Unit 20: Employee Relations

Unit code    A/508/0532
Unit level  5
Credit value  15

Introduction
The aim of this unit is to develop students’ understanding of the extent to which employee relationships impact on stakeholders who are internal and external to an organisation. Students will also be in a position to judge the possible outcome of employee relationship situations which will support an effective conflict avoidance intervention. Students will develop the skills required to understand the models, practice and process of employee relations in a broad context.

On successful completion of this unit students will have the confidence to contribute to the effective management of the employment relationship in a number of situations and context. Students will be in a strong position to advise employers on matters such as equality and diversity, contemporary developments in employee relations and conflict avoidance.

Learning Outcomes
By the end of this unit a student will be able to:

1  Apply the principles of employee relations in an organisational context.
2  Determine appropriate advice relating to rights, duties and obligations of the employment relationship.
3  Analyse the role of different stakeholders who support positive employment relationships.
4  Evaluate the broader impact of negative and positive employee relationships.
Essential Content

LO1  Apply the principles of employee relations in an organisational context

*Employee relations:*
As a principle and as a concept. The value of positive employee relations as opposed to the potential negative impact of negative employee relations.

*Power and politics in organisations:*
Where does the power really lie?
How can this be determined?
Types of power, including expert power and referent power.
The damaging effects of ‘office politics’.

*Legislation and law:*
The fundamentals of employment law and their relationship to employee relations.
Contracts, terms and conditions of employment.
The impact of legislation on human capital development and the free movement of trade.

*Key contemporary trends in employee relations:*
Contextualised and contemporary, national and/or regional trends.

LO2  Determine appropriate advice relating to rights, duties and obligations of the employment relationship

*The rights of employees and the rights of employers:*
Consider how both could be beneficial to the employment relationship.
Consider how they are legally binding and the implications if the law/legislation is broken.

*The psychological contract:*
Consider the unwritten expectations which could be based on culture, values and/or ethics.
How important is the psychological contract to employees and employers?

*Developing positive employee relations:*
Making the work-life balance a key principle for an organisation.
Consider opportunities to improve work-life balance through flexible working or annualised hours.
Protecting the rights of employees:
Ensuring duties and obligations are met.
Consider the role of unions and collective bargaining.

LO3 Analyse the role of different stakeholders who support positive employment relationships

Determining positive employee relationships:
The perception of this will vary between stakeholders. Employees are key and should be the main concern of an employer.

Effective relationship management:
Understanding stakeholder expectations through a stakeholder analysis.
Positive employee engagement and involvement.
Seeing employees as partners.

LO4 Evaluate the broader impact of negative and positive employee relationships

Managing conflict:
How to identify conflict in the workplace.
Why does conflict exist?
Is all conflict bad?
Impact of negative relationships on employee motivation:
Examples would include, increased absenteeism, reduced productivity and/or increase in error rate.

Impact of positive relationships on employee motivation:
Examples would include, greater cooperation, increase in commitment and/or effective communications.

Employee welfare:
As a concept and as a concern. The unitary and pluralist perspectives of employee relations and their impact on employee welfare.
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Recommended Resources

Journals
Employee Relations: An International Journal
Employee Relations
Work, Employment and Society

Links
This unit links to the following related units:
Unit 3: Human Resource Management
Unit 7: Business Law
Unit 12: Organisational Behaviour
Unit 17: Understanding and Leading Change
Unit 29: Managing and Running a Small Business