



Victoria Management School

**MMBA 562**  
**MANAGING EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS**

Trimester 1 2005

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Contact Details**

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**Class Times and Room Numbers**

Thursdays 19:40 – 21:30  
RH G04

**Course Objectives**

This course deals with the theory and, more particularly, the practice of entering into, managing, and ending the employment relationship. It builds on aspects of both MMBA 505 (Organisational Behaviour) and MMBA 519 (Human Resources Management), but neither of these courses is a pre-requisite.

The employment relationship has two dimensions. One is the employment contract, which is the legal relationship governed, in New Zealand, by the *Employment Relations Act 2000*. The other dimension is the psychological contract, the set of unspoken and unwritten assumptions and expectations which employers and employees have of each other.

Successful employment relations depends on the effective management of both the employment contract and the psychological contract.

In dealing with the employment contract, the course covers employment-related public policy and employment law, the rights and duties of employers and employees, and the roles of trade unions and employer groups. Particular attention is given to the concept of good faith, and to the formation and negotiation of employment agreements.

The psychological contract may be more influential than the formal legal contract in determining the day-to-day behaviour of employees. The course looks at the factors which make up this contract, and thus influence employees' commitment and performance.

All managers, not just human resources and employment relations specialists, need to understand — and be able to manage — both the legal and the psychological contracts. To that end, the emphasis in course sessions will be on effective practice rather than abstract theory. It is assumed that you will have, or through your reading will develop, an appreciation of relevant aspects of organisational and human behaviour and human resources management.

By the end of this course, you should:

1. Have an appreciation of New Zealand law and practice regarding the employment relationship and the employment agreement;
2. Have an understanding of the importance of the psychological contract to the development of positive employer-employee relations;
3. Be able to advise organisations and managers on appropriate approaches to the development and management of effective employment relations policies and programmes.

## **Course Content**

This course is made up of twelve two-hour sessions. It is divided into three main sections, although there are inevitable overlaps:

1. The nature of employment relations
  - Links to organisational strategies, human resources management and industrial relations
  - Contexts and influences on employment relations
  - Management strategies for employment relations
2. The psychological contract
  - The nature of the psychological contract
  - Linking people management and organisational performance

- Employee attachment and commitment
  - Impact of human resources and management practices
3. The employment contract
- The employer-employee relationship
  - Employment contracts and agreements
  - Good faith employment relations
  - Individual employment agreements
  - Collective bargaining and collective employment agreements

### **Readings**

Richard Rudman, (2005), *New Zealand Employment Law Guide – 2005 edition*, CCH New Zealand: Auckland.

Students will be supplied with a comprehensive set of readings. The readings are divided into three sections (relating to the three sections of the course), although the division is inevitably arbitrary for those articles which are relevant in two or more areas of the course. You will be expected to have read, at least, the group of readings for the relevant section of the course.

If you are not reasonably familiar with human resources management, you may find it helpful to have, or have access to, a reasonably up-to-date human resources management text for reference. One suggestion is:

Richard Rudman (2002), *Human Resources Management in New Zealand*, Pearson Education: Auckland.

### **Materials and Equipment**

Please submit your assignments in hard copy, on white A4 paper, printed one side of the page only, with line spacing set at 1.5 or 2. Folders or binding are not necessary.

### **Assessment Requirements**

Assessment for this course is based on three individual assignments (each worth 20% of the total mark) and a group project (worth 40%).

Details of the assignments will be provided and discussed in the first session. In each case, the individual assignments will be designed to check your level of learning and understanding in each of the three main areas of the course.

The group project will give you and one or two colleagues the opportunity — in a topic area of your choice — to apply your learning to a real situation.

The assignments will be due as follows:

Assignment #1 — 17 March

Assignment #2 — 28 April

Assignment #3 — 26 May

Group project — 9 June

There is no final examination in this course.

### **Penalties**

In fairness to other students, work submitted after the deadline will be subject to a penalty of 5% of the total marks available per day of lateness. Assignments more than one week late will not be accepted. A “zero” mark will be applied. In the event of unusual, unforeseen circumstances (e.g., serious illness, family bereavement), students should discuss waiver of the penalty with the course controller prior to the deadline date.

### **Mandatory Course Requirements**

Students are required to attend classes, fully participate in and submit the written Group Project Report, and achieve at least 50% of the total marks available for term work.

### **Victoria MBA Grading Standards**

- Victoria MBA - **Excellent** Category  
A (80 – 85%) to A+ (above 85%): The quality is performed to a very high level of proficiency, i.e. it is at a standard that makes it exceptional at Master’s level.
- Victoria MBA - **Very Good** Category  
B+ (70 – 74%) to A- (75 – 79%): The quality is performed at a high standard. Students have reached a level which clearly exceeds “competency”.
- Victoria MBA - **Good** Category  
B- (60 – 64%) to B (65 – 69%): The quality is clearly demonstrated without being exceptional in any way. Students can be thought of as competent in respect of this quality.

- Victoria MBA - **Satisfactory** Category  
C (50 – 54%) to C+ (55 – 59%): The quality is demonstrated to a minimally acceptable level. There may be flaws but these are not serious enough to “fail” the student on this quality.
- Victoria MBA - **Unsatisfactory** Category  
E (0 – 39%) to D (40 – 49%): The quality is absent or performed to a very low level, or the performance is seriously flawed in this respect.
- Please note that the MBA Board of Studies (End of Course Marks Meeting) reserves the right to adjust final grade distributions in order to achieve meaningful grading standards and equity in the application of evaluation standards across various MBA courses.

### **Individual Work**

While the Victoria MBA programme has a tradition of study group collaboration, there are important elements in the assessment process that are strictly individual. Collaboration on individual assignments is not allowed beyond general discussion as to how one might interpret the nature of the assignment question. Please do not work together to formulate a response and do not loan out your completed assignments.

### **Communication of Additional Information**

Additional information and information on any changes will be conveyed to students via class announcements and in written form on the university blackboard server for MMBA 505.

### **General University Policies and Statutes**

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly those regarding assessment and course of study requirements, and formal academic grievance procedures.

### **Student Conduct and Staff Conduct**

The Statute on Student Conduct together with the Policy on Staff Conduct ensure that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect. The Statute on Student Conduct contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps can be taken if there is a complaint. For queries about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor. This Statute is available in the Faculty Student Administration Office or on the website at:

[www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StudentConduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StudentConduct).

The policy on Staff Conduct can be found on the VUW website at:

[www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StaffConduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StaffConduct).

## Academic Grievances

If you have any academic problems with your course you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned or, if you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the MBA Programme Director, then the Head of School or the Associate Dean (Students) of your Faculty. Class representatives are available to assist you with this process. If, after trying the above channels, you are still unsatisfied, formal grievance procedures can be invoked. These are set out in the Academic Grievances Policy which is published on the VUW website:

[www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/AcademicGrievances](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/AcademicGrievances).

## Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means **no cheating**. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. Plagiarism is **prohibited** at Victoria.

The University defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not.

*'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea, even if it is presented in your own style. It includes material from books, journals or any other printed source, the work of other students or staff, information from the Internet, software programmes and other electronic material, designs and ideas. It also includes the organization or structuring of any such material.*

### ***Plagiarism is not worth the risk.***

Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct ([www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct)) and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- suspension from class or university
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course.

*Find out more about plagiarism and how to avoid it, on the University's website at:*

[www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html).

## Students with Disabilities

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities an equal opportunity with all other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to

participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, then please contact the Course Coordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services to confidentially discuss your individual needs and the options and support that are available. Disability Support Services are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building, or phoning 463-6070, email: [disability@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:disability@vuw.ac.nz). The name of your School's Disability Liaison Person can be obtained from the Administrative Assistant or the School Prospectus.

## **Student Support**

Staff at Victoria want students' learning experiences at the University to be positive. If your academic progress is causing you concern, please contact the relevant Course Co-ordinator, or Associate Dean who will either help you directly or put you in contact with someone who can.

The Student Services Group is also available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at [www.vuw.ac.nz/st\\_services/](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/) or email [student-services@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:student-services@vuw.ac.nz).

VUWSA employs two Education Coordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building, phone 463 6983 or 463 6984, email [education@vuwsa.org.nz](mailto:education@vuwsa.org.nz).

<b>MMBA 562 — 2005</b>			<b>Lecture schedule</b>
<i>Week</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Readings</i>
1	24 February	Course introduction The nature of employment relations	Section 1
2	3 March	Contexts and influences	Section 1
3	10 March	Management and organisational strategies for employment relations	Section 1
4	17 March	The psychological contract	Section 2
5	24 March	Impact on employee and organisational performance	Section 2
6	14 April	Employers and workers	Rudman, chap 2 Section 3
7	21 April	Employment contracts and agreements	Rudman, chap 3 Section 3
8	28 April	Good faith employment relations	Rudman, chaps 4, 5 Section 3
9	5 May	Individual agreements	Rudman, chap 4 Section 3
10	12 May	Unions, collective bargaining and collective agreements	Rudman, chap 5 Section 3
11	19 May	Terminating employment agreements	Rudman, chaps 8, 9 Section 3
12	26 May	Attempting integration	