

BA (Hons) International Labour and Trade Union Studies (ILTUS)

ABOUT THE COURSE

This is a **three year full-time** or **four and a half year part-time** block residential undergraduate course. For the block residential route you will be required to attend the college six weekends a year during term time.

The course is aimed at students who are active in trade unions, worker organisations or community groups. It covers four main themes: Employment Relations, Law, Sociology and Economics, but requires no advance academic knowledge of these subjects.

The course is unique in the UK as the only undergraduate programme to analyse employment relations issues on a global basis, including attacks on workers' rights, international migration, aging populations and other challenges for contemporary trade unions.

Overall Course Aims

- You will develop a depth of knowledge and complexity of analytical skills
- You will be equipped with the skills, knowledge and confidence to succeed on the degree course and, where this is your desired outcome, be provided with a suitable academic grounding if you wish to progress to Masters level of study
- You will deepen your problem-solving skills and increase your capacity for critical evaluation and independent judgment, particularly in undertaking independent study and research
- You will develop comprehension of, and the capacity to analyse issues that are central to the study of international labour and trade unionism
- You will be able to apply and critically reflect on different theoretical perspectives to the analysis of issues of labour regulation and trade union organisation and practice in different contexts
- You will be equipped with the personal and professional aptitudes to succeed in appropriate employment where this is the desired outcome for you
- You will be empowered with the motivation and independent thinking and learning skills to enable you to become lifelong autonomous learners and engage with the issues raised by the regulation of labour at both national and international level, along with the contemporary challenges posed to trade unions dealing with change and globalisation.

This course further aims to equip you with:

- A systematic understanding of key aspects of the subjects studied enabling you to show detailed and coherent knowledge informed by reference to research and scholarly work
- The skills and confidence to deploy an appropriate range of

VALIDATION



The course is validated by The Open University.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All candidates must be able to satisfy the general admissions requirements for Ruskin College.

If you have a Certificate of Higher Education or 120 credits in a relevant subject you may be eligible for direct entry onto Level 5. Please contact Hannah on 01865 759604 for further information. Similarly, if you have a Diploma of Higher Education or 240 Credits in a relevant subject you may be eligible for direct entry onto Level 6 of this course.

COURSE AND APPLICATION DATES

This course starts in September.
The closing date is 15th August.

CAREERS

Designed for trade unionists and other activists, this course naturally leads students into associated careers; Full-time trade union officials, Trade union organisers or Project workers on TU-related initiatives

Progression Opportunities within Ruskin College

Graduates of the International Labour and Trade Union Studies programme can apply for postgraduate study on the following course at Ruskin College:

- MA International Labour and Trade Union Studies
- MA Public History

STAFF

Dr Peter Dwyer
Caroline Holmes
Alan Irwin
Ian Manborde
Tracy Walsh

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analytical techniques to support independent enquiry

- The ability to devise and sustain arguments in response to issues and challenges emerging in the general field of international labour and trade union practice
- The competence to manage your own learning using scholarly sources, contemporary documents and basic research methods
- Communication skills in order to be able to present complex ideas and arguments using a range of presentational techniques

WHAT WILL I STUDY ON THIS COURSE?

The course is taught in a number of modules, which on successful completion earn students a Certificate of Higher Education, a Diploma of Higher Education or Degree level qualification.

LEVEL 4 MODULES (CERTIFICATE OF HIGHER EDUCATION):

Employment Relations in Theory and Practice

The study of Employment Relations is central to Ruskin's trade union heritage. This module is one of four modules at level 4 that lays the foundation stones for the rest of the BA programme. This module links with both the work and economic theory modules that students will undertake later in the ILTUS programme whilst also introducing theory and practice (collective bargaining) that is central to the practice of contemporary labour relations.

The Law and the Employment Relationship

This module introduces the central legal concepts related to employment relations. The study of employment law is also central to Ruskin's trade union heritage. The concept of equality, particularly in employment is a key theme throughout this module.

This core law module acts as a foundation for the other aspects of law in modules at level 5. It underpins the subsequent law taught by combining key aspects of the English Legal System, Employment Law and Anti-discrimination Law. Students will be introduced to the relevance of EU law and how it interacts with national law. In order to do so, the core knowledge of the English Legal System provides the pre-requisite for deeper knowledge of the international law. In accordance with this aim, Human Rights law will be introduced in relation to their work as activists. Both EU law and Human rights will be developed further at levels 5 and 6; thus reflecting the international focus of this degree.

Work and Economic Change

This module is designed to introduce students to the changes in the character of work brought about by the forces of globalisation. This module introduces students to basic economic concepts – demand, supply and price of labour. But whereas the categories of the orthodox economics framework inadequately reflect

HOW TO APPLY FOR THIS COURSE

You can apply for courses online via the Ruskin College website or you can download a pdf of our application form. Send printed application forms to: Academic Registrar, Ruskin College, Ruskin Hall, Dunstan Road, Old Headington, Oxford, OX3 9BZ. You can request a hard copy of the application form to be sent to you by contacting Reception at Ruskin Hall on 01865 759600 or email enquiries@ruskin.ac.uk

When filling in the application form please ensure that you complete the personal statement section in full and ensure that you include the contact details of two references. Incomplete applications will be returned.

You may also apply for this course online through UCAS (www.ucas.com). The UCAS course code is **L290**.

FUNDING YOUR STUDIES

Funding is available from Student Finance England if you live in England (www.gov.uk/studentfinance, 0845 300 5090). If you live in other parts of the UK please contact Student Finance Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland or the Student Award Agency for Scotland. International students will be responsible for the payment of their own tuition fees.

Further information on funding can be found in our fees and funding support sections on the website: www.ruskin.ac.uk

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Hannah on 01865 759604 or email enquiries@ruskin.ac.uk

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the transformations of labour brought about by the forces of globalisation, 'Work and Economic Change' examines the various theoretical responses to this. In order to enable students to understand and evaluate current debates and controversies, the module examines different theoretical perspectives on work, employment and the working of labour markets (Classical Political Economy, Neo-classical Economics and Marxist Political Economy).

Critical Skills and Personal Development

This module develops critical thinking skills and the ability to make reasoned judgments in relation to academic writing. There is a focus on developing the key skills involved in structuring an assignment in essay form, and making appropriately robust conclusions and recommendations.

In terms of professional development, students are introduced to a range of techniques that enable them to evaluate their current skills and knowledge. This includes self-appraisal skills which lead them to being able to design a development plan and build a portfolio.

LEVEL 5 MODULES (DIPLOMA OF HIGHER EDUCATION)

Research Methods

To prepare students for the independent research project at level 6, this module takes students through the design of a research project to the carrying out of fieldwork and utilising the data produced and prepares the students for the role of researcher.

The module introduces students to the choice and design of research tools, e.g. questionnaires, interviewing, focus groups and case studies. Students become familiar with both qualitative and quantitative approaches. A key part of the module involves the student carrying out the preparatory design work for their independent research project at level 6. Students will be introduced to ethical issues that may arise when undertaking primary research.

Labour in a Globalised World

This module builds on the level 4 modules by expanding on the legal, political and economic impact of globalisation for organised labour movements.

This is a multi-disciplinary module that examines and assesses the trade union response to a range of outcomes linked to the latest phase of globalisation including the outsourcing and off-shoring of manufacturing and service sectors, the role of International union bodies such as the ICFTU and Global Union Federations and the campaigns to secure core labour values and decent employment standards throughout the world. Case studies of international trade union strategies to curb exploitation such as the International Transport Federation's 'Flags of Convenience' campaign and the ILO campaign against child labour are used to evaluate the potential of

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co-ordinated trade union action.

Students will be introduced to the role of the EU and the implications for trade unions, with a view to relevant legislation, in particular Human Rights law.

Labour Movement History and Development

The study of Labour Movements is integral to and draws upon Ruskin's heritage. This module builds on the level 4 modules and seeks to challenge further student's knowledge of how organised labour has developed and what are the current challenges for the labour movement both in the UK and internationally.

The module aims to trace the development of Labour Movements in the UK from early forms of worker organising in the 14th Century to the present day. Emphasis is given to identifying the key legal, social, economic and political factors that have shaped the structures and practices of organised labour and how these challenges are met in the current environment. Students also have the opportunity to study the origins and development of international organised labour movements.

Work and Sustainability

This module provides a link with the analysis of Work and Economic Change carried out at level 4 of the programme. It extends the study of the real c that drives the actions (and inactions) of firms, countries and the international community. It centres on the dilemmas and challenges that the search for sustainability poses for society as a whole and the links with the workplace and trade unions in mobilising support for sustainable growth and concern for the environment. The module also identifies areas of Environment Law and how this can be applied.

LEVEL 6 MODULES (BA HONS)

Critical Reflection

This module builds on the critical skills and personal development module and research methods module and prepares students for studying at level seven (postgraduate study).

This reflexive module sees the students returning to previous summative and formative assignments and to critically evaluate their own responses to tutor feedback.

Contemporary Trade Unionism

This module is the first of three taught modules at level 6 and builds on the concepts and themes of employment relations and law. The module draws on students understanding and experience of the contemporary and developmental issues facing trade unions.

Students develop and apply an analytical framework to enable a rigorous evaluation to be made of the policies and practices that

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trade unions are applying to a range of contemporary employment relations issues including questions around equal opportunities, migrant labour and workplace restructuring. Students will also analyse developmental issues such as trade union crisis and renewal: are migrant workers the answer to membership decline, should unions organise sex workers? Students are given the opportunity to explore their own organisations and assess some of the internal debates around leadership, democracy and the future of organised labour movements.

Developments in the Global Economy

This module builds on the concepts and themes of political economy introduced in previous modules (eg Work, Employment and Change and Labour in a Globalised World). The lived realities of globalisation, neo-liberalism and economic crisis will be theorised and used to analyse the historical and changing role of global organisations such as the IMF, World Bank, WTO, EU etc. It critically evaluates their role in considers the effectiveness of these organisations against the empirical evidence of the various crises and challenges that have characterised the labour movements experiences of the latest phase of globalisation.

Dissertation

Students undertake a supervised piece of independent research culminating in a 12,000 word dissertation. The subject matter will be linked to the issues raised in the course as a whole but will be the student's choice taken in consultation with programme tutors and, where appropriate, trade unions and other organisations. Experience has shown that students are capable of rising to this challenge and many have remarked that the project term was the most fulfilling part of their time at the college.

This module provides a fitting end piece to the students learning. It offers the chance to research more thoroughly and, using appropriate academic methods, write at greater length with some originality on a subject or issue agreed with the supervisor at level 5. Students are encouraged to undertake primary research as many will have access to potential research groups via their trade unions. The inclusion of primary research contributes to the originality of the dissertation.

The dissertation is the student's own, original work, and gives them the opportunity to investigate and write about an issue in depth. We encourage students to go on to do further research, including postgraduate degrees. The dissertation module is designed to ensure students are taught at a standard that allows for progression onto the MA ILTUS at Ruskin College.

Students will develop their research proposals from level 5 and explore wider research epistemologies in the social sciences. They will explore the ethical issues that may arise in primary research collection and develop a strategy on how to minimise risks to both themselves as researchers and research participants.

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HOW WILL I LEARN AND BE TAUGHT ON THIS COURSE

The course deploys a range of teaching and learning methods which embrace formal class room sessions, student lead seminars, study visits, small group work, tutorials and debates.

Teaching is interactive and is designed to draw upon the worklife experience of students as a means of generating a body of shared practical knowledge against which more theoretical and research based material can be evaluated. The choice of teaching mode takes into account the different levels of student ability and differing levels of experience and development.

Study skills are dealt with at each stage in the programme covering:

- The planning and execution of written work
- Note taking
- Effective reading
- Active listening
- Group working
- Library and information research
- Presentational skills
- Problem solving techniques
- Revision techniques
- Examination skills

For each module you will meet as a whole group to explore key topics and to consolidate learning. These sessions are normally split into a two hour class and a three hour workshop and seminar. In addition to these group-based activities, you will be expected to put in around ten hours of guided study working independently and sometimes in small groups depending upon the nature of the topic covered.

You will receive tutorials to discuss and review the set work for the particular module you are studying. Tutorials are normally conducted in pairs and are used to develop and review formative assessments, e.g. data exercises and written outlines of assignments. The College attaches considerable importance to the tutorial since it offers the opportunity for detailed interaction with the student in order to check academic progress, consolidate and deepen understanding and work on any areas of weakness that may arise.

Within the class and workshop sessions, students with experience of trade union activity or with practical knowledge of the workplace are actively encouraged to use their experience and previous learning in discussions, group exercises, case study analyses, presentations and other activities to enrich and enhance the learning process. Study skills are integrated into each module appropriate to the level of study and the needs of the students.