

Past Seminars

Seminar 1: 11th October 2012 – University of Strathclyde



Understanding individual employment disputes

The first seminar in the series will comprise of both conceptual and empirical research in order to explore the trajectory of individual conflict and the main factors that determine whether and how workplace conflict becomes manifest in individual employment disputes. In addition the seminar will examine how different types of employment disputes are conceptualised and the implications of this for resolution.



For a review of the day written by the organisers please see the [ESRC Paper 1 download](#) (.doc, 35KB)

Speakers included:

Andrea Broughton, Principal Research Fellow, Institute of Employment Studies : 'Understanding the drivers of individual disputes and conflicts at work'

Presentation [slides](#) (.ppt, 264KB)

[Gill Dix](#), Head of Strategy, Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas): 'Dispute resolution and policy objectives: past, present and future'

Presentation [slides](#) (.ppt, 3261KB)

Charlie Irvine, Visiting Professor, Strathclyde Law School, University of Strathclyde: 'Do you see what I'm dealing with here? Vicious cycles in workplace conflict.'

Presentation [slides](#) (.ppt, 1181KB)

Charlie's paper has now been published in the Journal of Mediation & Applied Conflict Analysis, 2014. Available: <http://kennedyinstitute.nuim.ie/content/do-you-see-what-im-dealing-here-vicious-circles-conflict>

[Rachel McCloy](#), Senior Lecturer, School of Psychology and Clinical Language Science, University of Reading : 'Individual Dispute Resolution: Insights from behavioural economics'

Presentation [slides](#) (.ppt, 748KB)

Richard Saundry, Reader in International Employment Relations, Institute for Research into Organisations, Work and Employment : 'Unpicking conflict resolution – informal process and formal procedure'

Presentation [slides](#) (.ppt, 135KB)

Phil Taylor, Professor of Work and Employment Studies, University of Strathclyde: 'Performance management, lean and sickness absence - the new workplace tyranny?'

Presentation [slides](#) (.ppt, (please note there is no music on this presentation))

Seminar 2: 12th December 2012 – University of Central Lancashire



Resolving workplace disputes-employee voice engagement and representation

Recent research has suggested that effective structures of employee representation can underpin informal processes of resolution. At the same time, the growing number of unrepresented workers appear to find it difficult to resolve workplace problems through existing formalised policies and procedures. This seminar will examine these issues – it will discuss the role played by trade union representatives and the impact of employee engagement and alternative structures of employee voice on the way that conflict is managed and disputes handled.



Speakers included :

Dr Andy Charlwood, University of York : [Presentation](#) (.ppt, 405KB)

[Professor Ralph Fevre](#), University of Cardiff : [Presentation](#) (.ppt, 257KB)

Paul Nowak, Head of the Organisation and Services Department, TUC : [Presentation](#) (.ppt, 283KB)

Dr Gemma Wibberley, University of Central Lancashire : [Presentation](#) (.ppt, 430KB)

Steve Stott, Regional Manager, Unison : [Presentation](#) (.ppt, 135KB)

Jonny Gifford, Research Adviser, CIPD : [Presentation](#) (.ppt, 77KB)

[A review of the day](#) (.ppt, 325KB)

Seminar 3: 14th February 2013 - Swansea University



Mediation and alternative dispute resolution – outcomes and impacts

The third seminar will focus on the growing body of research into mediation and alternative dispute resolution in the UK. While mediation is seen as effective in resolving certain types and disputes, key questions remain in relation to its broader impact on management practice, workplace relations and organisational culture. Furthermore the seminar will examine key barriers to its development and implementation. In addition to UK based speakers, Prof Lisa Bingham, one of the USA's leading authorities will contribute to the seminar.



Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe

Speakers Included :

For a review of the day written by the organisers please see the [attached paper](#) (.pdf 354KB)

Dr Tony Bennett University of Central Lancashire : [Presentation slides](#) (.ppt, 2341KB) and [video](#)

Katherine Graham, Managing Director, CMP Resolutions : Presentation slides and [video](#)

Professor [Paul Latreille](#) Sheffield University : Presentation [slides](#) and [video](#)
Dr Richard Saundry, University of Central Lancashire : [Presentation slides](#) (.ppt, 170KB) and [video](#)
[Anna Shields and Alex Efthymiades](#), Directors, Consensio Partners : Presentation slides and [video](#)
Professor [Peter Urwin](#) University of Westminster : [Presentation slides](#) (.ppt, 180KB) and [video](#)
[David Liddle](#), Founder and Chief Executive, The TCM Group : Presentation slides and [video](#)
Dr [Rory Ridley-Duff](#), Sheffield-Hallam University : [Presentation slides](#) (.ppt, 596KB) and [video](#)
[Louise McArdle](#), University of Central Lancashire : [Presentation slides](#) (.ppt, 1883KB) and [video](#)
[Nicola Cullen](#), Team Leader, Employment Tribunal Reform and Mediation BIS : Presentation slides and [video](#)
Andrew Wareing, Chief Operating Officer, Acas : Presentation slides and [video](#)

SEMINAR 4: 18TH APRIL 2013 - QUEENS UNIVERSITY BELFAST



The management of workplace conflict – structures, systems and strategies

This seminar will look at the potential of different management strategies designed to manage conflict and increase organisational capability to resolve disputes. In doing so the implications of changes in HR structures and roles and the development of high involvement work practices for workplace conflict will be examined. In particular the seminar will include perspectives of leading US scholars and assess the potential of integrated conflict management systems for workplaces in UK and Ireland.



Speakers included :

[For a review of the day written by the organisers please see the attached paper](#) (.pdf 612KB)

[Ariel C. Avgar](#), UI (University of Illinois) : [Presentation](#) (.ppt, 1139 KB) and [video 1](#), [video 2](#)
[Alex Colvin](#), CU (Cornell University) : [Presentation](#) (.ppt, 200 KB) and [video](#)
John O'Dowd, UCD (University College Dublin) : [Presentation](#) (.ppt, 296 KB) and [video](#)
[David Liddle](#), Founder and Chief Executive, The TCM Group : [Presentation](#) (.ppt, 1361 KB) and [video](#)

[Kieran Mulvey](#) (.doc, 20KB), Chief Executive, Labour Relations Commission : [video](#)
Bill Roche, UCD (University College Dublin) : [Presentation](#) (.ppt, 99 KB) and [video](#)
Paul Teague, QUB (Queens University Belfast) : [Presentation](#) (.ppt, 457 KB) and [video](#)
Richard Saundry, UCLan (University of Central Lancashire) : [Presentation](#) (.ppt, 55 KB) and [video](#)
[Professor Paul Latreille](#), Sheffield University : [Presentation](#) (.ppt, 55 KB)

Seminar 5: 5th June 2013 – University of Warwick



The changing face of regulation – rights, resolution, fairness and efficiency

There has been a shift in the main source of regulation at the workplace. As collective bargaining has receded, the legal framework has come to provide the main focus of policy attention, with implications for conflict articulation and resolution. The current policy emphasis is on reducing the scale and scope of regulation in order to reduce perceived 'burdens' on employers and spur economic growth. This seminar will explore the implications of changing forms of regulation and examine key tensions between notions of fairness, equity and efficiency which underpin the current policy debate.



Speakers

[For a review of the day written by the organisers please see the attached paper](#) (.pdf 319KB)

[David Coats](#) : Work Matters Consulting
[Presentation slides](#) (.pdf, 478 KB)

Prof Hugh Collins : London school of economics
[Presentation slides](#) (.pdf, 136 KB)

Prof Sue Corby : University of Greenwich
[Presentation slides](#) (.pdf, 743 KB); [2nd part of presentation](#) and [handout](#) (.pdf, 538 KB)

Mike Emmott : CIPD

[Prof Edmund Heery](#) : Cardiff University
[Presentation slides](#) (.pdf, 119 KB)

[Fiona Hobbs](#) (.doc, 13KB): EEF

[Prof Paul Latreille](#) : University of Sheffield
[Presentation slides](#) (.pdf, 743 KB); [2nd part of presentation](#) and [handout](#) (.pdf, 538 KB)

[Matthew Percival](#) : CBI

Dr Melanie Simms : University of Warwick
[Presentation slides](#) (.pdf, 258KB)

[Ed Sweeney](#) : Acas

[Hannah Reed](#) (.doc, 22KB) : TUC

[Stephen Williams](#) (.doc, 25KB): Acas
[Presentation slides](#) (.pdf, 104 KB)

Programme

The [draft schedule](#) for the day is now available. (.doc, 63KB)

Travel

Please see the [University of Warwick](#) for travel information, more detailed information will be available shortly.

Bursaries

There are a small number of travel bursaries available for students and Early Career Researchers (ECRs). Each bursary is a maximum of £100, and receipts will need to be submitted for reimbursement. Travel and/ or accommodation costs are allowed. You are expected to make the most economic arrangements practical.

Each recipient will be expected to write a short piece on the seminar they attended for dissemination. This can be on anything about the series perhaps 300 words on a presentation they found particularly interesting, or how the seminar will influence their research.

Booking

To register your interest in this seminar please email Workplaceconflictseminars@uclan.ac.uk
For information on this seminar or the series as a whole please contact
Workplaceconflictseminars@uclan.ac.uk

Does Lean Thinking and HRM connect in UK higher education?

Emma Thirkell and Ian Ashman recently published their findings on the introduction of Lean Thinking in UK Higher Education. From its origins in the automotive industry, Lean Thinking is increasingly being seen as a solution to problems of efficiency and quality in other industries and sectors. In recent years attempts have been made to transfer Lean principles and practice to the higher education sector, with indications of mixed consequences and debate over its suitability. Their paper contributes to the debate by drawing evidence from 34 interviews conducted across two UK universities that have implemented Lean in some of their activities, and they pay particular attention to the role of the human resource function in facilitating its introduction. The findings suggest that there are problems in understanding, communicating and transferring Lean Thinking in the higher education context; despite human resource systems being vital facets of Lean, human resource professionals are excluded from participation; and as a consequence the depth and breadth of Lean application in the two institutions is very limited.

Emma Thirkell & Ian Ashman (2014) Lean towards learning: connecting Lean Thinking and human resource management in UK higher education, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, (online before print)

The full paper can be accessed [here](#) (free for a limited period and then via subscription)

Student Employee of the Year

A student from the Lancashire Business School has won the student employer of the year award.

Hayley Cooling, a marketing assistant for the Institute for Research into Organisations, Work and Employment (iROWE), was the winner of UCLan's On Campus Student Employer of the Year award.

Hayley was nominated for the award by her iROWE colleagues. Gemma Wibberley, of the Institute said: "she contradicted stereotypes, exceeded expectations and inspired senior colleagues. The Institute team 'are incredibly proud of her results and the substantial positive impact she has made' and for confounding low expectations of student staff "

Hayley said: "I feel very honoured to have been nominated for the award and I'm extremely pleased to have won."

iROWE staff are very proud of Hayley's achievement, who beat over 20 other candidates across the University. The award is a great achievement, and well deserved recognition of her hard work. Hayley will now go on to be nominated in regional and national heats in the Student Employee of the year awards (SEOTY) organised by National Association of Student Employment services (NASES).

New downsizing research makes an impact

The launch of Ian Ashman's latest Acas funded research on 'downsizing envoys' has made a big impact.

This study builds on Ian's previous research paper which explores the experiences of public sector employees who have been given the task of delivering the bad news of downsizing decisions face to face with the victims and then deal with the immediate repercussions – labelled downsizing envoys

The evidence from that paper is combined here with data gathered from envoys in the private sector in order to identify the similarities and differences in the experiences of envoys between the two sectors.

The impact of the paper, entitled '[Downsizing envoys: A public/private sector comparison](#)', has had far reaching benefits. This research has informed new Acas policy on [redundancy handling](#).

Ian's findings have also formed a paper for practitioners in [People Management](#), the CIPD magazine and a further investigation by the [Sunday Times](#). His research also inspired an interview with [BBC Radio Lancashire](#).

The research was also featured in both local and national press and HR publications including: London Evening Standard, HR Review, Bourne local, Lancashire Evening Post, Chorley Guardian, Burnley Express, Fleetwood News, Garstang Courier and Wigan Today.

One of CMI's Management Articles of the Year

Dr Ian Ashman's article, "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.

Ian attended the award event held at the British Library Conference Centre in January. He 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."

Ashman, I. (2013), *The Face-to-face Delivery of Downsizing Decisions in UK Public Sector Organizations*, *Public Management Review*, is scheduled for publication on the Taylor and Francis iFirst early view website in April.

The problem of unpaid work for domiciliary careworkers

The book was launched at the International Labour Process Conference at Rutgers University, USA, 18th march. 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 domiciliary workers 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.

Introducing mediation: An alternative approach to dispute resolution in the workplace and in a legal context

Interesting in knowing more about how mediation can resolve disputes in your workplace?

Interested in understanding how mediation can also offer an alternative to expensive litigation cases?

For law professionals the opportunity to gain 8 CPD points for the year

This new workshop will help delegates to better understand the key issues of:

- Why conflict occurs
- How mediation can help us resolve conflict
- When mediation may be a better route than more confrontational approaches to litigation
- The tools and techniques needed to effectively mediate
 - On behalf of clients
 - Between colleagues in the workplace

For further information on the workshop, please contact Tony Bennett ajwbennett@uclan.ac.uk

Workplace mediation: The participant experience

New iROWE research investigates the perceptions and experiences of participants in workplace mediation. The project explored why and when disputants participated in mediation; their views of the effectiveness of mediation and the sustainability of outcomes. It also examined the broader impact of mediation on the individuals and organisations involved.

This research provides crucial insights into mediation processes and outcomes. While it identifies a number of positive benefits, it also underlines the impact on those who participate and points to the complexity of the issues that mediators confront and the ambiguity of consequent outcomes. In doing this it suggests that organisations and mediation providers need to ensure that participants are supported and also that careful consideration is given to when mediation is used and how it is designed. Furthermore, this small study highlights the need for more detailed research which not only seeks to assess the longer term sustainability and consequences of mediated settlements but also explores the way in which mediation interacts with conventional disputes procedures and broader processes of conflict management.

For further information about the project please contact Gemma Wibberley gwibberley@uclan.ac.uk

This research was kindly sponsored by Acas and the report is now available on their website: <http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/t/j/Workplace-mediation-the-participant-experience.pdf>

Award winning teaching and learning resources on conflict management

Congratulations to iROWE's Tony Bennett, who came 2nd in the 2013 Teaching and Learning Prize Winners from the internationally renowned University Forum for Human Resource Development (UFHRD).

His learning and conflict resources will be invaluable for managers seeking an alternative way of successfully managing conflict in the workplace. Tony's materials are available as below:

- 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/>
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iROWE staff present at the Management History Research Group (MHRG) conference

'The MHRG is an annual, friendly and informal gathering concerning management history (broadly defined), including ideas affecting the management history community of researchers' (Bill Cooke, Lancaster University Management School). This year there were keynote contributions from Professor Gibson Burrell (Leicester University) and Professor John Wilson (Newcastle University)

iROWE was very pleased to provide two speakers at this important international event that showcases the on-going and increasing relevance of management and business history for today's practitioners and researchers. Both papers were well-received by delegates.

Ruth Slater delivered a critical reflection on the long, complex and challenging process CIPD undertook in order to achieve Chartered status entitled 'A clash of intent: The case of the Privy Council and the occupational association for personnel management in Britain, the Institute of Personnel Management (IPM) 1968-2000.

Tony Bennett's paper reflected on the lessons for management through a historical analysis of the creation of UNISON, twenty years ago this month, in terms of the drivers for, and challenges and outcomes of merging three organisations in the creation of a union with over 1.3 million members.

iROWE's ESRC seminar series makes the news

iROWE's ESRC seminar series 'Reframing Resolution - Managing Conflict and Resolving Individual Employment Disputes in the Contemporary Workplace' was featured in Personnel Today this week.

Ed Sweeney (Acas) and Richard Saundry (iROWE, Plymouth University) discussed the key topics that emerged from our recent series. They argued that "conflict is an inevitable feature of organisational life, but too often it is pushed down the business agenda". In particular they called for senior managers to recognise the problems that disputes can cause in their organisations, and to take action to enable early and effective resolution of disputes.

From the series, strategic steps organisations can take to improve their handling of workplace conflict were identified, such as: "ensure that conflict resolution is seen as a core competency for managers"; "invest in new and innovative approaches to managing conflict"; and "building positive relationships with trade unions and/or employee representatives"

The article "Is it time to see conflict management as a strategic issue?" is available now from Personnel Today, and was released 1st October 2013.

iROWE research on workplace conflict features in Acas's 'Employment Relations Comment'

The latest Acas 'Employment Relations Comment' explores iROWE research into workplace conflict.

Richard Saundry and Gemma Wibberley compiled a thematic analysis of their Acas funded case studies into individual disputes and their resolution at work, which has just been published.

Adrian Wakeling, Acas Senior Policy Adviser cites the research to highlight the challenges for frontline managers in handling workplace conflict and the need for an improvement in how organisations resolve disputes.

For the Acas 'Employment Relations Comment' piece: Wakeling, A. (2014) Plugging the confidence gap? Changing perceptions of conflict at work, Acas, May
<http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/0/1/ER-Comment-conflict-at-work.pdf>

For the thematic analysis: Saundry, R. and Wibberley, G. (2014) Workplace Dispute Resolution and the Management of Individual Conflict — A Thematic Analysis of Five Case Studies Acas: 06/14,
<http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/q/a/0614-Workplace-Dispute-Resolution-Thematic-Review.pdf>

Workplace mediation in Higher Education: A sectoral approach to dispute resolution

The findings of a new study of workplace mediation in the university sector by Tony Bennett are discussed in the latest issue of Personnel Review. Interviews were conducted with a cross section of key players in mediation from a sample of universities in the North of England.

The key findings of the research suggest that whilst there are many similarities with other organisations in terms of the rationale for and management of mediation in the workplace, there are also some sector specific variables that inform that practice. These include:

- The ethos of the sector,
- The nature of the academic labour process
- A propensity to network with others within the sector