

Who should attend

The seminar will be of great interest to trade unionists, employment lawyers, personnel and health and safety 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	£45.00
Trade unions	£60.00
Commercial	£120.00

Booking form

Please reserve ___ places at the National Minimum Wage seminar 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
INSTITUTE
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RIGHTS

10 years of the national minimum wage

a seminar

wednesday 4th march 2009

1:30pm – 4:00pm

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

organised by

The Institute of Employment Rights

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Unison's General Political Fund

THE
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the public service union

about the seminar

The National Minimum Wage Act of 1998 introduced a national minimum wage into the UK and saw the appointment of a Low Pay Commission, tasked with monitoring its impact on “pay, employment and competitiveness in the low paying sectors and small firms”. The introduction of a minimum wage represented an historical advance in employment rights, providing a safety net below which no worker’s wage was supposed to fall. The Labour Government saw the minimum wage as an integral part of its legislative framework for delivering fairness at work, ignoring opposition from the Conservatives and the CBI.

So has the legislation lived up to expectations? As we approach the 10th anniversary of the introduction of the national minimum wage in April 2009, this seminar will look back at its implementation and operation and critically examine its strengths and weaknesses.

Uncertainty about the rates and an historically poor attitude to enforcement has encouraged employers to develop avoidance tactics including cutting paid overtime, reducing staffing levels and intensification of work and longer hours for all staff.

Excluding the NMW from the Age Regulations has hindered the battle for equal pay for work of equal value while the existence of different pay bands for 16-17 and 18-21 year olds are seen as discriminatory and confusing. Ending the exemption of apprentices from the Regulations and increasing the level at which the minimum wage is set are all issues high on the agenda of unions in their efforts to build on the NMW foundations and reduce inequality and poverty.

London like a number of UK cities is already leading the way with its own living wage. Without sufficient enforcement, however, the majority of employers have predictably chosen to stick with the lower level, statutory national minimum wage. Moreover, recent developments in the European Court of Justice threaten to institutionalise the minimum wage as a maximum wage. In addition, there are considerable concerns around the issue of how the use of migrant workers has been cynically used to deflate wages and institutionalise a ‘sticky floor’ among the worst paid.

programme

- 1:30 Registration
- 1:50 Introduction from Chair, Carolyn Jones, Director IER
- 2:00 Wages and Work: The NMW and a living wage
Sheila Blackburn, Liverpool University
- 2:30 NMW 10 years old: Case law and an updated legal framework for the future
Ellie Reeves, Thompsons Solicitors
- 3:00 Tea and coffee
- 3:15 Unions, enforcement and Apprenticeships
Deborah Littman, UNISON
- 3:45 Discussion
- 4:00 Close

speakers

Sheila Blackburn is a Senior Lecturer at Liverpool University focusing on labour conditions and modern social policy

Carolyn Jones has been Director of the IER since its inception in 1989

Deborah Littman is a National Officer at Unison

Ellie Reeves is a lawyer with Thompsons Solicitors