

INTRODUCTION TO BRANCH EQUALITY ROLES

Equality has become an enshrined key feature of the GMB. We now have increasingly visible, vocal and organised equality groups recruiting, activating and developing members, campaigning and raising the profile of the union in the workplace and the wider community. We want to make sure that our members are treated fairly and the workplaces we organise are inclusive for all

We need to ensure that Equalities work is proactively implemented in workplaces/branches via the equality bargaining agenda and be a tool to recruit, retain, empower and activate membership.

We also need to reflect the long standing GMB@WORK organising policy to ensure all Equality campaigns and activities support the on-going work of building the Union, empowering members and developing activists. GMB's Purpose in the RuleBook states that: *"We will strive to ensure that GMB's profile reflects all equality strands in the union at all levels of the lay and employee National, Regional, Branch and Workplace structures"*

GMB Equality Strands

GMB's structures incorporate all our Equality Strands so everyone has a voice. Our five equality Strands are identified as

1. Women workers
2. Black, Asian and Minority ethnic workers
3. Young workers
4. Disabled workers
5. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT+) workers, the + indicates that this group incorporates others aspects identity people adopt, like non binary, asexual, queer, intersex.

Branch Roles

The role of the GMB Branch is vital to our structure and it is through the Branch that members have a chance to participate in Branch and GMB democracy and business.

The GMB Rulebook only defines three Equality branch positions:

1. Branch Equality Officer
2. Branch Young Members Officer
3. Branch Race Officer

Since the creation of a Branch Equality Officer the roles of Race and Young Members Officer were created, and their remits cover many areas of commonality. Together you can promote equality and ensure that this is high on the agenda within branch activities and guide the branch and activists to be all inclusive in taking into account the needs of members in all GMB equality strands.

In line with the 2014, CEC Special Report on Branches, outside of the core branch officer positions a branch can fill or not fill other rulebook or non-rulebook offices at their discretion according to the needs and demographics of the branch. Therefore, a Branch can decide they would like a separate Branch officer for each of our equality strands for example a Branch Women's Officer.

If your Branch decide on any other branch position than those 3 listed above, the Branch could draft a branch by-law (or make an amendment to the branch constitution if this exists) to say that the Branch requires this new post and then add this new post to the Branch Organising Plan. The amended by-law should then be sent to the Regional Secretary for agreement by the Regional Committee together with the Branch Plan.

General role of Branch Postholders

As a Branch postholder you would be assisting the Branch to carry out their key role which is to:

- Recruit new members
- Represent members
- Communicate with members
- Organise
- Campaign
- Meet regularly
- Participate in GMB democracy

Other issues a branch & its postholders should hope to achieve:

- Train branch officers and activists
- Educate members
- Mentor members
- Show solidarity with other organisations
- Be active in the workplace and in the community
- Service members
- Retain members
- Generate income
- Support members
- Develop campaigns
- Promote GMB
- Enhance and support Regional equality strategies and structures

1. Role of a Branch Equality Officer

Extract from the GMB Rule Book

Rule 38 Branch equality officer

- 1 The branch equality officer will be responsible for promoting equal rights within the branch's activities.
- 2 The branch equality officer must give one month's notice before they resign.

Specific role

The Branch Equality Officer (BEO) is a Rule Book position, and will normally be a member of the Branch Committee which is elected by the Branch and serves for four years.

You should be active in your workplace and committed in ensuring that the aims and objectives of the Union are met and in line with GMB policy.

As a BEO you can cover all the 5 Equality Strands especially if your Branch doesn't have a designated Race or Young Members Officer.

LONDON REGION

London Region has a number of self organised groups (called SOGs)

Self-Organised Groups (SOGs) SOGs are made up of members who share a protected characteristic. Members can belong to more than one group. London Region is proud to have set up these Self Organised groups which fit into our equality strands as follows:

- GMB Ability for members with disabilities
- GMB Shout! For members who identify as LGBT+
- GMB Young London for members aged under 30
- GMB Race for Black, Asian and Minority ethnic members
- GMB Sisters for members who identify as women

Please see the Branch Equality Toolkit for more information or contact your Regional Equality Officer Hilda Tavolara (hilda.tavolara@gmb.org.uk)



@GMBLondonRegion

Regional website: www.gmblondon.org.uk

As a Branch Equality Officer, your role is to:

- Be the identified and well publicised point of contact in the branch for Equality issues so you will need to keep up to date on equality issues & developments.
- Make sure other Branch Officers and the Branch Committee consider the equalities dimension of everything they do.
- Advise the Branch Officers and Branch Committee on the development and monitoring of the Organising plan to achieve proportionality and fair representation.
- Attend the Regional Equality Forum or National Equality Forum meetings if elected to do so.
- Attend the Regional Equality Conference if nominated by your Branch and speak.
- Report back to the Branch on motions raised at the local Equality Forum for support at the Regional Equality Conference.
- Work with branch equality officers to celebrate equality events in the branch.
- Guide the Branch on motions to go to various conferences and GMB congress on equality issues and provide report back.
- Consider putting yourself forward to sit on the Regional Equality Forum and also the Regional Council/Committee.
- Encourage existing and non-existing members to join and get involved with activities and events, spearheading Equality issue campaigns.
- Collect and share information on equalities issues, including information from the Regional and National Self-organised Groups.
- Make sure that Equality and Inclusion is being raised in all collective bargaining - not just in bargaining on 'pure' equalities issues, including where appropriate Equality Impact Assessments are done.
- Encourage and support the development of branch self-organised groups on behalf of the branch committee.
- Have a co-ordinating role among the Strand Reps, self-organised groups and between the self-organised groups and the rest of the Branch.
- Make sure new recruits know about GMB's commitment to equality and opportunities to participate in self-organisation.
- Co-ordinate the development and training of members from under represented groups.

2. Role of a Branch Young Members Officer

Please note that although the current Rule Book calls this a Branch Youth Officer the Region calls this role a Branch Young Members Officer. GMB defines young workers as members aged up to and including 30 years old.

Extract from the GMB Rule Book

Rule 38a Branch Youth Officer

- 1 The branch youth officer will be responsible for encouraging young people to join the union and promoting young people's issues into the branch's activities.
- 2 The branch youth officer must give one month's notice before they resign.

Specific role

The Branch Young Members Officer is a Rule Book position, and will normally be a member of the Branch Committee which is elected by the Branch and serves for four years. You should be active in your workplace and committed in ensuring that the aims and objectives of the Union are met and in line with GMB policy.

London Region has a self organised network called GMB London Young Workers. This is an active forum for all GMB members living or working in London and the East of England who are 30 years old or younger.

Their current chair is Joe Dharampal-Hornby. They meet regularly to discuss campaigns organised by ourselves and supported by our regional office.

The network seeks to build active participation of young members in GMB and in our communities, whether that's in their local branch, trades council and/or in this regional young members forum. They also campaign on a range of issues decided by our members. They have regular socials and jointly hosted events with other campaign groups.

The purpose of the network is:

- to grow our union, deliver real positive change for GMB members and ensure that the voice of young workers' members is heard within GMB and the wider movement.
- To encourage, support and inspire young members by promoting the principles of GMB@Work, to be active in their workplace and to recruit new young members to the GMB.

- To organise and campaign for better rights and health and safety, pay and conditions for young people at work around workplace issues and on current and future campaigns around policies transferable to the workplace.
- To encourage young members to be active at branch and regional levels, providing support for new members to get involved. This includes getting active in sections and equality strands.
- To produce Young Workers' members specific communications, newsletters and materials.
- To organise events and training sessions to ensure GMB London Young Workers are a visible presence within GMB, including equality and recruitment events.
- To co-ordinate a clear digital presence that makes existing members-aware of our activities, how to get involved and for potential members see why they should join.
- To grow the number of young members who are involved in our London Young Workers' network.

As a Branch Young Members Officer, you could be expected:

1. To assist the Branch to communicate with young members and encourage them to be more active in GMB
2. To participate in GMB campaigning, organising and promotional activities as required on young member issues.
3. To support the aims and objectives of the GMB London Young Workers network, attend their meetings as a branch representative and prepare and report back to branch and committee meetings.
4. To attend the Regional Equality Conference if elected as a delegate.
5. To attend National Young Workers GMB events if elected as a delegate.
6. To attend GMB Congress if elected as a delegate.
7. To undergo training relevant with the role as and when requested.
8. To attend the TUC strand conference if elected as a delegate.

 [@gmbyounglondon](https://twitter.com/gmbyounglondon)



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Current Chair: Joe Dharampal-Hornby joeDharampal-hornby@gmbactivist.org.uk



3. Role of a Branch Race Officer

Extract from the GMB Rule Book

Rule 38b Branch Race Officer

- 1 The branch race officer will be responsible for encouraging black and ethnic-minority people to join the union and promoting black and ethnic-minority issues into the branch's activities.
- 2 The branch race officer must give one month's notice before they resign.

Specific role

The Branch Race Officer is a Rule Book position, and will normally be a member of the Branch Committee which is elected by the Branch and serves for four years.

You should be active in your workplace and committed in ensuring that the aims and objectives of the Union are met and in line with GMB policy.

London Region has a self organised network called **GMB Race**. This is an active forum for all Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic members (BAME)

Their current chair is Abdi Mohamed and the Group meets meet regularly to discuss campaigns organised by ourselves and supported by our regional office.

The network aims to encourage, support, and inspire GMB members to become active and engaged within their union, to recruit new members to the GMB Union and to campaign on workplace and non-workplace issues as voted for by our members.

The network is open to any GMB member within London Region who defines as a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) person

The network seeks to build active participation of BAME members in GMB and in our communities, whether that's in their local branch, trades council and/or in this regional young members forum. They also campaign on a range of issues decided by our members. They have regular socials and jointly hosted events with other campaign groups.

The purpose of the network is:

- To provide advice to the Regional committee of the London Region on matters concerning race issues, especially in the workplace;
- To assist the National GMB and London Region Equalities Forums (respectively NEF and REF) with the development of policy for the GMB CEC on such matters;
- To organise and recruit BAME members into the GMB;
- To promote equality at work and in society for all who identify as BAME;
- To oppose all forms of prejudice and discrimination whether on the grounds of sexuality, trans status, gender, race, ethnic or national origin, colour, disability, religion, marital status, age, or other status or personal characteristic;
- To act as a contact and support for all GMB BAME members;
- To participate in local TUC Regional activity;
- To organise, as appropriate, GMB presence at regional BAME events;
- To develop training and events for the BAME members in the region as well as training for Reps on Race issues in conjunction with the National Committee.
- To organise and campaign on issues that affect BAME members across the region.

✉ gmbraelondon@gmail.com

🐦 [@gmbrace](https://twitter.com/gmbrace)

f [GMB Race](https://www.facebook.com/GMBRace)



Current Chair: Abdi Mohamed abdi.mohamed@gmbactivist.org.uk

Branch Disability Officer

If your Branch decides to have a Disability Officer which is not a RuleBook position, your role would be

- To attend GMB Ability meetings and prepare and report back in the branch and committee meetings.
- To attend the Regional Equality Conference if elected as a delegate.
- To attend National GMB Disability events if elected as a delegate.
- To attend GMB Congress if elected as a delegate.
- To undergo training relevant with the role as and when requested.
- To attend the TUC strand conference if elected as a delegate.
- To promote Disability issues within the branch and its activities.
- To give the Branch Secretary one months' notice before you resign.

GMB Ability is the London Region disability self-organised network within the GMB Trade Union.

It aims to encourage, support, and inspire GMB members who self-define as disabled to become active and engaged within their union, to recruit new self-defined disabled members to the GMB Union and to campaign on workplace and non-workplace issues as voted for by our members.

The network is open to any GMB member within London Region who self-defines as a disabled member.



londonability@gmbactivist.org.uk



[@gmbability](https://twitter.com/gmbability)



Current Chair: Susan Kelly susan.kelly@gmbactivist.org.uk

Branch Women's Officer

If your Branch decides to have a Disability Officer which is not a RuleBook position, your role would be

- To attend GMB Sisters meetings and prepare and report back in the branch and committee meetings.
- To attend the Regional Equality Conference if elected as a delegate.
- To attend National GMB Women's events if elected as a delegate.
- To attend GMB Congress if elected as a delegate.
- To undergo training relevant with the role as and when requested.
- To attend the TUC strand conference if elected as a delegate.
- To promote women's issues within the branch and its activities.
- To give the Branch Secretary one months' notice before you resign.

GMB London Sisters is the women's self-organised network within the London Region of the GMB Trade Union.

It aims to encourage, support, and inspire GMB members who self-define as women to become active and engaged within their union, to recruit new women members to the GMB Union, to campaign on workplace and non-workplace issues as voted for by our members and to work to remove all obstacles to women's equal participation at all levels of the union.

The network is open to any GMB member within London Region who self-defines as a woman.

✉ gmb Sisters London@gmail.com

f [GMB Sisters London](#)

🐦 [@gmb Sisters](#)

Current Chair: Kim Hendry kim.hendry@gmbactivist.org.uk



Branch LGBT+ Officer

If your Branch decides to have a Disability Officer which is not a RuleBook position, your role would be

GMB trade union is committed to protecting, promoting and furthering employment rights, full equality and human rights for all workers who identify themselves as a lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or trans (LGBT+) person.

- To attend GMB Ability meetings and prepare and report back in the branch and committee meetings.
- To attend the Regional Equality Conference if elected as a delegate.
- To attend National GMB Shout! events if elected as a delegate.
- To attend GMB Congress if elected as a delegate.
- To undergo training relevant with the role as and when requested.
- To attend the TUC strand conference if elected as a delegate.
- To promote LGBT+ issues within the branch and its activities.
- To give the Branch Secretary one months' notice before you resign.

GMB SHOUT! is the London Region LGBT+ self-organised network within the GMB Trade Union.

Our GMB LGBT+ members run their own successful, self-organised network and committee called GMB Shout!. This is a safe, inclusive forum for GMB LGBT+ members to come together to talk about their issues and views, to share experiences and ideas, to network and campaign with others in order to be empowered and to build a strong, diverse, inclusive, fair union, workplace and society

It aims to encourage, support, and inspire GMB members who self-define as LGBT+ to become active and engaged within their union, to recruit new self-defined LGBT+ members to the GMB Union and to campaign on workplace and non-workplace issues as voted for by our members.



londonshout@gmbactivist.org.uk



[@gmbshout](https://twitter.com/gmbshout)



[GMB Shout! – LGBT](https://www.facebook.com/GMBShout!-LGBT)



gmbshout.net



Current Chair: Brian Shaw brian.shaw@gmbactivist.org.uk

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