



TRAINING PROGRAMME

JANUARY TO
JULY 2026

GMB SOUTHERN REGION

COOPER HOUSE, 205 HOOK ROAD,
CHESSINGTON, SURREY, KT9 1EA
TEL: 020 8397 8881

Email: educationso@gmb.org.uk
Website: www.gmb-southern.org.uk



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TO: ALL BRANCHES & WORKPLACE ORGANISERS

Dear Colleague,

TRAINING PROGRAMME JANUARY TO JULY 2026

We are pleased to enclose details of the Training Programme for the above period.

On receipt of the completed Initial Support Meeting (ISM) form, all Workplace Organisers (WO's) will follow an automatic progression route through the mandatory programme. See the training progression route on page 3, which includes all mandatory and other courses available. It is important to note that it will more than likely take a few years to complete all the courses available to WO's.

It is important to respond to the course invites as soon as you receive them to secure your place and make sure you complete and return the Course Acceptance form and let us know if there are any learning support needs that you have and we will endeavour to support and provide assistance where possible.

Also, the Employer Release form must be completed and returned to us by yourself or the employer, so we know if you have release to attend or not. This is recorded against your training records and is important for us to note this on your records.

Congress Explained Part 1 & Branch Organisation is available for all WO's and Branch members. Congress Explained Part 2 & 3 for Elected Delegates is specifically for Delegates to Congress only.

Whilst we encourage all WO's to attend our mandatory training, there are additional needs particularly for WO's working in Schools to attend courses with some flexibility. Therefore, they can attend courses in two parts, ie. Monday to Wednesday during one course and then on the next batch Thursday and Friday. This avoids them being out of the classroom for a week at a time and has worked well for those attending previous courses.

Specialized courses can also be scheduled, ie. workplace or sector, if there is enough demand. Please contact the Regional Education Department about the possibility of putting on such courses.

Requests for Accompanying Reps to be trained and certificates to be issued, must be authorised and endorsed by the Branch Secretary and Senior Organiser, before any training and certificates are arranged and issued. Training will then be scheduled on an as required basis.

The GMB Southern Region does not endorse attendance on TUC courses, as we have a full Training Programme, which covers the needs of our Workplace Organisers. However, if the WO wishes to attend a TUC course, they can do so at their own expense. Please note that we will not cover any costs for attendance on these courses.

We hope that you will find our courses interesting and informative to give you the knowledge to carry out your role as a GMB Workplace Organiser or Branch Official. If you have any queries regarding your training, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Education Department via email to educationso@gmb.org.uk or by telephone on 020 8397 8881.

Yours sincerely,

Jo Hepworth
Interim Regional Secretary
Southern Region

cc: GMB Southern Region Staff & Branches
Shrewsbury College Course Co-Ordinator & Tutors

WORKPLACE ORGANISERS **TRAINING PROGRESSION ROUTE**

The mandatory training for Workplace Organisers (including Shop Stewards, Safety Reps and Union Learning Reps) is as follows:-

- 5-Day Workplace Organisers Induction Part 1
- 5-Day Workplace Organisers Induction Part 2
- 5-Day Health & Safety Part 1
- 5-Day Health & Safety Part 2
- 5-Day Mental Health & Stress at Work
- 5-Day Equalities

The following non-mandatory training is also available, but some will be scheduled on an as required basis or by application only. There may also be a criterion to qualify for some of the training:-

- 1-Day Accompanying Reps
- 3-Day Branch Secretaries
- 3-Day Congress Explained Part 1 & Branch Organisation
- 2-Day Congress Explained Part 2 (Congress Delegates Only)
- 1-Day Congress Explained Part 3 (Congress Delegates Only)
- 3-Day Understanding Neurodiversity in the Workplace
- 2-Day GMB Menopause in the Workplace: Smash the Stigma

WORKPLACE ORGANISERS INDUCTION PART 1

This is a five-day course to train all Workplace Organisers (WO's) in the basic techniques that they will need to grow and organise the GMB where they work. This course is mandatory for all WO's including Shop Stewards, Safety Reps and Union Learning Reps.

Once you have completed your Initial Support Meeting (ISM) session and upon receipt of the completed ISM form, the Education Department will automatically invite you to the next available Workplace Organisers Induction Part 1.

Course Aims

- Put workplace organising at the top of the training agenda for new WO's.
- Enable GMB Organisers to work more closely with the active development of new WO's in the Region.
- Standardise the approach taken to workplace organising across the GMB.
- Look at how to increase GMB membership in each respective workplace.
- Understanding what makes an effective workplace leader.

Course Content

- The role of the GMB WO.
- GMB membership and its structures.
- Dealing with members and employers.
- Recruiting, organising and building the GMB.
- Handling grievances and disciplinary cases.
- Communication skills.
- Negotiation skills.
- How we take up collective issues.

Venues & Dates

Chessington, Surrey: Monday 19th to Friday 23rd January 2026
Monday 27th April to Friday 1st May 2026

Hove, Sussex: Monday 12th to Friday 16th January 2026
Monday 11th to Friday 15th May 2026

Woolwich, Greenwich: Monday 19th to Friday 23rd January 2026
Monday 27th April to Friday 1st May 2026

Online: Monday 11th to Friday 15th May 2026

WORKPLACE ORGANISERS INDUCTION PART 2

This is a five-day course which will provide GMB Workplace Organisers (WO's) with an understanding of their role within the GMB and their workplace. The course is mandatory for all GMB WO's including Shop Stewards, Safety Reps and Union Learning Reps.

Once you have completed your Workplace Organisers Induction Part 1 course, the Education Department will automatically invite you to the next available Workplace Organisers Induction Part 2.

Course Aims

- Understand your role and responsibilities as a GMB WO.
- Understand how the GMB works.
- Understand your rights and agreements.
- Learn how to deal with members' problems.
- Understand your role as a Safety Rep.
- Understand basic health and safety legislation.
- Develop an understanding of equality issues and the law.
- Building support and solidarity using collective power.

Course Content

- Your role as a GMB WO.
- Your legal rights and facilities.
- Learning to use agreements.
- An understanding of the GMB structure.
- Dealing with members' problems.
- Negotiating with management.
- Identifying hazards.
- A trade union approach to health and safety.
- Developing an understanding of health and safety law.
- Developing a GMB approach to equality.
- Developing campaign-based organising and recruitment.

Venues & Dates

Chessington, Surrey:	Monday 16 th to Friday 20 th March 2026 Monday 22 nd to Friday 26 th June 2026
Hove, Sussex:	Monday 23 rd to Friday 27 th March 2026 Monday 29 th June to Friday 3 rd July 2026
Woolwich, Greenwich:	Monday 16 th to Friday 20 th March 2026 Monday 22 nd to Friday 26 th June 2026
Online:	Monday 23 rd to Friday 27 th March 2026 Monday 29 th June to Friday 3 rd July 2026

HEALTH & SAFETY PART 1 & 2

This is a ten-day course split into two five-day parts and will provide GMB Workplace Organisers (WO's) with an understanding of health and safety issues in the workplace. This course is mandatory for all GMB WO's including Shop Stewards and Safety Reps.

Once you have completed your Workplace Organisers Induction Part 1 & 2 courses, the Education Department will automatically invite you to the next available Health & Safety Part 1 course, followed by Part 2.

Course Aims

- Develop your role as a Safety Rep.
- Develop your knowledge of health and safety legislation.
- Understand the legal responsibilities of Management.
- Improve health and safety plans.
- Develop a trade union approach to health and safety.
- Deal with health and safety issues in the workplace.

Course Content

- Your legal rights and functions as a Safety Rep.
- A trade union approach to health and safety.
- Understanding health and safety law.
- Identifying hazards and understanding risk assessment procedures.
- How to handle members' health and safety problems.
- Organising for health and safety.
- Preventing accidents and ill health.
- Develop the skills needed for your role as a Safety Rep.

Venues & Dates

Part 1

Chessington, Surrey: Monday 2nd to Friday 6th February 2026

Hove, Sussex: Monday 9th to Friday 13th February 2026

Woolwich, Greenwich: Monday 9th to Friday 13th February 2026

Part 2

Online: Monday 18th to Friday 22nd May 2026

MENTAL HEALTH & STRESS AT WORK

This is a five-day course and will provide GMB Workplace Organisers (WO's) with an understanding of mental health and stress in the workplace issues. This course is mandatory for all GMB WO's including Shop Stewards and Safety Reps.

Once you have completed your Workplace Organisers Induction Part 1 & 2 courses and the Health & Safety Part 1 course, the Education Department will automatically invite you to the next available course.

Course Aims

- Develop an understanding of mental health and common mental health and stress problems.
- Be aware of diversity issues impacting on members with mental health and stress problems.
- Develop an understanding of the law and mental health and stress in the workplace.
- Identify good practice around workplace policies on mental health and stress.
- Explore the role of WO's in supporting and representing members with mental health problems.
- Identify organising and campaigning opportunities for the GMB around mental health.

Course Content

- What are mental health problems?
- What is work related stress?
- Mental health, stress and the law.
- How to handle a mental health or stress issue at work.
- Preparing and negotiating a mental health and stress policy and procedure.
- Stress and the GMB WO.
- The role of the Safety Rep in risk assessment procedures.

Venues & Dates

Chessington, Surrey: Monday 2nd to Friday 6th March 2026

Hove, Sussex: Monday 9th to Friday 13th March 2026

Woolwich, Greenwich: Monday 2nd to Friday 6th March 2026

Online: Monday 9th to Friday 13th March 2026
Monday 29th June to Friday 3rd July 2026

EQUALITIES

This is a five-day course which aims to develop an understanding of the equalities agenda and looks at how to deal with a broad range of equality issues in the workplace. This course is mandatory for all GMB WO's including Shop Stewards, Safety Reps and Equality Reps.

Once you have completed your Workplace Organisers Induction Part 1 & 2 courses, the Education Department will automatically invite you to the next available course.

Course Aims

- An understanding of equalities issues that affect diverse groups.
- A GMB approach to equalities.
- An understanding of the Equalities Act and how to use it.
- Understanding and handling different equalities issues that affect diverse groups.
- Organising for equality in the workplace and in wider society.
- The role of the Equality Reps and Branch Officers.
- Understanding and learning about unconscious bias and how it can have a negative impact in the workplace.

Course Content

- Developing an understanding and analysis of the equalities agenda.
- Developing the role of the Equality Reps & Branch Officers.
- Reviewing issues and problems that affect diverse groups.
- Developing organising techniques.
- Understanding and using equalities law to build the GMB.
- Understanding direct and indirect discrimination in the workplace.
- Handling members' equalities issues.
- Negotiating for equalities.
- How to organise and run an equal pay claim.

Venues & Dates

Online: Monday 15th to Friday 19th June 2026

BRANCH SECRETARIES

This is a three-day course for all Branch Secretaries, both new and experienced. It will be delivered by an experienced Tutor who has experience of running an effective GMB Branch.

If you would like to attend this training, please contact the Education Department to apply.

Course Aims & Content

- Develop an understanding of the role and functions of the Branch Secretary.
- How to build and develop a democratic functioning Branch.
- How to use the GMB Rulebook to help run an effective Branch and look at and explaining Branch finances. This will be a key part of the course.
- How to build, recruit and develop an effective Branch Development Plan linked to the GMB@Work organising principles and agenda.

Venues & Dates

Online: Monday 26th to Wednesday 28th January 2026
 Monday 15th to Wednesday 17th June 2026

CONGRESS EXPLAINED PART 1 & BRANCH ORGANISATION

CONGRESS EXPLAINED PART 2 & 3 (DELEGATES ONLY)

This course will provide GMB Workplace Organisers (WO's), Branch Reps and Branch Officers with an understanding of their role within the Branch and an understanding of how Congress works. Congress Explained Part 1 & Branch Organisation is available for all GMB WO's and Branch Officials. The other two Congress Explained Part 2 & 3 are for elected Congress Delegates only.

Once the elected Congress Delegates are confirmed they will be invited to attend the remaining dates of this training.

Course Aims & Content

Congress Explained Part 1 & Branch Organisation will be delivered over three days and is for all Branch Reps/Officers to help them to understand:-

- The role and functions of Branch Officers within the Branch.
- The role of the Branch within the GMB.
- The rules of the Branch.
- How to develop a team approach to building the Branch.
- GMB democracy.
- How to become a delegate to GMB Congress.

Congress Explained Part 2 & 3 will be delivered over three days and is for **elected Congress Delegates only** and will cover:-

- How GMB Congress Works.
- Why it is the sovereign body of the GMB?
- Developing practical skills such as writing and presentation skills.
- How to write a motion/speech for Congress and the Branch.
- How to review your motion/speech.
- How to move and speak on a motion either at Congress or in the Branch.

Support information will be provided on Congress Explained and any issues that may arise will be solved to ensure that all Delegates are ready for Congress.

Venues & Dates

Part 1 – Online: Monday 3rd to Wednesday 5th November 2025

Part 2 – Online: **Elected Congress Delegates only**
Monday 23rd to Tuesday 24th March 2026

Part 3 – Online: **Elected Congress Delegates only**
Dates to be confirmed

UNDERSTANDING NEURODIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

Our Workplace Organisers (WO's) are getting more requests for help and support from autistic and other neurodivergent members within the workplace and beyond. This is a three-day course for all GMB WO's and Branch Officers who want to learn more about neurodiversity and to be able to develop an understanding of neurodiversity issues within the workplace, their Branch and how to support our members in the workplace.

The course will be run by Janine Booth an experienced Trade Union Tutor who is the author of "Autism Equality in the Workplace: Removing Barriers and Challenging Discrimination". Janine is also a member of the TUC Disabled Workers Committee and she has also run this course for many other unions.

Course Aims & Content

The course will cover:-

- Neurodiversity and neurodivergent conditions.
- Myths and realities.
- Autism and employment.
- The social model of disability.
- Workers, carers and the law.
- Representing members.
- Reasonable adjustments.

The course will look to help make the workplace more autism and neurodiversity friendly, making our GMB union more representative of the diversity of our members.

It will be participatory in its delivery with open learning methods with activities, including case studies, group activity, the law, videos, presentations and guest speakers.

Venues & Dates

Online: Dates to be scheduled

If you would like to attend this training, please click on the link below and complete the form:

[COURSE APPLICATION - Understanding Neurodiversity in the Workplace - 2026 – Fill in form](#)

GMB MENOPAUSE IN THE WORKPLACE: SMASH THE STIGMA

This course is a two-day course aimed at GMB activists to understand what the menopause is and why it is a Trade Union issue.

GMB activists up and down the country have been campaigning and representing members around the menopause as a workplace issue for many years. This has included preventing members being disadvantaged at work because of their symptoms and because of the stigma of discussing menopause at work. Members tell us that this can have a profound impact on their working lives, but too often there is very little support and they may feel reluctant to come forward due to stigma. GMB believe that all workplaces should be inclusive for workers experiencing the menopause.

Course Aims & Content

The course will support GMB activists to run a campaign on the menopause in the workplace and how to negotiate with employers using the GMB resources, including a model workplace policy, and will help develop:

- Research skills
- Confidence
- Campaign planning skills
- Understanding of GMB@Work principles

Attendees will also have an understanding of why we bargain for equality and why it is important to build the union in your workplace when campaigning on sensitive issues. By the end of the course a clear plan of action will be developed and support offered from your regional office.

Venues & Dates

Chessington, Surrey: Tuesday 24th to Wednesday 25th February 2026

If you would like to attend this training, please click on the link below and complete the form:

[COURSE APPLICATION - GMB Menopause in the Workplace: Smash the Stigma - February 2026 – Fill in form](#)