

Who should attend

The conference will be of great interest to trade unionists, employment lawyers, personnel specialists, academics and students and those concerned with the development of public policy.

How to book

To reserve your place, complete the form below and send your cheque, made payable to IER.

CPD, NPP and EPP accreditation

This seminar counts for credit hours under the Law Society's Continuing Development Scheme and the General Council of the Bar's New Practitioners' Programme and Established Practitioners' Programme.

Additional Information

Details of nearby hotels are available from the office. Name changes are accepted up until the time of the event. Delegates who advise IER of their cancellation more than 15 working days in advance will receive a credit note with 10% deduction for administration.

How to get there

Nearest tubes: Russell Square, Goodge St and Tottenham Court Rd. Nearest stations: Kings Cross and St Pancras and Euston.

Cost

IER subscribers and members	£75.00
Trade unions	£90.00
Commercial	£220.00

Booking form

Please reserve ___ places at the employment act 2008 conference at £

Name _____

Address _____

email _____

Telephone _____

Organisation _____

Please invoice me/I enclose a cheque for £

Return completed form to IER, The People's Centre, 50-54 Mount Pleasant,
Liverpool L3 5SD. Tel 0151 702 6925 Fax 0151 702 6935.



the employment act 2008:

a critical overview

a conference

wednesday 29th April 2009

9:30am – 4:00pm

at the Clore Lecture Theatre,
Birkbeck College, 25 Torrington Square,
London WC1E 7JL

organised by
The Institute of Employment Rights



about the conference

The new Employment Act gained Royal Assent early in November 2008 and marks the largest piece of employment legislation in over 5 years.

While the new Employment Act offered a golden opportunity to raise standards of both individual and collective rights at work, labour movement expectations were dashed when several amendments calling for mild favourable changes to the Bill were derailed by the government.

So will the provisions of the Act take us nearer to fulfilling the 1997 promise of delivering fairness at work? Will the current framework of employment rights help unions meet the challenges facing workers in the hostile economic environment of 2009?

This conference will focus on three main areas of the Act: - trade union autonomy, dispute resolution and enforcement of employment rights.

1. Trade union autonomy: Section 19 of the Act- In 2007 the European Court of Human Rights in the case of *Aslef v UK* agreed that UK laws preventing unions from expelling members of the BNP, were in breach of Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights and in need of amendment. The Employment Act made changes to the law – but do those changes clarify or confuse the situation?

2. Dispute resolution and Tribunal Procedures: sections 1 - 7 of the Act- terminate the 3 step grievance and disciplinary procedures (introduced in 2004). With the erosion of the 3 step process, how does it impact on workers' rights to pursue claims to tribunal and any compensation they may be entitled to receive? What sort of process will replace the 3 steps and ensure compensation isn't reduced at the Employment Tribunal level?

3. Enforcement of employment rights: sections 8 through 18 of the Act- there are 3 areas of substantial concern in the area of enforcement- namely agency workers, the National Minimum Wage and redundancy payments. The latter issue attains significant importance due to the economic recession.

Come to our one-day conference and hear academics, lawyers and trade unionists explain and critique the new Employment Act.

programme

- 9:30 Registration and coffee
- 9:50 Introduction from Chair, Carolyn Jones, IER
- 10:00 **Session 1: Defending TU autonomy**
Principal speaker – Prof Keith Ewing, King's College London
- 10:20 Section 19: Paul Statham, Pattinson and Brewer
- 10:35 Aslef and its role in defining TU autonomy
John Usher, United Campaign
- 10:50 Questions
- 11:05 tea and coffee
- 11:15 **Critical appraisal – Part 1**
Missed opportunity: What's not in the Employment Act
John Hendy QC, Old Square Chambers
- 11:35 **Session 2: The New Dispute Resolution and Tribunal Procedures**
Principal speaker- Georgina Hirsch, Unite the Union
- 11:55 The implications for grievance procedures and damages
Steve Cottingham, O H Parsons
- 12:10 Employment Tribunals – TBC
- 12:25 Questions
- 12.40 LUNCH – not provided
- 1:40 **Workshops to examine issues in more depth**
1 - Autonomy – RMT on Wilson and Palmer – Speaker TBC
2 - Dispute Resolution – Iain Birrell, Thompsons Solicitors
- 2:40 **Critical appraisal – Part 2**
Looking to the future – the next Employment Act?
John McDonnell MP
- 3:00 **Session 3: Enforcing Employment Rights**
Paul Sellers, TUC
- 3:20 Feedback from workshops and discussion
- 4:00 Close