

UNIVERSITE PARIS 1 PANTHEON SORBONNE
UFR 06 / SGEL

LICENCE DE GESTION ET ECONOMIE D'ENTRPRISE, Semestre 2

Partiel d'anglais appliqué à la gestion

Enseignant responsable: J.T. Pindi

Date: 31 mai 2010

Maître de conférences

Durée: 2 heures

No documents allowed. Write your answers on the official answer sheets provided.

PART I: Reading

*A. Read the text below entitled **Trade Unions in Britain** and address the ensuing comprehension and vocabulary exercises*

Trade Unions in Britain

Trade unions obtained legal recognition in 1871 after long and bitter struggles. The fight for the right of workers to organize themselves originated in the trade guilds of the fourteenth century and later in social clubs which were formed to give their members protection against sickness and unemployment.

The modern trade unions are associated (if no longer closely) with the Labour Party and campaign for better pay, working and health conditions for their members. The trade-union movement is highly organized, with a membership of 7.4 million people in 2003. But this is a fall from 12 million in 1978 and represents only 27 per cent of all individuals in employment.

Today there are some 243 trade unions and professional associations of workers, which vary considerably in size and influence. They represent not only skilled and unskilled workers in industry, but also white-collar workers in a range of businesses, companies and local and central government. Other professional associations like the Law Society, the Police Federation and the British medical Association carry out similar representational roles for their members.

Members of trade unions pay annual subscriptions to their unions and frequently to the Labour Party, unless they elect not to pay this latter amount. The funding provides for unions activities and services such as legal, monetary and professional help. The richer unions give strike pay to members who are taking part in "official strikes", which are those legally sanctioned by members. Trade unions vary in their wealth and in their political orientation, ranging from the left to the right wing of the political spectrum.

Some unions admit as members only those people who work in a specific job, such as miners or teachers. Other unions comprise workers who are employed in different areas of industry or commerce, such as the Transport and General Workers' Union. Some unions have joined with others in similar fields to form new unions, such as Unison (public service workers) which is now the largest in Britain with 1.3 million members. Workers may choose, without victimization, whether they want to belong to a particular union or none at all.

Many trade unions are affiliated to the Trades Union Congress (TUC), which was founded in 1868, serves as an umbrella organization to coordinate trade union interests and tries to promote worker cooperation. It can exert some pressure on government (although this has now decreased) and seeks

to extend its contacts in industry and commerce and with employers as well as workers.

The influence of the TUC and trade unions (as well as their membership) has declined. This is due to unemployment; changing attitudes to trade unions by workers; the reduction and restructuring of industry; a deregulated economy; a more mobile workforce; and Conservative legislation. Laws were passed to enforce secret voting by union members before strikes can be legally called and for the election of union officials. The number of pickets (union strikers) outside business premises has been reduced, secondary (or sympathy) action by other unionists is banned and unions may be fined by the courts if they transgress legislation. Such Conservative laws (which the Labour government accept) and the economic climate have forced trade unions to be more realistic in their wage demands. But pay claims are escalating again and there is increasing (if sporadic) militancy among some union leaders. There are also arrangements for legal recognition of unions in those workplaces where a majority of workers want them and for consultation with workers in matters like redundancy.

(John Oakland, British Civilisation, London, Routledge, 2006)

B. Vocabulary (5 points)

a) Define or explain the following concepts underlined in the text and give their synonyms in English. Do not translate them into French.

- 1) Subscriptions:
- 2) workforce:
- 3) strikes:
- 4) pay claims:
- 5) redundancy:

b) Make 5 different sentences of your own using each of the 5 concepts above. Do not copy any sentence from the text.

C. Comprehension (5 points)

Answer the questions below briefly in your own words

1. How has the mission of trade unions in Britain changed from ancient to modern times?
2. What are the ways in which trade unions vary from one another?
3. How are trade unions financed and where does the money collected go?
4. Which laws has the conservative government put in place to reduce the influence of trade unions?
5. What does the expression “ deregulated economy” mean?

PART II. Grammar (5 points)

Have something done

Put the words below in the correct order to make meaningful sentences

- 1) debts by have we agency an collected our
- 2) department tested the could technical you samples have ? by the
- 3) Peterson had he Mr by photocopied documents yesterday his
- 4) airport John stolen had at briefcase the his

- 5) are we investigated the a matter having by lawyer
- 6) lawyer by workers have over will pay lodged a claims their
- 7) payments having employers by increased union the redundancy is
- 8) British having firm by major the stadium built government the Olympic a construction is
- 9) refinery on trade will oil by workers Friday staged have big demonstration unions a
- 10) government the secret by British a voting last parliament on year passed law had

PART III. Writing (5 points)

Strike action by unions can be damaging to the economy.

Argue your point in a minimum of 200 words. Give some arguments for and some arguments against as well as examples from real business life to support your discussion. Count and write down the number of words you have used in your essay. You lose 1 point if you fail or forget to do so.

Good luck!

Key to answers and guidelines for marking

Drawing on the course syllabus for semester 2, this exam paper aims at assessing student ability to

- 1) process standard business/economics expository text
- 2) remember and use specialist vocabulary studied in class
- 3) write correct English sentences both in isolation and in context.

Part I. B. Vocabulary

a) answers (2.5 points)

- 1) subscriptions: contributions that union members pay regularly to their unions. The synonym is *dues*
- 2) workforce: the total number of workers available for employment in a country. The synonym is *labour force*
- 3) strikes: organised refusals to work by employees in an attempt to force their employers to meet their demands for higher pay, shorter hours, or better working conditions. The synonym is *industrial actions*
- 4) pay claims: union demands for better wages. The synonym is *wage demands*
- 5) redundancy: loss of a job because the latter has ceased to exist or because there is no longer any work for the employee. The synonym is *lay off*.

Marking

- 0.5 point for a satisfactory definition coupled with a satisfactory synonym given.
- 0.25 point if the students only provides a definition without a synonym or vice versa
- nothing to be awarded for an unsatisfactory answer or a blank.

b) sentence writing (2.5 points)

- 0.5 point for a meaningful and grammatically correct sentence built around the concept. Nothing to be awarded otherwise.

Part I. C. Comprehension (5 points)

answers

- 1) Trade unions in Britain were originally set up as trade guilds in the 14th century or as social clubs sometime later to protect workers against sickness and unemployment. Nowadays their mission is to campaign for better pay, working and health conditions for their members.
- 2) Trade unions vary according to their size and influence, their political orientation, their wealth and in terms of the occupation of their members.
- 3) They are funded by their members who pay annual subscriptions. The money is used by the unions to provide for their activities and services to their members such as legal, financial or professional help when needed.
- 4) They are as follows: a) there should be a secret voting by members before a trade union can call a strike; b) only a small number of pickets is allowed during strikes; c) no secondary or sympathy strikes are allowed; d) the unions are liable to pay a fine if they fail to observe these laws.
- 5) An economy in which the government has removed controls or rules from business activity.

An economy in which the government has liberalised business activity.

Marking

- 1 point for each answer deemed correct in terms of both content and form
- 0.5 point can be awarded if you are satisfied with the content but less so with the way it is expressed
- nothing to be awarded if the answer is unreadable
- nothing to be awarded either if the answer is wrong albeit written in correct English.

Part II. Grammar (5 points)

Answers

- 1) We have our debts collected by an agency.
- 2) Could you have the samples tested by the technical department?
- 3) He had his documents photocopied by Mr Peterson yesterday.
- 4) John had his briefcase stolen at the airport.
- 5) We are having the matter investigated by a lawyer.
- 6) Workers will have their claims over pay lodged by a lawyer.
- 7) The union is having redundancy payments increased by employers.
- 8) The British government is having the Olympic stadium built by a major construction firm.
- 9) Trade unions will have a big demonstration staged by oil workers on Friday.
- 10) The British government had a law on secret voting passed by parliament last year.

Marking

- 0.5 points for each correct answer. Nothing to be awarded otherwise.

Part III. Writing (5 points)

- 1 point to be systematically awarded to a student who has written a minimum of 200 words
- 1 point to be systematically withheld for inadequate length or if the student has failed to count the number of words s-he has written
- up to 2 points for satisfactory substance;: some sense in what the student has written, whether or not you agree with his/her stance
- up to 1 point for writing in good English; i.e good lexical and grammatical choices
- up to 1 point for good cohesion and coherence