

**To: The Chair of the Probation Board  
The Chief of the Probation Board  
(Copy enclosed for the Head of Human Resources)  
The Secretary of the Probation Board  
Members of the National Negotiating Council**

12<sup>th</sup> June 2007

**NNC CIRCULAR NO.7/2007**

Dear Colleague

**UNION LEARNING REPRESENTATIVES (ULRs)**

We are writing to bring to the attention of employers and all employees, the provisions in Section 43 of the Employment Act 2002 relating to the right for Union Learning Representatives to take paid time-off during working hours to undertake their duties and to undertake relevant training. In support of these arrangements, ACAS revised its "Code of Practice 3", **Time Off for Trade Union Duties and Activities**, a copy of which is attached for ease of reference. [available online at: [http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/l/q/CP03\\_1.pdf](http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/l/q/CP03_1.pdf) ]

Government commitment to investing in the skills development of all workers, which is welcomed by the employers and trade unions in Probation was outlined in the Skills Strategy White Papers "21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills" (2003) and "Skills : Getting on in business, getting on at work"(2005).

In furtherance of the exercise of these rights, NNC trade unions have recently submitted a claim to the employers nationally for the introduction of a "Model Learning Agreement" which builds on these statutory rights. Proposals are under discussion and it is intended to consult widely with all parties to the NNC and other relevant bodies in the Service once an initial draft has been agreed. It is anticipated that any Model Learning Agreement will be broadly similar to agreements already in place elsewhere in the public sector.

Joint Secretaries are aware that ULRs are already in place in a few Probation Areas and would welcome receipt of copies of any local agreements which are already in place. Copies, where available, should be sent to Graeme Anderson at the Probation Board's Association.

Yours sincerely

**Christine Lawrie**  
**Judy McKnight**

**Joint Secretaries**