Unit Outline*

IREL1101/2201

Foundations in Employment Relations

Semester 1, 2011
Crawley Campus

Unit Coordinator – Professor Trish Todd

Business School

www.business.uwa.edu.au

* This Unit Outline should be read in conjunction with the Business School Unit Outline Supplement available on the Current Students web site
http://www.business.uwa.edu.au/students
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UNIT DESCRIPTION

Introduction

Welcome to Foundations of Employment Relations. I hope that you will not only learn a great deal in this unit, but that you will also enjoy it.

Unit content

The unit will examine the nature of work, the nature of the relationship between employer and employee. It will consider the interests and strategies of workers, unions, managers, employers and the state and how they seek to manage their workplaces and to exercise control over each other. It will explore areas of conflict and cooperation and the different ways in which conflict can be handled.

The goal of the unit

Employment relations are an important aspect of a country’s economy and also a key element in the political debate, but what does ‘employment relations’ mean? Is it about unions, about strikes, about negotiation of wages and conditions, about freedom of contract? Is it about what happens when a manager wants to introduce some changes or a worker is concerned about safety issues? Why are employment relations good in some companies but not in others?

This unit seeks to lay the foundations for the study of employment relations and so help you answer questions such as these.

If you do well in the unit then you will have gained a good understanding of the fundamental aspects of employment relations. This will provide you with a foundation for subsequent studies in employment relations or related subjects such as human resource management. Even if you do not continue with studies in this area, the knowledge and understanding of Employment Relations that you gain in this unit will be useful to you whatever your future employment might be.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, you should be able to:

• describe the interests of workers, unions, managers, employers and the state within the workplace and the broader environment
• understand the complexity of the relationship between employer and employee
• analyse the factors which create the dynamics of the employment relationship
• understand the logic of collective action by employers and employees
• know how employer associations and unions perform their roles
• understand the reasons why governments take an interest in workplace relations and what institutions they create to regulate employment relations issues
• understand the concepts of control and consent in the workplace
• understand the factors which lead to cooperation or conflict in the workplace.
• apply all the above to practical contexts and issues.

In this unit, in addition to learning about employment relations, you will also be focused on developing or improving the following skills:

• reading and analysing an academic article
• researching employment relations topics in the library
• writing a good academic essay
• debating topics in class
Educational principles and graduate attributes

In this unit, you will be encouraged and facilitated to develop the ability and desire to:

• explain and apply concepts, principles and theoretical knowledge across various areas pertaining to the degree you have chosen;
• demonstrate specialised knowledge and skills in Employment Relations;
• critically evaluate and solve problems relevant to business, government and commercial professions
• listen, speak and write effectively and appropriately to peers and the wider community, and especially in relation to business matters.

TEACHING AND LEARNING RESPONSIBILITIES

Teaching and learning strategies

The University environment offers a variety of ways in which a student may learn more of their chosen subjects.

The lectures will establish the scope of each particular topic (management, industrial conflict etc.) and direct the students in their approach to the topic. The lectures are the principal source of guidance as to what you need to know in order to thoroughly understand the subject.

The tutorials are the opportunity for you to practise and test your understanding of the subject and to explore areas of employment relations which are of particular interest to you. Some tutorials will reinforce the material presented in the lectures; others will expand the topic or explore related topics. Almost all tutorials provide an opportunity to engage in critical thinking; some enable you to also improve your presentation skills. There are also opportunities to learn to work in teams. The tutors will endeavour to encourage discussion within the tutorial group. Note that what you get out of the tutorials will be directly related to what you put in through preparatory reading.

Assessment exercises (a short essay and a longer essay) provide the opportunity to develop research skills and to improve academic writing and critical thinking skills. These should also be regarded as part of your learning.

Lectures will be recorded and made available on the WebCT internet site for students enrolled in the unit. While recording is generally good, technical failures do occasionally occur, and there is no guarantee that every lecture will be available in recorded form. Attendance at lectures in person is strongly advised.

Student Support Services and the Library are available to any student who is looking for additional guidance about studying effectively while at University.

Teaching and learning evaluation

You may be asked to complete two evaluations during this unit. The Student Perception of Teaching (SPOT) and the Students’ Unit Reflective Feedback (SURF). The SPOT is optional and is an evaluation of the lecturer and the unit. The SURF is completed online and is a university wide survey and deals only with the unit. You will receive an email from the SURF office inviting you to complete the SURF when it is activated. We encourage you to complete the forms as your feedback is extremely important and can be used to make changes to the unit or lecturing style when appropriate. Student feedback has already affected the quantity and selection of readings in this course.
Attendance

Participation in class, whether it be listening to a lecture or getting involved in other activities, is an important part of the learning process, therefore it is important that you attend classes. More formally, the University regulations state that ‘to complete a course or unit students shall attend prescribed classes, lectures, seminars and tutorials’.

CONTACT DETAILS

We strongly advise students to regularly access their student email accounts. Important information regarding the unit is often communicated by email and will not be automatically forwarded to private email addresses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit coordinator/lecturer</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong></td>
<td>Professor Trish Todd,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Email:</strong></td>
<td><a href="mailto:trish.todd@uwa.edu.au">trish.todd@uwa.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phone:</strong></td>
<td>6488 2881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office:</strong></td>
<td>Room G61, ground floor, Business School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consultation hours:</strong></td>
<td>Happy to meet with you; please email to arrange a time as needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lecture venues/times:</strong></td>
<td>Wednesday 4pm-4.45pm Clews Lecture Theatre, Room 2.43, Physics Building</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday 12pm–12.45pm Wesfarmers Lecture Theatre, Ground Floor, Business School Building</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutor</th>
<th>TBA</th>
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<td><strong>Phone:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Consultation hours:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tutorial times:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tutorial venue:</strong></td>
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TEXTBOOK AND RESOURCES

Unit website

Students will find the WebCT unit web site useful. There you will find the recorded lectures for this unit together with copies of the overheads used in lectures. A copy of this unit outline will be placed there and marks will be able to be accessed at this web site progressively during the semester as they become available. Please note that this is not an on-line course. While some administration is carried out on-line, attendance at classes is required.

For information on how to login to WebCT please go to the following web site:

http://webct.uwa.edu.au/

Log in to WebCT at UWA using the following information:

  Person ID (formerly known as student number)
  Password (formerly known as student PIN)

When you have finished using WebCT, be sure to log-out of WebCT. There is a log-out button on the top of your homepage as well as on the My WebCT page.

Recommended/required text


Additional resources and reading material

Copies of the articles listed in each week’s readings will be available electronically through Course Materials Online (see the Library website) while the books will be located in the Reserve section of the Business Library.

Employment relations is not only an academic subject, it is a practical one. It will be helpful to read items about employment relations in the newspapers in order to get a ‘feel’ for the subject. You may also find the following employment relations/industrial relations texts useful to refer to during your studies:


**Journals**

Library call numbers of the most relevant journals are around 300-331
HRM journals are around 658
Sociology journals (which may contain articles on issues related to work and employment) are around 303-306.

Journals relevant to employment relations include:

- Journal of Industrial Relations
- British Journal of Industrial Relations
- Economic and Labour Relations Review
- Relations Industrielles
- Work, Employment and Society
- Industrial and Labor Relations Review
- Australian Bulletin of Labour
- Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources
- Labour and Industry
- New Zealand Journal of Employment Relations
- Economic and Industrial Democracy
- Industrial Relations Journal
- Industrial Relations
- International Journal of Employment Studies
- Labour History

**Electronic Resources**

The WA IR Society has an excellent list of websites on their ‘IR links’

Association of Industrial Relations Academics of Australia and New Zealand (AIRAANZ)
[http://www.airaanz.org/](http://www.airaanz.org/) (check conference proceedings link for many useful articles)
## UNIT SCHEDULE

### Lecture and Tutorial Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture Topic</th>
<th>Tutorial</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 March</td>
<td>Course introduction and welcome Work: what is it?</td>
<td>No tutorial</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3 March</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>9 March</td>
<td>Changes to Work &amp; Employment Understanding the Employment Relationship and its Dimensions</td>
<td>Introduction &amp; Work</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10 March</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>16 March</td>
<td>Understanding the Employment Relationship and its Dimensions</td>
<td>Employment Relationship: Dimensions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17 March</td>
<td>Analytical Frameworks: Unitarism, Pluralism and Radicalism</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>23 March</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Analytical frameworks</td>
<td>1st essay due</td>
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<td></td>
<td>24 March</td>
<td>Management</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>30 March</td>
<td>Management Dynamics of the Employment Relationship</td>
<td>The role of management</td>
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<td></td>
<td>31 March</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>6 April</td>
<td>The tussle between individualism and collectivism</td>
<td>Individualism/collectivism</td>
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<td>7 April</td>
<td>Unions</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>13 April</td>
<td>Unions</td>
<td>The role of unions</td>
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<td>14 April</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>20 April</td>
<td>Employee participation</td>
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<td>21 April</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Non-teaching study break</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>4 May</td>
<td>Role of the State</td>
<td>The role of the state</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5 May</td>
<td>Role of the State</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11 May</td>
<td>Bargaining structures, processes</td>
<td>Industrial conflict</td>
<td>2nd essay due</td>
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<td>12 May</td>
<td>Conflict in the workplace - forms</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>18 May</td>
<td>Conflict in the workplace - causes</td>
<td>Resolution of conflict</td>
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<td>19 May</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>25 May</td>
<td>Work/Life Balance</td>
<td>Work/Life Balance, OHS and IR</td>
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<td>26 May</td>
<td>Occupational Health &amp; Safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1 June</td>
<td>IR theories: how it all fits together</td>
<td>Employment Relations in practice</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2 June</td>
<td>Review, exam preparation</td>
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</table>
ASSESSMENT MECHANISM

The purpose of assessment

There are a number of reasons for having assessable tasks as part of an academic program. The assessable tasks are designed to encourage you to explore and understand the subject more fully. The fact that we grade your work provides you an indication of how much you have achieved. Providing feedback on your work also serves as part of the learning process.

Assessment mechanism summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay I</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay II</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tutorial exercises/activities</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Attendance at tutorials is compulsory. See note 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>50%</td>
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</table>

Note 1: Results may be subject to scaling and standardisation under faculty policy and are not necessarily the sum of the component parts.

Note 2: Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning outcomes as required for accreditation and audit purposes. The findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of Business School programs. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the unit.

Note 3: Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning outcomes as required for accreditation and audit purposes. The findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of Business School programs. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the unit.

Note 4: Students failing to attend at least 10 tutorials during the semester will receive a grade of FC (“Failed Component”) for the unit, unless they present adequate documentary evidence to justify their absence.
Assessment components

I. Essay I

1101 students:
Topic: Discuss contemporary trends in paid work and employment.
Length: 1000-1200 words
Date Due: Thursday 24th March, 9am

There are three parts to this task:
- use the literature listed below to discuss the trends in paid work and employment.
- Access ABS6105 Australian Labour Market Statistics (the most up to date release of this catalogue at www.abs.gov.au) to provide up to date statistical evidence on these trends.
- How do the economic and social dimensions of the employment relationship inform our understanding of the trends?


2201 students:
Topic: Discuss contemporary trends in paid work and employment.
Length: 1200-1500 words
Date Due: Thursday 24th March, 9am

There are four parts to this task:
- use the literature listed below to discuss the trends in paid work and employment.
- Access ABS6105 Australian Labour Market Statistics (the most up to date release of this catalogue at www.abs.gov.au) to provide up to date statistical evidence on these trends.
- Compare these findings with those of one other country. Identify the source of your material for that country and comment on its reliability.
- How do the economic and social dimensions of the employment relationship inform our understanding of the trends?


2. **Essay II**

Topic: “It’s management’s role to determine the most effective way to manage employees for the organisation, therefore employees should not expect to input into decisions.” Discuss.

Length: 2000 words

Date Due: Thursday 12th May 9am

There is no set answer to this essay, the topic could be dealt with in different ways. Whether or not you agree with the statement is not so important as how you justify your stance. ‘Discuss’ means you need to think about and write about the different possibilities before making your own judgement.

The words in the essay topic suggest what we would expect the essay to cover:

- management’s role (in an employment relations context)? The most effective way to manage employees?

- employee input: should employees expect to have some input into decisions? If so, in what form?

This topic will require you to integrate your learning across the unit; use the knowledge you have gained in lectures, tutes and through your reading. We would expect you to use at least 10 academic references in writing your essay.

**Tutorial work**

You will be assessed on your contribution to the tutorials. This contribution will be measured in terms of regular attendance, good preparation, constructive involvement in discussions and exercises and the quality of any written work which is required by the tutor. Attendance at tutorials is compulsory and attendance at less than 75% of tutorials without the permission of the Unit Controller may result in you being unable to sit the final exam.

You are expected to prepare for the tutorials each week; your tutor will expect to see you with notes in front of you showing that you have prepared and are ready to get involved. How and what should you prepare? Read a minimum of the essential readings listed for each week which are available in the library, mostly in Course Materials Online. Use the tutorial questions to take notes from the readings. Having done this, you should then be able to participate in the class discussion as well as having developed a comprehensive set of notes for the course. (That is, relying on lecture notes for your learning for the unit is insufficient if you wish to do reasonably well).

The tutorial component of the total marks is 10%. The following is a guide to our marking criteria for tutorial participation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Score</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-attendance</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regular attendance</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some productive contributions</td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular insightful, analytical comments</td>
<td>7-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outstanding contributions</td>
<td>8+</td>
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</table>

**Exam**

The examination will be held during the first semester examination period in June. It will be a 2 hour exam for Foundations 1101 students and a 3 hour exam for 2201 students. The exam will assess your understanding of the unit as a whole.
Submission of assignments

An electronic submission is required by the due date. Submit your assignment in an electronic format by going to the Uniprint web site www.uniprint.uwa.edu.au, then click on “Student Assignments” and follow the instructions.

If you have been granted additional time to complete an assignment or have missed the deadline for submission, you can submit your assignment in hard copy to the Students Centre. Please remember to attach an Assignment Cover sheet to the front of your assignment. You can download the relevant Assignment Cover sheet from the Business School Current Students web page http://www.business.uwa.edu.au/students/assessments

Student Guild

Phone: (+61 8) 6488 2295
Facsimile: (+61 8) 6488 1041
E-mail: enquiries@guild.uwa.edu.au
Website: http://www.guild.uwa.edu.au

Charter of Student Rights and Responsibilities


Appeals against academic assessment

The University provides the opportunity for students to lodge an appeal against assessment results and/or progress status (refer http://www.secretariat.uwa.edu.au/home/policies/appeals).
# Essay Assessment Sheet – Essay 1 (1101)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Marginal</th>
<th>Poor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General content:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Identification of relevant trends</td>
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<td>Use of ABS data</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dimensions linkage</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reference material:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Selection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of use</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing style, e.g. clarity</td>
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<td>Paragraphing</td>
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<td>Formal English</td>
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<td>Reference list presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-text Referencing style</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proof-reading</td>
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</table>

**Comments:**

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Evaluation (comparison with other students)

WELL ABOVE AV.  ABOVE AV  AVERAGE.  BELOW AV.  WELL BELOW AV.

**GRADE**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General content: Identification of relevant trends</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Marginal</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of ABS data</td>
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<td>International comparison</td>
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<td>Dimensions linkage</td>
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<td>Reference material: Selection</td>
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<td>Quality of use</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation: Writing style. (e.g. clarity)</td>
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<tr>
<td>paragraphing</td>
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<td>Formal English</td>
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<td>Reference list presentation</td>
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<td>In-text Referencing style</td>
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<td>Proof-reading</td>
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Comments:

Evaluation (comparison with other students)
WELL ABOVE AV. ABOVE AV AVERAGE. BELOW AV. WELL BELOW AV.

GRADE _____
## Essay Assessment Sheet – Essay 2

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<td><strong>General content:</strong></td>
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**Comments:**

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**Evaluation (comparison with other students)**

WELL ABOVE AV.    ABOVE AV    AVERAGE.    BELOW AV.    WELL BELOW AV.

**GRADE**

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Tutorial Topics

WEEK 2 (the first tutorial) WEEK COMMENCING: 7th March

TOPIC: Work – what is it? what shapes it?

This topic will focus on the experience and meaning of work within the context of an employment relationship.

OBJECTIVES: To define the term ‘work’ in capitalist societies
To describe ways of giving meaning to work
To describe what shapes an individual’s experience of work
To relate an individual’s job experience to the literature on work.

PRE-TUTORIAL: Complete the reading and answer the questions
Complete the work experience questionnaire

READINGS:


QUESTIONS:

1. Define ‘work’. What does the term mean to you?

2. How does work affect the individual you interviewed for the work experience questionnaire? What meaning does work have for them?

3. What shapes our experience of work and employment?

4. To what extent are workers in general (and your interview subject in particular) ‘in control’ of their work?
TUTORIAL ASSIGNMENT: THE EXPERIENCE OF WORK

Due Date: WEEK COMMENCING March 7

In the coming weeks you will have exposure to many academic arguments (and political debates) about the employment relationship. The crux of this relationship is **work**. The purpose of this questionnaire is to get you to focus on the experience of work and so provide a realistic and relevant context for this unit.

**Instructions:** Answer the following questions in note-form. (If you are not in paid employment, interview someone else, perhaps a relative or friend). Your answers will form the basis of the group’s discussion.

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

What is your job?

What are the main tasks you perform?

Is your work challenging? boring? repetitive? fun? How would you describe it?

Do you have friends at work? In what ways do you interact with other employees at your place of work?

What is your boss like? Would you like to be the boss?

What sort of things does your boss tell you to do?
How important are time and other schedules or routines in your job?

Comment on the size of the organisation for which you work (e.g. does it have more than one workplace? approx how many employees?)

Comment on the management structure (e.g. very bureaucratic, not many layers)

What do you like most/least about your job?

What other activities do you have to fit into your life? Do you fit these things around work, or vice versa?

When you leave University, are you going to get a job, or take up a career?
Tutorial Topics

TOPIC:  The Employment Relationship: factors influencing it

The relationship between employer and employee is at the heart of industrial relations. This topic focuses on the three dimensions of the relationship: economic, legal, social. It examines the factors which can influence the relative position of the two parties to the relationship.

OBJECTIVES: To identify the three dimensions of the employment relationship and to list several factors for each which influence the employment relationship.

READING:

Bray, Waring and Cooper (2009), pp.73-96.

QUESTIONS:

1. Identify and explain how the three aspects of the employment relationship impact on the relationship between employer and employee:
- what are the legal issues impinging on the employment relationship?
- how can economic frameworks assist us in interpreting the economic dimension of the employment relationship? Provide examples of how the labour market impacts upon the employment relationship.
- how do wider social and cultural factors and work group factors, influence the employment relationship?

2. Examine the three dimensions of the employment relationship in relation to the occupation you examined in the work experience questionnaire (previous tutorial).

3. Using the framework of the three dimensions in the employment relationship, evaluate the sources of power for employers and employees.

4. From what you have learned about the economic dimension, what do you expect has been the impact of the Global Financial Crisis upon employment relations?
Tutorial Topics

WEEK 4

WEEK COMMENCING: 21st March

TOPIC: The Importance of Analytical Frameworks

OBJECTIVES: To understand the unitarist, pluralist and radical perspectives
To consider the link between these and IR outcomes

READINGS:
Bray, Waring, Cooper (2009) ch.3.

QUESTIONS:

1. List the features of the radical, unitarist and pluralist frames of reference. Compare and contrast these frames of reference. Illustrate your discussion with examples.

2. Discuss the implications highlighted by these frameworks on the extent to which workers are ‘in control’ of their work. You may like to illustrate this by referring to the subject you interviewed.

Tutorial Topics

WEEK 5

WEEK COMMENCING: 28th March

TOPIC: The Role of Management

This tutorial examines the position of management in terms of the basic approaches to the employment and management of labour. In addition, it explores the relationship between organisational strategy and management strategy in relation to ER.

OBJECTIVES:
- To define ‘management’
- To become aware of the various explanations about the role of management in the employment relationship
- To understand how management impacts on ER

READINGS:
Bray, Waring, Cooper (2009) ch.6.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the role of management?

2. Outline the different types of managerial control strategies as developed by Braverman, Friedman and Edwards.

3. Identify the impact of business strategies on employment relations practices.

4. In the airline industry (Bamber et al, 2009) what factors are influencing management’s strategic choices about their business strategies and employment relations strategies?

5. If you have time, look at the Work Story in Bray, Waring, Cooper (2009) p171 and discuss your answers to the 2 questions there.
Tutorial Topics

WEEK 6

TOPIC: Individualism and collectivism

This tutorial will consider the differences between individual and collective employment relations and consider the outcomes of the trend towards individualisation of employment relations.

OBJECTIVES: To understand what individualism and collectivism mean in relation to ER
To consider the differences between individual and collective ER
To analyse the critiques and defence of individual and collective employment relations

READINGS:
Bray, Waring, Cooper (2009) pp.243-247

QUESTIONS:
1. How are you defining ‘individualising’ employment relations?
2. What are the characteristics of individualised employment arrangements and collective employment arrangements? If you are in paid employment, are your wages and conditions determined individually or collectively?
3. What are said to be the pros and cons of these two methods of fixing employment terms and conditions?
4. Australian ER has become very divided over ‘individualism Vs collectivism’ with each of the main political and industrial parties advocating a different philosophy. How has the State changed the terrain of ER in terms of individualism and collectivism? Is there a way forward that would enable greater consensus?
Tutorial Topics

WEEK 7  WEEK COMMENCING: 11th April

TOPIC:  The Role of Trade unions

This tutorial will examine the contemporary and future role of trade unions.

OBJECTIVES:  To define 'trade unions'
To become aware of the role of unions in the employment relationship
To identify what motivates workers to join unions
To identify the challenges facing unions today
To consider what role contemporary unions should play

READINGS:

Bray, Waring, Cooper (2009) ch.7

QUESTIONS:

1. (a) What roles and functions do and can unions perform?
   (b) What are the most important reasons for joining a union? Under what circumstances would you want to join or resign from a union?

2. What factors have contributed to the decline in union membership in the 1980s and 1990s?

3. Are unions relevant today? What are the main issues concerning unions today?
Tutorial Topics

WEEK 8                   WEEK COMMENCING: 18th April

TOPIC:    Employee Participation

This tutorial will consider the concept of employee participation and what is necessary for it to be successful within the workplace.

OBJECTIVES: To consider what employee participation is
To analyse the potential outcomes from employee participation
To understand why the various parties might be interested in employee participation and what factors are necessary for its success

READING:

Bray, Waring, Cooper (2009) ch.8

QUESTIONS:

1. How would you define employee participation? What are some common examples of employee participation?

2. What outcomes are employees, managers and the state seeking with employee participation programs?

3. What factors appear to be associated with successful employee participation programs? (Perhaps begin by defining a 'successful' employee participation program).

4. Can employee participation programs fill the 'representation gap' in workplaces which are not unionised? Are representative forms of participation a threat to the unions' role in the workplace?

5. Read the Case study in Bray, Waring and Cooper (2009) pp. 256-257 and discuss the 3 questions raised as 'issues for debate'.
Tutorial Topics

WEEK 9				WEEK COMMENCING: 2 May

TOPIC: The role of the State in Employment Relations

This tutorial will consider the role of the State in ER, including an analysis of the various state institutions and how they impact on IR.

OBJECTIVES: To define 'the state'
To become aware of the various explanations about the role of the state in the employment relationship
To understand how the state impacts on ER

READINGS:

QUESTIONS:
1. What is the state (definition) ? What are its components? What are its functions? What is its role?
2. What are the different theoretical perspectives on the state according to Giles 1989?
3. Read the case study Foreign Workers and 457 visas (Balnave et al., Chapter 2, pp. 75-77).
   Answer questions 2, 3 and 4.
No tutorial this week as students will be finalising essays.
Tutorial Topics

WEEK 11

TOPIC: Conflict in the workplace

This tutorial will consider the nature of conflict in the workplace and why it occurs. It will also require you to analyse the case study ‘Lockouts as a form of industrial conflict’ (Bray, Waring & Cooper 2009, Chapter 11, pp. 366-367).

OBJECTIVES:
- To better understand why industrial conflict occurs
- To identify the forms industrial conflict can take
- To consider the role of management, unions and the state in relation to industrial conflict

READING:

Bray, Waring and Cooper (2009), ch.11.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why does industrial conflict occur and what forms does it take? Bring to the tutorial 2 or 3 examples of industrial conflict from the media.

2. Should we/can we try to eliminate all forms of industrial conflict? Why or why not?

3. What is management's role in minimising the incidence of industrial conflict? What do unions do to contribute to maintaining industrial peace?

4. Discuss the case study: ‘Lockouts as a form of industrial conflict’ including the 4 ‘issues for debate’.
**Tutorial Topics**

WEEK 12  
WEEK COMMENCING: 23rd May

**TOPIC:** Work/Life Balance, Occupational Health and Safety and ER

**OBJECTIVES:** To develop a preliminary understanding of the issues associated with the implementation of work/life balance strategies in the workplace.
To consider the connections between work/life balance concepts and ER concepts, and similarly OHS and ER concepts.

**READING:**


**QUESTIONS:**

1. What would work/life balance mean to you
   (i) when you’re 25?
   (ii) when you’re 35?
   (iii) when you’re 55?

2. Why has work/life balance become an important issue in contemporary workplace relations?

3. What are the barriers to implementation of work/life balance policies?

4. Consider the connections between the topic ‘work/life balance’ and ER.

5. Prepare a brief summary of the main points in Walters’ article.

6. Consider the connections between the issues raised by Walters in relation to OHS and the ER concepts you have learned this semester.
**Tutorial Topics**

**WEEK 13**

**WEEK COMMENCING: 30th May**

**TOPIC:** Employment Relations in Practice

This tutorial will focus on two case studies, one being an industry-based study of call centres and the other a study of employment in an elite club. You will consider the ER concepts you have learned so far this semester in relation to these studies.

**READING:**


**QUESTIONS:**

1. Compare the nature of the work and employment in call centres and ‘The Club’.
   (a) what factors are shaping the work?
   (b) what factors are shaping the employment relationship? (3 dimensions)

2. Outline and discuss the strategies used by management to control labour and their output in call centres and ‘The Club’.

3. Describe the employees’ response to their work and to management’s control strategies in both the call centres and ‘The Club’. Can you identify a contested terrain in both cases?

4. Imagine yourself as the manager, firstly of a call centre and, secondly of the club. Draft a set of organizational goals and business strategies appropriate to the organization and then consider the implications of these for your management of labour within the organization.

5. Imagine yourself as a union organiser. Identify the factors that might facilitate or hinder your opportunity to recruit employees to your union in the two cases.

6. Provide examples of the impact of the state upon employment relations in both cases.