

Rules for appointment and election of workplace reps



In July 2011, the ATL Executive Committee agreed new guidance for the election, appointment and confirmation of workplace representatives. Incorporated within ATL's model branch rules (section 11), the new rules are reproduced in full below.

In summary the rules:

- govern the annual appointment, election or confirmation of school/college reps, health and safety reps, and learning reps
- stipulate that existing reps should inform members at their workplace at least once per academic year (no later than 31 May) whether they wish to continue for the next academic year
- outline how members put themselves forward for any of these roles
- set out a mechanism to conduct elections where positions are contested and cannot be undertaken jointly.

We recognise that the majority of reps may continue to be the only volunteers in their workplace, and the rules are relatively 'light-touch' to acknowledge this, but they provide a clear, transparent and robust mechanism to ensure all reps are the democratically agreed voice of their members.

If you have any immediate questions please contact your branch secretary. A copy of these rules has also been posted to ATL's website at: www.atl.org.uk/reps-toolbox/new-reps.asp

11. Electing, appointing or confirming workplace representatives

- a. Rule 8 of the ATL Constitution & Rules (see annex) stipulates that members employed in every workplace where ATL provides accredited representation, shall appoint, elect or confirm annually from amongst themselves, in accordance with the model branch rules as set out in 11b-h below, one or more of the following representatives:
 - i. School, college or other educational establishment representative
 - ii. Health and safety representative
 - iii. Learning representative
 - iv. Other representative types approved by the Executive Committee
- b. Where there is an existing workplace representative, they shall annually and no later than 31 May, inform all members employed at their workplace, via workplace noticeboard, email or internal mail, whether or not they wish to continue the role for the next academic year and provide the members with at least seven days' notice to submit to them alternative nominations for the role. Members may self-nominate.

- c. Where there is no existing workplace representative, any member in the workplace may, at any time, inform all members¹ employed at their workplace, via workplace noticeboard and/or email, of their wish to take on the role for the next academic year and provide the members with at least seven days' notice to submit to them alternative nominations for the role. Members may self-nominate.
- d. If only one member is nominated for any or all of the roles set out in 11a)i-iv, then they are thereby confirmed or appointed, and should inform ATL membership² (who will advise branches of their accreditation via the My Branch Membership database) and the members employed at their workplace. All health & safety reps and learning reps must also complete ATL training before being accredited.
- e. If more than one member is nominated then they should first consider the possibility of undertaking the role jointly, or of sharing the respective roles set out in 11a)i-iv between them. If that is possible then they are thereby confirmed or appointed, and should inform ATL membership (who will advise branches of their accreditation via the My Branch Membership database) and the members employed at their workplace. All health & safety reps and learning reps must also complete ATL training before being accredited.
- f. If more than one member is nominated and jointly undertaking the role(s) is not appropriate or feasible, then the nominated reps should contact their branch secretary who will proceed to convene a properly constituted meeting of members to elect the rep by majority secret ballot. The branch secretary (or their nominated representative)³ should attend to chair such a meeting, act as scrutineer⁴ for the ballot⁵, declare the result, inform ATL membership and the members employed at the workplace of the outcome.
- g. All such rep elections shall be conducted in accordance with the elections protocol set out in appendix G of the ATL Constitution & Rules.
- h. All members should receive at least seven days' notice of any properly constituted meeting via workplace noticeboard, email or internal mail. Where the meeting is to elect a rep or to remove a rep from office, then such notice must include notice of that business. Such meetings shall be convened by the existing school, college or other educational establishment representative as defined by 11a)i above, except where the business includes election of rep or removal of rep from office, in which case such meetings shall be convened by the branch secretary (or their nominated representative).

¹ Lists of members can be requested from your branch secretary, or else from membership@atl.org.uk

² ATL's membership department: membership@atl.org.uk or 020 7782 1602

³ Such a nominated representative would typically be any member of the branch committee, including ex-officio members such as Executive Committee members. In exceptional circumstances, such a nominated representative may be a member of professional staff.

⁴ Scrutineer responsibilities shall include:

- providing an attendance sheet
- chairing the meeting
- assisting the meeting to decide what form of candidate statement is appropriate, if any
- declaring the ballot result to the meeting and informing ATL membership.

⁵ Such a secret ballot should take place at the meeting, with those in attendance indicating their vote via a name on a folded piece of blank paper, counted by the scrutineer. The scrutineer should make a note of the votes cast for each candidate, spoilt votes and abstentions and immediately declare the result to the member meeting.