

IRHR2010: Introduction to Industrial Relations

2024



MISSION: To develop a unique business school identity which is distinctive in the marketplace and provides a clear value proposition for students. This will be achieved by embedding the themes of entrepreneurship and innovation, digitalisation and data within our programs and embracing sustainability, work integrated learning and a commitment to social justice.

OVERVIEW

Course Description

The effective management of complex employment relationships is a critical function in contemporary organisations. This course introduces industrial relations, delineating its essential concepts. It considers the historical dimensions of work and the employment relationship, and the origins and the development of industrial relations up to the present time. Particular attention is given to the contemporary structures and characteristics of employee representation, management, and employers' associations. This is complemented by an examination of the role of the state, and how recent systemic changes affect state regulation and the workplace. The problem-based learning structure allows you to develop your analytical and communication skills.



Sustainable Development Goals

Contact Hours

Integrated Learning Session

Face to Face, On Campus
Two (2) hour(s) per Week for Full Term

Students are expected to complete 4 hours of guided learning via online preparation, lectures, interactive workshops, tutorials, discussion groups or self-directed learning, and an additional 6 hours of independent study per week.

Unit Weighting Workload

10

Students are required to spend on average 120-140 hours of effort (contact and non-contact) including assessments per 10 unit course.

Please refer to the course CANVAS site for details of teaching staff for ALL course offerings. The primary contact for courses is the Course Coordinator, whose details are listed on the course CANVAS site.

Student Consultation

A minimum of one (1) hour of consultation per week. Please see course CANVAS site for details of time and location.

Course Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate descriptive knowledge of the field of industrial relations;
2. Apply the essential concepts of industrial relations and their interrelationship at the personal, organisational and national levels;
3. Recognise and consider the social, historical and equity issues within industrial relations;
4. Investigate solutions to industrial relations problems based on research and assessment of current practices; and
5. Communicate your knowledge of industrial relations in written and verbal formats appropriate to both audience and purpose.

COURSES OUTCOME

ASSESSMENT DETAILS

This course has **3** assessments. Each assessment is described in more detail in the sections below:

	Assessment Name	Due Date	Involvement	Weighting	Learning Outcomes
1	Brief Reflective Essays	Essay 1: Sunday of Week 3 by 11:59 pm Essay 2: Sunday of Week 10 by 11:59 pm	Individual	20%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2	Problem-based Analytical Report	Thursday of Week 7 by 11:59 pm	Individual	40%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
3	Final Examination	Formal Exam Period	Individual	40%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Please note: students are advised that all assessments must be submitted in English. Assessment items not submitted in English will receive a mark of zero.

Results of individual assessment items and final results, including those provided via the Learning Management System (LMS) are 'unofficial results' until they are confirmed as finalised by the School Assessment Body and the Head of School or delegate. Finalised results are released directly to students on the Fully Graded Date of the relevant Semester/Trimester.

Time referenced is time in Newcastle NSW

Late Submissions	The mark for an assessment item submitted after the designated time on the due date, without an approved extension of time, will be reduced by 10% of the possible maximum mark for that assessment item for each day or part day that the assessment item is late. Note: this applies equally to week and weekend days.
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Assessment 1 – Brief Reflective Essays

Assessment Type	Short Answer / Reflective Assignment
Purpose	These brief essays assess students' understanding of the lecture material and required readings, and their ability to relate these to real-world events and their own experiences. There are two essays to complete. Each is worth 10 marks, for a total weighting of 20%.
Description	There are two essays to complete. Each is worth 10 marks, for a total weighting of 20%.
Weighting	20% (2 x 10%)
Length	600 words each
Due Date	Essay 1: Sunday – Week 3 by 11:59 pm Essay 2: Sunday – Week 10 by 11:59 pm
Submission Method	Online via CANVAS
Assessment Criteria	Each essay is marked out of 10, based on how effectively it: 1. Answers the question; 2. Reflects on real employment relations events and experiences; 3. Incorporates ideas from weekly workshops and required readings; and 4. Uses information and evidence to develop and support an argument
Return Method	Online
Feedback Provided	Marks via Grades, individual comments via Turnitin and general comments via CANVAS.

Assessment 2 – Problem-based Analytical Report

Assessment Type	Case Study / Problem Based Learning (PBL) Assignment
Purpose	This assignment assesses students' ability to apply theoretical principles and use empirical research findings to investigate and provide solutions to a real-world employment relations problem.
Description	Students draw on and refine their skills in research, critical thinking and problem solving to investigate a scenario. They then communicate in writing the relevance of the research and theory and formulate recommendations for plausible solutions.
Format:	See detailed instructions provided on course CANVAS site.
Weighting	40%
Length	2500 words
Due Date	Thursday – Week 7 by 11:59pm
Submission Method	Online via Turnitin (CANVAS)
Assessment Criteria	The following marking criteria will apply: 1. Scoping of the issue: 8 marks (20% of assignment total) 2. Substantive content: 12 marks (30%) 3. Quality of argument: 20 marks (50%)

	4. Possible penalties if essential requirements not met (max penalty: -6 marks) Additional detail provided on course CANVAS site.
Return Method Feedback Provided	Online Written comments on marked papers and general comments in weekly class workshops.

Assessment 3 – Final Examination

Assessment Type	Formal Examination
Purpose	To test students' cumulative, intermediate knowledge of industrial relations.
Description	Through a mix of short-answer and essay-style questions, students will demonstrate their knowledge of and ability to critically analyse a range of industrial relations issues studied in this course. Note: Exam is two (2) hours long. Comprises a combination of questions that require short answers and longer essay-style answers. The exam questions are based on information provided in the CANVAS course materials and discussed in our weekly class workshops. Further information: A mock exam paper will be posted on the course CANVAS site and additional exam guidance will be given in the final workshop (Week 13). This course has a RESTRICTED OPEN BOOK examination. A memory aid is permitted. The memory aid is a single double sided A4 sheet of handwritten or typed notes for use during the examination. Note: memory aids must be left on the examination table and cannot be removed from the examination venue.
Weighting	40%
Length	120 minutes
Due Date	Formal Exam Period
Submission Method	Formal Examination
Assessment Criteria	Not Applicable
Return Method	Not Returned
Feedback Provided	No Feedback. Examination scripts will not be returned to students. Final examination scripts will be made available for review by students, upon request, in a controlled and monitored setting. Students are required to make requests, directly to the relevant course coordinator. Completed examination scripts are kept by the Newcastle Business School for a period of six (6) months only, from the relevant fully graded date. Requests made after the six (6) month period cannot be considered.

SYLLABUS

Course Content

The syllabus incorporates five main areas: the scope of industrial relations as a field of study; management; employee representation; the role of the state and regulatory processes; and determinants of industrial relations outcomes. Contemporary Australian examples are central to the course. Historical and international examples of industrial relations structures and processes are also used.

Course Materials

Required Text:

Bray, M., Waring, P., Cooper, R., & Macneil, J. (2018). *Employment relations: Theory and practice* (4th ed.). McGraw-Hill.

ISBN: 9781743765586

Please refer to the course CANVAS site for details of additional recommended texts.

SCHEDULE

Week	Topic	Class Preparation	Workshop Activities
1	Introduction: What is Employment Relations?	Relevant details will be provided each week in advance of the workshops, under the Announcements section of CANVAS site.	Course Overview and Introduction. Workshop activities on What is Employment Relations?
2	Studying Employment Relations: analytical tools & values		Workshop activities on Studying Employment Relations.
3	Industrial Conflict		Workshop activities on Industrial Conflict. Introduction to Assessment 2: the Problem-based Analytical Report.
4	PARTIES: Management		Brief Reflective Essay 1 due: Sunday of Week 3 by 11:59 pm Workshop activities on Management.
5	PARTIES: Employee Representation		Analysing and writing Assessment 2: the Problem-based Analytical Report.
6	PARTIES: The State		Workshop activities on Employee Representation.
7	Major Assignment Preparation		Workshop activities on The State. Problem-based Analytical Report due: Thursday of Week 7 by 11:59 pm
Semester 1 recess			
8	PROCESSES: Awards and the Safety Net		Workshop activities on Awards and the Safety Net.
9	PROCESSES: Collective Agreement-making		Workshop activities on Collective Agreement-making.
10	PROCESSES: Managerial Unilateralism and Individual Contracting		Workshop activities on Managerial Unilateralism and Individual Contracting. Brief Reflective Essay 2 due: Sunday of Week 10 by 11:59 pm
11	PROCESSES: Statutory Regulation		Workshop activities on Statutory Regulation.
12	OUTCOMES: Employment Relations and Performance		Workshop activities on Employment Relations and Performance.
13	Course Review and Guidance for the Final Exam		

If a lecture/class is scheduled on a public holiday, a make-up lecture may be announced by the course coordinator on the course CANVAS site.

CONTACTS

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PSB Academy Enquiries

Log your question or request to the PSB Program Executives at the following website:
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Grading Scheme

This course is graded as follows:

Range of Marks	Grade	Description
85-100	High Distinction (HD)	Outstanding standard indicating comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an outstanding level of academic achievement; mastery of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
75-84	Distinction (D)	Excellent standard indicating a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a very high level of academic ability; sound development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
65-74	Credit (C)	Good standard indicating a high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a high level of academic achievement; reasonable development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
50-64	Pass (P)	Satisfactory standard indicating an adequate knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an adequate level of academic achievement; satisfactory development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
0-49	Fail (FF)	Failure to satisfactorily achieve learning outcomes. If all compulsory course components are not completed the mark will be zero. A fail grade may also be awarded following disciplinary action.

*Skills are those identified for the purposes of assessment task(s).

Communication Methods	Communication methods used in this course include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CANVAS Course Site: Students will receive communications via the posting of content or announcements on the CANVAS course site. - Email: Students will receive communications via their student email account. - Face to Face: Communication will be provided via face to face meetings or supervision.
Course Evaluation	Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the University for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement.
Oral Interviews (Vivas)	As part of the evaluation process of any assessment item in this course an oral examination (viva) may be conducted. The purpose of the oral examination is to verify the authorship of the material submitted in response to the assessment task. The oral examination will be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in the Oral Examination (viva) Procedure . In cases where the oral examination reveals the assessment item may not be the student's own work the case will be dealt with under the Student Conduct Rule .
Academic Misconduct	All students are required to meet the academic integrity standards of the University. These standards reinforce the importance of integrity and honesty in an academic environment. Academic Integrity policies apply to all students of the University in all modes of study and in all locations. For the Student Academic Integrity Policy, refer to https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=35 .
Adverse Circumstances	The University acknowledges the right of students to seek consideration for the impact of allowable adverse circumstances that may affect their performance in assessment item(s). Applications for special consideration due to adverse circumstances will be made using the online Adverse Circumstances system where: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the assessment item is a major assessment item; or 2. the assessment item is a minor assessment item and the Course Co-ordinator has specified in the Course Outline that students may apply the online Adverse Circumstances system; 3. you are requesting a change of placement; or 4. the course has a compulsory attendance requirement. Before applying you must refer to the Adverse Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Procedure available at: https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=236
Important Policy Information	The Help button in the Canvas Navigation menu contains helpful information for using the Learning Management System. Students should familiarise themselves with the policies and procedures at https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/no-room-for/policies-and-procedures that support a safe and respectful environment at the University.

This course outline was approved by the Head of School. No alteration of this course outline is permitted without Head of School approval. If a change is approved, students will be notified and an amended course outline will be provided in the same manner as the original.

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