Welcome to the latest issue of the iROWE newsletter, in which we share with you our research and activities within the world of organisations, work and employment.

We’ve had some fascinating evening seminars. In December we learnt from iROWE’s Ruth Slater and Jayne Pook, HR Manager, Kepak Convenience Foods. The seminar featured Jayne’s experience as a practitioner, of using research in her company to identify core values that could support Kepak’s mission and vision. Then in March we had an interesting discussion on performance management from an employment law perspective from Caroline Rayner, Baines Wilson LLP.

Our next seminar will be on June 29th on workplace mediation, from the perspectives of internal and external mediators Fiona O'Donnell and her colleagues. Full details are available on the back page. Please book your space now!

iROWE’s staff continue to be awarded funding to carry out their research, and within this newsletter members share their findings on: lean management, the technology sector and conflict management.

We are also excited to be in talks with the Lancashire Forum - a joint project between UCLan and Lancaster University on leadership, innovation and business development in local SMEs. UCLan will be supporting SMEs working in creative and digital industries across Lancashire. This project will involve both research and expert-led, sector specific training delivery, and is funded by the ERDF. It combines expertise from the worlds of HE and industry and, via innovative facilitation and creative learning techniques, will bring creative and digital businesses together for joint development and peer-to-peer learning. See p7 for your invite to the launch. Or contact Elena Vasilieva - EVasilieva@uclan.ac.uk or 01772 894547

Contact: Gemma Wilberley 01772 894674 gwilberley@uclan.ac.uk http://bit.ly/1FKZvSn

Martin, D (forthcoming) ‘Lean’ in the UK Civil Service: from a theory of improvement to the varied realities of costs cutting’, La Nouvelle Revue du travail

Welch, M., Ruck, K. and Menara, B. (forthcoming), ‘Employee voice: An antecedent to organisational engagement’, Public Relations Review

Conferences/ Presentations

Gemma Wibberley and Carol Walton, ‘Early dispute resolution for managing staff conflict’, Lancashire CIPD Conference, 25th February

Gemma Wibberley ‘Responding to Domestic Abuse in the Workplace - The Role of Trade Union Representatives in Supporting Members’ Connect Centre, UCLan, 4th April

FORTHCOMING:

Gemma Wibberley ‘Social media and conflict’, HRM in turbulent times’, MMU, 30th June
Managing Poor Performance Seminar

Caroline Rayner provided a fascinating insight into managing poor performance from an employment law perspective at our iROWE seminar in March.

She is an Associate, in Employment Law, at local law firm Baines Wilson LLP. Caroline discussed the importance of being clear with employees from the very beginning of their employment about the expectations of their role, and continuing to communicate these expectations and requirements. She highlighted the importance of following a fair and legally compliant process when managing performance. Caroline also outlined the dismissal procedure and the steps within this.

The audience were very keen to discuss performance management, and the challenges it can pose for all within the organisation. Stories of best practice in handling tricky cases from all perspectives were also shared.

Performance management is a topic that features heavily in iROWE research, and appears to be something many organisations find challenging. We have seen that conflict may erupt from increased performance expectations. Or that in some sectors staff may be determining their own performance management. We have also explored strategies such as ‘lean’, which may have a variety of impacts upon performance. Other research highlights that wellbeing issues may be at the root of performance issues. See our website under the ‘publications’ tab for a variety of work on the topic:

http://www.uclan.ac.uk/research/explore/groups/institute_research_organisations_work_employment_irowe.php
Student project impact

As part of her Masters course in HRM Jayne Pook, undertook research to develop values to support new vision and mission statements in her organisation.

Jayne is HR Manager at Kepak Convenience Foods, brand owner of ‘Rustlers’ and was supervised by Dr Ruth Slater, iROWE researcher and HR Lecturer.

The research demonstrates the practical application of research on an academic programme. The project has been very successful, as it has encouraged other divisions in the group to undertake similar work.

It has also made an impact outside the organisation, as Ruth and Jayne have delivered presentations to both academic and practitioner audiences through the University Forum for HRD (UFHRD) conference and the iROWE associates seminar and are now busy writing articles for publication. They also have exciting plans to further develop this research and are awaiting news of funding.

PhD success for iROWE student

We are delighted to announce that Keith Tomlinson has been awarded his doctorate this January. Dr Keith’s thesis was titled ‘The contested terrains of workplace disciplinary processes and practices’.

Keith researched workplace discipline from the perspective of HR professionals, operational managers and employee representatives. This enabled him to provide an interesting understanding of their different roles and perspectives within the disciplinary process. He was also able to illuminate how these different groups of staff interact in handling disciplinary issues from policy to enacting procedure.

He was supervised by iROWE’s Carol Jones and former colleague Richard Saundry. Keith is currently examining for the CIPD and doing freelance consultancy on management and HR. We wish him all the best with his future plans.
Workplace conflict

It is great to see iROWE research into workplace conflict being used by others to continue the debates, and highlight the challenges organisational actors, particularly line managers, face in dealing with disputes.

iROWE research was recently cited in an article on 'How managers can defuse workplace conflict'. The piece by Dr Roger Seaman, was in People Management, the CIPD publication. He was discussing the difficulties line managers can face in handling employee disputes, and suggested ways in which they might address them. The article is available at: http://www2.cipd.co.uk/pm/peoplemanagement/b/weblog/archive/2016/10/11/how-managers-can-diffuse-workplace-conflict.aspx#

The piece draws upon Carol Jones and Richard Saundry's research into the management of workplace conflict, which highlighted that line managers may not have the support, confidence or resources required to resolve staff disputes. Their research findings are detailed in:


Another iROWE paper on workplace conflict has been picked up and turned into a summary of key research by another journal, and is one of their ‘most read’ articles.

The summary piece is by Human Resource Management International Digest, who state the aim of their journal is “selecting only the very best, most pertinent information and presenting it in a condensed and easy-to-digest format.” The article is available: http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/full/10.1108/HRMID-10-2015-0157

The original article explored the tensions for line managers between handling workplace conflict informally, and via formal procedures. It suggested that line managers may actually be moving towards more formal approaches, and need more support if organisations desire informal resolution.

UCLan staff showcased all sides of their HR expertise at the CIPD Lancashire Conference ‘Life of HR’

On Saturday, 25 February 2017, various staff were at the conference; learning, networking and sharing their HR knowledge from teaching, research and professional experience.

Tony Proctor ran a stand showing the CIPD courses that he and many other iROWE staff teach on. Sharing their HR knowledge with HR practitioners wanting to gain their professional qualifications here at UCLan. For more information on the Postgraduate Diploma in HRM Development see http://www.uclan.ac.uk/courses/pg_dip_human_resources_management_development.php

For other courses please contact David Vickers http://www.uclan.ac.uk/staff_profiles/dr_david_vickers.php

iROWE’s Gemma Wibberley and UCLan’s Learning & Development Manager Carol Walton drew upon their research and practitioner knowledge to present ‘Early Dispute Resolution for Managing Staff Conflict’. Gemma presented findings from research into methods of early dispute resolution that other organisations have utilised, highlighting the benefits and barriers.

Carol discussed dispute resolution techniques employed at UCLan and explained that she and her HR colleagues were looking at enhancing the employee relations strategy to offer a wider range of options for staff including coaching and team development.

They are also both Acas accredited mediators as part of UCLan’s in-house mediation scheme for staff. So discussed their experiences of how mediation can work, and their learnings for others running an internal scheme.

It was a lively conference and we really enjoyed being able to participate in such a great event. Thanks to Lancashire CIPD for the invite!
Lancashire Forum launch – 11\textsuperscript{th} May

UCLan’s Centre for SME Development is launching a new business growth, leadership and innovation programme for Lancashire’s Creative and Digital SMEs. Called the Lancashire Forum the programme combines tried and tested peer-to-peer learning tools alongside expert input specifically aimed at those leading Creative and Digital businesses.

To celebrate the launch of the Lancashire Forum local SMEs are invited to a special Think Tank event on 11th May at UCLan’s Media Factory. This session will provide interested SME leaders with the opportunity to help shape the programme itself and then hear a keynote speech from Ekm.com head Antony Chesworth.

At the age of 22 Antony decided to create his own platform to allow anyone to create their own successful online shop. From being on the dole with tens of thousands of credit card debt to building a company that processes more than half a billion pounds per year and has created hundreds of millionaires, Antony shares his story to success.

The Lancashire Forum will launch on 11\textsuperscript{th} May from 4.00 pm till 8.00 pm. For more information please contact Elena Vasilieva evasilieva@uclan.ac.uk

Or to book now click here
https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/lancashire-forum-launch-event-with-antony-chesworth-tickets-33239293622

European Union
European Regional Development Fund
LANCASHIRE FORUM

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Join iROWE on Social Media

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 iROWE at wcseminars@uclan.ac.uk or you can find us on:

Like – IROWE Seminars
The iROWE Facebook has been re-launched to offer a new way to access us and our activities.

Follow – iROWE Uclan
The iROWE twitter has all the latest information about research, awards and events.

Join– iROWE
The linkedin account has a group where there are regular discussions with other iROWE connections.

Become an associate member

iROWE is a research institute located within Lancashire Business School at the University of Central Lancashire. It provides a forum for the development and dissemination of high quality research into organisations, work and employment. Its work has a particular emphasis on policy and practice—in short research that has an impact and makes a difference.

Therefore, iROWE brings together academics, managers, HR professionals, union representatives and policy makers. If you would like to be part of this exciting institute and kept at the forefront of research then become an ASSOCIATE MEMBER. This FREE membership is open to all those with a professional interest in organisations, work or employment. Benefits include: research e-newsletter, regular free seminars by key speakers in the field, consultancy opportunities for your organization, and networking.

To join just email Gemma Wibberley at gwibberley@uclan.ac.uk

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Seminar and Audience Discussion

Looking behind the mediation label

Speakers:
Fiona B. O'Donnell, Honorary Fellow and Lead Mediator, University of Dundee and mediation colleagues

- With the many challenges and opportunities presently around for instance organisational change and business transformation, what roles can mediation play?
- What is the wider usage in employment and the workplace?
- A discussion around the opportunities and barriers from an internal as well as external mediator’s viewpoint.

Thursday June 29th - 5.30pm – 7pm
Harrington 320, UCLAN [n.b not the normal building]

Refreshments available from 5pm
Attendance is free.
To book a place please contact Gemma : gwigberley@uclan.ac.uk