

IB240-15 Managing Work and Employment

23/24

Department

Warwick Business School

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader

Deborah Dean

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

Multiple

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

Work is central to our lives and this module provides an introduction to the field of employment relations. The employment relationship is studied within a broad political, historical, economic and social context, with a primary focus on the UK and secondary focus on the US. Students develop familiarity with the academic discussions around the key issues affecting the contested ordering of working life. The module enables understanding of the changing roles played by different participants in the 21st century workplace and how these are affected by outside the workplace. This understanding is framed by the major theories and concepts involved in shaping and making sense of the employment relationship.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

Students learn how to analyse the employment relationship, which will enable them to be better and more effective managers. They will develop familiarity with the academic discussions around the key issues affecting the contested ordering of working life. The module enables understanding of the changing roles and interests of workplace actors in the 21st century – employers/managers,

employees/workers, the state, the law, trade unions, activist groups – and how these are affected by outside the workplace

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Introduction to the Employment Relationship: What is the employment relationship and why is it important that we understand it in order to manage it effectively and with more nuanced consideration; employment and society, the peculiarity of the employment contract.

Context, History: Relevance of national contexts and their histories in understanding contemporary employment relations; analytical perspectives on the employment relationship - different ways of 'seeing' the social facts discussed in Lecture 1: power and ideology.

Co-operation and conflict: What is consent? Is conflict an inherent feature? Individual and collective focus; strikes and discussion of other expressions of conflict. Debates about the employment relationship as a series of structured antagonisms, where cooperation may be as common as conflict.

Managers: Key theoretical and conceptual positions on the management of employment relations in both private and public sectors. How and why do they differ? Sources of power, legitimacy and constraints. Key theoretical and conceptual positions on the management of employment relations in both sectors.

Employees: Who are employees/workers and do they - can they - have the same ER interests? What is left behind and what is taken with in the workplace; how are 'interests' defined. Reflect on key labour market trends and trends in terms of what it means to be an employee: move away from stereotype of full time, male worker to atypical contracts, flexibility of hours, feminisation of labour market; platform and gig economy issues.

Trade unions and the State: Trade unions as representatives of the interests of employees (which ones?). Why people join and don't join, why employers listen and don't listen. The State as a political actor, economic manager, legal regulator.

Introduction to trade unions: characteristics, aims, activities, membership trends and introduction to key interventions in the workplace; relevance? What role does government play in the regulation of employment relations, with focus on legislative framework and changes over last 30 years. Pressures of democracy and globalization, relevance of ideologies.

Equality and Inequality: Advantage and disadvantage in the workplace in relation to social groups; equality legislation and policies; 'managing diversity'.

Participation, Involvement and Voice: Workplace decisions affect employees and managers - who is part of making decisions and to what extent? Key issues around the extent to which workers have a voice in managerial decision-making.

Pay: What are the purposes of 'pay'? Why and how does it vary between jobs, organisations, sectors and individuals. We consider motivations of employers and employees in relation to pay; the purpose and design of pay systems; the explanations offered to account for variation in pay across jobs, organisations, sectors and between individuals.

Overview and essay skills: Overview of key themes across module, connections between the weekly topics and guidance on assignment and expectations of markers.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Recognise and reiterate the shifting roles and influence of employers, employees, trade unions and the state in shaping the employment relationship
- Diagnose and compare the connections between outside and inside employment
- Analyse the impact of the changing political, economic and societal context on employment relations developments and the behaviour of employment relations participants
- Relate and explain the employment relations processes and institutions within broader business management contexts.
- Critically assess evidence and theory when evaluating problems.

Indicative reading list

Kirton, G and Greene, A-M (2022) *The Dynamics of Managing Diversity and Inclusion: A Critical Approach*, Routledge, (5th edition).

Townsend, K., Cafferkey, K., McDermott, A. and Dundon, T. (eds.) 2019: *Elgar Introduction to Theories of Human Resources and Employment Relations* (Elgar Introductions to Management and Organization Theory).

Watson, T. 2016: *Sociology, Work and Organisation*. 7th Edition. Routledge.

Katz, H., Kochan, T. and Colvin, A. 2017: *An Introduction to Industrial Relations and Collective Bargaining*. 5th Edition, ILR Press
(Katz et al. 2017)

Colling, T. and Terry, M. (2010) *Industrial Relations: Theory and Practice*. Wiley.

Townsend, K. et al. (2020). *Elgar introduction to theories of human resources and employment relations*. Edward Elgar.

Bennett, T. et al. (2020). *Managing employment relations*, 7th edition. CIPD.

Subject specific skills

Develop negotiating skills in relation to different positions and interests.

Transferable skills

Develop awareness of importance of evidence based, theoretically-informed analysis in decision-making at work.

Establish and build on discussion in groups toward application of theories to case study material.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	10 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Total	150 hours

Type	Required
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Online learning (independent)	10 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Private study	49 hours (33%)
Assessment	72 hours (48%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

Private Study.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A4

	Weighting	Study time
Individual Assignment	90%	65 hours
Participation	10%	7 hours

Assessment group R1

	Weighting	Study time
Individual Assignment	100%	

Feedback on assessment

Feedback via My.WBS.

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- UIBA-MN34 Law and Business Four Year (Qualifying Degree)

- Year 3 of MN34 Law and Business Studies Four Year (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 4 of MN34 Law and Business Studies Four Year (Qualifying Degree)
- UECA-3 Undergraduate Economics 3 Year Variants
 - Year 2 of L100 Economics
 - Year 2 of L100 Economics
 - Year 2 of L100 Economics
 - Year 2 of L100 Economics
 - Year 2 of L100 Economics
 - Year 2 of L100 Economics
 - Year 2 of L116 Economics and Industrial Organization
 - Year 2 of L116 Economics and Industrial Organization
 - Year 3 of L100 Economics
 - Year 3 of L100 Economics
 - Year 3 of L100 Economics
 - Year 3 of L116 Economics and Industrial Organization
 - Year 3 of L116 Economics and Industrial Organization
- UECA-4 Undergraduate Economics 4 Year Variants
 - Year 2 of LM1H Economics, Politics & International Studies with Study Abroad
 - Year 2 of LM1H Economics, Politics & International Studies with Study Abroad
 - Year 4 of L103 Economics with Study Abroad
 - Year 4 of LM1H Economics, Politics & International Studies with Study Abroad
 - Year 4 of LM1H Economics, Politics & International Studies with Study Abroad
 - Year 4 of L114 Industrial Economics with Study in Europe
- UECA-LM1D Undergraduate Economics, Politics and International Studies
 - Year 2 of LM1D Economics, Politics and International Studies
 - Year 2 of LM1D Economics, Politics and International Studies
 - Year 3 of LM1D Economics, Politics and International Studies
 - Year 3 of LM1D Economics, Politics and International Studies
- UPHA-L1CA Undergraduate Economics, Psychology and Philosophy
 - Year 2 of L1CA Economics, Psychology and Philosophy
 - Year 2 of L1CC Economics, Psychology and Philosophy (Behavioural Economics Pathway)
 - Year 2 of L1CD Economics, Psychology and Philosophy (Economics with Philosophy Pathway)
 - Year 2 of L1CE Economics, Psychology and Philosophy (Philosophy and Psychology Pathway)
 - Year 3 of L1CA Economics, Psychology and Philosophy
 - Year 3 of L1CC Economics, Psychology and Philosophy (Behavioural Economics Pathway)
 - Year 3 of L1CD Economics, Psychology and Philosophy (Economics with Philosophy Pathway)
 - Year 3 of L1CE Economics, Psychology and Philosophy (Philosophy and Psychology Pathway)
- UPHA-L1CB Undergraduate Economics, Psychology and Philosophy (with Intercalated Year)
 - Year 4 of L1CG Economics, Psychology and Philosophy (Behavioural Economics

- Pathway) (with Intercalated Year)
 - Year 4 of L1CH Economics, Psychology and Philosophy (Economics with Philosophy Pathway) (with Intercalated Year)
 - Year 4 of L1CJ Economics, Psychology and Philosophy (Philosophy and Psychology Pathway) (with Intercalated Year)
 - Year 4 of L1CB Economics, Psychology and Philosophy (with Intercalated Year)
 - Year 4 of L1CB Economics, Psychology and Philosophy (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 2 of UIPA-L8N1 Undergraduate Global Sustainable Development and Business
- Year 3 of UIBA-MN31 Undergraduate Law and Business Studies
- UIBA-MN32 Undergraduate Law and Business Studies
 - Year 3 of MN32 Law and Business Studies (Four-Year)
 - Year 4 of MN32 Law and Business Studies (Four-Year)
- UIBA-MN37 Undergraduate Law and Business Studies (Qualifying Degree) with Intercalated Year
 - Year 2 of MN37 Law and Business Studies (Qualifying Degree) with Intercalated Year
 - Year 5 of MN37 Law and Business Studies (Qualifying Degree) with Intercalated Year
- UIBA-MN35 Undergraduate Law and Business Studies with Intercalated Year (3+1)
 - Year 3 of MN35 Law and Business Studies with Intercalated Year (3+1)
 - Year 4 of MN35 Law and Business Studies with Intercalated Year (3+1)
- UIBA-MN36 Undergraduate Law and Business Studies with Intercalated Year (4+1)
 - Year 2 of MN36 Law and Business Studies with Intercalated Year (4+1)
 - Year 5 of MN36 Law and Business Studies with Intercalated Year (4+1)
- Year 3 of UMAA-GL11 Undergraduate Mathematics and Economics
- Year 4 of UECA-GL12 Undergraduate Mathematics and Economics (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 4 of UPHA-V7MM Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics (with Intercalated year)

This module is Unusual option for:

- UPHA-L1CA Undergraduate Economics, Psychology and Philosophy
 - Year 2 of L1CA Economics, Psychology and Philosophy
 - Year 2 of L1CA Economics, Psychology and Philosophy
 - Year 3 of L1CA Economics, Psychology and Philosophy
- UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
 - Year 3 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
 - Year 3 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
 - Year 3 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)

This module is Option list G for:

- UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
 - Year 2 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
 - Year 2 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
 - Year 2 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
- USX2-Y202 Undergraduate Social Studies [2 + 2]
 - Year 3 of Y202 Social Studies [2 + 2]
 - Year 3 of Y202 Social Studies [2 + 2]