

3.7 Employment Law



What is it ?

- Employment law is designed to protect workers from employers who may treat them unfairly.
- Without these, your boss could ask you to work 15 hours a day, 7 days a week and fire you for then being tired!
- There are lots of different laws protecting workers, but the main ones you need to know for your GCSE are on this page!

Discrimination

This important act, makes it illegal to discriminate against a worker based on their:

- Race
- Sex (inc. equal pay)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Religion or beliefs

The Equality Act 2010 brought together 116 pieces of legislation into one single Act which is designed to protect the rights of workers.

The main times when people may be discriminated against are: when being recruited, paid, their terms & conditions of employment (hours, etc.), promotion opportunities, training opportunities and when the worker is being dismissed / made redundant.



Key Words

Employment law

Designed to protect workers from employers who may treat them unfairly

Discrimination

When one worker is treated differently from another for no acceptable reason.

Working time directive

Statement of the maximum number of hours that a person can be asked to work

Holiday entitlement

the amount of paid holiday that a worker can have in a year

Employment tribunal

Panel that hears cases where employment laws may have been broken and which comes to a decision either in favour of employee or employer

Contract of employment

Legal agreement between an employee and their employer

Statement of employment particulars

Part of the employment contract. It gives details of the terms of employment

Employment Rights Act

As soon as you accept a new job, you are technically 'under contract', but your new company must outline your contract, in writing, within 2 months of your start date. This contract should state your working hours, salary / wage, right to time off as well as many other things.



Working Hours

The Working Time Directive is a piece of legislation that limits your working hours.

This means that employers must:

- Give you a 20 min break for every 6 hours worked.
- Not ask you to work more than an average of 48 hours per week across a 17-week period (U18's = max 40).

Holidays

There is even laws saying that you must have holiday entitlement! Isn't that nice! If you work full time (5 days a week), you're entitled to 5.6 weeks holiday a year. This is the minimum and does include bank holidays. Many companies offer more than this government minimum.



Why comply with these laws?

Complying with these laws is likely to increase costs for the business and take up valuable management time, so you might be tempted to think that entrepreneurs should just ignore them. However, breaking these laws could lead to:

- Fines
- Court cases
- Jail time for the owners

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