

Trade union rights

Every worker has the right to join a trade union.

More than 118,000 workers joined trade unions in 2020, bringing trade union membership in the UK to 6.6 million workers. Employees in workplaces where a trade union is recognised by the employer have higher pay, better terms and conditions and safer working environments.

You have a legal right to join a trade union. Your employer must not treat you unfavourably because you join a trade union, take part in trade union activities or use the services trade unions provide for their members. You have a right to be accompanied by a trade union rep at grievance and disciplinary hearings and appeals. We have collective agreements with some employers that give contractual rights to be accompanied to other meetings with management. You have a right to take industrial action.

Your reps have a right to reasonable paid time off to: negotiate pay, terms and conditions, represent members, for trade union training and to carry out trade union, health and safety and union learning activities.

If you feel that you are being denied your trade union rights, talk to your [union rep](#). We are here to help. PCS can give free legal advice and guidance on trade union rights.

Not a member? It's never too late. [Join PCS today.](#)