



THE TIMES 100

BUSINESS CASE STUDIES

Employee representation teacher guide (UNISON)

GCSE activity – advertising flyer

Independent enquirers	Team workers	Effective participants	Self managers	Reflective learners	Creative thinkers
✓			✓		✓

‘A’-Level activity – report

Independent enquirers	Team workers	Effective participants	Self managers	Reflective learners	Creative thinkers
✓			✓		✓

E-D students are likely to recommend some methods of employee representation in the context of the given scenario

C-A students are likely to justify the employee representation methods they have recommended explaining how they will resolve the problems the organisation in the scenario is experiencing.

Employee representation worksheet

1. A trade union is an organisation that represents the interests of workers over issues such as pay and conditions, hours worked and dismissal
2. Collective bargaining is when trade unions negotiate with employers on behalf of the workers. They have more influence than individual workers as they represent so many people. It is simpler for firms to negotiate with a trade union than lots of workers.
3. Benefits of trade union membership include:
 - a. Collective bargaining
 - b. Legal advice and services
 - c. Financial advice and services
 - d. Training and development opportunities
 - e. Special offers and discounts



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4. Other than collective bargaining, trade unions may work together with employers to share knowledge and provide advice. Trade unions may encourage workers to take industrial action which could include strikes, go-slow and work-to-rule.
5. Young apprentices have benefited from UNISON negotiating with employers in the following ways:
 - a. Apprentices are paid at least the minimum wage and work in fair conditions
 - b. They are provided with good quality training schemes including the appointment of a mentor
 - c. Well organised supervision
 - d. Provision of study time
6. Reasons for fewer strike days over the last two decades include:
 - a. The adoption of a more partnership approach where trade unions and employers work with each other rather than against each other. This can be more beneficial to both parties as they can share best practise.
 - b. The costs of strike action are high in terms of wages (workers), reputation and income/profit (firms) and availability of products (customers). All of this can have a negative impact on the economy as a whole.

E-D students are likely to identify reasons for a reduction in strike days and explain these in context.

C-A students are likely to analyse reasons for having fewer strike days from a range of points of view e.g. firms, trade unions, workers and customers.

What's next?

Trade unions are organisations that protect the interests of employees. The UK's largest public sector trade union is called UNISON. Collective bargaining occurs when trade unions negotiate on behalf of their members. They have more influence because they are representing a large number of workers. They will negotiate on issues such as pay, working conditions, redundancy and holiday entitlement. If negotiations are unsuccessful, trade unions may encourage their workers to take industrial action. This may include striking, picketing, working-to-rule or going-slow. It is usually easier for firms to negotiate with one trade union rather than many individual workers. Trade unions also provide other benefits to their members such as education and training, legal and financial advice and discounts. Other forms of employee representation include work councils, employee participation and worker directors. These allow the workers to share their ideas with the management. This can result in more efficient workplaces and more motivated workforces. However, sometimes it can lead to slower decision making.