

**2024 TUC Women's
Conference
Final Agenda**

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Motions

Composite 1 - Safety of women and girls on public transport

Motions 1 and 2

Conference notes with concern the prevalence of sexual harassment, abusive and violent behaviour perpetrated against women and girls on public transport.

the Transport Focus survey found that 49 percent of women have felt threatened when making a journey on public transport.

A recent survey of its women members in public transport (rail, metro, bus, and passenger ferry) by the RMT found that:

- i) More than 40 percent had been sexually harassed at work in the last year and over 80 percent thought
- ii) sexual harassment on public transport had increased.
- iii) Over 70 percent had experienced workplace violence in the last year.
- iv) 98 percent think that more action needs to be taken against perpetrators.

The North Clyde Line has notably had issues with anti-social behaviour and violence, one incident saw a female staff member sexually assaulted on a train in broad daylight.

Conference commends the successful campaign, led by the RMT and others including women's groups, to oppose the government and train companies' plans to close nearly 1000 ticket offices and cut around 2300 station staff jobs. Conference understands that one of the main oppositions to the proposals centred around the impact on women and girls' safety of ticket office closure and staffing cuts.

Conference notes the announcement that front line safety personnel (TSO's) will be rolled out on public transport to reduce anti-social behaviour on buses, trains, and trams. The scheme is framed as a preventative tool combatting violence against women and girls on public transport, however operating in only 4 areas of England this is not enough to protect both passengers and staff.

Conference calls on the TUC Women's Committee

- a) to campaign and lobby for an extension to the Assault on Emergency Workers (Offences) Act 2018 to include frontline transport workers who provide essential public services despite threats to their own safety.
- b) to lobby the government to convene a summit on women and girls' safety on public transport; to expand staffing on trains, stations and across the whole public transport network and for additional protections for public transport workers who are victims of violence at work.

Mover – RMT

Seconder - ASLEF

Composite 2 - Womens rights, representation and safety

Motions 3, 4 and 5

Women and girls across the world engage in activism on a wide range of issues. These include employment rights, gender-based violence and sexual harassment, reproductive rights, climate, and the environment.

Conference notes that women remain under-represented in political spaces and peace processes.

This sets back gender equality and global peace.

Sexism, misogyny, and violence violate women's right to participate equally in political and public life.

Conference notes in 1995, The 'Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a comprehensive agenda on gender equality and women's empowerment was created. The world promised equal rights and opportunities for women and girls, everywhere.

Issues including poverty, environment, violence against women, girls' education and equal participation in the labour market were acknowledged. It further committed to promote the balance of paid work and domestic responsibilities.

Conference reports a growing number of studies show that progress in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action has stalled and an alarming backlash around women's rights and feminism emerged.

Attacks on women in public life are also increasing and more women are withdrawing from public life as a result. Activism can take its toll on an individual, with recent data showing that one in five women and girls have feared for their safety whilst carrying out their activism work. A further one in ten have faced threats of physical violence, and 15 percent have experienced online harassment and abuse.

Women are excluded from peace processes, and impunity for atrocities against women and girls is widespread.

These figures lay bare a variety of challenges as women and girls' campaign for change.

Threats and violence faced by women and girls who are activists are widespread.

The number of people needing humanitarian aid is growing. We face the largest global food crisis in modern history. Much of this is driven by armed conflicts.

More than 600 million women and girls lived in conflict-affected countries in 2022, a 50 per cent increase since 2017.

Women are more affected by these problems, but their participation contributes to their resolution and longer-lasting peace.

From the Taliban banning girls from education in Afghanistan to the repeal of Roe v Wade in the USA, Turkey withdrawing from the Istanbul Convention to the growing hostility towards women on social media, women's rights across the world are being eroded.

We applaud the bravery of women who fight the erosions of their rights despite the risk to themselves and their families.

Evidence shows women bring lived experience to political decision-making resulting in decisions that address violence, human rights abuses and promote more equal access to resources and services.

The TUC and its women's committee has a long-standing history of supporting women and girls internationally.

We are calling on both to:

- i) Encourage community mobilisation and engagement – utilising the power of UK trade unions to continue the support for internationalism.
- ii) Ask the TUC Women's Committee to increase engagement with individual trade union women's networks to support women and girl activists facing violence and harm.
- iii) send a message of solidarity to the women of the world and to work in conjunction with affiliates to promote key campaigns and initiatives that seek to retain and improve women's rights across the globe.
- iv) reiterates calls for investment in women's organisations in crisis settings, measures to increase the meaningful participation of women in mediation and peace processes, parity in political and electoral processes, and greater protections for women in conflict-affected countries.

Mover – Usdaw

Secunder – CSP

Supporter - Aslef

Composite 3 – Underrepresentation of women in the arts and sexual stereotyping

Motions 6 and 7 plus amendment

For decades TUC Women's Conferences have supported the fight for better representation of women in the visual arts, widely accepting that disrespectful images and stereotyping in the media greatly influence everyone's lives, confidence and mental health and wellbeing.

Conference Notes:

- i) That the prevalence of sexual stereotyping is still rife in many books, magazines, social media, films, television, and visual arts made for both adult and child audiences.
- ii) The rise of right-wing groups, whose attitudes to women are often fuelled and supported by such stereotyping
- iii) That misogyny is not recognised in law as a hate crime.

Despite constant highlighting over years, recent research by Professor Karen Ross, University of Newcastle, depressingly demonstrates that in whatever part of the industry you work gendered ageism is alive and well.

In film, 35 years after cartoonist Alison Bechdel coined the term the Bechdel Test - "A good film has at least 2 women in it, with one scene together where they don't talk about a man!" - many film releases are still not meeting its minimal requirements, according to Angelina Fedorova's 2023 research. Similarly, the Centre for Ageing Better's 'Cast Aside' campaign

concludes older film characters are under-represented, and only one in ten involved in major plotlines.

Playwright April De Angelis and Shakespeare's Globe CEO Stella Kanu are among a group calling for a government inquiry into under-representation of women in the arts.

Conference calls on the TUC Women's Committee to

- a) To continue to campaign against misogyny, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and sexual stereotyping.
- b) To organise an awareness campaign around misogyny.
- c) To organise a campaign with representatives from the TUC's creative unions to draw attention to gender stereotyping and its role in sexual harassment, sexual violence, and general attitudes to women in society.
- d) To call on all journalists and media workers involved in the production media content to abide by the NUJ code of conduct, which states that journalists should not produce material likely to lead to hatred or discrimination on the grounds of a person's gender - as well as age, race, colour, creed, legal status, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation.
- e) To commission a working group of trade union representatives and academics to produce a report recommending how practically we can challenge and change cultural stereotypes, including recommending new legislation.
- f) to join industry and academic voices calling for a government inquiry into the under-representation of women in the arts.

Mover – Equity

Secunder – AUE

Supporter - NUJ

Composite 4 - Protecting Women Workers, the impacts of online abuse on women

Motions 8 and 9

Conference recognises the increasing use of online and digital abuse and its disproportionate impact on women. There are a number of issues around the use/abuse of platforms at work such as MS teams, WhatsApp, Yammer as well as social media generally. Online abuse often intersects with other forms of abuse such as coercive or financial control.

Women's Aid's research found that over half of respondents experienced online abuse during the first year of the pandemic, and over a quarter of respondents (28.6 percent) reported their experiences of tech abuse started or escalated since March 2020.

In 2021, research by Refuge found that 1 in 3 women in the UK have experienced online abuse, of these women, 1 in 6 experienced this from a partner or ex-partner.

Additionally, there are many examples of WhatsApp 'conversations' being made public e.g. Met police investigations or the Covid inquiry where women have been subject of and

targeted for abuse on WhatsApp. Behaviours and language that are unacceptable have been freely expressed on these platforms. At the heart of those behaviours is sexism and misogyny.

Online abuse is a workplace issue. Women need to be provided with better protections against online and digital abuse at work. Women must be safe to undertake their roles and work without fear and intimidation.

Reps will know the increasing number of individual case work related to the use of platforms at work and with the lack of clear guidance by employers it continues to be a feature of the workplace

We call on the TUC Women's Committee to work with other TUC equality committees to;

- i) Work with trade unions to raise awareness of digital abuse with employers and educate them to offer training for staff to recognise signs of abuse and signpost to support available
- ii) Campaign for employers to include online abuse in their domestic abuse guidance and policies
- iii) Produce guidance on how to negotiate good employer practice and policies on the use of messaging and other platforms in work with a particular emphasis on equality implications and how to address them.
- iv) Work with tech companies and domestic abuse charities to develop systems combatting online harassment and integrate into workplace platforms

Mover – PCS

Secunder – FDA

M10 - Working with Men and Boys to End VAWG

As Amended

In light of the fatal attack on Elianne Andam, Conference condemns the epidemic of male violence faced by women and girls and declares that expectations for respect and dignity of women must be better learned and normalised from a young age.

Conference notes that:

- i) In the UK and internationally, women and girls are more likely to experience repeated and severe forms of abuse, including sexual violence
- ii) More than 1 in 4 women have been raped or sexually assaulted as an adult
- iii) Only 1.3 percent of rape cases recorded by police resulted in charge or a summons.
- iv) 58 percent of women experienced at least three incidents of sexual harassment in the workplace with many reporting a detrimental impact on their mental health.
- v) Rape Crisis Centres and workers provide life-saving support to survivors of sexual violence, and education on consent/healthy relationships - and are making do with insufficient short-term funding

Conference instructs TUC to:

- a) engage men in trade unions to understand the nuances of the way in which discrimination and harassment plays.
- b) campaign for use of bystander programmes, including in schools and other educational settings, from primary on.
- c) organise men in trade unions to be active in ending harassment in public spaces
- d) encourage men to act to support fair working practices to bring about income equality through women's economic empowerment.
- e) lobby for funding solutions for Rape Crisis Centres which recognise the statutory right to advocacy and support
- f) Campaign for better terms, conditions and job security for workers in this sector.

Mover - NEU

Secunder - GMB

M11 - End Intimate Police Searches

As amended

Conference notes:

- i) Searches involving exposure of intimate body parts, or a physical examination of a person's bodily orifices often have negative, long-lasting, and traumatic effects
- ii) Strip searches are used to punitively discipline minoritised young people and political protestors
- iii) Such searches are often accompanied by racist, homophobic, and misogynist assumptions and language
- iv) Runnymede Trust data which shows 86 percent of searches of young people are on suspicion of carrying drugs but only 1 percent result in an arrest.

Conference agrees that no crime which could be concealed in the body is serious enough to warrant such invasive and violating searches.

Conference calls on the Women's TUC Committee and TUC to:

- a) Coordinate campaigning across the TU movement for a complete ban of such searches on educational premises excluding a prison environment
- b) Work with survivor-led organisations to campaign against misuse of police powers which result in abuse such as that experienced by Child Q and Konstancja Duff

Mover - UCU

Secunder - POA

M12 - Third Party Harassment

Conference, this Tory government claims to have a zero-tolerance approach towards violence against women and girls, and sexual harassment and bullying in the workplace, yet their actions do not reflect this.

When this Conservative government had the opportunity to increase workers' protections, they backed away from legislating against third party harassment, leaving many workers in front-line jobs suffering regular abuse and harassment from customers and users.

This is dereliction of the responsibilities that should be placed on employers who should have policies, training, preventative measures, and a proper, impartial investigation into reported cases of harassment with clear consequences.

Conference, we are pleased that an incoming Labour government has committed to reversing this position, but we call on the TUC Women's Committee to:

- i) Ensure that the Labour Party manifesto clearly commits to reinstate third party harassment and the removal of the 'three strikes' element under the Equality Act 2010.
- ii) Keep highlighting that tackling sexual harassment and abuse at work is a collective issue and any workplace agreement must take a preventative approach to all forms of harassment.
- iii) Promote training for all union representatives on sexual harassment in the workplace to ensure a zero-tolerance approach is taken.

Unite

M13 - Sexual Harassment Governance

Congress recognises the excellent work being carried out by TUC affiliates to tackle sexual harassment in our movement, including the work of the TUC Executive Committee (EC) working group in supporting and encouraging affiliates to develop best practice.

Congress recognises that the senior leadership of our movement plays a key role in addressing and preventing sexual harassment. We need greater transparency and proper mechanisms in place to monitor progress.

To do this, trade unions need large-scale, reliable data, collected at regular intervals. With the assistance of such data, senior trade union leaders will be able to evaluate progress and identify where improvements or actions are needed.

To this end, Congress calls on the TUC to ensure that the EC working group continues its vital work on sexual harassment and encourages unions to:

- i) Collect data on sexual harassment to determine the prevalence and nature of sexual harassment, including but not limited to the key themes of reported cases, climate survey outcomes, education participation rates and leadership sessions.
- ii) Report the findings from its data collection, broken down by protected characteristics.
- iii) Produce action plans following each report, stating how it will address areas that require action or improvement.

CWU - Communication Workers Union

Composite 5 - Empowering and including women across our trade union movement

Motions 14 and 15

Conference notes:

- i) Inspiring women have been active at every level of trade unions in recent strikes, industrial disputes, and campaigns
- ii) Trade union membership among women has increased but we tend to be unequally represented in branch and national union structures
- iii) Intersecting forms of discrimination and insecure work, and lack of flexibility to accommodate caring responsibilities create barriers to participation in trade union leadership roles and to workplace progression

Conference notes the NASUWT Step up Sisters campaign through which the union:

- a) hosted a series of national and regional events;
- b) made formal provision for job-sharing of elected roles in Local Associations;
- c) issued guidance for local associations to assure equality of access at local meetings;
- d) adopted a national action plan for tackling sexual harassment and misogyny;
- e) developed a policy and associated guidance for reporting and dealing with sexual harassment complaints involving lay activists.

Conference recognises that, collectively, the trade union movement still has a long way to go until women are fairly represented, especially at senior levels.

Conference recognises that one of the most important reasons for women becoming more active in the Union is being encouraged by another lay activist and calls on the TUC and TUC Women's Committee to play an active role in inspiring and helping women to get more involved in our vital work.

Conference calls upon Women's TUC committee to:

- 1) to target promotion of the trade union movement to a diverse group of women, recognising that the strength of trade unionism lies in working together and embedding an intersectional approach to organising
- 2) Coordinate research across affiliate trade unions taking an intersectional approach to:
 - i) investigate the barriers to women taking on union leadership roles
 - ii) identify examples of good practice which empowers women to participate and develop as activists and leaders
 - iii) explore the impact of strike pay provision and support with caring responsibilities on participation in industrial action in order to make recommendations to affiliate unions
- 3) Coordinate with women's representative structures across TUC affiliated unions to:
 - i) devise a mentoring scheme for women getting active in their union

- ii) facilitate the development of inter-union supportive, inclusive groups and networks for women trade unionists
 - iii) develop guidance for unions to set up buddying schemes
- 4) Undertake work to support affiliate unions in navigating a transition to hybrid format meetings, accessible to all.

Mover - NASUWT

Secunder - UCU

Composite 6 - The gender pay and pension gap including for part-time and self-employed workers

Motions 16, 17, 18 plus amendment

Conference notes that there exists a gender pensions gap in the UK which, by most measurements, is more than double that of the gender pay gap and which is largely a reflection of differentials in private pension wealth accrument between men and women.

Multiple factors contribute to the gender pension gap, such as the gender pay gap and unpaid caring responsibilities.

Conference notes:

- i) According to the Office for National Statistics, in 2023 the pay gap among full time employees increased to 7.7 percent up from 7.6 percent in 2022.
- ii) The continuing upward trend in the part-time gender pay gap seen since 2015 is continuing.
- iii) women fill more part-time jobs, which in comparison with full-time jobs have lower hourly median pay

Conference acknowledges the largest causal factor of the pensions gap is women being more likely to take time off work to assume caring responsibilities, and notes that on average, women carry out 60 percent more unpaid work than men.

Conference recognises the Pensions Policy Institute report, showing that:

- a) Approaching retirement age, the median private pension wealth of women is one third that of men's private pension wealth.
- b) 50% more women than men are heading towards retirement without any private pension savings.

For musicians and other self-employed workers, the problem is particularly acute as many will not have sufficient savings to support them in retirement.

The Musicians' Census found that only 28 percent of musicians had access to a workplace pension scheme and only 14 percent have access to other types of pensions, indicating musicians may be especially vulnerable to poverty in later life.

Work for women in the arts over 60 is scarce and many cannot afford to retire until they receive their state pension leaving them actively seeking work, that in many cases, doesn't

exist. The proposed rises in state pension age means musicians working for longer with no hope of retirement in sight.

Conference calls on the TUC to lobby government to:

- 1) Rule out any further pension age rises.
- 2) Address the root causes of the gender pensions gap.
- 3) Review the incentives provided for pension saving among self-employed workers.

Conference therefore commits to campaign in support of policy measures which target the numerous causes of the gender pensions gap, including:

- A) mandatory action plans for businesses, public bodies, and public funded organisations to identify what actions they are taking to reduce the gender gap, ensuring that part time and self-employed women workers are included. The action plans must contain time bound targets that are clear and measurable. Including reporting requirements to include businesses and publicly funded organisations with 50 employees.
- B) Reduction in the earnings trigger threshold for automatic enrolment in a workplace pension, as more women than men tend to be excluded.
- C) Introduction of a family carer top-up, to boost the pension wealth of people who take time away from work to care for children or relatives.
- D) Encouraging more equal sharing of caring responsibilities by gender and making affordable childcare more widely available.
- E) Increase in the incidence of sharing of pension assets on the ending of long-term relationships.
- F) Higher take-up of credits that can boost women's pension income.

Mover – Community

Seconder – MU

Supporter – AUE

Supporter - Prospect

M19 - Invest in Job Evaluation

Job evaluation is a crucial tool to ensure employers meet their obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

The NHS Job Evaluation Scheme underpins the pay structure, it ensures equal pay for work of equal value. Job evaluation is also important to addressing wider pay discrimination, gender, ethnicity, and disability pay gaps.

The RCM is increasingly concerned that lack of investment in infrastructure and capacity building is leading to failings in the application of the scheme locally. When midwives and MSWs request their job descriptions are updated this is met with push back and the regrading application process is protracted.

The NHS Job Evaluation Group is reviewing the suite of nursing and midwifery profiles (women dominated roles), most jobs are matched to a nationally evaluated profile which assigns a pay band to a job. The RCM supports this work, once completed it will lead to an increase in requests for job description reviews and regrading applications. Continued barriers to accessing this will further damage the morale of a workforce already in crisis.

Conference calls on the TUC to campaign for government funding for job evaluation infrastructure and local capacity building for training and time to attend job matching panels.

RCM

Composite 7 - Flexible working

Motions 20, 21, 22 plus amendment

In 2023, the right to request flexible working became UK law. the Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023 comes into effect in 2024 and that ACAS is updating its statutory Code of Practice following a consultation. This was a huge win for all women across the UK. Flexible working is inherently an issue that affects women, who – typically – undertake additional caring responsibilities, for children or relatives.

However, women are still paying the price. Recent data found that the flexible work women are accessing is associated with lower paid, lower quality work including part-time, insecure, and zero-hours contracts.

Access to flexible work means that women, who are overwhelmingly still the primary caregivers, can balance their caring responsibilities. However, evidence shows that:

- i) Women are significantly more likely to report working part-time (27 percent) compared to men (14 percent)
- ii) Men are more likely to report having access to more desirable forms of flexible work
- iii) 77 percent of women agreed that they would be more likely to apply for a job that advertises flexible working options

Furthermore, we are deeply concerned about the impact this has on the gender pay gap, which at its current rate of change, won't close until 2051.

Conference also notes the intersect with ethnicity and disability which compounds over time impacting on Black and disabled women to create larger pay gaps.

Conference notes that although hybrid working options have become more widely available, most women workers do not have a choice about where and how they work.

For example, women in operational roles in the creative industries are generally required to work very long hours with little or no flexibility.

Women in sectors such as energy may be excluded from roles with shift patterns and stand-by rosters that are incompatible with caring responsibilities.

Options are particularly restricted for women freelancers working on atypical contracts.

Other female dominated sectors face similar restrictions. This can result in talented women leaving careers they have trained for.

We are concerned the latest diktat from Ministers insisting on a 60 percent in office attendance within the Civil Service will push more women into deciding to become a home worker or to leave employment. We are also concerned that employers generally may insist on home working rather than enabling flexible working, as an answer to adjustment requests. Blanket approaches will have a negative impact on women.

We are calling on the TUC and its women's committee to:

- a) survey affiliated unions in order to assess the scope of this challenge and to identify and share examples of good practice.
- b) Campaign to ensure that all women have access to flexible working
- c) Identify the risks of women not having access to flexible working and its impact on the gender pay gap.
- d) Continue to promote flexible working, develop case studies, and profile good practice;
- e) Update the reps guidance on flexible working to reflect the new law and include a template equality impact assessment form for reps to utilise at employer level;
- f) Promote membership of Working Families across all employers

Mover – Prospect

Secunder – CSP

Supporter – FDA

Supporter - RCM

M25 - Bereavement Leave & Pay

Congress recognises there is no legal right to paid leave for parents grieving the loss of a pregnancy before 24 weeks. Although an increasing number of organisations, including ASOS, the Scottish Government and others, have adopted paid miscarriage leave policies, sadly, not all employers are as generous. That means many suffer alone in silent without the support they need.

Congress notes the Bereavement Leave and Pay (stillborn and miscarriage) private members bill and the excellent work of Angela Crawley (SNP), trade unions affiliates and others in their campaigning efforts for this bill to become UK Law.

Whilst we wait for the bill to go through parliamentary processes this congress believes that trade unions can do more in creating change within the workplace: To this end congress calls on the TUC to encourage unions to:

- i) Do more to encourage a supportive work environment where members feel able to discuss and disclose pregnancy and/or loss to the employer without fear of being disadvantaged or discriminated against.
- ii) Do more to encourage employers to sign up to the "miscarriage association's The Pregnancy Loss Pledge and in doing so implement policy or guidance for

pregnancy-related leave/sick absence, including extra support, training, and awareness.

CWU - Communication Workers Union

M26 - Fight for 52

Conference notes the postcode lottery of maternity provision in the UK. Maternity provisions in the fire and rescue service are wholly inadequate, in terms of occupational hazards and recruitment, retention and inclusion.

Conference notes the FBU's Fight for 52 research found that a firefighter in Cornwall receives around £15,000 less than their counterpart in Staffordshire in maternity pay.

Conference believes that if women are to be valued within the service, then the postcode lottery on maternity pay must end. This means levelling up all staff in the service including Green Book members.

Conference endorses the FBU's Equality Matters campaign to ensure that equality is at the heart of everything trade unions do.

Conference calls on ministers, employers, and chief fire officers to extend the current arrangements for maternity leave to 12 months on full pay.

Conference firmly opposes the White Paper and any attack on collective bargaining arrangements in the service.

Conference calls on the National Joint Council to raise the minimum standards within the Grey Book in line with the Fight for 52 proposals.

Conference calls on the government to implement the recommendations of the FBU's Fight for 52 in full.

FBU - Fire Brigades Union

M27 - Maternity Matters: Supporting Women's Maternal and Mental Health

Conference recognises that pregnant women, and new mothers returning to work from maternity leave, face unfair, unsafe, and unlawful treatment at work.

Conference notes in the UK:

- i. Maternity health care is underfunded, under resourced and under researched.
- ii. The Women and Equalities Committee has found 'glaring and persistent disparities in outcomes for women depending on their ethnicity.'
- iii. Statistics suggest that postnatal depression in Black mothers is 13 percent higher, but the topic is under-explored.
- iv. Childcare is often unavailable and unaffordable; the CBI has reported that the childcare system is broken.

Conference recognises that these multiple factors cause anxiety for new mothers wishing to return to work and can lead them to develop poor physical and mental health. Pregnant women and new mothers need better healthcare, tailored pregnancy and maternity support plans and care for postnatal depression, to form strong attachments with their babies.

Conference instructs the TUC to campaign for:

- a) robust research into the impact of poor maternal healthcare on working women, including racial disparities and single mothers' experiences.
- b) a right to paid KIT days and bespoke return to work induction and support for new mothers.
- c) subsidised, safe, high-quality childcare.

NEU - National Education Union

M28 - Artificial Intelligence and Risks for Women

As Amended

Conference believes machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI) pose specific dangers to women's equality.

The data used to train machines and develop AI algorithms contain multiple biases. In recruitment, where AI-based decision-making is shaped by data from previous successful predominantly male candidates, women's applications are more likely to be rejected.

The creative industries have a specific cause for concern. Writers, reporters, photographers, videographers, artists, musicians, and actors are finding their work and likeness being stolen and used without their consent for generative AI.

Employers in journalism are seeking to utilise generative AI in reporting and content creation, perpetuating biases and misinformation embedded within training data. Resulting jobs losses risk reducing the diversity and plurality of new content.

Conference asserts that action must be taken to ensure that data used by AI fairly represents the needs, interests, and intersectional experiences of women.

AI can be used with ease and speed to produce and share disinformation and misogynistic materials that violate women online.

Conference instructs the Women's Committee to work with the wider TUC to raise awareness of effect of AI on women and call for regulation to protect creators' rights from being breached and women from proliferation of online abuse.

Conference calls on the TUC and affiliates to challenge all forms of discrimination and bias in AI, and to support members to actively engage in decision making processes to ensure that their needs, interests and experiences are being served.

Mover – NUJ

Seconded – NASUWT

Supporter - AUE

M29 - Women in STEM

Women in STEM are central to meeting societal challenges.

STEM skills are key to managing Covid and other emerging risks to public health and in responding to the climate emergency and preserving our natural environment.

To meet these challenges, we need to improve diversity and inclusion.

The fact that the proportion of women in these occupations is falling must be a call to action.

In 2023 the TUC reported that the gender pay gap for women in professional, scientific, and technical industries is 19.9 percent. This means that women work for free for 73 days a year.

Unions have a key role to play in facilitating workforce engagement and involvement, redesigning working practices and pay systems, and negotiating for fair and inclusive cultures.

Urgent improvements are required to workplace access, support, and opportunities for women.

We call upon TUC to

- i) Work with employers and government to design and deliver in-work training and lifelong learning tailored to women that helps organisations “grow their own” specialists.
- ii) Design, publish and promote guidance and advice for employers and industry groups to audit discriminatory working practices and produce action plans to address the inequities under their immediate control.

Prospect

M30 - Student Debt Forgiveness for Healthcare Students Impacted by 2017 Introduction of Tuition Fees

A survey by the RCM found that three-quarters (74 percent) of student midwives in England expect to graduate with debts of over £40,000. Almost nine in 10 worry always or often about debt.

The NHS in England is 2,500 midwives short because staff have been ground down and are leaving. This exodus will not be reversed by a system that forces students into debt for the opportunity to work in the NHS.

This is a women’s issue, the vast majority of student midwives are women, almost half are over 30 and have caring responsibilities for children or parents

There is cross-party support for the expansion of healthcare student training, but this will only succeed if those undertaking these demanding courses are supported financially and can focus on qualifying and getting to work in the NHS, not burdened with debt and worry.

For a number of years, the RCM alongside sister unions and the TUC has campaigned on these issues.

Conference calls on the TUC to join the RCM in campaigning for student loans forgiveness for healthcare students impacted by the introduction of tuition fees in 2017 as a priority in the next parliament

RCM - Royal College of Midwives

M31 - Recruiting Women Seafarers

Conference is extremely concerned at the failure to increase the number of women seafarers working in the shipping industry. Conference notes that the Conservative government called on the industry in 2017 to increase the number of women in the maritime industry.

Conference notes that this has resulted in promotional activities which only affect women in senior management roles ashore, including maritime business services in the City of London, with no guidance or censure from government. Conference notes that according to DfT figures from May 2023, women seafarers hold 1.1 percent of the total number of officers and ratings jobs in the UK shipping industry, below the global proportion of 1.3 percent.

Conference supports training programmes for seafarer ratings and cadets in the public and private sectors, including at the Royal Fleet Auxiliary. Conference believes that the historic gender imbalance in seafaring roles requires reforms to training, internet connectivity and to the culture at sea and onshore to increase the number of qualified women seafarers.

Conference calls on the TUC to campaign for improved careers advice and the promotion of seafarer jobs to women.

RMT - National Union of Rail Maritime and Transport Workers

M32 - The Impact of the Cost-of-Living Crisis on Women

The cost-of-living crisis is putting unbearable pressure on women who are usually over-represented in part-time roles and low paid jobs. This crisis could worsen existing gender pay and pension gaps.

With inflation, energy bills and fuel prices at a record high, women, who more often than not manage household bills, face a huge financial burden.

It is appalling to learn that parents in urgent need of baby milk formula have resorted to stealing it while some buy it from illegal and unscrupulous suppliers. Some women are giving their babies watered down feed or unsafe alternatives.

This is a looming public health crisis, storing up problems for future generations. The Healthy Start vouchers provided to women no longer cover the cost of baby formula.

The government cannot stand by as babies are placed at risk of malnutrition and serious illnesses due to the crisis and the soaring price of infant formula.

Conference calls on the TUC Women's Committee and affiliates to demand the government act to:

- i) Take urgent actions on these issues and help women, particularly those on low incomes.
- ii) Increase the value of the Healthy Start allowance.
- iii) Increase the value of Statutory Maternity Allowance.

Unison

Amendment:

We wholeheartedly support this motion and are appalled by the dire situation. UK women are also facing a growing gender pay gap, taking home on average £564 less than men each month. Furthermore, 35% of women who are not working want to work but are prevented from doing so because of childcare costs and a lack of flexible working.

CSP

Composite 8 – Childcare

Motions 23, 24 and 37

Conference recognises that the responsibility of juggling paid work with caring for children and other dependent family members falls disproportionately on women within our society. the increase in the cost of childcare is impacting negatively on women in work.

The current cost of living crisis is pushing families into poverty, and it is widely known that this disproportionately affects women, BAEM, disabled and migrant workers, and other groups who already face inequality in our society.

Good quality childcare is often too expensive and/or not accessible to many working parents. Childcare costs take up nearly half of women's average earnings and has become unaffordable for many women due to the additional pressure of the cost-of-living crisis. The lack of affordable childcare is forcing many women to either reduce their working hours or leave the workforce altogether; which might lead to the widening of the gender pay and pension gap.

Further, conference asserts that the existing framework of statutory family/carer pay and leave rights does not adequately support most working parents and carers with this responsibility. Women who are engaged in insecure, temporary, or self-employment are among those who suffer from employment rights that do not properly support caregiving. Working irregular hours means their requirements for care do not fit within the standard 'nine to five' working-day, often forcing them to consider cost alternatives which many struggle to afford.

This lack of affordable childcare does not just impact on the capacity of women to work but it also impacts on their career progression. Caring responsibilities is a significant factor in limiting women's career progression. A survey of 4000 working women found that 67

percent felt that childcare duties in the past decade has prevented them from receiving pay rises, promotions, or career progression.

Despite forthcoming improvements to flexible working rights, too many employers will still be able to refuse reasonable requests due to “business needs.”

Employers should work with trade union to ensure that caring is not a barrier to equal pay, promotion, and career development.

Conference asserts that we need a modern, high quality, affordable childcare system that supports a flexible approach to both parenting and work.

Conference calls on the TUC Women’s Committee and affiliates to continue to campaign for free, safe, flexible, and affordable childcare for all parents from employers, governments, and political parties.

Conference, calls on the TUC Women’s committee to:

- i) Launch a campaign with our union representatives to significantly improve enhanced maternity and paternity leave and pay provided by the employer
- ii) Encourage union representatives to collectively negotiate increased rates for all aspects of parental leave above statutory levels
- iii) Continue campaigning for legislation to ensure employers advertise all roles as flexible at the recruitment stage

Conference commits to lobby the government:

- a) for improvements in all aspects of statutory maternity leave and pay and to Raise maternity payments and expand eligibility - including extending the 8-week qualifying period for statutory maternity pay to cover 12 weeks’ earnings for those with variable hours, so women on casual contracts are not disadvantaged.
- b) Strengthen rights and protections at work - including a right to flexible working and family friendly working arrangements that supports women to return and remain in the workplace.

Mover – UNISON

Secunder – Unite

Supporter - Community

Composite 9 - Recognising paid and unpaid care

Motions 33, 34, 35, 36, 38 plus amendment

We acknowledge the invaluable role of women as primary unpaid care providers undertaking this essential work alongside that paid employment. We recognise the social and economical and societal contributions of unpaid care providers is crucial for achieving gender equality.

Conference recognises that working-aged women contribute an estimated 200 million days’ worth of adult care each year, and that:

- i) One in four women providing unpaid care to a child has reduced their hours at work
- ii) One in five women providing childcare are prevented from working more hours, despite wanting to work more
- iii) One in five women providing unpaid care for an adult reduced their hours at work.
- iv) Without support, 600 employees quit work each day due to the challenges of juggling work and care

Providing care has an impact on most aspects of women's daily lives, decision making and financial circumstances, and yet their care responsibilities and the effort required to make themselves available to do their jobs is frequently invisible to or ignored by employers.

Due to this lack of recognition and support, women carers are often compelled to reduce hours of work, take unpaid, sick leave, or give up work altogether. This has a knock-on effect on income.

Conference notes that women with caring responsibilities face higher levels of job insecurity, exceptionally low levels of work-life balance and low levels of employability.

Many carers find themselves in poverty or facing financial hardship as a direct result of providing unpaid care. As the cost-of-living rises, carers also face a lower income as providing unpaid care reduces their ability to work.

Carers UK found that 1.2 million carers are in poverty in the UK. 16 percent are in debt because of their caring role and financial situation, increasing to 40% for unpaid carers in receipt of Carer's Allowance.

Equity along with organisations like PIPA (PARENTS In the Performing Arts) have been urging government and industry employers to see the unique challenges faced by creative freelancers in balancing work and caring responsibilities.

Carers want to work but the current rate of Carer's Allowance, £76.75 per week and the low earnings threshold, £139 per week, means carers must limit their employment opportunities, limit their careers, leaving them unable to make use of their skills and experience.

The invaluable contribution of carers to society's wellbeing is recognised but it is vital we also recognise the impact made on the careers, mental/emotional health, financial stress, and the vast time expended on unpaid caring work

Fostering a supportive work environment, it is imperative to advocate for a comprehensive carers policy that addresses the unique challenges faced by women in juggling both paid work and caregiving responsibilities. We continue to bear the disproportionate burden of unpaid care work. This needs to change.

Whilst conference welcomes the Carers Leave Act as a step in the right direction and acknowledges that it gives us a base from which to negotiate improvements, without pay it will make little practical difference to low paid women carers.

Conference congratulates the TUC Women's Committee on work already undertaken to improve the rights of women workers who also provide unpaid care to loved ones. However, there is still much to be done.

Conference calls on the TUC Women's Committee to mount a priority national campaign to address the inequalities faced by women carers that explicitly value the contribution of unpaid carers, no matter what kind of job or contract they have.

Conference calls on the TUC to lobby government to:

- a) Increase the level of Carer's Allowance to at least the National Living Wage.
- b) Increase the earnings limit.
- c) Ensure that all benefits are aligned to current rates of inflation
- d) Provide a Work Allowance for carers in receipt of Universal Credit, enabling more carers to keep their paid work alongside their caring role.

Conference calls upon the TUC Women's Committee to continue to press for:

- 1) Demands for a statutory right to flexible working
- 2) Social security that prevents and protects against poverty and enables people to work and care.
- 3) Advocate for financial recognition of unpaid care work by exploring mechanisms such as tax credits, stipends, or other forms of financial compensation to alleviate the economic burden on women
- 4) Statutory right to paid time off for respite and emergency care responsibilities
- 5) Workplace carer policies including training for managers and policies that recognise, and support employees engaged in unpaid care work including flexible working, carers passports and compassionate paid leave
- 6) Accessible and affordable support services such as Affordable childcare for all parents disability support and elder care resources and facilities
- 7) A national care service accessible to all
- 8) Launch a public awareness campaign to challenge stereotypes and raise awareness about the vital contributions that unpaid carers provide
- 9) Champion the cause of unpaid carers in Creative industries.
- 10) A commitment to policies that ensure flexible working arrangements, affordable child/social care options and enhanced social protections for carers in the creative workforce. The establishment of out of hours tailored support to creative freelancers, would provide a structured environment for those needing care and carers during those crucial hours, enabling freelancers to pursue their careers without compromising their caring.
- 11) Establishment of industry-specific guidelines and incentives to encourage employers to adopt carer-friendly practices, thereby fostering an inclusive environment which retains and attracts talented individuals rather than deterring or forcing them out of the creative market

Conference calls on the TUC to lobby government to:

- A) Increase the level of Carer's Allowance to at least the National Living Wage.
- B) Increase the earnings limit.
- C) Ensure that all benefits are aligned to current rates of inflation

- D) Provide a Work Allowance for carers in receipt of Universal Credit, enabling more carers to keep their paid work alongside their caring role

Mover – Usdaw

Seconder – PCS

Supporters – Equity, MUC, BDA, RCPod

Composite 10 - Menopause in the workplace

Motions 39 and 40

Leg muscle aches and pains in the legs are common symptoms experienced by women during menopause. These symptoms, known as musculoskeletal symptoms, are characterised by stiffness, pain, and limited range of motion. Women feel these discomforts not only in your legs but also in areas such as your shoulders, elbows, knees, and other joints and muscles throughout your body.

During the early stages of menopause, women often experience a significant occurrence of leg pain, which can be attributed to the decline in oestrogen levels. This hormonal change affects the overall health of muscles and bones, leading to discomfort in the legs.

Congress notes the recent CIPD report exploring women’s experiences of menopause at work. Key findings of the report show ***that:***

- i) Most working women aged 40-60 have experienced menopause related symptoms and over half have been unable to go into work at some point as a result.
- ii) The most common symptoms reported are psychological including anxiety and depression, loss of concentration etc
- iii) 67% of working women aged 40-60 say that their experience has had a negative effect on them at work
- iv) Only 24% of women say that their organisation has a stated menopause policy.
- v) menopause has a negative effect on career progression for more than a quarter of women.

We are also seeing a trend of misdiagnosis of the menopause with fibromyalgia. Many of the symptoms being like fibromyalgia sensitivity to pain, muscle/ limb stiffness, difficulty sleeping, brain fog, headaches, low mood, all symptoms of fibromyalgia. With the high cost to HRT and the postcode lottery in healthcare, women are having an increasing battle for the correct medication and support from professionals.

Conference agrees that a voluntarist approach to providing support to women at work has failed and calls on the TUC Women’s Committee to work to ensure that:

- a) The recommendations of the 2021 report “Menopause in the Workplace – How to enable fulfilling lives” are implemented in full by Government
- b) to campaign for all women in the journey of menopause and fibromyalgia to be assessed and diagnosed correctly.

- c) That day one rights to access flexible working are implemented for women experiencing the transition to menopause and menopause symptoms
- d) That menopause policies and menopause champions are implemented in all workplaces.

Mover – RCPod

Secunder - BDA

Composite 11 – Menstruation and related health conditions

Motions 41 and 42 plus amendment

Conference, many women suffer from heavy prolonged periods, and about 1 in 10 also have to contend with endometriosis, the second most common gynaecological condition in the UK.

Many workplaces already provide free sanitary products to their employees and should be commended for doing so, but why should it depend on where someone works. It has taken the POA 4 years to get HMPPS to provide their employees with the products they need.

For those women in Britain's railways who work on board trains or at stations on platforms the need to frequently change sanitary products is often hampered because there is no easy access to toilets and washing facilities.

Instead, women workers often have to use the public toilets that are available.

Conference, despite the railway industry's desire to increase diversity in a largely male dominated sector, companies do not have any policies in place that allow women to take time off during their periods. Through their absence and attendance policies, they also make no allowance for the fact that for some women it's almost impossible to attend work due to heavy flooding and pain.

Conference, we call upon the TUC's General Council to adopt this issue and campaign that a new law is adopted to put a legal obligation on employers to provide period products to their employees who need them during their time at work.

We also call on the TUC Women's Committee to include in this campaign that sanitary products are freely available at all transport hubs and in toilets on public transport.

The TUC should as a joint union campaign put pressure on employers:

- i) to recognise and allow women dignity at work
- ii) work with unions to introduce policies that don't penalise women who have to take time off work due to symptoms of endometriosis or prolonged heavy periods.

Mover – POA

Secunder – TSSA

Supporter - RMT

M43 - Parents of Schoolgirls who have Started their Periods to be given an Extra Allowance from the Government.

The TUC campaign that a new allowance is made available that parents of schoolgirls can claim once their daughters start their periods.

Periods start during puberty, the average age for puberty to start in girls is 11 but can be earlier or later. Periods usually begin at around the age of 12 but everyone is different.

Buying sanitary wear for schoolgirls during their periods is an extra expense particularly in this cost of living crisis. It's an expense that parents of boys don't have which is unfair. Why should it cost more to raise girls than it does boys?

Therefore, conference asks the TUC to campaign to get government to provide an extra allowance that can be claimed by parents of girls once their periods start. This allowance is paid until the end of their compulsory education.

POA

M44 - Cancer as an Industrial Injury for Firefighters

Conference notes the FBU-commissioned research into the effects of contaminants on firefighters' health by the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN). Firefighters were found to be four times more likely to develop cancer than the general public and develop these cancers at a much younger age.

Conference notes that in 2022 the World Health Organization classed firefighting as a carcinogenic profession. Despite this, fire and rescue services have not implemented regular health monitoring for cancers as standard practice.

Conference further notes the UK's Industrial Injuries Advisory Council (IIAC) failed to recognise cancer as a prescribed disease in firefighters.

Conference notes that only 9 percent of UK firefighters are women. The study's findings focused mainly on men, due to lack of available data.

Conference notes the cancers mainly or exclusively affecting women, such as breast, ovarian and cervical cancers. Women firefighters are undoubtedly at increased risk from these cancers.

Conference calls on fire and rescue services to implement annual cancer health monitoring for women firefighters to ensure early detection, and to lobby IIAC to recognise cancers suffered by firefighters as an industrial injury. This will enable firefighters who develop cancer as a result of their occupation to access benefits.

FBU - Fire Brigades Union

M45 - Women's Health, Safety and Wellbeing in the Workplace

Conference notes that women make up the majority of the teaching profession and that they play an essential and positive role in schools and colleges.

Conference notes with concern that women's health concerns are often downplayed and even dismissed by employers in the workplace, resulting in many women being forced out of the profession.

Conference is further concerned that, despite women being disproportionately vulnerable to long-term inflammatory immune and other health conditions, many sickness-absence and health and safety policies fail to address such conditions and there is a lack of awareness and understanding amongst managers and employers.

Conference condemns the stigmatisation of women's health in the workplace and society in general, which results in many women suffering in silence and reluctant to seek the work-life adjustments they need.

Conference calls on the TUC to campaign for:

- i) Greater awareness of intersectional gender-sensitive health and safety issues in schools, colleges, and all workplaces.
- ii) A requirement for gender-sensitive sickness absence and health and safety policies in schools and colleges, with mandatory training for all managers.
- iii) Specific training for union negotiators on bargaining for gender-sensitive health, safety and welfare policies in schools, colleges, and the wider workplace.

NASUWT - National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers

M46 - PPE in War Zones

Conference notes that PPE provision for women journalists covering conflict zones is inadequate, making them unsafe in already dangerous environments.

Women journalists working in war zones report flak jackets which do not fit or 'unisex' PPE which is designed towards Caucasian male standards, making it unfit for women and other groups that do not fit that model. This issue particularly affects freelancers and local fixers who might not have the resources to access this expensive equipment and might lose work as a result of it.

The problem of inadequate women's PPE affects many industries, as repeatedly seen in previous TUC Women's Conferences, and this conference invites other unions to work together under the guidance of the TUC to call on manufacturers to produce women's PPE that is safe, compliant, inclusive, and fit for purpose.

Conference also calls on distributors and employers to ensure that it is provided without detriment to freelancers and that it works with standard-making bodies such as BSI to ensure that this issue is addressed properly, and awareness raised.

NUJ - National Union of Journalists

TUC Women's Conference

Constitution

1 Title and purpose of the conference

The title of the conference shall be the 'TUC women's conference' and its purpose shall be to encourage women to play a full and active role in the trade union movement. The conference seeks to allow both debate on motions and wider capacity building work and workshop-based engagement for delegates.

2 Date of conference

The conference meets annually and takes place over no more than four sessions of half a day each. In general, there will be two sessions focused on motions-based business and two focused on more interactive sessions.

3 Basis of representation

Affiliated unions are entitled to be represented at the conference by a minimum of two delegates, provided that the organisation has paid the fee prescribed in Rule 3 of the Rules and Standing Orders of the Trades Union Congress. For affiliates with 10,000 or more members, the following entitlements also apply:

- a) Affiliated organisations with between 10,000 and 20,000 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 5 delegates.
- b) Affiliated organisations with between 20,001 and 50,000 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 10 delegates.
- c) Affiliated organisations with between 50,001 and 100,000 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 15 delegates.
- d) Affiliated organisations with between 100,001 and 500,000 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 20 delegates.
- e) Affiliated organisations with over 500,001 and 1,000,000 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 25 delegates.
- f) Affiliated organisations with over 1,000,001 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 30 delegates.

Affiliated organisations shall be entitled to be represented by additional delegates based on the total of their women members according to the following banding arrangements:

- i) Affiliated organisations with between 5,000 and 10,000 women members shall be entitled to 1 additional delegate.
- ii) Affiliated organisations with between 10,001 and 15,000 women members shall be entitled to 2 additional delegates.
- iii) Affiliated organisations with between 15,001 and 20,000 women members shall be entitled to 3 additional delegates.
- iv) Affiliated organisations with between 20,001 and 100,000 women members shall be entitled to 4 additional delegates.

- v) Affiliated organisations with over 100,001 and 250,000 women members shall be entitled to 6 additional delegates.
- vi) Affiliated organisations with over 250,001 and 500,000 women members shall be entitled to 8 additional delegates.
- vii) Affiliated organisations with over 500,001 women members shall be entitled to 10 additional delegates.
- viii) All delegates shall be women.

It is the TUC's strong expectation that general conference delegates put forward by unions should as far as possible be women. There is also an expectation that union delegations reflect the full diversity of their wider union membership (ensuring, for example, appropriate representation of disabled workers, LGBT+ workers and young workers). All additional delegates attending (in line with the banding arrangements set out above) shall be women.

4 Elections

i) General Council representation

The General Council members of the Women's Committee shall be appointed by the General Council of the TUC.

ii) Elected members

There shall be **no more than twenty-one elected members** of the Women's Committee.

One nomination shall be for Section A (fourteen places)

One for Section B (four places for black women),

One for Section C (one place for a disabled woman)

One for Section D (one place for a lesbian, bisexual and trans woman)

One for Section E (one place for a young woman).

Each affiliated union is entitled to nominate one candidate for each section.

Affiliated unions with over 1.5 million members have the right to make two nominations for election to Section A.

Candidates shall be given the opportunity to submit a **nomination statement of no more than 150 words** that will appear in the nomination document that will be circulated to delegates. The statement should contain biographical details and relevant details of work carried out in the trade union movement but should not be in any way an election address.

No candidate is eligible for election unless she is a delegate to the Conference from her trade union. If a nominee is unable to attend the conference, her nomination will stand only if the reason for non-attendance is acceptable to the Women's Committee.

Voting shall be by ballot. Each trade union delegate attending the conference shall have fourteen votes for Section A and four votes for Section B, not more than one vote to be given to any one nominee, and one vote each for Section C, Section D and E.

Any elected member of the Women's Committee who during the year ceases to be the official representative of her nominating trade union shall cease to be a member of the committee.

Should a vacancy occur during the year among the elected seats, the runner-up in the election at the previous conference will be invited to fill it. If there is no runner up, or the runner up does not wish to take the seat, the Committee may decide to invite co-options to the Committee. Co-opted members do not have voting rights on the committee.

If the Committee decide to appoint co-optees, this must be done in accordance with the existing process for electing members, in line with the rest of the processes set out in rule ii).

iii) Conference Arrangements Committee

The Women's Committee shall act as the Conference Arrangements Committee

5 Motions

- i) Motions for the annual conference agenda must be signed by the general secretary of the trade union sending them and must reach the Secretary of the Committee at least ten weeks before the date fixed for the Conference. Electronic signatures are acceptable.
- ii) Each affiliated union shall be **allowed two motions of no more than 200 words**. Each motion should deal with one subject only, relate to issues about women's equality and specifically mention women. The Women's Committee, acting in their capacity as the Conference Arrangements Committee, shall consider whether motions are competent and comply with the requirements for inclusion in the agenda. The decision of the Committee shall be final.
- iii) The motions included in the preliminary agenda shall be sent to each affiliated union as soon as possible after the closing date for their submission. The order in which subjects shall be discussed shall be decided by the Women's Committee acting as the Conference Arrangements Committee.
- iv) Each affiliated union shall be allowed **one amendment of not more than 60 words**. All amendments to the motions submitted by affiliated unions must reach the Secretary of the Committee by a date to be agreed by the Women's Committee. Amendments must be signed by the general secretaries of the trade unions submitting them. Electronic signatures are acceptable.
- v) Affiliated unions that have had an amendment submitted to their motion will be asked if their union accepts the amendment(s). Affiliated Unions decisions on acceptance or rejection of amendment(s) must be signed by the General Secretary. Electronic signatures are acceptable.
- vi) In planning for the conference, the Women's Committee shall have authority to take any steps they consider necessary to co-operate with the unions submitting motions and amendments, in order that composite motions may be obtained wherever practicable. Where affiliated unions have accepted amendments, the motions and amendment(s) will appear on the final agenda as composites. Failure to comply with the Women's Committee's arrangements may involve a union's motion being deleted from the final Agenda.
- vii) Notwithstanding the above provisions, the Women's Committee may submit statements on issues that are on the agenda or emergency issues that are relevant to the conference that have arisen after the closing date for motions. The committee may not submit emergency motions. Additionally, any affiliated union shall, subject to the approval of the Women's Committee, be permitted to submit an emergency motion for consideration of the delegates to the conference. No such permission shall, however, be granted unless:

- Such an emergency motion is received from the Secretary of the affiliated organisation by the General Secretary of the TUC no later than the morning of the day, two days prior to the opening of conference; and
 - At least two-thirds of the delegates to the conference agree to its inclusion in the agenda of that conference.
- viii) Delegates will select, by secret ballot, one resolution of the conference to go forward onto the agenda of the succeeding TUC Congress.

Standing orders

1 Hours of conference

The Conference assembles annually and takes place over no more than four sessions of half a day each over consecutive days. Lunch breaks will be no less than an hour. In general, the hours of Women's Conference will be from 14.00 to 17.30 on the opening day. From 09.30 to 17.30 on the second day and from 09.30 to 15.00 on the final day. Lunch times on both days shall be from 12.45 to 14.15.

2 Conference chair

The Chair of the TUC Women's Conference shall rotate amongst women members of the Women's Committee based on seniority; this being defined as the longest continuous service.

3 Business of the conference

Included in the business of the annual conference shall be the consideration of the annual Report of the Women's Committee and of motions and amendments. The Report and the Agenda for the conference shall be sent to delegates not later than two weeks prior to the conference.

The Women's Committee as the Standing Orders Committee for conference will prepare an order of business that indicates the Committee's attitude to each motion as follows:

- **Support:** In order to allow more time for delegates the Committee usually (but not always) waive their right to speak in a debate on a motion or amendment they support.
- **Support with comment/explanation:** If necessary, a Committee member will explain to conference any procedural issues they may have on a motion.
- **Support with reservations:** If necessary, a committee member will explain to Conference any reservations they may have on a motion or amendment they otherwise support. The union concerned is notified in advance of the Committee's reservations.
- **Seek remission:** The Committee may ask remission of a motion before Conference. If the union will not agree to remit the motion a committee member will speak in opposition to it. The union remitting the motion is allowed to speak to their motion but there is no debate or vote.
- **Seek withdrawal:** The committee may seek withdrawal of a motion from the submitting union. If the motion is not withdrawn, the motion will be opposed by the Committee. The union will not speak to the motion if the request to withdraw is accepted.
- **Oppose:** A Committee member will speak on any motion or amendment opposed by the Committee
- **Leave to conference:** The Committee do not take an attitude and conference votes on the motion.

4 Appointment of scrutineers and tellers

Four ballot scrutineers and four tellers will be appointed by delegates at the start of the conference.

5 TUC Regional and Trades Council observers

TUC Regions and Trades Council can send **one Observer** to conference, respectively. The TUC Regional or Trades Council observer **may speak on motions at the discretion of the Chair**.

6 Limitation of speakers

Five minutes shall be allowed for the mover of a motion and three minutes for each subsequent speaker. Speeches on behalf of the Women's Committee shall be limited to six minutes unless otherwise agreed by the conference, except for **the chair's address which shall be no longer than 15 minutes**. Other guest speakers shall not exceed the length of the chair's address.

A delegate shall not speak more than once on any motion unless permission to do so, on a point of order or explanation, is given by the Chair. The mover may be allowed a maximum of three minutes to reply to discussion on the motion concerned but no new matter may be introduced into such reply.

Movers of amendments do not have the right of reply. Delegates shall vote on the motion immediately the mover has replied.

7 Closure

Delegates may request that a debate is closed by moving any one of the following procedural motions.

- That the previous question be put: This motion can be moved during an amendment debate. All debate on the amendment will cease and the original motion will be put to the vote. The amendment will be abandoned.
- Move next business: All debate on the current business will cease and that item of business will be abandoned.
- Closure of the debate: All debate on the current business will cease but a vote will be taken. Should the closure be carried, the mover of the original motion shall have the right to reply in accordance with Standing Order 6.

Procedural motions in this instance must be seconded and can only be moved by delegates who have not previously spoken during the debate. There shall be no speeches on such motions.

8 Voting

The method of voting at the TUC Women's Conference on all matters except the election of representatives to serve on the Women's Committee, and the selection of one resolution to go forward onto the agenda of Congress, shall be by voice or show of hands.

The Chair will order votes to be counted by tellers where the result of a show of hand is not clear.

9 Conference reception

The TUC General Council shall support a delegate reception at the close of the first day of the conference.

10 Suspension of standing orders

Standing orders may be suspended only if agreed by at least two-thirds of delegates to the annual conference who are present and voting.

11 Chair's ruling

The chair's ruling shall be final.