



Institute for research into organisations, work and employment



Welcome to the latest issue of the iROWE newsletter, in which we share with you our latest research and developments.

The last six months or so has been challenging for us and although from the outside it may seem as if things have been quiet we have been working hard to secure the immediate future of the Institute. The University has placed an embargo on all web updates as it redesigns its entire platform so the iROWE site has been static for some time. When it reanimates (any day now, hopefully) you will notice that Pete Thomas has left us (to go to Lancaster University) and that Richard Saundry will be departing in June (for Plymouth University). So we would like to thank both for their important contributions and wish them well, although Richard will continue his association with us as a visiting research fellow.

Nevertheless, whilst the website has been in abeyance, our social media platforms go from strength to strength thanks to the sterling efforts of Hayley Cooling and Gemma Wibberley - if you haven't already, please check out our presence on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter see the article in this edition for details.

The very successful ESRC Seminar Series on workplace conflict has expended a lot of our time so we have not held any iROWE specific sessions recently but we are pleased to say that we will be holding an open event in May to recognise the 100th anniversary of the Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development.

ESRC Workplace Conflict Seminars



Our ESRC seminar series 'Reframing Resolution - Managing Individual Workplace Conflict' continues to be a roaring success. We are now half way through our series, having held the following events: 'Understanding individual employment disputes' at University of Strathclyde; 'Resolving workplace disputes - employee voice, engagement and representation' at University of Central Lancashire; and 'Mediation and alternative dispute resolution - outcomes and impacts' at Swansea University.

We are shortly off to Belfast for our fourth seminar 'The management of workplace conflict - structures, systems and strategies' on 18th April 2013, at Queens University Belfast. In June, the University of Warwick will be holding a seminar on 'The changing face of regulation - rights, resolution, fairness and efficiency', and speakers have just been announced including: David Coats (WorkMatters Consulting); Professor Hugh Collins (London School of Economics); Professor Sue Corby (University of Greenwich); Mike Emmott (CIPD); Professor Edmund Heery (Cardiff University); Professor Paul Latreille (University of Sheffield); Matthew Percival (CBI); Dr Melanie Simms (University of Warwick); Ed Sweeney (Acas); Sarah Veale (TUC) and Stephen Williams (Acas).

Our final seminar 'Managing conflict and resolving disputes: synthesising research and practice to inform policy' will be 6th September 2013, at the University of Westminster

Review of Seminar 2 -Resolving workplace disputes: employee voice, engagement and representation

On the 12th December 2012 the University of Central Lancashire held the second seminar in the ESRC series into workplace conflict. Almost 50 people attended, representing academia, the public and private sectors, mediation companies and trade unions. The seminar discussed the role played by trade union and non-union representatives and the impact of employee engagement and alternative structures of employee voice on the way that conflict is managed and disputes handled. Attendees enjoyed the diversity of speakers, and the opportunity to debate current voice channels and the future of employee representation. The audience were very interested in learnings they could take forwards to enhance workplace relationships, especially as one participant reflected " *a little sadness that 'trust' is what makes successful resolution – yet it is missing in so many places*"



Eleanor Kirk, one of the PhD Students to win a bursary to attend this seminar commented " *A seminar series that brings together academics, practitioners and policy makers concerned with the resolution individual disputes seems long overdue. Individual workplace conflict is a topic that is only really beginning to attract concerted academic attention, despite its centrality to workplace relations, and the focus of government on reforming employment law. The study of this subject matter has been rather fragmented to date between the disconnected efforts of scholars of employment law, employment relations, human resource management and organisational behaviour. For this reason, a seminar organised around subject matter rather than academic schools or approaches is a welcome development.*" The travel bursaries were provided by kind sponsorship from Acas, Consensio Partners, CMP Resolutions TCM Group, enabling several PhD students to attend.

iROWE's Dr Gemma Wibberley began the day by exploring the role of employee voice in individual dispute resolution at work. Steve Stott, Regional Manager, Unison then talked us through the Pre-claim conciliation (PCC) project that was being trialled by Unison NW in conjunction with Acas, across 3 local governments. Dr Andy Charlwood, University of York provided an overview of employee voice, and tentatively suggests that voice improves dispute resolution for both employees and employers. Jonny Gifford, Research Adviser from the CIPD explained the importance of good relationships between organisations and trade unions, particularly to enable informal resolution.

Professor Ralph Fevre from the University of Cardiff discussed the 'Fair Treatment at Work' Survey results. He explained that the findings painted a very complicated picture of workplace problems, and their relationship with trade unions. Paul Nowak, Head of the Organisation and Services Department at the TUC Paul discussed the positive role that unions can play within workplaces, in particular noting that unionised organisations tend to experience a much lower rate of employment tribunal claims than non-unionised workplaces. A panel discussion followed, comprised of Peter Monaghan (Acas), Mike Green (HR Director, Protective Coatings & Marine EMEA), Ralph Fevre and Paul Nowak. The panel discussed briefly their thoughts on engagement and then it was opened up to a general discussion. The key message from the panel discussion was the importance of trust and good relationships between the different parties, which can enable any problem to be worked through.

Presentations are available online at: http://www.uclan.ac.uk/schools/lbs/research/research_institutes/Seminar2Resolvingworkplacedisputes.php

Review of Seminar 3- Mediation and alternative dispute resolution

For the third seminar in our ESRC Seminar Series 2012-2013 'Reframing Resolution - Managing Individual Workplace Conflict', iROWE staff travelled to Swansea University. This seminar focused specifically on mediation in the workplace, and was a great opportunity for mediation providers, users, researchers and policy makers to discuss their experience of ADR.



Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe

The day started with a review of the theories of mediation by Dr Rory Ridley-Duff, from Sheffield Hallam University. iROWE's Louise McArdle then explained the importance of language used in mediation, and how it can shape individual's perceptions. Further iROWE research informed the second session, as Dr Richard Saundry described the impact of In-house Mediation upon conflict resolution, and Dr Tony Bennett reflected on the Mediation Process from the Disputant's Perspective.

Alex Ethymiades from Consensio Partners, Katherine Graham from CMP Resolutions and David Liddle from TCM Group presented the perspective of mediation providers in the form of panel discussion. Then Professor Paul Latreille from University of Sheffield, presented a critical reflection on mediation. Andrew Wareing from Acas chaired a Workshop Discussion, inviting delegates to think about the future of mediation and what are the barriers to wider uptake in the workplace. He also challenged the audience to suggest the one question research into ADR needs to answer.

The final session focused on Policy Initiatives, and Professor Peter Urwin from the University of Westminster reported on the challenges of creating evidence-based policy on ADR, in part because of the difficulties of comparing conflict resolved with and without mediation. Nicola Cullen from the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills provided an overview of the initial impact of The Government's SME Mediation Network Pilot, highlighting the strong interest from SME's into mediation, but reminding us of the resource barriers they experience.

Presentations are available online at:

http://www.uclan.ac.uk/schools/lbs/research/research_institutes/Seminar3-Mediationandalternativedisputeresolution.php

Almost 50 people attended the seminar, and found the day to be a valuable experience as expressed by one delegate *"very good conference, range of speakers, range of topics, but all within a central theme. Really good that there is a recognition of the challenges- how can we 'prove' that [mediation] works?"*.

The audience also felt that they learnt from the day, with many commenting that it encouraged them to reflect upon their own use of alternative dispute resolution, and for the stakeholders they work with : *"There is a real opportunity to improve management effectiveness by training them in mediation skills"* and *"giving parties more/ better information regarding the process [of mediation] and managing expectations of those commissioning"*

With the kind sponsorship of travel bursaries (offered by Acas, Consensio Partners, CMP Resolutions TCM Group) several PhD students researching ADR were able to attend and give poster presentations. Ria Deakin, studying at Manchester Business School said :*"Attending the seminar provided the opportunity to engage with research, policy and practitioners in a way which, for me, had not previously been possible. The seminar reminded me of the need to constantly refine my thinking about mediation and the way it is conceptualised and presented in my research."*

Seminar and Audience Discussion

One Hundred Years of the Personnel Profession: Reflections and Future Directions



Guest Speaker:

Jonny Gifford, CIPD Research Adviser

Latest iROWE research into HR practices

The seminar will conclude with audience discussion of the future of the HR profession in their workplaces.

Wednesday 8th May 2013

5.30pm until 7pm

Brook 008, UCLAN

Refreshments available from 5pm

Attendance is free, but places are limited. To book a place please contact Gemma and Hayley at WCSeminars@uclan.ac.uk

Douglas Martin to collaborate with Dr Mona Fineide



Douglas Martin is collaborating with Dr Mona Fineide and colleagues from Østfold University College in Norway on an examination of the impact of lean working within the public sector. Douglas has been researching the impact of 'lean' within the UK Civil Service, whilst Dr Fineide's research on lean has within the Norwegian health and social services sector.

Reframing workplace relations?

Richard Saundry, Louise McArdle and Pete Thomas have just published a paper on 'Reframing workplace relations? Conflict resolution and mediation in a primary care trust' in *Work, Employment and Society*.

The authors note that in recent years, workplace conflict has become increasingly manifest in individual employment disputes as collective labour regulation has been eroded. Accordingly, attention has been focused on finding ways to facilitate the early resolution of such disputes. Policy-makers have placed a particular emphasis on workplace mediation. However, the broader impact of mediation on conventional grievance and disciplinary processes and on the workplace relations that underpin them has been largely ignored. This article reports on research into the introduction of an in-house mediation scheme within a primary care trust. It explores the implications of the scheme for: workplace relations within the organization; the dynamics of conflict management; and trade union influence. It argues that the introduction of mediation provided a conduit through which positive workplace relations were rebuilt which in turn facilitated informal processes of dispute resolution. Furthermore, it allowed trade unions within the organization to extend their influence into areas traditionally dominated by managerial prerogative.

The paper 'Reframing workplace relations? Conflict resolution and mediation in a primary care trust' (2013) in *Work, Employment and Society*. doi: 10.1177/0950017012472236, is available by subscription from <http://wes.sagepub.com/content/early/2013/03/06/0950017012472236.full.pdf+html>

The impact of learning in the workplace in reducing conflict

The research findings of a report sponsored by the Universities' Forum for HRD in partnership with TUC Unionlearn on the impact of learning in the workplace in reducing conflict have just been published on the UFHRD website. In addition, Tony Bennett has produced a tutor's guide, also on the UFHRD website, which allows lecturers to utilise the findings in their HRD teaching programmes.

- Do learning partnerships reduce conflict in the workplace? (2013) Joint report for the University Forum for HRD and TUC Unionlearn <http://www.ufhrd.co.uk/wordpress/category/research-archives/>
- The learning and conflict project: A tutor's guide (2013) Joint teaching resource for the University Forum for HRD and TUC Unionlearn <http://www.ufhrd.co.uk/wordpress/teaching-learning/>

Everyday practices, behaviour and discourse of HR professionals

Members of the iROWE team have been conducting research into the everyday practices, behaviours and discourse of HR professionals.



The research team - David Vickers, Ruth Slater and Emma Thirkell - have gathered over 100 diary entries and a further 80 behavioural examples written by around 40 different HR professionals. The team have just completed the data gathering process and are now starting the analysis. The research team would like to thank the many iROWE Associates who volunteered to take part and, as promised, at some stage next year we will hold an iROWE session and feedback/discuss some of our findings.

Conferences

Gemma Wibberley 'the challenges in contemporary union organising' International Labour Process Conference at Rutgers University, USA, 19th march 2013

Richard Saundry 'Unpicking conflict resolution – informal process and formal procedure', ESRC Reframing resolution– Managing individual workplace conflict seminar , University of Swansea

Tony Bennett ' Experiencing the mediation process from the disputants' perspective' ESRC Reframing resolution– Managing individual workplace conflict seminar, University of Swansea

Louise McArdle ' mediation, discourse and change' ESRC Reframing resolution– Managing individual workplace conflict seminar, University of Swansea

Gemma Wibberley' The vital role of employee voice in resolving individual conflict at work'. ESRC Reframing resolution– Managing individual workplace conflict seminar, University of Central Lancashire.

Douglas Martin "It's been a prolonged period of misery, but I think it's really intensified now": the impact of lean production management systems on the UK Civil Service, British Universities Industrial Relations Association (BUIRA)

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Recent iROWE publications

Wibberley, G. (2013) The problems of a 'dirty workplace' in domiciliary care, Health and Place, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2013.01.014>. 03/12

Willcocks, S. and Milne, P.(2013) The Medical Leadership competency framework: challenges raised for GP educators by a pilot study of culture in general practice. Educators for primary care, Vol 24. Number 1.

Tony Bennett Do learning partnerships reduce conflict in the workplace? (2013) Joint report for the University Forum for HRD and TUC Unionlearn <http://www.ufhrd.co.uk/wordpress/category/research-archives/>

Tony Bennett The learning and conflict project: A tutor's guide (2013) Joint teaching resource for the University Forum for HRD and TUC Unionlearn <http://www.ufhrd.co.uk/wordpress/teaching-learning/>

Wibberley, G.(2013) Getting the bodies of the workers to the bodies of the clients: the role of rotas in domiciliary care, Body/ Sex/ Work

Tony Bennett Workplace Mediation and the Empowerment of Disputants: Rhetoric or Reality? (2013) Industrial Relations Journal Vol. 44, No. 2.

Recruiting now for HR practitioner/ CIPD courses!!!

We are now recruiting for our part-time HR practitioner/CIPD courses starting in September 2013. We have a 1 year Diploma HRM; 2 year Postgraduate Diploma HRM/D and the 1 year MA HRM/D (for those already with a PGDiploma).

If you or your colleagues are interested please contact David Vickers at davickers@uclan.ac.uk



Engaging with Clinical Commissioning- The Attitudes of General Practitioners

Ian Ashman and Steve Willcocks have recently completed a survey examining the extent to which general practitioners are engaged with clinical commissioning – a process that is widely regarded as the centrepiece of Government reforms to the UK health service and has been identified by primary healthcare organisations as a priority of policy and implementation.

The study, undertaken among GPs across a particular North West region, concludes that levels of clinical commissioning engagement among GPs can be interpreted as somewhat lower than may be desirable or necessary to facilitate current commissioning reforms. The data indicates that barriers to clinical commissioning engagement are more likely to result from a perceived lack of capacity and capability among GPs rather than a lack of opportunity to engage or ideological opposition to clinical commissioning reforms.

The organisation for which the research was undertaken has been provided with an interim report that is unavailable to the public at present. Phase two of the study will explore the reasons for current levels of engagement and possible policy solutions.

The medical leadership competency framework: challenges raised for GP educators by a pilot study of culture in general practice

Steve Willcocks and Paul Milne's article on 'the medical leadership competency framework (MLCF): challenges raised for GP educators by a pilot study of culture in general practice' has just been published in *Education for Primary Care*, an official publication of the World Organisation of Family Doctors & Association of Primary Care Educators UK.

The paper presents the findings of a small scale pilot study based on a questionnaire survey of two general medical practices, the aim of which was to identify the organisational culture dimensions in these practices and their relationship to the development of MLCF competencies in the context of general practice. The paper concludes that general practice needs to take account of existing culture (s) before undertaking the implementation of generic training initiatives such as the implementation of the MLCF; and that educators in primary care need to respond to the challenges being presented by the changing context of general practice.



The paper is called : Willcocks, SG and Milne, P (2013), The medical leadership competency framework: challenges raised for GP educators by a pilot study of culture in general practice . *Education for Primary Care*, 24: 29-33. This can be accessed via subscription at www.radcliffehealth.com/journals (ISSN 1473-9879)

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iROWE's research on mediation utilised in new ACAS and CIPD guide to workplace mediation

A guide
February 2013

acas

cipd 100
YEARS
OF LEADING HR
INTO THE FUTURE

MEDIATION: AN APPROACH TO RESOLVING WORKPLACE ISSUES

To coincide with iROWE's ESRC seminar on mediation, the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) and Acas launched a new guide to workplace mediation. The guide 'Mediation: An approach to resolving workplace issues' is designed to assist organisations who are interested in using mediation to address workplace conflict.

iROWE research into mediation has been utilised by the CIPD and ACAS when creating the guide to provide up-to-date information on companies use of mediation schemes.

Acas and CIPD state that the guide "explains the background to mediation and how it can help to resolve workplace grievances. The publication draws on examples of good practice and offers some practical information for employers seeking to utilise mediation in their organisations."

The guide is available at: <http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/2/q/Mediation-an-approach-to-resolving-workplace-issues.pdf>

'Workplace Mediation and the Empowerment of Disputants: Rhetoric or Reality?'

Tony Bennett's research is based on the views and experiences of 60 respondents from over 40 cross-sectorial organisations in the North of England. Findings revealed that the main reasons for the disputes referred for mediation were relationship problems, poor communication and poorly perceived management style and practice. Significantly, differences in sector or occupation could impact on whether cases went to mediation.

The paper is available via subscription : <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/irj.12012/abstract>

Tony Bennett (2013) 'Workplace Mediation and the Empowerment of Disputants: Rhetoric or Reality?' Industrial Relations Journal Vol. 44, No. 2.

One of CMI's Management Articles of the Year

Dr Ian Ashman's article called 'A New Role Emerges in Downsizing: Special Envoys', which was published last year in People Management, has been chosen as one of five Management Articles of the Year by the Chartered Management Institute. In attended the award event held at the British Library Conference Centre in January. Ian said:

"I was extremely pleased and a little surprised to find out that I had been placed in the top five for CMI's Management Articles of the Year. The research is of real interest to me and the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas) and People Management (PM) were delighted that I had been awarded this accolade.

It is very important to me that the judging was carried out by practicing managers and those working in business, as it shows that we can successfully bridge the gap between academic thinking and industry know-how. I was pleased to know that the research was of particular significance to the audience I'm eager to reach in the business world."

All five articles are available for view at the following web address - <http://www.managers.org.uk/articlesoftheyear> Ashman, I. (2013) 'The Face-to-face Delivery of Downsizing Decisions in UK Public Sector Organizations, Public Management Review, scheduled for publication on the Taylor and Francis iFirst early view website in April.

The problem of unpaid work for domiciliary careworkers

Unpaid overtime for domiciliary care workers is a major issue argues iROWE's Gemma Wibberley in her chapter of new book 'Body/sex/work' : Intimate, embodied and sexualised labour (Edited by Carol Wolkowitz, Rachel Lara Cohen, Teela Sanders and Kate Hardy).

Gemma's chapter reveals the logistical challenges in getting domiciliary care workers to the clients. She highlights that problems are compounded by the lack of remuneration for domiciliaries' travel time which can easily be over an hour a day, and therefore the extensive unpaid work the care workers are expected to perform.

The book was launched at the International Labour Process Conference at Rutgers University, USA, 18th march. Gemma and several of the other authors attended this exciting event. It is now available from Palgrave publishers :



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Join iROWE on Social Media

iROWE was recently been informed that it was in the top 5% of profiles viewed on LinkedIn last year

We regularly post updates about our research activities and events via social media channels. There is also opportunity for discussion with other people interested in employment issues. If you would like to be connected to iROWE via social media, then please email us or you can find us on:



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The linkedin account has a group where there are daily discussions with other iROWE connections

If you have something that you would like posting on any of our social media formats then please contact wcseminars@uclan.ac.uk

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iROWE seeks to encourage the conduct and dissemination of high quality academic research into organisations, work and employment. In addition i-ROWE will work closely with employers, government and trade unions in order to inform the development of effective workplace practice and employment policy

REFRAMING RESOLUTION - MANAGING INDIVIDUAL WORKPLACE CONFLICT

ESRC Seminar Series 2012-2013

Recent years have seen increased concern over a perceived increase in individual workplace conflict. As a result, the resolution of individual employment disputes has become a crucial issue. This seminar series brings together, for the first time in the UK, academic researchers, policy-makers and practitioners to explore workplace dispute resolution and the management of conflict.

11th October 2012
**Understanding individual
 employment disputes.**
 University of Strathclyde



18th April 2013
**The management of workplace
 conflict - structures, systems
 and strategies.**

Queen's University
 Belfast



12th December 2012
**Resolving workplace
 disputes - employee
 voice, engagement
 and representation.**
 University of Central Lancashire



5th June 2013
**The changing face of legal
 regulation - rights,
 resolution and
 efficiency.**
 University of Warwick



14th February 2013
**Mediation and
 alternative dispute
 resolution - outcomes
 and impacts.**
 Swansea University



6th September 2013
**Managing conflict and resolving
 disputes - synthesising
 research, practice
 and policy.**
 University of Westminster



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For more information and to book a FREE place please go to:

www.uclan.ac.uk/workplaceconflictseminars