

**WIRRAL UNISON BRANCH**

**RULES**

*DRAFT - TO BE AGREED*

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**1.** **BRANCH NAME**

The Branch shall be called 'Wirral UNISON' and is referred throughout the rules as “the branch”.

1. **AIMS OF THE BRANCH**
2. To support and pursue the Aims and Objectives contained in the UNISON Rule Book, and the Objectives agreed by UNISON’s National Executive Committee annually, and in particular:
3. To achieve the aims and targets set annually through the branch assessment.
4. **MEMBERSHIP**

Eligibility for membership shall be in accordance with the Rules of the union.

1. **BRANCH STRUCTURE**
2. There will be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the branch to confirm the election by ballot of branch officers and members of the Branch Committee, to receive the branch accounts and report on branch development from the Branch Committee. The AGM may comprise one meeting or a series of aggregate meetings based on sections or geographical areas in order to maximize the active participation of members.

1. The AGM will determine the basis of representation in the branch and the number of stewards and other representatives to be elected in each work group or workplace.
2. Other general meetings may be called by the Branch Committee or by 50 members of the branch or 5% of the membership, whichever is the greater.
3. The quorum for any general meeting, including the annual meeting is 80 members of the branch at a single meeting or through aggregate meetings.
4. Non-Council Organisation (NCO) Steward Committees will be established for each organisation covered by the branch to provide for the participation and representation of members in that organisation in accordance with rule 9 below.
5. The Branch Committee will comprise all branch officers (see rule 5 below) and stewards and will be responsible for the general organisation and development of the branch and for policy and decision making on matters affecting all members within the branch between general meetings.
6. The Branch Management Group will be responsible for the day to day management of the branch in accordance with the decisions and authority delegated by the Branch Committee. Its membership and role is as described in rule 7 below.

**5. BRANCH OFFICERS**

1. The branch shall elect the following officers annually in accordance with rule 5c.
* Branch Chair
* Branch Secretary
* Branch Treasurer
* Education Co-ordinator
* Lifelong Learning Co-ordinator
* Equality Co-ordinator
* Health and Safety Officer
* Communications Officer
* International Officer
* Membership Officer
* Young Members Officer (must be under 27 years old for the full term of office)
* Welfare Officer
* Labour Link Officer (elected by the members who pay the political levy only)
* Retired Members Secretary (elected by the retired members)
* Others to be determined as necessary for the effective operation of the branch
1. Each NCO Stewards Committee within the branch shall elect a Lead Steward from amongst the stewards in that committee in accordance with rule 5d.
2. Election of branch officers:
3. Branch officers may be nominated by the Branch Committee or any two members, with the exception of the Labour Link Officer who will be elected by the APF members only, and the Retired Members Secretary who will be elected by the retired members.
4. Nominations will be invited 12 weeks before the AGM and nomination forms will be made available from the branch. All nominations must be received in writing at least 7 weeks before the AGM
5. Each nominee will be notified and given the right to withdraw not later than 6 weeks before the AGM
6. If there is more than one candidate a vote will be held
7. The vote will be conducted by postal ballot in accordance with the procedure and timescales contained in the Code of Good Branch Practice
8. Where no valid nomination has been received before the deadline, nominations may be called for and a candidate elected at the AGM, or endorsed by the Branch Committee subject to ratification by the next general meeting
9. In the event of a vacancy occurring in any office referred to in this rule (other than the Labour Link Officer and the Retired Members Secretary) before the next AGM of the branch, the Branch Committee shall appoint a suitable person to fill the vacancy
10. Election of Lead Stewards in Non-Council Organisations
11. Each NCO Stewards Committee shall appoint a Lead Steward. If there is more than one candidate a vote will be held and only members employed by that organisation may participate.
12. **BRANCH COMMITTEE**
13. Representation on the Branch Committee will be agreed by the AGM and will include:
* Branch officers
* Council Stewards
* NCO Stewards
1. The Branch Committee shall administer branch business in accordance with UNISON rules and guidance.
2. The quorum for the Branch Committee shall be 20 members of the committee.
3. The Branch Committee shall ensure that sections within the branch are appropriately and equitably resourced to ensure the effective participation of members, recruitment and organisation, representation, and collective bargaining, and campaigning on behalf of members in each section.
4. The Branch Committee will establish arrangements for the individual representation of members.
5. The Branch Committee shall meet at least six times per year at venues and times as the Committee may determine to maximize the active participation of members.
6. The Branch Committee shall elect delegates to Annual Conference, Service Group Conference, Regional Council, and nominations to Regional Committees, National Executive Council, and National Service Group Executive.
7. All members of the branch shall be entitled to attend any meeting of the branch as an observer, provided that they can show proof of membership and the facilities allow.
8. **BRANCH MANAGEMENT GROUP**
9. The Branch Management Group shall comprise the Branch Secretary, Branch Chair, and the Branch Treasurer (and others as appropriate).
10. The Branch Management Group will meet monthly to ensure the effective day to day management of the branch within the parameters of the decisions and guidance issued by the Branch Committee. The Branch Management Group may commit to no expenditure, policy decision or affiliation that has not been previously agreed by the Branch Committee.
11. **COUNCIL STEWARDS COMMITTEES**
12. Collectively stewards will form a Departmental Stewards Committee for which the quorum will be 25% of the stewards.
13. Stewards will be elected to represent their committee on the Branch Committee. Each Stewards Committee based on total departmental membership shall be entitled to the following representation on the Branch Committee:-

Up to 100 members - two representatives

 Every additional 100 or part thereof - one representative up to a maximum of 30

1. All stewards will be accountable to the Branch Committee for their actions as a steward.
2. Allocated branch officers will be members of Stewards Committees but with no voting rights.
3. All departmental negotiations will be led by the allocated branch officer. Stewards Committee's are encouraged to appoint substitutes to attend Branch Committee and/or to rotate representation. They shall have full voting rights and notification of these arrangements must be given to the Branch Secretary prior to the meeting.

1. **NON-COUNCIL ORGANISATIONS (NCO)**
2. NCO’s comprise all members within the relevant service group and will have autonomy within the branch in respect of collective bargaining with their employer(s) only, subject to the policies and any guidelines and procedures of the branch, region and national union.
3. NCO’s will be led by a Lead Steward elected in accordance with rule 5d and who will be the senior accredited representative.
4. **CONDUCT OF MEETINGS**
5. All meetings will be conducted in a fair and democratic manner.
6. All meetings will be advertised widely as far in advance as possible (in the case of the AGM, all members will be notified in writing at least 12 weeks before the meeting, or first aggregate meeting).
7. The procedures to be used at the meeting will be explained clearly.
8. The branch will maintain records of all meetings and other appropriate records to enable the branch to function.
9. **MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS**

Communications to the media on behalf of the branch shall be made only by officer(s) authorised by the Branch Secretary.

1. **AFFILIATIONS**
2. Affiliations to relevant constituency Labour Parties will be decided by the APF membership.
3. Affiliations to trade councils shall be determined by the AGM or Branch Committee.
4. **FINANCE**

The branch shall keep a Unity Trust Bank account in the name of the branch and will maintain a financial record of all assets and transactions in accordance with UNISON guidelines.

1. **DONATIONS**

Donations shall be agreed by the AGM or Branch Committee in accordance with the union’s policies and objectives and subject to provisions of national rule.

1. **EXPENSES**

Rates of expenses for members attending meetings or carrying out other activities on behalf of the branch shall be agreed by the AGM in accordance with the Scheme for Branch Expenses contained in the Branch Finances Handbook.

1. **HONORARIA**

Any honorarium paid to a branch officer will only be made in accordance with the Scheme for Honoraria Payments in Branches contained in the Branch Finances Handbook.

1. **BRANCH STAFF**
2. The Branch Secretary will be responsible for the employment, direction and supervision of any staff employed by the branch consistent with employment law and current good practice.
3. In the event of any first stage hearings of staff disciplinary or grievance matters, the Branch Secretary will be joined by another senior branch officer other than the Branch Chair.
4. Any appeal arising from a first stage grievance or disciplinary hearing will be heard by the Branch Chair and other senior branch officers not involved at the first stage hearing.
5. The outcome of any disciplinary or grievance hearing will remain confidential and the outcome only will be reported to the Branch Committee on its conclusion.
6. **APPROVAL / ALTERATION TO BRANCH RULES**
7. In accordance with the Code of Good Branch Practice 11.1 every branch must adopt a set of rules within the parameters of the core branch rules laid down by the National Executive Committee.
8. Branch rules must be agreed by two thirds of members present and voting at a quorate general branch meeting, and then by the Regional Committee.
9. Branch rules must be approved in accordance with UNISON’s procedures.

(d) Any changes to branch rules must be agreed and approved in the same way.