

**Certification Officer
for Trade Unions and Employers' Associations**

Annual Report

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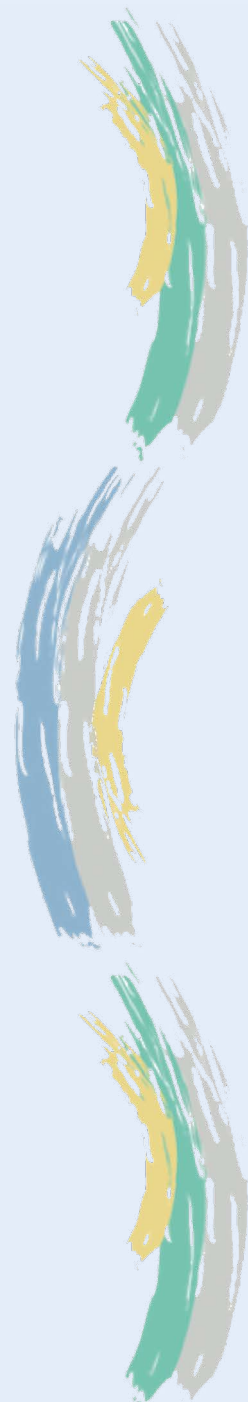
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2024–25



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I am required by the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 to submit to you both a report on my activities as the Certification Officer during the previous reporting period. I have pleasure in submitting such a report for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

Review of the year

I will be retiring on 31 May 2025. Since being appointed as Certification Officer on 1 January 2018, I have been supported by a strong team of dedicated individuals and am grateful for their hard work and friendship over those years. I am delighted that Michael Kidd, currently Assistant Certification Officer, has been appointed as Certification Officer on an interim basis and am confident that he will provide strong leadership during the recruitment process to appoint my replacement.

Employment Rights Bill

The immediate challenge for the team will be in responding to the Employment Rights Bill which is currently before Parliament. The Bill, should it receive royal assent, will repeal many of the provisions in the Trade Union Act 2016 which relate to the Certification Officer. These were controversial provisions at the time, which many believed were driven by political views rather than a need for strengthened regulation of unions. My predecessor was notably critical of their introduction in his Annual Report for 2015/2016.

The powers of investigation did not come into force until April 2022. From the outset, I was committed to using the powers proportionately, working with the relevant union where possible so that any breach could be rectified without the need for any formal enforcement procedures. There have been a small number of cases where my team has raised potential breaches of statute with unions; however, there has only been one case where I have made a formal decision and issued an enforcement order. Somewhat ironically, the breach was drawn to my attention by the union itself who sought a formal decision and enforcement order to protect the union from possible complaints about the need to, potentially, run a new ballot for General Secretary. That case is covered in more detail at page 16. I am pleased to see that the union has now concluded its electoral process.

The 2016 Act gave me powers to impose a financial penalty following a finding that the union has breached its rules or statute. I published guidance which set out the principles I would follow when considering a financial penalty. Having followed those principles I have not found it necessary to impose a penalty and have explained, in each decision, why that was the case.

Union governance

I have reflected in previous reports that improved governance at branch and regional level might have prevented complaints coming to my office. Over the last two years I have seen an increase in the number of complaints which might have been avoided by better governance at national level. These have usually arisen from decisions taken by a union's executive committee or general secretary.

In some cases, the complaints have arisen from confusion, or dispute, about where responsibility lies. In others they have arisen from tension between senior employed staff, including the general secretary, and the executive committee. Very often the tension has been exacerbated by a lack of clarity around responsibility and, or, poorly documented or reasoned decisions. It is self-evident that members of the Executive Committee and senior staff should work together in the best interests of their members whatever their political, or other, differences. It is also vitally important that the roles and responsibilities of each are set out clearly so that everyone understands what is required of them.

I have been surprised to find, however, that some unions, do not have formally documented delegations in place. This could be set out in rules or standing orders or a separate schedule of delegation. Nor do all senior members of staff have clear, and up to date, job descriptions.

Similarly, I have been provided with draft minutes of executive committee meetings because minutes had not been agreed several months after the relevant meeting. These issues have arisen in some of the largest unions who are representing thousands of members and managing significant funding provided by those members.

Consequently, I would encourage all unions to regularly review their governance arrangements to ensure that responsibilities are clear and that decisions are documented appropriately. In addition, they should ensure that all elected office holders and senior staff have the skills and knowledge required to undertake their roles. In my view this should include appropriate mandatory training for elected officers and officials and effective recruitment processes for senior staff.

A lack of good governance can give rise to significant issues in any organisation. It can also leave a union open to allegations that it cannot effectively defend. Poor governance is a poor defence.

Annual returns

The annual returns for Unite the Union have remained outstanding since 2021, although Unite have submitted non-financial information which we have published. The reasons for the outstanding annual returns have been the subject of some external scrutiny. I have been in regular contact with Unite to understand the reasons for the delay and am confident that those reasons arise from some significant issues which are already the subject of investigations by other authorities or through Unite appointed independent investigators. I have every expectation that Unite will continue to liaise with my successor until the full returns are submitted.

Costs

The net cost of the office was £630,872.

It is estimated that the costs of services such as IT equipment, its maintenance, HR and other support services provided by Acas was £56,641.

My salary as Certification Officer was £149,231 which is taxed under PAYE. This is pensionable with an employer's contribution to my pension of £ 43,232.

The team will continue to seek opportunities to reduce costs in the future to avoid unnecessary increases in the levy.

Finally, I want to thank all unions and employers' associations who have engaged constructively during my term of office. This has enabled me to deliver change, which has improved our service and ensured that we remain fit for purpose. My team has worked hard to achieve this change, and I have no doubt that they will continue to maintain our high standards with the support of our stakeholders.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Sarah Bedwell', written over a horizontal line.

Sarah Bedwell
Certification Officer
29 May 2025

Overview of 2024-25

Trade union finances

Total funds down 3.6% from £1.96 billion to £1.89 billion.

Total value of political funds up 7.8% from £33.2 million to £35.8 million

Trade union membership

Up by 21.8% – from 5.5 million to 6.7 million*

Casework

13 complaints from trade union members formally determined

4 withdrawn

3 struck out

1 upheld and 5 dismissed 1 enforcement order made

1 investigation into allegations of financial irregularities

1 breach conceded by a trade union and an enforcement order made without a complaint from a member

1 financial irregularities investigation report published

1 merger of trade unions

Lists of trade unions and employers' associations

4 trade unions added to the list, 4 removed

* This year's figures include Unite the Union's membership of 1.2 million which was not included last year. See page 10 for details.

Chapter 1 – Lists of trade unions and employers' associations

I am required by the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 ("the 1992 Act") to keep a list of trade unions and a list of employers' associations.

To enter an organisation on the relevant list I must be satisfied that it meets the definition in sections 1 or 122 of the 1992 Act.

A trade union is an organisation that is mostly made up of workers. Its main purposes must include the collective representation of those workers with their employers. A 'worker' is defined by the 1992 Act as someone working or seeking to work under a contract of employment.

Some trade unions, such as the Trades Union Congress, are mostly made up of other trade unions. These are called 'federated trade unions'. They may represent workers collectively or regulate the relationship between the unions themselves, such as by intervening in disputes between unions.

An employers' association is an organisation that is mostly made up of employers. Its main purposes must include negotiating with workers or trade unions on behalf of its members.

Listing applications

I made decisions on 4 applications from organisations seeking to be added to the list of trade unions. Enquiries into 1 further application were ongoing at 31 March 2025.

We have updated our guidance for making a listing application, to help organisations understand what information they need to submit in support of their application. We are also committed to providing high-quality support and assistance to organisations seeking to be listed prior to them submitting a formal listing application form. This can help avoid organisations paying the fee (which is non-refundable) where their application is unlikely to be accepted.

Following the changes we have made to our process we were pleased to receive the following positive feedback:

"I very much appreciate your time this week and the swiftness with which you have responded. Can I also state that Ms Hirji has been highly professional and represented the office well in what is probably a unique series of events and should be commended...."

Trade unions added to the list

4 trade unions were added to the list during the period. Details are provided in the following table.

Name	Date added	Membership criteria/ representation
Libertas Union	11 April 2024	Represents workers in all industries
Independent Oxfam Union	7 May 2024	Represents employees of Oxfam GB
Yourmate Union	8 October 2024	Represents workers in all industries
United Medical Associate Professionals Trade Union (UMAPs TU)	19 March 2025	Represents medical associate professionals

Trade unions removed from the list

4 trade unions were removed from the list during the period. Details are provided in the following table

Name	Date removed	Reason for removal
Aircrew Officers Association Europe	19 April 2024	Union dissolved
Balfour Beatty Staff Association	1 August 2024	Union dissolved and no longer met statutory definition
Boots Pharmacists Association	1 January 2025	Merged into PDA Union
Leek Building Society Staff Association	29 January 2025	Union dissolved

Changes to the lists

The official lists		
	At 31 March 2024	At 31 March 2025
Total number of trade unions	128	128
Total number of employers' associations	36	36

The current lists of trade unions and employers' associations, are available on the Certification Officer's [website](#).

Listing application fee

The fee for an application to join the list of trade unions or employers' associations is £519.

Special register bodies

Some trade unions are known as 'special register bodies' and have different features to other trade unions. These are organisations that appeared on a special register immediately before 16 September 1974. They were either companies registered under the Companies Act 2006 or incorporated by charter or letters patent. The special register bodies also took part in collective bargaining on behalf of their members. They were mainly professional bodies.

Whilst the 1992 Act provides that other trade unions cannot have corporate status it provides an exception for special register bodies. Special register bodies are also exempt from the requirement to conduct elections for the posts of president and general secretary but only where they are not voting members of the Executive.

The 12 special register bodies are indicated on the list of trade unions in Appendix 1.



The Certification Officer and her team

Certificates of independence

A listed trade union may apply for a certificate of independence. In this context, independence is defined as independence from an employer or group of employers. A certificate of independence is a prerequisite to an application for formal recognition with an employer to the Central Arbitration Committee.

Within the reporting year, I received 2 applications for a certification of independence from trade unions on my list. As of 31 March, my decision was pending on each of these.

The fee for an application for a certificate of independence is £997.

Chapter 2 – Annual returns

Annual returns

All trade unions and employers' associations are required to submit an annual return to me every year. The return contains information about the organisation's membership, income and expenditure, industrial action ballots held, and industrial action taken. All returns are available on my [website](#).

Organisations must submit their return within 5 months of the end of their reporting period. Most reporting periods run from 1 January until 31 December, which means most returns are due before 1 June in the following year. Failure to submit a return to me can result in prosecution.

As stated in the previous chapter, there are 128 trade unions on my list. However, not all of these trade unions' returns were due between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. This is because the due date for annual returns does not always fall within the reporting year for my annual report. Notably, newly listed trade unions will generally have longer to provide their first return.

By 31 March 2025, 123 out of 124 trade union returns due had been received. I will continue to seek full compliance with the statutory requirements and will work with those organisations who consistently submit late returns to help improve their compliance.

At the time of writing this report, Unite the Union has only submitted partial annual returns for 2021, 2022, and 2023. Those partial annual returns include only the membership figures that unions are required to report on. I am satisfied that the delay in submitting the financial elements of the annual returns is due to issues identified during the auditing process. I understand that those issues are currently under investigation by other authorities and so I do not consider it proportionate to use my own powers of investigation at this stage. I have been in regular contact with the union, and have every expectation that Unite will continue to liaise with my successor until the full returns are submitted.

Membership audit certificate

All unions must maintain a register of their members' names and addresses. Unions are required to send a membership audit certificate to me, as part of their return, to demonstrate that they are meeting the statutory requirement.

Statement to members

Trade unions must send a statement to all members containing certain information from the union's annual return within 8 weeks from the day the annual return is sent to me. The union is also required to send a copy of this statement to me.

Industrial action and ballots

30 unions reported on ballots and industrial action. Of these, 17 reported both ballots being held and action being taken, 11 reported only ballots and 2 reported only taking industrial action.

I have no powers to investigate trade unions over the information reported to me about industrial action and ballots other than to publish the information as part of the union's annual return to me. However, failure to provide industrial action and political spend information required in the annual return could result in me awarding a financial penalty against the organisation or prosecution.

Compliance with statutory election requirements

The annual return requires trade unions to provide the date their general secretary, president and executive members were last elected.

This assists my team in monitoring whether trade unions comply with the statutory requirement that no one holds such a position for more than 5 years without being re-elected. We introduced this addition to the annual return because the changes brought in by the Trade Union Act 2016 mean that I can now consider a potential breach without having first received a complaint from a member of that organisation or another eligible party. This has made early identification of potential breaches more important than ever. Our early engagement with organisations allows them to bring themselves back into compliance without the need for formal action, a benefit to both trade unions and their members.

My team will contact unions that fail to provide this information in their return. No issues arose from this that required me to take formal action.

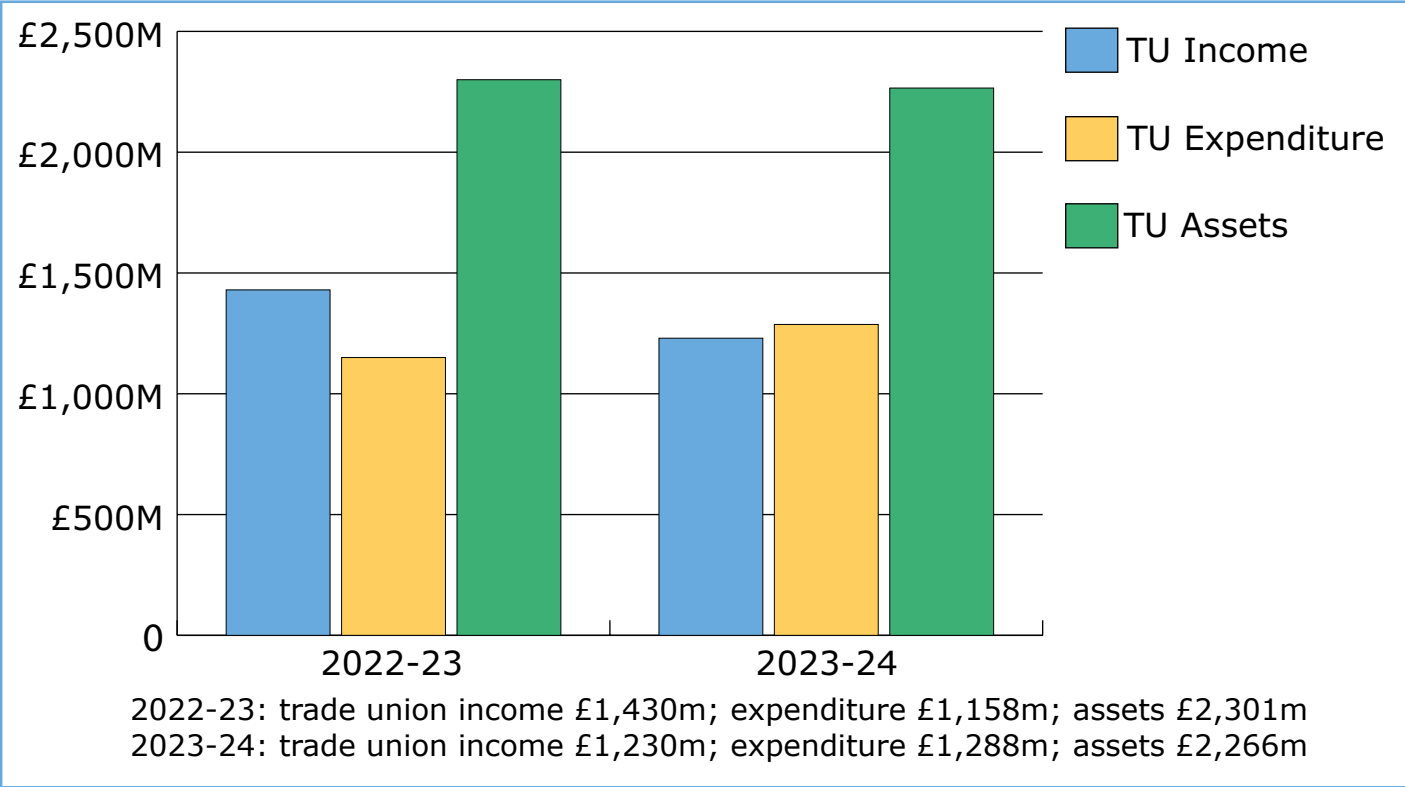
Information from the annual returns

Figure 1 - Distribution of trade union membership 2022-23

Number of Members	Number of Unions	Membership
Under 100	8	343
100-499	20	5,171
500-999	12	8,803
1,000-2,499	17	23,623
2,500-4,999	15	51,900
5,000-9,999	11	79,754
10,000-14,999	6	79,903
15,000-24,999	9	178,672
25,000-49,999	10	400,256
50,000-99,999	3	202,250
100,000-249,999	5	827,517
250,000 and over	7	4,861,980
Total	123	6,720,172

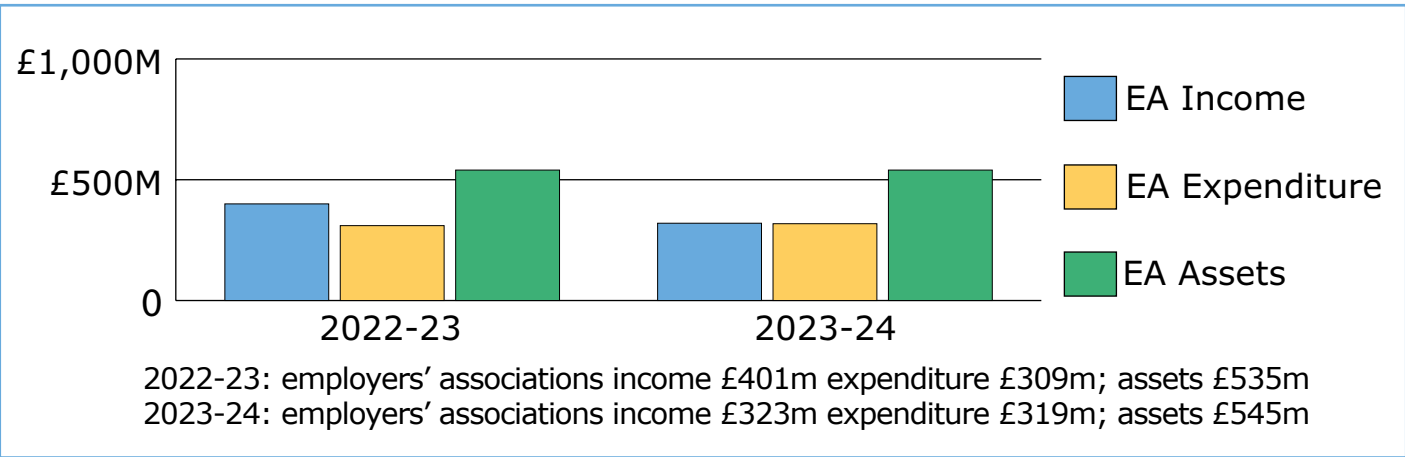
The figure reported here for total union membership of 6,720,172 shows an increase of 1,226,452 members from last year's reported figure of 5,493,720. However, this is mainly due to the inclusion of Unite the Union's membership figure of 1,177,292, which was not available for inclusion in last year's report.

Figure 2 – Comparison of trade union finances



The total funds of trade unions were £1,889 million compared to £1,956 million the previous year, a decrease of 3.6%. Appendix 3 provides detail of the income, expenditure, and assets of trade unions.

Figure 3 – Comparison of employers’ association finances



The total funds of employers’ associations were £322 million compared to £381 million the previous year, a decrease of 18.3%. Appendix 5 provides detail of the income, expenditure, and assets of employers’ associations.

Figure 4 – Percentage of trade unions paying salaries and benefits to their general secretary

Salary paid to general secretary	No: of unions	% of trade unions
No salary	32	26.02
No salary but in receipt of benefits	1	0.81
up to £30,000	18	14.63
£30,001 to £60,000	16	13.01
£60,001 to £100,000	19	15.45
Over £100,000	37	30.08

Appendix 4 provides detailed information on the salary and benefit payments paid by unions to their general secretary.



Chapter 3 – Operational work summary

Complaints from members

Trade union members can bring a complaint to me if they believe that their union has failed to comply with one or more of the relevant provisions of the 1992 Act or has breached, or threatened to breach, certain rules of the union.

My team makes an initial assessment of complaints from members to decide whether it is a complaint I can accept. In particular, my team seeks assurance that the complaint:

- Has been made within the statutory time limits
- Is about a type of rule or statutory provision I can deal with, and that
- It could be reasonably argued that the rule or statutory provision was breached in the manner described

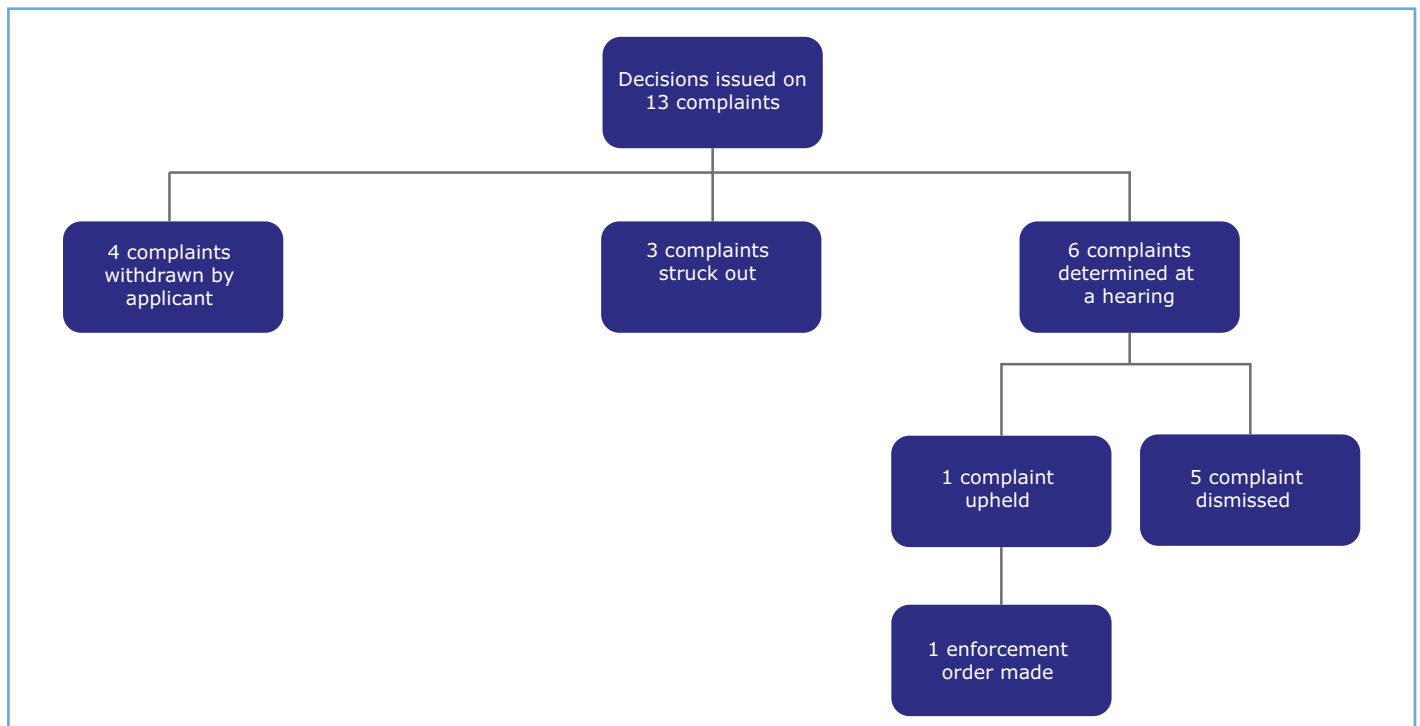
Being assured that complaints are arguable and well evidenced reduces the time and effort that union members, and unions, invest in preparing a case that has no reasonable prospect of success. If I, or the Assistant Certification Officer, do not accept a complaint for formal determination, a member of my team will write to the member setting out the reasons. This can be appealed to the Employment Appeal Tribunal in the same way as any of my formal decisions.

If I accept a complaint, my team will make enquiries with the parties. I will give reasons for all of my decisions in writing. If I agree that the union has breached its rules, or the law, I may make an enforcement order and, where necessary, I will also consider whether to impose a financial penalty. Further details of my powers are at Appendix 8.

At the point of receiving a complaint, my team will explore with applicants and the union the potential of resolving issues directly between the parties. In many cases, resolution outside of my formal process can provide a better outcome for both members and trade unions.

We will keep this process under continuous review.

Figure 5 – Summary of decisions issued



As shown above, 13 complaints were subject to formal decisions. Of these, 4 complaints were withdrawn by the applicant, 3 complaints were struck out and, following hearings, 1 complaint was upheld with an enforcement order made and 5 complaints were dismissed.

Complaints not subject to formal decisions

My team also dealt with a further 97 complaints which were not subject to formal decisions. Of these, 29 complaints were closed prior to being copied to the trade union. This was either because:

- they were withdrawn by the applicant (7 complaints),
- there was insufficient evidence to proceed (2 complaints),
- they were out of time (8 complaints),
- the applicant failed to engage with my team (9 complaints) or
- the Union concerned dissolved (3 complaints).

68 complaints were under consideration as of 31 March 2025. This represents a marked increase year-on-year in the number of complaints under consideration during this snapshot in time (9 complaints in 2022/23 and 35 complaints in 2023/24).

Cases of interest

Lambe v Fire Brigades Union (D/2/24-25)

Mr Lambe's complaint was that the Union had breached a rule by deferring a decision made on an application to rejoin the Union. Mr Ahmed, who made the application, left the Union in 2018 as he had been racially abused by a Union official. His application to rejoin in 2022 was accepted by his branch and then approved by the Union's London Regional Committee. I was tasked with deciding whether the Union's Executive Council ("EC") had exceeded its powers by deferring Mr Ahmed's application. Following a hearing, I upheld the complaint and made an enforcement order. In reaching my conclusion I noted that:

- Mr Ahmed's application had been properly made and had not been withdrawn and
- exceptional circumstances enabling the EC to intervene in a decision of the Brigade Committee did not exist in this case

Cassidy v Unite (D/11/24-25)

Mr Cassidy's complaint was that the Union should not have appointed its Executive Head of Operations ("EHO") without the approval of the Union's Executive Council ("EC"). The key issue I had to decide was whether the position of EHO was an officer role or a staff role. This was because appointment to an officer role would require EC approval according to the Union's rules, whilst a staff role would not. Mr Cassidy maintained that the EHO was an officer. However, I was not presented with any evidence to support that position nor any evidence to show that approval had been given to past appointments. I therefore concluded that the EHO was a staff role and not an officer role and so did not uphold Mr Cassidy's complaint.

Pinder v GMB (D/9/24-25)

Ms Pinder's complaint related to her suspension in February 2024, from all positions in the Union. She argued that this action could only be made by the Union's Central Executive Committee ("CEC"), a regional council or a regional committee, whilst she had been suspended by the President and Vice President. At the hearing, the Union argued it was reasonable for the CEC to delegate urgent decisions to the Presidential Team in between CEC meetings. Ms Pinder did not provide any evidence that contradicted this position. I also noted that the decision to suspend Ms Pinder had been ratified by the CEC at a meeting in March 2024. Consequently, I did not uphold the complaint.



Elections for certain positions

Section 46 of the 1992 Act specifies that elections for the positions of president, general secretary and members of the executive committee must be held every 5 years. Elections must be by postal ballot of the union's members and conducted in accordance with the relevant provisions in the 1992 Act.

We received 2 complaints from members regarding alleged breaches of statutory elections in two different trade unions. 1 of these was struck out and 1 was under consideration as of 31 March 2025.

We received 7 complaints from members regarding alleged breaches of statutory elections in this reporting period. 6 complaints were closed during the reporting period. 1 complaint was under consideration as of 31 March 2024.

Complaints: power to act without an application from a member

The [Trade Union Act 2016](#), incorporated into the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, allows me to investigate and consider whether an organisation has breached its statutory responsibilities set out in the 1992 Act, without having first received a complaint from a member of that organisation or another eligible party. My [guidance](#) sets out the criteria used to determine whether to use these powers and the likely procedure I would follow when doing so.

The powers apply to a number of statutory provisions. These include the requirements about political spending by trade unions, merger ballots and the election requirements for a trade union's general secretary, president and executive members.

I engaged my powers to act without an application twice. The first occasion was upon receiving information that statutory elections had not taken place in one trade union. After making enquiries, the union came into compliance and so no further action was required.

The second occasion was at the request of the union, the Fire Brigades Union, following errors in its General Secretary election in January 2025 ([D/12/24-25](#)). After the result of the election was declared by the scrutineer which ran the ballot, the Union informed me that, out of a total 33,044 members eligible to vote, 3,155 had not received a ballot paper in the initial mail out. The Union explained that this was due to an accidental error on its part. The Union shared the correspondence with the scrutineer with me, reflecting the scrutineer's view that the error did not affect the outcome of the election. Notwithstanding this, the Union conceded the breach which I agreed disenfranchised a significant proportion of the electorate. My enforcement order was based upon an agreement by the Union that, should both candidates confirm that they wished to stand again in any rerun ballot, a fresh ballot complying with the relevant statutory provisions would be held.

Political funds

Any trade union wishing to spend money on political objects, for example campaigning for a political party, must establish a separate political fund for this. The decision to adopt a political fund must be endorsed by a ballot of all members. A ballot must then be held every 10 years to ensure that the membership wishes to retain the fund.

21 trade unions have political fund resolutions in force. These are identified in [Appendix 6](#).

7 trade unions with political funds held ballots during the reporting year in which the members voted to retain the political fund. These were:

Bakers Food and Allied Workers' Union
Transport Salaried Staff Association
Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen
Communication Workers Union
Fire Brigade Union
National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers
UNISON: The Public Service Union

3 unions are due to hold ballots in the next reporting year.

Members can choose whether to contribute to a political fund. Members who joined before 1 March 2018 would have been automatically opted in to making payments but may choose to opt out. Members who joined from 1 March 2018 only pay into the fund if they have opted in.

Trade union members can complain to me about political expenditure by their union, for example if they believe that the union has used resources on political objects from outside of the political fund. I received 1 complaint from a member regarding their union's political spending which was later withdrawn by the applicant.

I approved changes to 3 trade unions' political fund rules. My focus in such cases is to ensure that the political fund rules are clear and continue to reflect the statutory provisions.

Financial irregularities

The 1992 Act allows me to investigate the financial affairs of trade unions and employers' associations, with the exception of federated employers' associations and trade unions, and organisations that have been in existence for less than 12 months. I have powers to appoint an inspector to investigate an organisation's financial affairs and to publish my findings. In accordance with section 37B(2) of the 1992 Act, I can take action only where it appears to me that one or more of the following circumstances exist:

- The financial affairs of the organisation are being or have been conducted for a fraudulent or unlawful purpose.
- Persons concerned with the management of those financial affairs have, in connection with that management, been guilty of fraud, misfeasance or other misconduct.
- The organisation has failed to comply with any duty imposed on it by the 1992 Act in relation to its financial affairs.
- A rule of the organisation relating to its financial affairs has not been complied with.

Fire Brigades Union

Allegations were received by my office in July and August 2023 from several Fire Brigades Union members that "secret ex-gratia payments" had been made to employees of the Union, including National Officers, across a ten-year period. It was suggested that the Union's Executive Council ("EC") had not approved the decision to make the payments, and therefore that the rules of the Union had not been followed.

I appointed the Assistant Certification Officer, Michael Kidd, as an inspector to investigate the financial affairs of the Union. The terms of reference I provided to Mr Kidd focused on settlement payments made by the Union to senior officials who had left the Union, the key question being whether those payments had been properly approved in line with the Union's rules.

The results of the Mr Kidd's investigation were published in an [inspector's report](#) which is available on my website. The report records that the Union had not been able to conclusively demonstrate that it had followed its rules when settlement agreements had been agreed, noting in particular that the Union was unable to provide relevant minutes in many instances. Notwithstanding this, he found no conclusive evidence that any of the matters referred to in section 37B(2) of the 1992 Act had occurred. Mr Kidd found that there appeared to be:

- a lack of shared understanding amongst Union officials about the meaning of certain rules
- little common understanding about the precise way in which responsibility for the day-to-day running of the Union was delegated to either a sub-committee or the General Secretary and
- inconsistency in the quality of record keeping and information management

Mr Kidd made a number of recommendations intended to assist the Union to improve its accountability for decision-making. The report was welcomed by both the Union, and the members who raised the initial allegations.

I received allegations of financial irregularities against a further 4 trade unions. Of these, 2 were closed as I did not consider that any of the statutory grounds existed to require further action. Enquiries into the allegations about the other 2 trade unions are ongoing.



Chapter 4 – Trade Union Act 2016: the levy

Background

As reported in last year's annual report, my additional powers provided in the [Trade Union Act 2016](#) came into force on 1 April 2022. These changes included the requirement for trade unions and employers' associations to pay a levy to fund the costs of some of my functions.

The levy

In my last annual report, I reported the figures for the second levy period. I am pleased to report that in this reporting year all organisations who were liable to pay the second levy had done so. My team worked with one organisation to agree to a payment plan as it could not make the payment in one instalment.

In order to help organisations prepare for the third levy period, we wrote out in November 2024. This was to inform them of their likely levy payment based on estimates of the likely end of year costs for my office less the excluded costs in the Regulations.

The levy covers the relevant expenses of the Certification Office. In addition to the net cost of the office, the levy includes expenses of £56,641.37 incurred by Acas in providing accommodation, equipment, and other facilities to me.

The total costs which need to be funded through the levy this year were £615,146.31. This is slightly higher than the previous year because we implemented the agreed public sector pay increase. Details of the amounts levied, how these amounts were determined, and the thresholds for eligibility, are provided in Appendix 9.

My other costs, which organisations were not required to cover through the levy, were £41,706.36 to cover legal advice.

Organisations can raise any further questions about the levy by contacting my office by e-mail at info@certoffice.org or by telephone on 0330 109 3602.

[Guidance](#) on the levy is available on the website.



Chapter 5 – Service improvements

Work to improve our service for users

My team and I have continued with our work to improve the service we provide to organisations, their members and the general public. Below are some of the examples of work that my office has carried out over the year.

Internal database

As reported previously, my team has been developing a new internal database for storing data collected from trade unions and employers' associations' annual returns as well as for case management.

As was our aim, we are now using the new database for the majority of our work. In particular, we are using the database to collate and analyse information from organisations' annual returns. The system enhances opportunities for automating processes, thereby reducing our reliance on team members manually entering information. This has helped avoid errors and increased efficiency.

All new complaints from trade union members are now also recorded in the database. This enables my team to track progress on these. It also allows us to run a greater range of reports showing, for example, the types of complaints received over a given year, providing improved information for stakeholders and the wider public.

Website improvement

We continued to make improvements to the information available on our website. Most notably, my team and I updated our guidance on complaints, hearings and political funds to make these clearer and more in line with current practice. My guidance is available on the [website](#).

Portal for annual returns and complaints

We are aiming to develop secure online portals for both the submission of annual returns and complaints. My team has been continuing to work towards this. Once operational, the portals will provide significant benefits for the organisations on our list and for trade union members. We welcome any comments or suggestions about ways we could improve our service. You can get in touch either by telephone on 0330 109 3602 or e-mail info@certoffice.org

Appendices

Appendix 1	List of trade unions at 31 March 2025
Appendix 2	List of employers' associations at 31 March 2025
Appendix 3	Summary of statistics – Trade unions, returns received during the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025
Appendix 4	Salary and benefits of trade union general secretaries
Appendix 5	Summary of statistics – Employers' associations, returns received during the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025
Appendix 6	Summary of statistics – Political funds of trade unions
Appendix 7	Superannuation schemes
Appendix 8	Certification Officer functions
Appendix 9	Determination of the levy for the third levy period



Appendix 1

List of trade unions at 31 March 2025

Notes:

- Bold** Denotes a trade union first entered in the list during 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.
- * Denotes a trade union holding a certificate of independence at 31 March 2025.
- (P) Denotes a trade union with a political fund resolution in force at 31 March 2025.
- (F) Denotes a federated trade union.
- (#) Denotes a branch of an American trade union.
- (S) Denotes a special register body.

England, Wales and Scotland

- * Accord
- * Advance
- * Aegis the Union
- * Affinity
 - App Drivers and Couriers Union
- * Artists' Union England
- * Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (P)
- * Association for Clinical Biochemistry & Laboratory Medicine, The (S)
- * Association of Educational Psychologists
- Association of Flight Attendants (Council 07) (#)
- * Association of Headteachers and Deputies in Scotland
- * Association of Local Authority Chief Executives
- Association of Local Council Clerks
- * Association of Revenue and Customs
- * Association of School and College Leaders

- * Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union (P)
- * British Air Line Pilots Association
- * British Association of Dental Nurses
- * British Association of Journalists
- * British Association of Occupational Therapists Limited (S)
- * British Dental Association (S)
- * British Dietetic Association (S)
- * British Medical Association (S)
- * British Orthoptic Society Trade Union

- Cabin Crew Union UK
- * Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (S)
- * Cleaners and Allied Independent Workers Union (CAIWU)
- * Communication Workers Union (P)
- * Community (P)
 - Confederation of British Surgery
 - Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions (F)
- * Criminal Justice Workers Union
- Currys Supply Chain Staff Association (CSCSA)

Driver and General Union

- * Educational Institute of Scotland (P) (S)
 - Employees General Union
 - Employees United
 - Empower the Workers' Union
 - Equal Justice The Union
 - Equality for Workers Union (EFWU)
- * Equity (Incorporating the Variety Artistes Federation)

- * FDA
- * Financial Services Union
- * Fire and Rescue Services Association
- * Fire Brigades Union (P)
- * Fire Officers Association

G4S Care and Justice Services Staff Association

- * GMB (P)
- * Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association
- * Independent Federation of Nursing in Scotland
Independent Oxfam Union
- * Independent Pilots Association
- * Independent Workers Union of Great Britain (IWGB)
- * Industrial Workers of the World
 - International Transport Workers Federation (F)
- * ISU

Leeds Building Society Colleague Association

Libertas Union

Locum Doctors Association

- * Musicians' Union (P)
- * NAPO – the Trade Union and Professional Association for Family Court and Probation Staff
- * National Association of Head Teachers
- * National Association of Racing Staff
- * National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (P)
- * National Crime Officers Association
- * National Education Union (P)
 - National Employees Union
- * National House Building Council Staff Association
- * National Society for Education in Art and Design
- * National Union of Journalists
- * National Union of Mineworkers (P)
 - National Union of Mineworkers (South Wales Area)
 - National Union of Professional Foster Carers (NUPFC)
- * National Union of Rail Maritime and Transport Workers (P)
- * Nationwide Group Staff Union
- * Nautilus International
 - News Union
 - North of England Zoological Society Staff Association
- * Palm Paper Staff Association
- * PDA Union
- * POA (P)

- * Prison Governors Association
- Professional Cricketers' Association
- Professional Footballers' Association
- Professional Footballer' Association of Scotland
- * Prospect (P)
- Psychotherapy and Counselling Union
- * Public and Commercial Services Union (P)

- * Retail Book Stationery and Allied Trades Employees Association
- * Royal College of Midwives (S)
- * Royal College of Nursing of the United Kingdom (S)
- * Royal College of Podiatry, The (S)
- RSPB Staff Association
- Rugby Players' Association

- * Sales Staff Association
- Scottish Artists Union
- * Scottish Secondary Teachers Association
- Security Industry Federation
- * SKYSHARE
- * Social Workers Union (SWU)
- * Society of Authors (S)
- * Society of Radiographers (P) (S)
- * Society of Union Employees
- * Solid Trade Union
- Solidarity
- Stage Directors U.K. Union

- Trade Union for Ethnic Minority Social Workers (TUEMSW)
- Trades Union Congress (F)
- * Transport Salaried Staffs Association (P)

- UK Private Hire Drivers Union
- * Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (National Association of Teachers of Wales)
- United Medical Associate Professionals Trade Union (UMAPs TU)**
- Union of General and Volunteer Workers
- Union of Pilots, Engineers & Cabin Crew (UPECC)
- * Union of Shop Distributive and Allied Workers (P)
- Union Workers' Union
- * UNISON – The Public Service Union (P)
- * Unite the Union (P)
- * United Road Transport Union
- * United Voices of the World
- * University and College Union (P)

- WALGAS TU
- Warwick International Staff Association
- Welsh Rugby Players Association
- Women's Rugby Association, The
- * Workers of England Union
- * Writers Guild of Great Britain

Yourmate Union

Appendix 2

List of employers' associations at 31 March 2025

Note:

(F) Denotes a federated employers' association.

England Wales and Scotland

Association of Circus Proprietors of Great Britain

British Amusement Catering Trades Association

British Footwear Association

Building Engineering Services Association

Chemical Industries Association Ltd

Confederation of Paper Industries Ltd

East Midlands Councils

East of England Local Government Association

EEF Limited (F)

Electrical Contractors' Association

Electrical Contractors' Association of Scotland

Employers in Voluntary Housing Limited

Engineering Construction Industry Association

Federation of Master Builders

Improvement and Development Agency (F)

Leather Producers' Association

London Councils

National Farmers Union

National Federation of Retail Newsagents

National Trainers Federation

North East Regional Employers' Organisation for Local Authorities

North Western Local Authorities Employers' Organisation

Print Scotland

Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television

Refractory Users Federation

Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation

Scottish Association of Master Bakers

Scottish Decorators' Federation

Society of London Theatre 'SOLT', The

South East Employers

South West Councils

UK Theatre Association
Universities and Colleges Employers' Association

Welsh Local Government Association
West Midlands Employers

Yorkshire and Humber (Local Authorities) Employers' Association

Appendix 3

Summary of statistics – Trade unions, returns received during the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

The figures used in this appendix are taken from the summary sheets of the annual returns and provide a simple analysis of each union's financial affairs for the year. Individual annual returns are available on the [website](#).

The information in the table relates to returns received during the reporting period. The table includes returns from trade unions with year ending dates ranging from October 2023 to September 2024 and therefore due in this office between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. Unite the Union submitted a partial annual return for 2023 containing the non-financial elements of the annual return.

Notes to table

- (a) The total membership reported by some trade unions includes a number of special categories (e.g. honorary or retired) who are members under the union's rules but who either pay no contribution to union funds or make a nominal payment only.
- (b) Investment income is shown net of certain items such as outgoings on property held as an investment, but not, for most unions, net of tax paid on that income.
- (c) The total income and total expenditure figures are not confined to normal revenue income and expenditure. The figures cover all items which increased or decreased a union's total funds during the year. They are inclusive of recognised gains and losses, including revaluation of property and assets and other changes in the value of assets, which are not offset by an equal change in liabilities. Tax recoveries and provisions no longer required are included in total income, and tax paid is included in total expenditure.

Summary of statistics – Trade unions

Notes – see previous page

		GROSS INCOME			GROSS EXPENDITURE		TOTAL FUNDS		GROSS ASSETS				
Unions with 100,000 members or more	Number of members (a)	From members £000s	From investments (b) £000s	Other income (c) £000s	Total income (c) £000s	Total expenditure (c) £000s	Beginning of the year £000s	End of the year £000s	Fixed assets £000s	Investment assets £000s	Other assets £000s	Total assets £000s	Total liabilities £000s
UNISON: The Public Service Union	1,403,792	180,517	2,119	12,214	194,850	232,684	269,868	232,034	91,256	18,556	210,947	320,759	88,725
Unite the Union	1,177,292												
GMB	576,463	70,077	1,386	4,159	75,622	141,808	176,555	110,369	36,452	55,991	23,954	116,397	6,028
Royal College of Nursing of the United Kingdom	570,656	66,158	1,356	4,282	71,796	68,436	61,289	64,649	0	34,255	44,085	78,340	13,691
National Education Union	487,420	76,289	3,181	5,582	85,052	72,642	108,173	120,584	38,388	32,498	58,771	129,657	9,073
Union of Shop Distributive and Allied Workers	360,394	40,395	1,821	4,381	46,597	50,004	89,875	86,468	17,324	84,948	7,739	110,011	23,543
National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers	285,963	32,979	1,392	3,376	37,747	38,573	78,858	78,032	15,329	35,603	20,219	71,152	-6,880
British Medical Association	191,105	59,600	9,859	103,526	172,985	161,007	202,164	214,142	14,896	210,834	75,153	300,883	86,741
Public and Commercial Services Union	189,399	31,304	2,052	62	33,418	42,971	58,210	48,658	20,525	5,456	27,923	53,904	5,246

Communication Workers Union	170,324	27,951	179	1,471	29,601	33,351	32,753	29,003	20,329	9,842	16,832	47,003	17,999
Prospect	156,904	24,364	2,966	1,790	29,120	27,751	62,814	64,183	21,219	43,388	8,072	72,679	8,496
University and College Union	119,785	26,658	772	749	28,179	17,170	39,979	50,988	12,284	1,725	39,554	53,563	2,575
Total for above unions with 100,000 members or more	5,689,497	636,292	27,083	141,592	804,967	886,397	1,180,538	1,099,110	288,002	533,096	533,249	1,354,348	255,237
Total for 111 other listed unions with less than 100,000 members	1,030,675	234,462	24,528	165,641	425,036	401,286	766,534	789,889	211,014	480,263	219,936	911,212	121,323
Total for all unions	6,720,172	870,754	51,611	307,233	1,230,003	1,287,683	1,947,072	1,888,999	499,016	1,013,359	753,185	2,265,560	376,560
Total for all unions (previous year)	5,493,720	825,944	11,953	591,950	1,429,847	1,149,967	1,675,949	1,955,837	527,517	969,567	804,158	2,301,242	357,750

Appendix 4

Salary and benefits of trade union general secretaries

	Title	Salary £	Benefits £	Notes
Accord	General Secretary	162,413	15,566	a
Advance	General Secretary	17,540	6,711	a
Aegis the Union	General Secretary	69,263	17,903	
Affinity	General Secretary	135,242	22,321	a
App Drivers and Couriers Union	General Secretary	800	0	
Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen	General Secretary	126,067	24,015	
Association for Clinical Biochemistry & Laboratory Medicine, The	General Secretary	73,903	6,492	b
Association of Educational Psychologists	General Secretary	81,485	9,132	b
Association of Headteachers and Deputies in Scotland	General Secretary	90,470	22,040	
Association of School and College Leaders	General Secretary	152,198	21,443	a
Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union	General Secretary	53,136	20,280	
British Air Line Pilots Association	General Secretary	114,497	5,974	
British Association of Dental Nurses	General Secretary	48,324	2,767	
British Association of Journalists	General Secretary	35,018	1,050	
British Dental Association	Chairman	75,000	0	
British Medical Association	General Secretary	102,058	0	
Cabin Crew Union UK	General Secretary	15,777	0	
Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, The	Chief Executive	135,854	29,996	
Communication Workers Union	General Secretary	116,537	18,887	
Community	General Secretary	129,523	19,845	a
Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions	General Secretary	105,517	31,261	
Criminal Justice Workers Union	General Secretary	27,762	514	b
Currys Trade Union -CTU	General Secretary	32,486	5,822	
Driver and General Union	General Secretary	21,716	57	
Educational Institute of Scotland	General Secretary	115,407	34,853	
Empower The Workers' Union	General Secretary	42,500	0	
Equality For Workers Union (EFWU)	General Secretary	49,740	2,459	

	Title	Salary £	Benefits £	Notes
Equity (Incorporating the Variety Artists' Federation)	General Secretary	110,358	29,613	
FDA	General Secretary	123,702	34,716	
Financial Services Union	General Secretary	€152,997	€51,030	a
Fire and Rescue Services Association	Chief Executive Officer	45,542	3,960	
Fire Brigades Union	General Secretary	97,857	19,730	a
Fire Officers' Association	Chief Executive	44,818	1,742	
G4S Care and Justice Services Staff Association	General Secretary	41,062	3,709	
GMB	General Secretary	113,000	30,000	a
Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association	General Secretary	83,595	8,359	
Independent Federation of Nursing in Scotland	General Secretary	26,013	562	b
Independent Pilots Association	General Secretary	26,624	12,806	
Independent Workers Union of Great Britain (IWGB)	General Secretary	30,724	3,994	
International Transport Workers Federation	General Secretary	237,000	35,000	
ISU	General Secretary	60,030	1321	
Locum Doctors' Association	Chairperson	0	300	c
Musicians' Union	General Secretary	119,484	19,270	
NAPO - The Trade Union and Professional Association for Family Court and Probation Staff	General Secretary	97,063	16,292	
National Association of Head Teachers	General Secretary	172,845	37,911	a
National Association of Racing Staff	Chief Executive	77,677	3,856	
National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers	General Secretary	125,716	33,355	
National Crime Officers Association	General Secretary	54,742	5,474	
National Education Union	General Secretary	122,541	17,094	
National Society for Education in Art and Design	General Secretary	47,625	1,242	
National Union of Journalists	General Secretary	100,152	10,068	
National Union of Mineworkers	Secretary	43,136	7,312	
National Union of Mineworkers (South Wales Area)	General Secretary	49,625	1,489	
National Union of Professional Foster Carers (NUPFC)	General Secretary	1,581		
National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers	General Secretary	96,838	30,501	
Nationwide Group Staff Union	General Secretary	90,012	19,982	a

	Title	Salary £	Benefits £	Notes
Nautilus International	General Secretary	103,884	44,561	a
News Union	General Secretary	96,241	9,166	
PDA Union	General Secretary	0	5,000	c
POA	General Secretary	87,247	31,721	
Professional Cricketers Association	General Secretary	163,575	26,041	
Professional Footballers' Association	General Secretary	649,234	67,617	a
Professional Footballers Association Scotland	General Secretary	79,746	2,392	
Prospect	General Secretary	133,000	27,000	a
Public and Commercial Services Union	General Secretary	105,459	18,757	
Retail Book Stationery and Allied Trades Employees Association	President	41,538	22,082	a
Royal College of Midwives	General Secretary	146,240	38,169	
Royal College of Nursing of the United Kingdom	General Secretary	176,905	15,856	d
Royal College of Podiatry, The	General Secretary	69,897	5,592	
RSPB Staff Association, The	Chair	0	1,200	c
Rugby Players Association, The	General Secretary	116,768	15,973	a
Scottish Artists Union	President	13,500		e
Scottish Secondary Teachers Association	General Secretary	114,274	20,165	
Security Industry Federation	General Secretary	1,237	0	
Social Workers Union, The	General Secretary	86,163	2,642	
Society of Authors, The	General Secretary	113,094	12,900	
Society of Radiographers	Chief Executive Officer	130,077	19,714	f
Solidarity	General Secretary	8,568	266	
Stage Directors U.K. Union	General Secretary	26,008	434	
Trades Union Congress	General Secretary	116,749	28,794	
Transport Salaried Staffs Association	General Secretary	103,522	20,187	
UK Private Hire Drivers Union	General Secretary	13,760	0	
Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (The National Association of the Teachers of Wales)	General Secretary	55,158	5,013	
Union of Shop Distributive and Allied Workers	General Secretary	123,187	51,850	a
UNISON: The Public Service Union	General Secretary	118,454	47,658	g
United Road Transport Union	General Secretary	86,747	66,855	
United Voices of the World	General Secretary	28,080	655	
University and College Union	General Secretary	136,656	21,484	
WALGAS TU	General Secretary	0	3,570	h
Workers of England Union	General Secretary	30,000	713	
Writers Guild of Great Britain	General Secretary	72,312	6,300	

Notes:

- (a) Benefits also include car allowance
- (b) Total paid in respect of two people holding the office of General Secretary and is not the sum paid to one individual
- (c) Honorarium
- (d) The General Secretary & Chief Executive was paid £130,195 in respect of her trade union responsibilities. This represents 73.60% of her gross salary of £176,905 for the period 1 January to 31 December 2022. RCN has paid the employer's National Insurance
- (e) Stipend
- (f) 50% of these costs are re-charged to the College of Radiographers
- (g) Taxable subsistence & car allowance £10,292 and salary sacrifice £13,269
- (h) motorbike

Unite the Union's partial annual return received during the period, did not include the relevant information. Therefore, the union's figures could not be included.

Appendix 5

Summary of statistics – Employers' associations, returns received during the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

The figures used are taken from the summary sheets of the annual returns received from employers' associations and provide a simple analysis of each association's financial affairs for the year. Individual annual returns are available on the [website](#). Where an association has functions outside the field of employment relations, the return may relate to its activities as a whole and not merely to its employment relations functions.

The information in the table relates to returns received during the reporting period. The table includes returns from employers' associations with year ending dates ranging from October 2023 to September 2024 and therefore due in this Office between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.

Notes

- (a) Income from investments includes interest on short term deposits.
- (b) Total income and gross expenditure figures are not confined to normal revenue income and expenditure. The figures include all items which increased or decreased an association's funds during the year. This includes any increases or decreases in the valuation of property and other assets. Tax recoveries and provisions no longer required are included in total income and tax paid is included in total expenditure.
- (c) Some figures may have changed from last year's report due to later information.

Summary of statistics – Employers' associations

Notes – see previous page

Employers' associations with over £2,500,000 total income	GROSS INCOME			GROSS EXPENDITURE	TOTAL FUNDS		GROSS ASSETS				Total liabilities	Number of members
	From members	From investments	Other income		Beginning of the year (c)	End of the year	Fixed assets	Investments	Other assets	Total assets		
	£000s	(a) £000s	(b) £000s		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	
London Councils	42,908	760	23,475	67,143	68,657	8,611	627	0	33,234	33,861	25,250	33
Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government	0	0	56,280	56,280	45,778	-9,046	0	2,767	33,763	36,530	45,576	18
EEF Limited	15,073	4,884	23,470	43,427	51,568	50,429	18,444	41,691	13,070	73,205	22,776	2,173
National Farmers' Union	35,803	1,873	3,959	41,635	43,738	122,627	14,635	81,702	58,065	154,401	31,775	74,343
Welsh Local Government Association	2,480	85	26,128	28,693	28,756	-219	400	0	11,975	12,375	12,954	28
Building Engineering Services Association	3,398	-170	12,001	15,228	15,819	7,721	1,215	12,015	13,764	26,994	19,273	985
Electrical Contractors Association	4,936	2,845	7,169	14,950	9,185	75,633	1,229	13,512	67,633	82,373	6,740	2,296
Society of London Theatre "SOLT"	668	428	7,033	8,129	8,437	5,668	768	5,100	18,471	24,339	18,671	246
East of England Local Government Association	767	20	4,031	4,818	4,820	2,305	0	0	3,416	3,416	1,111	50
Federation of Master Builders Ltd	4,149	311	206	4,666	6,057	6,604	3,338	2,139	2,781	8,258	1,653	6,809
Chemical Industries Association Limited	3,508	152	873	4,534	4,627	3,076	254	0	4,172	4,426	1,350	100
National Federation of Retail Newsagents	2,572	72	1,601	4,245	4,945	10,856	9,915	247	5,127	15,288	4,432	9,410

West Midlands Employers	550	35	3,479	4,064	3,969	-4,031	-3,935	80	0	1,864	1,944	5,879	46
South West Councils	348	279	3,140	3,768	2,860	1,437	2,344	63	0	5,504	5,567	3,223	44
Universities and Colleges Employers	1,912	91	1,181	3,183	2,416	1,565	2,332	0	0	3,062	3,062	731	4
Electrical Contractors Association of Scotland	1,540	19	1,598	3,158	3,485	5,979	5,652	2,926	1,042	2,414	6,382	730	1,263
Total for above Employers' Associations	120,612	11,684	175,624	307,921	305,117	287,853	290,658	53,894	160,215	278,315	492,421	202,124	97,848
Total for 15 other listed Employers' Associations	7,665	833	4,627	13,125	12,931	31,269	31,463	1,371	31,146	17,629	50,145	18,681	2,255
Total for all Employers' Associations	128,277	12,517	180,251	321,046	318,048	319,122	322,121	55,265	191,361	295,944	542,566	220,805	100,103
Total for all Employers' Associations(previous year)	123,660	7,612	269,490	400,761	308,535	289,145	381,384	59,834	191,299	283,773	534,906	153,159	103,963

Appendix 6: Political funds of trade unions 2023-2024

	Number of members contributing to the political fund	Number of members not contributing to the political fund	Political Fund (a)			
			income £	expenditure £	Fund at beginning of year £	Fund at end of year £
Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen	7,757	17,025	334,905	190,391	481,162	625,676
Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union	13,227	1,150	26,493	24,169	17,810	20,134
Communication Workers Union	122,367	47,957	1,331,476	1,024,090	2,586,742	2,894,128
Community	14,351	29,379	228,000	308,000	275,000	195,000
Educational Institute of Scotland	29,718	28,848	299,627	101,657	3,139,526	3,337,496
Fire Brigades Union	25,240	8,699	254,774	169,557	808,475	893,692
GMB	373,593	202,870	1,699,000	1,501,000	1,367,000	1,565,000
Musicians' Union	15,902	18,661	65,000	40,000	122,000	147,000
National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers	127,385	158,578	103,283	43,186	692,046	752,143
National Education Union	214,640	272,780	487,871	493,596	965,659	959,934
National Union of Mineworkers	92	104	1,403	2,561	16,615	15,457
National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers	70,001	8,888	222,000	435,000	520,000	307,000
POA	22,136	12,153	38,105	53,433	18,023	2,695
Prospect	63,949	92,955	39,000	45,000	643,000	637,000
Public and Commercial Services Union	127,994	61,405	156,894	66,150	1,107,194	1,197,938
Society of Radiographers	21,466	12,505	50,518	110,957	314,158	253,719
Transport Salaried Staffs Association	10,703	6,322	89,598	40,447	222,286	271,437
Union of Shop Distributive and Allied Workers	294,413	65,981	1,522,000	1,446,000	1,384,000	1,460,000
UNISON: The Public Service Union	1,180,287	223,505	7,250,000	5,511,000	18,515,000	20,254,000
University and College Union	62,601	57,184	145,550	139,943	21,080	26,687
Total for the 20 unions with political funds which reported in the period	2,797,822	1,326,949	14,345,497	11,746,137	33,216,776	35,816,136
Total for the 20 unions with political funds which reported in the previous period	2,869,307	1,260,019	14,627,951	11,697,946	30,286,772	33,216,777

Notes: The information in the table is derived from annual returns received during 2024-2025.

Unite the Union's partial annual return received during the period, did not include the relevant information. Therefore, the union's figures could not be included

Appendix 7

Superannuation schemes

Any superannuation scheme maintained by a trade union or employers' association which covers its members must be examined periodically by a qualified actuary with a copy of the actuarial report sent to the CO. The CO is aware of 8 such schemes in existence. 4 of these require periodical valuation whilst, for the other 4, the Union has applied for exemption from periodical examination under section 41(1)(b) of the 1992 Act.

Details are set out in the tables below.

Schemes requiring periodical valuation		
Union/scheme	Report due	Last report received
Unite the Union – BASSA Members' Superannuation Fund	31/12/27	29/12/2021
RMT – Orphan Fund	31/12/27	29/12/2021
GMB – BMS Section Members' Superannuation Fund	31/12/27	29/12/2021
Unite the Union – AEEU Section Superannuation Scheme	31/12/28	31/12/2022

Schemes exempt under section 41(1)(b) from the requirement for periodical valuation		
Union/scheme	Date exemption was granted	Last confirmed in existence
Unite the Union – Plate Preparers Superannuation Fund	22/01/2001	09/01/2018
Unite the Union – MSF Section Craft Members (formerly known as Sheet Metal Workers) Superannuation Fund	29/04/2009	09/01/2018
Unite the Union – TGWU Section Members Superannuation Fund	30/06/1976	09/01/2018
Unite the Union – Litho Printers Superannuation Fund	16/12/2020	31/12/2020

Appendix 8

Certification Officer functions

My powers and functions are set out in the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidated) Act 1992. They are summarised here, along with links to the related guidance, containing full details of the Certification Officer's statutory duties. Areas where I may consider an alleged breach without having first received a complaint from a member of that organisation or another eligible party are marked with an asterisk (*).

Part I, Chapter I

Maintaining a list of trade unions and for determining the independence of trade unions;

- [Apply to have a trade union or employers' association on the public list](#)
- [Removal of a trade union's or employers' association from the list](#)
- [How trade unions apply for a certificate of independence](#)

Part I, Chapter III

Dealing with complaints and/or investigating where a trade union has failed to maintain an accurate register of members.

Dealing with complaints where a trade union has failed to provide a member with access to its accounting records.

Ensuring that trade unions have their accounts properly audited and submit annual returns.

Investigating the financial affairs of trade unions where specific grounds are met.

Ensuring that the statutory requirements concerning the actuarial examination of members' superannuation schemes are observed.

Dealing with complaints that a trade union has failed in its duty to secure that positions in the union are not held by certain offenders*

- [Complain to the Certification Officer about a trade union or employers' association](#)
- [Complain about financial irregularities in a trade union or employers' association](#)
- [BEIS Guidance: trade union register of members and membership audit certificate requirements](#)
- [Powers to act without an application and investigatory powers](#)

Part I, Chapter IV

Dealing with complaints by members that a trade union has failed to comply with one or more of the provisions of the Act which require a trade union to secure that its president, general secretary and members of its executive are elected to those positions in accordance with the Act*.

- [Complain to the Certification Officer about a trade union or employers' association](#)
- [Powers to act without an application and investigatory powers](#)

Part I, Chapter VI

Ensuring by trade unions comply with the statutory procedures governing the setting up, operation and review of political funds; and for dealing with complaints about breaches of political fund rules, the conduct of political fund ballots or spend from general funds on political objects*.

- [Set up a political fund for a trade union or employers' association](#)
- [Political funds: a guide to review ballots](#)
- [Powers to act without an application and investigatory powers](#)

Part I, Chapter VII

Ensuring that the statutory procedures for amalgamations; transfers of engagements and change of name are complied with, and for dealing with complaints by members about the conduct of merger ballots*.

- [Mergers between trade unions](#)
- [Powers to act without an application and investigatory powers](#)

Part I, Chapter VIIA

Dealing with complaints by members that there has been a breach, or threatened breach of the rules of a trade union relating to the appointment, election or removal of an office holder; disciplinary proceedings; ballots of members other than in respect of industrial action; or relating to the constitution or proceedings of an executive committee or decision making meeting.

- [Complain to the Certification Officer about a trade union or employers' association](#)
- [Powers to act without an application and investigatory powers](#)

Part II

Maintaining a list of employers' associations; ensuring compliance with the statutory requirements concerning accounting records, annual returns, financial affairs and political funds; ensuring that the statutory procedures applying to amalgamations and transfers of engagements in respect of employers' associations are followed.

- [Mergers between employers' associations](#)

Appendix 9

Determination of the levy for the third levy period

The total levy in the third levy period, running from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, is **£615,146.31**. This amount is comprised of the office's eligible expenses being:

- Staff salaries and pensions
- Subscriptions, training and travel and
- Services provided by Acas (including information technology and human resources support)

The levy for each organisation has been calculated as follows.

All trade unions, federated trade unions and employers' associations with an income under **£78,362.59** are exempt from paying the levy.

Organisations with an income over **£78,362.59** are liable for the **basic levy** of **£1,959.06**.

All trade unions (except the 3 federated trade unions) with an income exceeding **£182,624.67** are also liable for the **additional levy** of **£2,606.55** per organisation and this means that trade unions charged the basic and additional levies pay a total of **£4,565.61**.

Employers' associations and federated trade unions with income over **£147,089.39** and trade unions with an income exceeding **£251,351.47** are also liable for the **enhanced levy** of **£1,718.17**. This means that trade unions paying the basic, additional and enhanced levies pay a total of **£6,283.78**.

Employers' associations and federated trade unions paying the basic and enhanced levies pay a total of **£3,677.23**.

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