

TUC regional secretary Beth Farhat announces she is stepping down

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The regional secretary of trade union organisation the TUC has announced she is stepping down to take on a new role.

Beth Farhat has spent 18 years at the TUC's Northern office, with the past eight in the top job.

She is now set to start a new position at the National Education Union as their regional secretary, from September.

Ms Farhat made the announcement on social media, saying: "I have some personal news. After 18 awesome years at TUC Northern, I'm excited to be joining @NEUnion Northern as their Regional Secretary from September. To my colleagues, unions and regional stakeholders, thank you for everything. This is an outstanding region in which it's an honour to be a leader. I'll look forward to working with you in my new role."

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Ms Farhat became the first woman to run the Northern TUC, becoming its senior representative across the North East and Cumbria. following her appointment in 2013.

She started work with the TUC in 2003 and helped set up the Northern TUC Young Members Network, which worked closely with unions in the region.

In 2006 Ms Farhat became a regional development worker, managing the Learning for All Fund, and four years later she

became the regional development co-ordinator for unionlearn – the TUC’s learning and skills arm – in the Northern region.

Following the announcement Ms Farhat paid tribute to her TUC colleagues.

She said: “It’s been a privilege to lead the Northern TUC and play a key role in delivering on a range of TUC campaigns over the years.

“I’m leaving behind an exceptionally talented team.

“I’m particularly proud of the work we have achieved, including securing millions in compensation payments for victims of asbestos exposure, multiple successful women in leadership programmes that saw an increase in women becoming union reps and progressing in their unions and we saw tens of thousands of adults returning to learning via the union learning route and the regional learning for all fund.

“We have secured another three years to coordinate the flagship Better Health at Work Award directly tackling issues of health inequality in the North East and hopefully another exciting announcement for union learning to come before I leave.”

Of her new role, she said: “I’m very excited to be joining the National Education Union and working with activists to ensure our schools are great places for teachers and children to work and learn.

“One of the first priorities will be to support the delivery of an education recovery plan, ensuring safety in schools and colleges along with developing a better education system that works for all to give children and young people the best start in life.

“This is an exciting time to be joining a thriving growing union with an excellent regional team.”