



**Division of Economic and Financial Studies  
Department of Business**

# **HRM201**

## **Comparative & International Employment Relations**

***UNIT OUTLINE***  
***Semester 2, 2008***

**Unit Convenor: Dr Angie Knox**

Prerequisites: Entry to BHRM; HRM107

**Students in this unit should read the Unit Outline carefully at the beginning of the semester. It contains important information about the unit. If anything in it is unclear, please consult the Unit Convenor.**

## **ABOUT THIS UNIT**

HRM201 is a 3 credit point unit.

This unit examines employment relations systems across a number of different countries and analyses international issues facing employers and their employees. We explore for example, employment relations in Australia, the UK, USA, Germany and Japan. In addition, we consider a range of challenges emerging internationally including: diversity management, language, behaviour and sex-typing as well as issues regarding outsourcing and off-shoring. While examining these themes, we will draw out any points of convergence and/or divergence across nation states and develop a greater understanding of the implications of these processes.

## **TEACHING STAFF**

Convenor: Dr Angie Knox  
Email: aknox@efs.mq.edu.au  
Room: E4A 633  
Consultation: Friday 11 am-1 pm

## **CLASSES**

Lecture/Seminar Time: Friday 1-4 pm in W5C 320

You are expected to attend these classes. iLecture will be available but it is preferable that you attend each class in person. If for unavoidable reasons you miss a class, it is your responsibility to do the necessary work that was covered in class in your own time. Individual lectures and/or tutorials will **not** be conducted in order for you to catch up.

## **REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND/OR MATERIALS**

Bamber, G., Lansbury, R. and Wailes, N. (2004). International and Comparative Employment Relations (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

HRM201 Reading Pack.

The following journals contain many articles in the area of employment relations, which may be useful:

Industrial Relations Journal

British Journal of Industrial Relations

International Journal of Human Resource Management

Employee Relations

Journal of Industrial Relations

Human Resource Management Journal

## **UNIT WEB PAGE**

Online: HRM201. You can access iletecture, powerpoint slides, course outline, assessment information and other learning aids through this site.

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The learning outcomes of this unit focus on gaining:

- an understanding of employment relations systems across a range of countries.
- the ability to analyse areas of convergence and/divergence across these countries.
- an understanding of the major parties involved in national systems of employment relations and how they influence employment outcomes.
- an ability to analyse policy debates in employment relations.
- be aware of, and able to assess, current issues and trends in employment relations.

In addition to the discipline-based learning objectives, all academic programs at Macquarie seek to develop students' generic skills in a range of areas. One of the aims of this unit is that students develop skills in the following:

- communication skills
- taking responsibility for your own learning
- critical analysis skills
- information literacy
- research and inquiry

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY**

This unit is taught using lectures plus seminars and other learning activities. Students are expected to read in advance of lectures and participate in the learning process.

## **LECTURE PROGRAM**

**Lecture 1** Introduction to Comparative and International Employment Relations  
Date: Friday August 8

**Lecture 2** Employment Relations in Australia  
Date: Friday August 15

**Lecture 3** Employment Relations in the UK (plus CDC)  
Date: Friday August 22

**Lecture 4** Employment Relations in the US (plus CDC)  
Date: Friday August 29

**Lecture 5** Employment Relations in Germany  
Date: Friday September 5

**Lecture 6** Employment Relations in Japan  
Date: Friday September 12

**Lecture 7** Diversity at Work I  
Date: Friday September 19

### **ASSESSMENT DUE 19<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER**

**\*\*\*MID SEMESTER BREAK\*\*\***

**Lecture 8** Diversity at Work II  
Date: Friday October 10

**Lecture 9** Language, Behaviour and Sex-typing  
Date: Friday October 17

**Lecture 10** Outsourcing and Off-shoring  
Date: Friday October 24

**Lecture 11** International HRM I  
Date: Friday October 31

**Lecture 12** International HRM II  
Date: Friday November 7

**Lecture 13** Course Review  
Date: Friday November 14

### **EXAM**

## **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Knowledge and understanding of comparative and international employment relations is assessed using a combination of assessment pieces. The assessment components are: a mid-semester task, a cultural briefing, and a final exam.

### **Mid-Semester Assessment (worth 40%)**

This assessment will consist of a 'take home task' that focuses on appraising your knowledge and understanding of the content covered during the first half of the course (week 1 to week 6). It will consist of short answer questions and it is to be completed in your own time and submitted to ERIC by the due date (19th September). You will receive a copy of the task 10 days in advance of the due date, as well as any additional instructions. You must abide by the stipulations regarding the maximum length of your answers, as detailed in the task. You will be penalised if you do not follow these instructions.

Due Date: 19<sup>th</sup> September 2008  
The assessment will be marked out of 40.

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, late submissions will be penalised by deduction of marks at the rate of 10 per cent per day.

### **A Cultural Briefing (worth 20%)**

While this cultural briefing forms part of the exam, you will have time to prepare it during the semester.

Business is increasingly international in scope. Many problems can arise when we attempt to conduct business in foreign countries if we do not have an awareness of the local culture and customs. The obvious solution is education and training, including briefings provided by the firm's HR department, for expatriates before they are sent on overseas assignments. Academic research indicates that this type of pre-departure training is essential and firms should develop effective policies to better manage their expatriate staff.

Select one of the following foreign countries: the Netherlands, Switzerland, Singapore or Brazil, and prepare a briefing that discusses the cultures and customs of that country. The briefing would be given to staff preparing to complete a work assignment in that country as part of their pre-departure training. Your briefing should be based on relevant academic findings and it should include information that would be important for a business person to know if they were living and working in that country. You *may* also include information regarding traditions, history, living conditions and cost of living, clothing and housing requirements/standards, drug and alcohol laws, and the political and economic climate. You might think of other useful factors too.

In addition to academic references, you can use travel guides and internet sites, such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO), The Office of Economic and Community Development (OECD), the Consulate of the country chosen, Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Hofstede's (2001) cultural classification of 98 countries (<http://www.harzing.com/living.htm>) and you can think of others.

Your briefing should be approximately 800-1000 words or three pages in length (hand-written, so don't get too carried away...) and it will form one of the exam questions ! You will have opportunities to work on your briefing in class.

### **Final Examination (worth 60% in total, including 20% for cultural briefing)**

The final exam will be held in the formal examination period. The examination will be "closed book". Further details will be given later in the semester regarding format and content.

The University examination period in Second Half Year 2008 is from 19 November to 5 December.

You are expected to present yourself for examination at the time and place designated in the University Examination Timetable. The timetable will be available in Draft form approximately eight weeks before the commencement of the examinations and in Final form approximately four weeks before the commencement of the examinations.

<http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au/exam>

The only exception to not sitting an examination at the designated time is because of documented illness or unavoidable disruption. In these circumstances you may wish to consider applying for Special Consideration. Information about unavoidable disruption and the special consideration process is available at <http://www.reg.mq.edu.au/Forms/APSCon.pdf>

If a Supplementary Examination is granted as a result of the Special Consideration process the examination will be scheduled after the conclusion of the official examination period.

You are advised that it is Macquarie University policy not to set early examinations for individuals or groups of students. All students are expected to ensure that they are available until the end of the teaching semester, which is the final day of the official examination period.

## **ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES**

Assessments completed during the semester will be marked and returned to students 3 weeks after submission. Feedback will include an evaluation sheet indicating how the assignment rated against the marking criteria and specific comments from the marker.

Special consideration will only apply to cases of serious illness or misadventure. Applications must be made through student administration channels.

Extensions will only be granted in cases of serious illness or misadventure and claims need to be supported by documentation. Students must apply for an extension from the lecturer in charge BEFORE the assessment is due.

## **PLAGIARISM**

The University defines plagiarism in its rules: "Plagiarism involves using the work of another person and presenting it as one's own." Plagiarism is a serious breach of the University's rules and carries significant penalties. You must read the University's practices and procedures on plagiarism. These can be found in the *Handbook of Undergraduate Studies* or on the web at: <http://www.student.mq.edu.au/plagiarism/>

The policies and procedures explain what plagiarism is, how to avoid it, the procedures that will be taken in cases of suspected plagiarism, and the penalties if you are found guilty. Penalties may include a deduction of marks, failure in the unit, and/or referral to the University Discipline Committee.

## **UNIVERSITY POLICY ON GRADING**

Academic Senate has a set of guidelines on the distribution of grades across the range from fail to high distinction. Your final result will include one of these grades plus a standardised numerical grade (SNG).

On occasion your raw mark for a unit (i.e., the total of your marks for each assessment item) may not be the same as the SNG which you receive. Under the Senate guidelines, results may be scaled to ensure that there is a degree of comparability across the university, so that units with the same past performances of their students should achieve similar results.

It is important that you realise that the policy does not require that a minimum number of students are to be failed in any unit. In fact it does something like the opposite, in requiring examiners to explain their actions if more than 20% of students fail in a unit.

The process of scaling does not change the order of marks among students. A student who receives a higher raw mark than another will also receive a higher final scaled mark.

For an explanation of the policy see

<http://www.mq.edu.au/senate/MQUonly/Issues/Guidelines2003.doc> or  
<http://www.mq.edu.au/senate/MQUonly/Issues/detailedguidelines.doc>.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Macquarie University provides a range of Academic Student Support Services. Details of these services can be accessed at <http://www.student.mq.edu.au>.

## REFERENCING GUIDELINES

### Citing References

1. Citations to references in the essay should be as follows:

Blyton and Turnbull (1992) argue that human resource management ...

or

Recent developments in human resource management (Blyton & Turnbull, 1992) ...

2. When there are **more than two** authors, the first citation should be

Deery, Iverson and Erwin (1994) argue that organisational commitment...

Subsequent citations should be: Deery et al. (1994) assert that organisational commitment ...

or

The importance of organisational commitment (Deery, Iverson & Erwin, 1994) ...

Subsequent citations should be: The effect of industrial relations climate ... (Deery et al., 1994)

...

3. When there are **two or more** citations within the same parentheses, the order is alphabetized, e.g.,

The recruitment and retention of employees is fundamental to organisations (Deery & Walsh, 1999; Gahan, 1992; Jones, 1990; Smith, 1989).

### Quotes

4. When quoting always provide page numbers, e.g.,

"It is assumed that both workers and management share a common objective" (Deery & Walsh, 1999, p. 5).

or

Deery and Walsh (1999) "assumed that both workers and management share a common objective" (p. 5).

### Secondary Sources

5. When you do not have access to the original material that has been cited in another's work, the citation is:

Hyman and Fryer (1975, cited in Deery & Walsh, 1999) argue that rather than there being symmetry in the distribution of power ...

In the References only the actual work read is included e.g., in the above example Deery and Walsh would be included and Hyman and Fryer (1975) would be excluded from the References.

### References

6. The reference list appears on a separate page at the end of the essay and includes all references cited in the essay. They are listed in alphabetical order, by the first author's surname, with the title, year of publication, title, and publishing information provided, e.g.,



- Abbott, J., De Cieri, H., & Iverson, R.D. (1998). Costing turnover: Implications of work/family conflict at management level. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, 36 (1), 25-43.
- Deery, S.J., Iverson, R.D., & Erwin, P.J. (1994). Predicting organisational and union commitment: The effect of industrial relations climate. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 32 (4), 581-597.
- Guest, D.E. (1992). Employee commitment and control. In J. F. Hartley & G.M. Stephenson (Eds). *Employment relations* (pp. 111-135). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Young, W.R., McHugh, P.P., & Reed, C.S. (1992). A cross-national comparison of company and union commitment: A meta-analysis. *Proceedings of the 44th Annual Meeting, Industrial Relations Research Association*. WI: IRRA.

Note: Students can **underline** rather than **italicize** titles if an italicized font is not available.