

Employee Relations Newsletter: ER Matters

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Meet the Employee Relations (ER) team



[Visit the ER contact us page](#), for information on the ER team and our contact details.

What is ER



Dear All

Welcome to our third ER Matters Newsletter, and our first for 2020. Following the implementation of HR Transformation project in 2019 the Employee Relations Team have now been up and running for a year. One question we get asked is, what is Employee Relations (ER), what do we do and are we part of HR?

Yes, we are part of the HR Division and at Imperial the ER team is primarily concerned with conflict management. However, over the last twelve months we have been looking at alternative dispute resolution techniques and the team alongside member of the three recognised trade unions, Unison, Unite and UCU have attended a two-day workshop run by training company TCM to look at facilitated conversations and mediation to resolve workplace disputes and differences. Going forward, the aim of the ER team is to help resolve conflict at an early stage rather than the more traditional approach which tends to focus on the disciplinary and grievance procedure.

We have a drop in session on the first Friday of every month where you can pop along and meet one of the team to get advice and guidance and discuss any concerns you may have. This could range from, how do deal with sickness absence, poor performance or a capability issue to managing a formal flexible working request.

So, we look forward to seeing you and help you manage any concerns or difficulties you may have.

Ann Kelly
Head of Employee Relations

Training



Sickness Absence Workshops

The Employee Relations and Strategy teams have worked together to develop a Sickness Absence Workshop. This is a session designed to support line managers in managing attendance effectively and consistently.

Its aim is to provide line managers with the confidence to understand and apply a best practice approach in line with Imperial policies. The workshops are suitable for new and existing managers and are delivered jointly by the Employee Relations and Strategy teams. The session will last 1.5 hours and give access to the experts to ask any questions regarding managing attendance.

The dates are as follows:

Wednesday 05 February 2020, 10:00-12:00 at South Kensington campus

Wednesday 08 April 2020, 14:00-16:00 at South Kensington campus

Wednesday 10 June 2020, 14:00-16:00 at South Kensington campus

Wednesday 12 August 2020, 10:00-12:00 at South Kensington campus

Wednesday 14 October 2020, 10:00-12:00 at South Kensington campus

Wednesday 09 December 2020 (*times/venue to be confirmed*)

If you are interested in attending, please contact Jackie Rajalingham, j.rajalingham@imperial.ac.uk, to register your interest.

Investigation Officer Training sessions

During 2020, we will continue to run Investigation Officer training to provide managers with the knowledge and behaviours to undertake the role of Investigating Officer when dealing with disciplinary and grievance investigations.

The dates are as follows:

Thursday 23 January 2020, 14:00-16:00 at St Mary's campus

Thursday 26 March 2020 (*times/venue to be confirmed*)

Thursday 28 May 2020 (*times/venue to be confirmed*)

Thursday 30 July 2020 (*times/venue to be confirmed*)

Thursday 24 September 2020 (*times/venue to be confirmed*)

Thursday 26 November 2020 (*times/venue to be confirmed*)

For further information and to register your interest in these sessions, please email j.rajalingham@imperial.ac.uk

Also, please don't forget our **monthly drop in sessions** on the first Friday of every month when the Employee Relations team will be available to speak to you directly regarding your queries. As Ann mentions in her introduction, the scope of these sessions has widened from just sickness absence to now include any of your other ER queries from poor performance or capability issues to managing formal flexible working requests. You can find

the team on the 3rd Floor, Faculty Building, South Kensington campus, behind the red screens in front of the lifts.

Next session: **10:00 to 12:00 on Friday 07 February 2020.**

Sickness Absence ‘drop-in’ sessions



Do you have problems with staff sickness? Do you need advice and guidance on how to manage? Are you feeling stuck on the next steps or confused with the policy? Come along to our Sick Absence ‘Drop-in’ session and speak to an expert. The ER team will be available to speak to you directly regarding your sickness absence queries.

When: first Friday of every month

Next date: 7 February 2020

Time: 10:00 – 12:00

Location: Behind the red screens, in front of the lifts, 3rd floor, Faculty Building, South Kensington campus

Do bring along any information to help inform the discussion.

Did you know...



Employment Tribunals – Disclosure of Documents

As part of any Employment Tribunal claim, a preliminary hearing will make an order for disclosure. This means that we are provided with a deadline to exchange copies of all documents that we wish to refer to at the Employment Tribunal hearing; we therefore need to collect all the relevant material, review it and prepare to exchange.

General Guidance

The College is under a duty to disclose all documents which are in its possession or control which are relevant to the issues in the proceedings whether or not they help or hinders the case. To comply with its duty, the College must:

- make a reasonable search for relevant documents in its possession or under its control. If you are unsure whether a document is relevant or not you should let Employee Relations know and we can review it;

- carry out a reasonable search for both paper and electronic documents. To search your electronic document files, such as e-mails and computer records, it is useful to search for keywords or phrases, such as the Claimant’s name and job title. If you would like some assistance deciding which keyword searches to undertake, please contact us.

The College does not, however, need to disclose documents to which legal privilege is attached. The rules about privilege can be quite complex, so if you are not sure whether privilege applies to any documents you come across then we suggest that we review them for you.

The College should not destroy documents that are relevant to the case; therefore, doing so would put an individual in contempt of court. The destruction of documents is something which Tribunals take very seriously and could cause significant harm to a case, as the Tribunal may draw negative inferences.

You should keep all requests for disclosure, as well as anything you do in consequence, confidential.

Please:

- consider the content of your emails carefully
- only retain handwritten notes where necessary. If you have typed them, consider whether you really need to retain the handwritten version. If you are unsure, it is always better to discuss with Employee Relations.

Further information



View our webpage <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/contact-us/employee-relations/> for more information about the ER team.

Visit our HR webpages <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/> for general HR information.

Please contact the team if you have any questions or ideas. We would really appreciate your feedback as to what you would like to see in future editions.