of the benefit of being part of a million-strong group of colleagues speaking out to defend your rights, pay and terms and conditions at work. Members are entitled to most benefits from the day you join the union, with the exception of legal assistance and death or accident payments that require you to be a member for four weeks to qualify.
- Is there more than one sort of Membership?
 - You can be a retired or unemployed member or a student member if you fit those categories.
- Who can join Unison?
 - Anyone who fits the entry requirements – that is any employee of the University of Southampton.
- I am already a member of a Union. Can I also join Unison?
 - Yes you may be a member of more than one union – that is your choice.
- I am on secondment. Can I still be a member?
 - As long as you pay your membership subscription you may still be a member of Unison.
- I am working part-time. Do I get a reduction on the membership fee?
 - Membership subscription is based on your actual salary.
- I am leaving the University. Can I retain my membership?
 - You may retain your membership of Unison, but if you pay your subscription you should change to DD. If you are moving to another

employer where Unison is a recognised Trade Union we can transfer your membership and you will not lose any benefits.

B. PERSONAL ISSUES (WORK RELATED)

- I want to check my job against the generic job description for my level – where do you I do that?
 - We have copies of the Job Descriptions and a pro-forma we can send you to help with that. The JDs are on the HR website.
- I have been called to an official meeting and need someone to accompany me to it. How do I do that?
 - Let us know when the meeting is and we will arrange for someone to come with you if possible. You should notify HR that you wish to be accompanied and the timing of the meeting may be changed to allow a rep to attend with you.
- I have been asked to attend Occupational Health. What does this mean?
 - If you have been off sick for a period of time, especially for work related stress you may be asked to go to OH; this is good practice and should happen. You will normally be interviewed by an OH nurse, sometimes the doctor. They are professionals, and will provide a professional assessment of your health. You will be sent a copy of the report.
- A grievance has been taken out against me. What should I do?
 - Contact the Branch ***unison@soton.ac.uk*** and we will talk to you about representation and support. Do this as soon as you know about the grievance.
- Disciplinary action is being taken out against me. What should I do?
 - Contact the Branch and we will talk to you about representation and support. Do this as soon as you know about the disciplinary.
- I am being bullied what can I do?
 - Please arrange an appointment with the branch by email (preferred) or phone us. Bullying takes many forms and sometimes it is hard to recognise. Understanding what is happening and that it is not your fault is the first step to stopping it

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- **There is a reorganisation being planned what support can I expect from the Union?**
- Contact the Union immediately. We should have been notified by the HR manager, but if you have specific concerns contact us sooner rather than later.
- **I might be facing Redundancy what should I do?**
 - Contact us as soon as possible. We can provide advice on a settlement agreement or redeployment and we can provide legal advice as well.
- **I am facing a Capability Hearing what should I do?**
 - Contact the branch as soon as possible. Collate any relevant emails or information you may have and come and see us. We are very experienced at representing members at capability hearings.

C. ACTIVIST QUESTIONS

- Now that I am a member, I would like to get more involved with Unison. How do I do that?
 - Contact the unison office unison@soton.ac.uk and come and meet us. You could find a specific role such as membership secretary, health and safety rep or you could become a steward. You could also be a contact in your workplace and distribute information and feedback from your colleagues. Unison provides accredited training for reps and you will be supported by the branch.
- I would like to be a Union Representative. How do I do that?
 - Contact the Branch and we will be pleased to give you all the information you need. Come and meet us at an event, or email us and we can meet to discuss.
- My Line Manager won't give me time off for my Union activity/training/meetings requested in advance. What do I do?
 - Contact the Branch Secretary. There is a Facilities Agreement with the University and the Trade Unions which allows you to have time for union duties and the university is committed to this.

D. YOUR BRANCH

- What is the best way for me to contact the Unison branch at the University of Southampton?
 - By email at unison@soton.ac.uk. We can always pick up email. You can ring us on 023 8059 32.37 and leave a message.
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- What are the branch opening hours?
 - Currently our office is not staffed. Please email us to make an appointment and we will arrange to see you.
 - Some of my details have changed (new address, different University job) – who do I submit this information to for updating my membership details
 - My Unison <https://www.unison.org.uk/my-unison/>
 - Where do I find out about training ?
 - Contact the Branch unison@soton.ac.uk or you could check the Unison website or the Unison South East website.
 - Do you have regular meetings for Unison members?
 - We hold Branch meetings over the course of the year.
 - Where is the Unison office on Campus?
 - 47 University Road, next to the Jubilee Sports Centre
 - Who is the Branch Secretary?
 - Gwen Gordon
 - What regular communications will I receive as a Unison member?
 - A monthly emailed newsletter and other information by email. A hard copy newsletter at least twice a year. Information from Unison head office and offers from our partners.

E.UNISON

- What special offers are available to Unison members?
 - Training and development, death and accident benefits, legal services, welfare, financial grants for learning.
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- How do I set up a Direct Debit to pay for my membership?
 - Complete the section on the membership form with your bank details.
 - I have had a promotion – who do I have to tell to get this changed on the Unison membership details?
 - You can change your details on My Unison <https://www.unison.org.uk/my-unison/> Your payments will be updated by Payroll, but if you pay by DD you should notify the branch and we can amend the payments.
 - Does membership of Unison entitle me to any legal advice?
 - We offer a number of legal services to members and their families, for help with issues within and outside of the workplace. This includes assisting with workplace problems, injury claims, clinical negligence and free legal advice, wills and conveyancing.
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- I want to know more about Unison – where can I find that information?
 - The Unison website: [www. Unison.org.uk](http://www.unison.org.uk), the branch unison@soton.ac.uk or by taking to one of the reps or calling in to the branch.
 - Can Unison help me develop my career?
 - Yes we can train you as a steward which will boost your confidence and we can send you for further training in other areas such as employment law. There are basic literacy courses and you would have access to degree courses at Ruskin College. Please contact us for more information.

