



2023 National Executive Council Elections

Request for nomination: Higher Education Female seat

June Maguire

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to seek your branch's nomination for UNISON's NEC Higher Education Female Seat in the forthcoming election for 2023/24.

I currently represent Higher Education at Regional and National level as a member of the Scottish HE Committee and the HE Service Group Executive, and at the local level as Branch Secretary and Women's Officer of the University of Edinburgh. This experience has given me a comprehensive knowledge of the challenges we face in HE, and I would welcome the opportunity to represent our members on the NEC.

We are a member-led union and I will always fight to defend this. We should be a campaigning union, concerned with a wider political agenda, but we must also organise to deliver the best representation and support for members on the ground. This is vital to recruiting and retaining members. We must value our staff and work together to deliver for the members. I am not a member of any political party, and I think it important that we engage with all politicians who support unions and the right of our members to take industrial action. We should not be led by the agenda of any one party, but always work in the best interest of our members. Our members are the union, and activists must ensure their voices are heard.

Universities don't work without us, and I am committed to achieving parity of conditions of service for all our members across the sector, and gaining the recognition we deserve for the vital services we provide. Current priorities being negotiated in my branch include:

- parity of conditions of service, including annual leave entitlement
- review of the pay spine - our low paid members have already had a pay increase to alleviate compression on the lower grades
- recruitment and retention, including moving staff from fixed term to permanent contracts
- career development policy for professional services and support staff
- disability and menopause guidance to become policies; review of other 'equalities' policies

Recent improvements include:

- facility time increase, including payment for part-time activists doing union work in own time
- commitment to reduce risk of redundancy – improved opportunities for redeployment
- hybrid working

I want to ensure that the successes we achieve at branch level are reflected across the sector.

Activists continue to face many challenges – fighting cuts, erosion of pay and conditions, climate crisis, and defending the very existence of trades union. We must work hard in our union, and work with other unions, to defend workers' rights. We need a strong, committed and united NEC to lead UNISON in these fights.

Pay: we must continue to campaign for improved pay, to reverse the cuts our members have suffered for over 10 years, and to build on the successes we've had in industrial action ballots. We should also continue to address gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps.

Pensions: we must campaign against the inequality of pension provision in our sector. UNISON must play a lead role in ensuring activists have the knowledge and training to campaign for our members to have access to the best pension fund. We must defend vulnerable local funds and find ways to ensure that our lowest paid members don't remain stuck in the worst pension.

Funding: Universities are vital for our society and economy and must be properly funded. We must continue to campaign against fees, and for access to free life-long learning opportunities.

Equalities: equalities must remain at the heart of our work. As a NALGO activist I was proud to support the setting up of self-organised groups so we could be informed by and learn from the members experiencing discrimination and ensure that our policies and campaigns were led by the members facing the inequalities. We must ensure the continued success of our SOGs as we fight all forms of discrimination and harassment.

Green Agenda: addressing the worsening climate crisis is vital, and the NEC must lead on our green agenda to ensure activists have the knowledge to lead campaigns in their branches and regions.

Devolved Nations: UNISON prides itself on being a democratic union, and has recognised that while all regions face many of the same challenges members in devolved administrations have different needs. HE represents members across the UK and the NEC must ensure that the devolved nations are fairly represented in all UNISON structures.

I've had a lifelong commitment to trade unionism and equalities. Despite our many successes, I believe UNISON is as vital for our disadvantaged members now as ever. There's much to strive for, and also much to defend as our hard-won gains are constantly under attack.

I hope your branch will nominate me together with Denise Ward who is standing for the NEC Higher Education General seat.

Thank you for your consideration.

June Maguire

Membership Number: 9226056

Branch: University of Edinburgh branch 7416

Nomination period: 09th January – 13th February 2023¹

¹ A nomination needs to be agreed at a quorate branch meeting held between these dates. Nominations must be submitted through the CES online portal, details of which will be emailed to your branch secretary.