

Review of the Workplace Employment Relations Survey - Management Questionnaire (MQ)

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Forward

Consultation on the content of the next Workplace Employment Relations Survey (WERS6) will be undertaken over a six week period (February until 17th March), and this document represents the primary vehicle for consultation on the Management Questionnaire (MQ). It provides an initial set of proposals designed to reduce the length of the Management Questionnaire (MQ). Once the consultation ends, a report on the consultation will be produced. Towards the end of March, the Sponsors hope to have appointed a fieldwork organisation and formal testing and piloting of the new research instruments will begin.

The paper is in 3 sections, the first gives the broad rationale in terms of the need to reduce the content of the Management Questionnaire. Section 2 identifies in detail changes that are proposed and finally a summary of the questions that are proposed for suspension is given in section 3, together with an assessment of the net savings this is likely to produce. Users of WERS data are advised to read the paper alongside a copy of the 2004 MQ – an annotated questionnaire is attached, divided into 14 subsections of the questionnaire.

The Sponsors welcome views on the proposals, in particular any questions that are being considered for deletion that users consider vital in terms of mapping trends in employment relations over time or which are used as inputs for the construction of employment relations indicators or in complex analysis. In addition, the Sponsors are anxious to receive feedback on questions which are being retained and if any of these are recommended for amendment. Finally, the sponsors welcome views on new and emerging topic areas that should be considered for inclusion in the next survey and draft candidate questions that could be put forward for further testing and evaluation. Users should note that the space for new items is limited so a well thought through rationale showing an appreciation of the subject matter, sampling frame and regularity of data collection in WERS will be important.

Section 1 - Background

The target average duration of the senior managers' questionnaire (MQ) is 90 minutes. The average duration of the MQ at the last sweep of WERS was 118 minutes with a median of 115 minutes. There would appear to be a certain degree of creep in the questionnaire since 1998, when the average length was estimated at 108 minutes (median 102) and in 1990 when the average was 100 minutes (median 93 minutes) – see Table 1.

Table 1	Average Duration of Managers' Questionnaire					
	2004		1998		1990	
	Mean (mins.)	Median (mins.)	Mean (mins.)	Median (mins.)	Mean (mins.)	Median (mins.)
Cross section Manager's Questionnaire	118	115	108	102	100	93
[response rate]	[64%]		[80.4%]		[82.7%]	

The Research team have calculated that the number of questions needs to be reduced by approximately one quarter. This paper proposes questions that would be dropped.

Reductions to the questionnaire are essential to safeguard response rates, to ensure that the data collected is robust and that the survey will live within the budget for fieldwork costs.

In order for the MQ to be reduced to an average target length of 90 minutes, the Research team have undertaken a detailed review of the content of the questionnaire fielded by the last WERS in 2004 and these proposals are now being consulted upon. Throughout the review the chief priority has been to maintain consistency of the measures used in mapping trends over time and also to retain variables which are used to generate key employment relations indicators. The review has also sought to identify some space in the questionnaire so that emerging priorities can be accommodated by existing questions or by the inclusion of a small proportion of new material. For example, the economic downturn has heightened interest in WERS as a source of information about how workplaces have adapted to tightening financial conditions and the impact this has had for employees. In addition there is continued and growing interest in a number of areas, including - retirement age, pensions, individual and collective dispute resolution, information and consultation that will need to be considered alongside other priorities.

Section 2 identifies each of the question sections in the MQ from 2004. It provides an overview of the section and then suggests questions that could be suspended. Readers who would like to assess how the current proposals sit in the context of the WERS questionnaire used in 2004 should refer to the annotated questionnaire spreadsheets. We invite responses to the proposals presented in this paper on:

- questions which are identified for deletion but are important for the outputs of users or used in their analyses;
- questions that are not identified for deletion but where users would make suggestions for changes;
- identification of new topics and proposals for a limited number of new questions to respond to emerging issues.

Section 2 – Detailed proposals on rationalisation of Management Questionnaire content

Survey Content – MQ survey

EPQ **Employee profile questionnaire.**

This section is completed in advance of the Management Questionnaire and is designed to collect basic information on the composition of employees at the workplace.

Several questions ask about the breakdown of the workforce by hourly earnings thresholds which were linked to the national Minimum Wage rates (at the time of the 2004 survey £4.50 per hour or less/ £4.51-£5.00/ £5.01 - £14.99/ £15.00 or more), proportions of staff who are in different age groups (16-17 years/ 18-21 years and 50 years or more), from a non-white ethnic group, proportion with a long term disability and the number who are members of a trade union or staff association. Included are questions which refer to staff working on temporary or fixed term contracts and agency staff hired on a temporary basis from an employment agency.

The workforce composition is broken down by male and female, full-time and part-time and the 9 major occupational groupings. It is felt that limited use is made of this detailed breakdown and therefore suggested that this could be reduced, so that the detailed sex split is only collected for SOC1 'managers and senior officials' (an item that has been used in the past to measure the vertical segregation of the workforce), and that only the marginal totals for each of the other occupational groups are collected (these are needed to identify the largest occupational group in the workplace, or LOG, which is used extensively in later sections). Users should recall that the Survey of Employees collects detailed occupational data at the individual level (with 4 digit coding) and this can be used for occupational analysis.

It is suggested that the questions referring to the numbers of staff at the workplace who are 'working on temporary or fixed term contracts' and the number of temporary agency staff could be replaced with questions that ask for the proportion – which could be banded and offered as a tick box question.

A **Establishment and organisational characteristics**

This section is vital in classifying the nature of the workplace, crucially if it is a single independent establishment not belonging to another body, or if it one of a number of workplaces in the UK belonging to the same organisation, or if it is the sole UK establishment of a foreign owned organisation. The legal status of the organisation is collected in order for it to be classified to the private or public sector, as well as if it is in the trading sector. At the end of the section a range of attitudinal questions are asked of all respondents about the perceptions of management and staff.

A review of the section indicates that not all of the attitudinal questions are essential and that there is some overlap with questions in the collective representation section e.g. (EVIEWWS) – Managers general attitude to Trade Unions in the workplace and the EFOR and EAGAINST follow ups. It is suggested that general attitude to Trade Unions are maintained in section A but that 5 of these questions are suspended – those asking about the relationship of management and employees which are posed at a higher level of abstraction - ‘We frequently ask employees at our workplace to help us in ways not specified in their job description’ (APHRAS01); ‘Given the chance, employees at our workplace sometimes try to take unfair advantage of management’ (APHRAS02); ‘Those at the top are best placed to make decisions about this workplace’ (APHRAS05); ‘Employees here are fully committed to the values of this organisation’ (APHRAS09) and either ‘We do not introduce any changes here without first discussing the implications with employees’ (APHRAS08) or ‘Most decisions at this workplace are made without consulting employees’ (APHRAS10). These questions overlap partially with ‘establishment flexibility’ in section J and ‘workplace change’ questions in section L.

It is recommended that the question AESTNUM which asks about the number of other workplaces in the UK that are owned by the same company could be presented, in a tick box format, with some size bands.

B Management of Personnel and employment relations

This section is used to record classificatory information about the characteristics of the respondent, the proportion of time they spend on employment relations matters and the extent to which employment relations is viewed as a central and strategic function of the business.

Several questions about the characteristics of the respondent are suggested for deletion, including, ‘Is employment relations your main job responsibility or are you more concerned with other matters such as financial management or administration at this workplace?’ (BRELATE), ‘How many years of experience do you have in personnel or employment relations management either in this establishment or elsewhere?’ (BSERVICE), ‘Do you have any staff at this workplace to assist you in

managing personnel or employment relations matters here?’ (BASSIST), and ‘How many staff (BNUMASS). It is suggested that the questions concerning the degree of delegation of employment relations matters to non-managers could be suspended, specifically the questions about the proportion of non-managers with duties involving supervision of employees (BINVMANG) and the degree of autonomy they have over hiring (BAUTHOR1) pay increases (BAUTHOR2) and dismissal (BAUTHOR3).

It is also suggested that the questions about the degree to which the responding HR/personnel manager is required to liaise with other more senior managers at a separate establishment could be suspended, specifically – if someone at another establishment is mostly engaged on personnel or employment relations matters (BSEPAR), if a policy must be followed in terms of – pay, hours, holidays, pensions, recruitment & selection, training, grievances, discipline, staffing, equal opportunities, health and safety, perform appraisals, recognition of TU, or None of these (BPOLICY). Finally, if a regular report on each of the issues must be made to a manager at another organisation (BREPORT).

A block of questions about the extent to which decisions about the quality of outputs and the organisation of work have been devolved to managers at the local establishment are suggested for suspension – on quality of main product or service; quantity of output of main product or level of service; physical changes within the establishment; changes in organisation of work at the establishment; or none of these (BCONMOR). Associated with these it is proposed to drop the question asking if a regular report is required by managers at another workplace (BREPMOR).

Further, it is proposed that the detailed follow up on advice sought from Acas be suspended (BAISSUES) and that we no longer ask about Investors in people – IIP - accreditation (BAWARD). The follow up question on whether the respondent was involved in drafting the strategic plan is also proposed for deletion (BPREPARE).

C **Recruitment, training and organisation of work**

This section deals with the general practices regarding filling vacancies, induction, training and the objectives of training, team working arrangements and use of computers and ICT. The section also covers the degree of autonomy that individuals and teams have over the work they do.

It is suggested that the question on whether management undertake any steps to determine if potential recruits are Trade Union members (CCHECKS) are deleted and that the detailed questions on ever used personality/attitude tests (CTESTWHO) and performance/competency tests (CWHODO) by occupational groups are not asked. The length of time induction training lasted for the largest occupational group (LOG), measured in days and hours, is also recommended for deletion

(CLONGCH, CLONGHR, CLONGDY), users are also asked to comment on the need for the question on whether a standard induction programme exists for staff of the largest occupational group (CINDUCT). Further, it is suggested that the questions asking for average time spent on off-the-job training by experienced employees in the LOG is less reliable and could be deleted (CTRAIN) and its objective (COBJECT) but to retain the question asking about what was covered in the training (CHOW). In terms of worker autonomy, a number of detailed questions are best located on the Survey or Employees questionnaire, such as 'the extent that individuals in the LOG have variety in their work' (CVARIETY), 'discretion over how they work' (CDISCRETE), 'control over the pace at which they work' (CONTROL), and 'involvement in decisions over how their work is organised' (CDESIGN). It is also proposed that the items measuring the autonomy of teams are reduced to concentrate on the extent to which 'team members depend on each other's work to be able to do their job' (CTEAMHOA), 'team members jointly decide how the work is to be done' (CTEAMHOC) and 'team members are given responsibility for specific products or services' (CTEAMHOD). The questions about rotation of tasks (CTEAMHOE), and teams appointing their own leaders (CTEAMHOB) are proposed for deletion from the MQ as they are less useful in discriminating between workplaces due to very small incidence.

D Consultation and communication (including joint consultative committees and worker forums)

This section includes structures in place to permit information to flow between management and employees. It concerns general meetings between management and all staff, meetings between line managers/supervisors and employees they have responsibility for and consultative committees, forums or councils that may operate at the workplace. Questions are included on how employees are voted or nominated to serve on committees, regularity of meeting and the influence of the committee. The section concludes with a series of questions about the extent to which management engage with employees about improving performance, undertaking staff surveys and advising them on staffing and financial issues.

A number of questions ask the senior manager to comment on the regularity of meetings between management and staff and enquires, in aggregate terms, about the issues covered at these meetings, which may provide less meaningful data. It is proposed that the content of such meetings should be restricted to the two or three most common issues discussed so that there is some measure of importance. The questions which ask for an estimate of the average time spent dealing with questions from employees should be adapted so they better distinguish if the meetings are primarily an exchange of views or are mostly concerned with disseminating information (DMTWOWAY, DBTWOWAY). It is also proposed that the question about different occupational groups of employees covered by the joint consultative committee could be dropped (DISSWHO); the expected lifespan of the committee (DCOMLIF) and

number of employee representatives (DREPNUM) which should be rationalised in terms of the numbers of employee representatives questions in Section E (ESITNUM, EUJCCNU and ENUMREPS, ENUMOTHU, ESTEWNUM). The questions asking if employee representatives receive training for their role on the committee are also proposed for deletion (DANYTRAIN, DTRAIN, DCONFID). It is proposed that the question about engagement with staff to help improve performance are continued but that the detailed questions about life-span of such groups and proportion of non-managerial staff are not asked (DCIRCLIF, DPROPORT). In addition we suggest retaining the question about undertaking staff surveys but suggest that the question, 'Were the results of the survey made available in written form to those employees that took part?' (DRESULTS) is dropped.

E Representation at work (Trade Union section)

This section examines the extent that any Trade Union has a formal recognised role to represent members at the workplace. It examines membership of Trade Unions at the workplace and attitudes towards Trade Unions in general. It collects details on the number of Trade Unions that are formally recognised and those which are not, including any new requests for recognition and those that have been derecognised. The section then examines the role of Trade Union representatives/shop stewards and the presence of any non-union representatives. The final section looks at the extent to which management negotiates or consults with representatives over a range of employment relations matters.

It is suggested that through cognitive testing we should explore some of the terminology used in this section as what is understood by 'collective bargaining', 'group/collective procedures', pay review bodies, formal recognition, negotiation and consultation may have become rather variable and subjective since the last survey in 2004.

In order to reduce the number of questions it is suggested that the largest Trade Unions in membership terms are included as answer categories and respondents asked to indicate if any are 'recognised' for collective bargaining. To establish the total number of Trade Unions with members at the workplace (either recognised or not) a question will be asked along the lines 'How many separate unions or independent staff associations have members at this workplace?', followed by a question on the number that are recognised (either with members or not).

To avoid duplication with attitudes to Trade Union questions in section A, it is proposed to remove the question EIEWS 'How would you describe management's general attitude towards trade union membership among employees at this establishment?' and the follow ups EFOR and EAGAINST which seek to identify if trade union recruitment is encouraged or discouraged.

It is proposed that the question about formal agreement to recognise just one Trade Union is deleted (EFORMAL) and the question which collects the number of separate negotiating groups (EGROUPS) as the number of respondents being routed to these questions is now very small. In addition it is proposed that we no longer ask if management have started to negotiate with the Trade Union within the last 6/7 years (ENEW, ENEW2 and ENEWNUM) and over a wider range of jobs (EWIDER, EWIDNUM & EWIDER2). It is also proposed that we do not ask about Trade Union learning representatives (EULR, EULRNUM) or that this information is captured in the Worker Representative Questionnaire.

The questions on the degree of 'trust' perceived to exist between management and Trade Unions could be reduced from 3 at present to 1 – so replace ETRUSA1 to ETRUSA3 with 1 generic question, and the same for non- union representatives (ETRUB1 to ETRUSB3). The rationale here is that analysis on the data reveals that the questions measure one underlying factor with very high undifferentiated correlation. It is proposed that we do not ask the questions about the impact that either Trade Union representatives or non-Union representatives have on performance (EPHRASTU, EPHRASNU). The question APHRAS06 'Unions help find ways to improve workplace performance' already covers this for official representation.

The detailed section on the manner to which management negotiates, consults, informs or does not inform Trade Unions and, separately for employee representatives, over 12 issues is rather long and it is suggested that our understanding of how these concepts are understood by respondents is less than sufficient. It is proposed that we restrict this section to areas where employers are expected to consult with recognised unions (pay, hours, holidays and perhaps pension entitlements) and have a shorter question on areas which are not covered by statutory provisions. It is noted that some testing may be required as frequently agreements may be negotiated to cover multiple years. The first 4 questions EPAYA, EHOURLSA, EHOLA, EPENA would be retained, but the last 8 would be grouped together with respondents asked to identify those where 'consultation' occurred– ESELECTA, ETRAINA, EGRIEVA, EDISCIPA, ESTAFFA, EQUALOPA, EHEALTHA, EPERFORA. For non-Union representatives (in workplaces where union representatives exist, or where no other representatives exist) the hierarchy of negotiation and consultation is less clear, but should be simplified and cognitively tested with appropriate reductions in the number of individual items.

F **Pay determination**

This section examines pay and remuneration of employees and the extent to which management use payment by results and merit pay as incentives and the degree to which these reward systems apply for managers as well as non-managers. The section also collects information on profit related pay, the size and characteristics of

settlements reached and fringe benefits that may be enjoyed by some staff groups.

Propose that FSAMPAY and FFACTORS, which ask if those in the largest occupational group receive the same pay and, if not, the reasons why it is different are suspended. Most are not paid 'the same' for a variety of reasons and better wage distribution data collected as part of the EPQ will be a superior measure.

To help streamline this section detailed questions on occupational groups who are rewarded in different sorts of ways could be removed, but maintaining a 'non-managerial' question in terms of the proportion of non-managers who are covered by the scheme. Questions that are proposed for amendment are FPERWHO, FPROCC, FOCCGR and FSOCIND.

It is proposed that we continue to ask about use of formal job evaluation, but do not attempt to collect the number of schemes (FJOBENUM). In addition two questions are used to collect eligibility and participation in share ownership schemes. It is proposed that we retain just one of these, with the emphasis on eligibility (FSHAREWHO) rather than participation (FNONWHO). This will permit historical comparison.

The section of questions which focus on the 'pay settlement' may be adapted so that we collect a new item which captures when the last settlement was negotiated (to replace FREVIEW). This should then capture the size of the settlement (adapted from FUPDOWN). The individual questions to collect the influences on the pay settlement all have a 'Yes/No' response, so it may be possible to rationalise them into one question and ask respondents to select 'the factors which influenced the size of the pay settlement' – so FLIVING, FRECRUIT, FPERFO, FPROD FACTION are placed on a showcard and read as one question.

Several other questions are proposed as candidates for suspension, including (FAWARDSI) 'Was this increase higher, about the same, or lower than the average increase for similar workers in your industry/sector as far as you know?', (FAWARDSL) '...similar workers in this locality as far as you know?' and FWHODID 'Which of the following parties were directly involved in determining or negotiating the pay rise for the largest occupational group?' (as the important question about negotiation with employee representatives is included at FCONSNEG). It is also proposed that the follow up questions concerning where the decision about the pay settlement was made is not asked (FWHERE & FWHERE2) 'Was the decision over the most recent pay increase for ... made at this workplace (at a higher level in the organisation) or elsewhere?'

The existing series of questions on pay determination, repeats this for each occupational group which exists at the workplace (with a maximum of 9 questions). It is suggested that this could be replaced with 2 questions, one focusing on arrangements for managers and senior administrative employees and the other focusing on non-managers.

Finally, it is proposed that the question asking if written information is made available for different terms and conditions is not asked (FWRITE). Also the follow up questions on the frequency of performance appraisal with non managerial employees (FAPPWHEN) and who undertakes these are suggested for suspension (FWHOAPP).

G Collective disputes and procedures

This section examines how group or collective disputes are handled at the workplace and if procedures are in place to deal with workplace conflict. The section then examines the prevalence of actual disputes, how these were managed and any action that was taken. Questions also cover the extent to which issues that arise are referred to others within the organisation or to other independent bodies.

It is suggested that some testing around what is understood by 'collective/group procedures for handling disputes and conflict' could be undertaken. The questions asking if there are separate procedures for different groups of workers or for different issues, is proposed for suspension (GWORKISS). It is suggested that the open-ended question 'If a dispute over pay or conditions arises here, how is it generally resolved?' (GRESOLVE) should be deleted. In addition the forms of industrial action at question GACTION could be grouped and reduced, potentially - Strikes of less than 1 day/ Strikes of a day or more, but less than week/ Strikes of a week or more/Overtime ban or restriction by employees/Work to rule/Other industrial action. This grouping would lead to an appropriate reduction in the follow up questions if these still need to be asked about individually. The same grouping of answer categories should be considered for GPSTYR 'In the last 12 months, have any employees here threatened to take any of the forms of industrial action listed on this card?', although due to small numbers this could be reduced to a Yes/No response.

It is suggested that the question on GNUMBER is replaced with a questions which asks the respondent to think of the last ballot and indicate what proportion of the eligible workforce voted.

H Individual grievance and disciplinary procedures

Section H examines the procedures in place to deal with individual grievances, how employees are made aware of the procedures and how they operate in practice. The different types of grievances raised in the last year are collected from a long list including – Pay and conditions, Job grading, Physical working conditions and health and safety, discrimination strands. A similar set of questions are asked about disciplinary procedures at the workplace including –

Performance, Time keeping, Breaches of security, various forms of harassment.

In reviewing the section, it is suggested that the question about 'How are employees made aware of the (grievance) procedures' is deleted (HAWARE) as are the questions about what employees companion's are allowed to do at formal meetings (HCOMP1, HCOMP2, HCOMP3). The matching questions on grievances are also suggested for deletion (HOTHAWAR, HOTHCOMP1, HOTHCOMP2, HOTHCOMP3). An amendment to the question about use of the formal procedures is suggested so that it captures actual volumes at the work place, for example HRAISED could read, 'On how many occasions in the last 12 months have employees formally raised any matters through the individual grievance procedures?'. It is also suggested that the list of grievances is shortened from a list of 16 items – Pay and conditions issues/Job grading and classification/ Promotion, career development and internal transfers/ Physical working conditions and health and safety/ Work practices, work allocation, pace of work/Working time, annual leave, time off work/Performance appraisal/Sex discrimination/Sexual harassment/Relations with supervisors, line managers/Bullying at work/Race discrimination/Racial harassment/Selection for redundancies/Use of disciplinary sanctions, including dismissal/ Some other grievance – by grouping them into more generic categories such as – pay and grading/working time/working practices, fair treatment and any other type of grievance. The open ended question on why no issues have been raised through procedure should not be asked (HWHYNOT).

It is suggested that the questions about use of disciplinary sanctions are amended to collect information on incidence of – formal verbal warnings/ formal written warnings/ suspension with or without pay/ deduction from pay/ dismissal/ internal transfer in one question – possibly using a showcard (HORWARN, HWARNING, HSUSPEND, HDEDUCT, HDISMISS, HTRANSF). It would also be useful if a question could be developed to collect the number of employees against whom sanctions were imposed short of dismissal (dismissals are included in the EPQ section, so it locating a question at that point could be tested). The list of reasons for taking disciplinary action could also be re-grouped to move from a list of 13 to about 7 categories (HSUSTYP)

It is proposed that the question on changes to procedures following an Employment Tribunal application is dropped as this information is gathered as part of the Survey of Employment Tribunal Appeals – SETA (HREVIEW).

I Fair treatment at work and health and safety

Section I examines workplace policies on equal opportunities, managing diversity, flexible working arrangements including maternity and paternity leave. The section also includes questions

on health and safety arrangements and workplace accidents and injuries.

In reviewing the section it is suggested that the following questions are dropped – ‘How is the (equal opportunities) policy made known to employees’ (ITOLD) and ‘Could you tell me why there is no formal written equal opportunities policy at the establishment?’ (IWHYNOT). It is suggested IEFECTS could be dropped as there are detailed questions which enquire about measurement of the equal opportunities policies – IPRAC1 to IPRAC5 which would be retained. The 3 questions on assessing accessibility of the workplace for staff with disabilities could be shortened to one question (IASSESS) as the follow up questions have produced limited information and it has not been possible to infer much without knowing what changes were identified as necessary, so propose removing IOUTCOM and IADJUST.

It is proposed that two questions which examine eligibility for changing working hours could be combined so that ‘all staff have option’ and specific subgroups are co-located (merge IPTELIG and IPTGRP) similarly the question on flexitime could be rationalised into one question (IFLXELIG and IFLXGRP).

It is suggested that the questions dealing with number of weeks/days offered for maternity leave and paternity leave should be dropped (IMATWKS and IPATFULL) and the questions on availability of arrangements adapted so that they collect ‘male/female receives their normal pay’ and ‘male/female receives the state minimum pay’. It is also recommended that the questions to do with ‘time off to look after children’ (IPARENT, IPARPAID) are dropped but that the alternative to deal with ‘emergency leave for care of children or family member’ is retained (IFMOFF).

The questions on health and safety arrangements at the workplace are retained except for those which ask about workplace accidents and injuries. The Health and Safety Executive do not feel that the questions provide an accurate portrayal of the incidence of work related accidents and injuries and have suggested that it may be more useful to match WERS data with the RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) data maintained by them. Correspondence indicates that this information is maintained at the workplace level and use local unit IDBR references (IINJURY, INUMINJ, IILLNESS, ILLNUM).

J Establishment flexibility

Section J examines the extent to which different activities at the workplace are undertaken by independent contractors and the extent to which the functions undertaken by them have been outsourced. Parallel questions enquire about functions which have been taken back in house. The section also includes the use of

temporary agency staff, staff hired on temporary and fixed term contracts, home workers, free lancers and contractors, and a question on use of shift working, annualised hours and zero hour contracts. A series of questions on redundancies and redundancy proposals follow, with an emphasis on measuring the extent to which the proposals were agreed with employee representatives. The section concludes by examining the usual operating hours of the workplace and the extent to which staff have worked in excess of 48 hours over the last year.

This section will be important in terms of assessing the impact of recession on workplaces and the extent to which they have downsized and made changes to their business activities in order to weather the downturn. The precise detail of the questions asking about change may be restricted to the last 3 or 4 years rather than 5 as was previously used e.g. JYR5EMP. The questions asking where agency staff and temporary/fixed term staff are deployed are suggested for deletion (JSOCTEM, JSOCFIT). In addition it is proposed that the question on job security across occupational groups (JOBSEC) is amended to refer to managerial and non-managerial groups of staff.

It is considered that some of the 'why?' questions could be rationalised with removal of JWHYOUT 'Why was this activity or service contracted out?', JWHYIN 'Why was this activity/were these activities or service brought in-house?', JWHYTEM 'Why are you using temporary agency staff?', and JWHYFIT 'Why are you using fixed term contracts?'.

The question enquiring if a specific committee and/or specific representatives were appointed to deal with the redundancy proposals are recommended for deletion (JNEWCOM, JNEWREP). The questions on usual operating hours and opening and closing times are of limited value and could be located in the EPQ questionnaire or removed. Users are asked to comment on the need they have for these data.

The section progresses to ask about long working hours (over 48 hours per week), it is suggested that these questions are reduced (suspend JOVERTIM & JOVERTIT which ask about employees of the largest occupational group regularly working overtime as well as JEXHMAN & JEXHMANI which ask about the employees of the largest occupational group work regularly in excess of 48 hours) and that a matching set of questions on reduced working hours/short time and unpaid leave are introduced to reflect the prevailing economic climate.

K Establishment performance

Section K focuses on the financial wellbeing of the workplace in terms of competitors both nationally and internationally. The questions collect the number of customers for which products/services produced and the importance of price verses quality of outputs. Other questions assess the current state of the

market and factors that are important in terms of gaining a competitive advantage. The module then considers the extent to which the workplace has met various quality standards and if they are required to supply data about this to customers. The final set of questions examine target setting and benchmarking and ask for an assessment of how well the workplace is performing, including the degree to which employees are involved in setting targets.

Given the interest of WERS 2011 to capture the experience of workplaces as they emerge out of recession, it is likely that the questions focusing on production of good and services, market presence, competition and shifts in the external environment will be adapted. Some questions are highly pertinent, but others in connection with growth, target setting are likely candidates for modification so that they reflect operating in a shrinking economy and emphasise the strategies that businesses have adopted in order to reduce costs. The questions will also need to reflect that in some sectors and for some businesses the recession has had less impact and some businesses have grown. It is likely that new questions will need to be developed to reflect these circumstances and the issues that have been encountered (e.g. recruitment, finance).

Some attempt to rationalise the market questions is needed and it is proposed that KPRIVPUB 'Are those organisations to which you primarily provide goods or services in the private or public sector?', KLARGE which asks for the proportion of goods or services provided to the establishment's largest customer, could probably be deleted. KQUAL, an estimate of whether demand for service was based on offering better quality did less to differentiate workplaces than did KPRICE – an estimate of whether demand for service was based upon offering a more competitive price, so it is proposed for deletion, plus KRANK which asks about other factors important for competitive success.

It is proposed that the question which asks if workplaces must provide information to customers on a range of employment relations matters, KREQUIRE could use a shorter list, focusing only on the most common items. It is also proposed not to ask KWRKPLACE, 'Has this workplace attained either of the quality standards BS5750 or ISO9000'.

It is suggested that the question on consultation with employees about target setting could be dropped (KTARCON) and if employees /representatives are informed of target setting (KEMPINF). There is a general question about ever benchmarked in the last 2 years (KBNCHMA) followed by 3 questions on the nature of this benchmarking – in same business, same county or abroad which are proposed for suspension. Finally, the question asking for an assessment of the quality of product or service relative to other establishments in the same industry is used less than the items comparing an assessment of labour productivity or financial performance and is proposed for suspension (KESTPER3).

L Workplace change

Section L focuses on changes that have taken place in the workplace in the last 2 years in terms of performance related pay, information technology, organisation of work and worker involvement.

There are 5 questions in the section and it may be appropriate to merge them with section K, especially as this will be developed to reflect the changing economic climate. It is proposed that one question LMANCHA might be located in the EPQ questionnaire space permitting.

M General information

Section M is the final section of the Management Questionnaire. It is short with an assessment of relationship between management and employees at the workplace and permission for data matching with other official data sources for the purposes of research. A question asking for permission for follow up is also included.

Financial
Performance
Questionnaire
(FPQ)

At the end of the Manager Questionnaire, the interviewer will place a short self completion Financial Performance Questionnaire (FPQ). This will be left with workplaces in the Trading Sector only (i.e. those in the private sector and public sector workplaces engaged in the provision of services).

The FPQ consists of seven questions which aim to collect objective data for a given accounting year on; turnover, staff working full-time and part-time, the value of assets, capital expenditure, purchases of goods, materials & services, employment costs, research and development. It is proposed that the same questionnaire will be used again. Users are invited to comment on their use of this information.

Section 3 – Summary of questions proposed for suspension from the Management Questionnaire in WERS 2011

Manager Questionnaire – questions proposed for suspension, movement or parallel block			
Section	Action	Question	Impact – no. questions removed (no. of question items removed)
EPQ	Remove	zpro_mft /zpro_fft/	-32

		zpro_mpt/ zpro_fpt/ ztec_mft /ztec_fft/ ztec_mpt/ ztec_fpt/ zadm_mft /zadm_fft/ zadm_mpt/ zadm_fpt/ zskl_mft /zskl_fft/ zskl_mpt/ zskl_fpt zper_mft /zper_fft/ zper_mpt/ zper_fpt zsal_mft /zsal_fft/ zsal_mpt/ zsal_fpt zope_mft /zope_fft/ zope_mpt/ zope_fpt zrou_mft/ zrou_fft/ zrout_mpt/ zrou_fpt	
Section A		APHRAS01	1
		APHRAS02	1
		APHRAS05	1
		APHRAS09	1
		APHRAS08 or 10	1
Section B		BRELATE	1
		BSERVICE	1
		BASSIST	1
		BNUMASS	1 Routed on above
		BINVMANG	1
		BAUTHOR1	1
		BAUTHOR2	1
		BAUTHOR3	1
		BSEPAR	1
		BPOLICY	1 (13 item showcard)
		BREPORT	1 (13 item showcard)
		BAISSUES	1 (8 item list)
		BAWARD	1
	Removal of all items	BCONMOR	1(4)
	Removal of all items	BREPMOR	1(4)
		BPREPARE	1
Section C		CCHECKS	1
	Consolidate into 1 question	CTESTWHO	1
	Consolidate into 1 question	CWHODO	1
		CINDUCT	1

		CLONGCH	1
		CLONGHR/ CLONGDY	1
		CTRAIN	1
		COBJECT	1 (6 item showcard)
		CVARIETY	1
		CDISCRETE CCONTROL	2
		CDESIGN	1
		CTEAMHOE	1
		CTEAMHOB	1
Section D	Ask for 2 most important items	DMWHIC	0 (10 items to 2)
	Ask for to 2 most important items	DBWHIC	0 (10 items to 2)
	Ask for 2 most important items	DWHICH and D1WHI	0 (10 items to 2)
		DISSWHO	1 (9 item showcard)
		DCOMLIF	1
		DREPNUM	1
		DANYTRAI	1
		DTRAIN	1 (5 item showcard)
		DCONFID	1
		DCIRCLIF	1
		DPROPORT	1
		DRESULTS	1
Section E		ERECRUIT	1
		EVIEWS	1
		EFOR	1
		EAGAINST	1
	All trade unions recognised with active members or with some active members but not for all recognised unions, or with no active members for any unions but recognised. Some moved to EPQ, consideration about whether Trade Union names need to be recorded (consider reduction of name collection to recognised Trade Unions, largest pre-filled, and move to EPQ)	EUNIONA, EADDREC, EOTHREC, EMOSTMEM	0 (-10)

	OR introduce panel question ENUMREC 'Is this union/How many unions are recognised by management for negotiating pay and conditions for any sections of the workforce in this establishment?'		
		EFORMAL	1
		EGROUPS	1
		ENEW & ENEW2	2
		EWIDER, EWIDNUM & EWIDER2	3
		EOTHUREP	1
		EULR	1
		EULRNUM	1
	REDUCED FROM 3 TO 1 ITEM	ETRUSA1, A2, A3	RETAIN 2?
	REDUCED FROM 3 TO 1 ITEM	ETRUSB1, B2, B3	RETAIN 2?
		EPHRASTU	1
		EPHRASNU	1
	12 items reduced from individual questions to an enumerated list (showcard) asking respondents to identify the areas where 'active consultation' takes place OR reduction in the number of issues covered	EPAYA EHOURLA EHOLA EPENA ESELECTA ETRAINA EGRIEVA EDISCIPA ESTAFFA EQUALOPA EHEALTHA EPERFORA	6 (approx)
	12 items reduced from individual questions to an enumerated list (showcard) asking respondents to identify the areas where 'active consultation' takes place OR reduction in the number of issues covered	EPAYB EHOURLB EHOLB EPENB, ESELECTB ETRAINB EGRIEVB EDISCIPB ESTAFFB EQUALOPB EHEALTHB EPERFORB	6 (approx)
Section F		FSAMPAY	1
		FFACTORS	1
		FPERWHO	0 (Up to 9)

		FPERPOCC	0 (Up to 9)
		FOCCGR	0 (Up to 9)
		FSOCIND	0 (Up to 9)
		FNONWHO	1
		FJOBENUM	1
	Adapted to capture size of settlement	FUPDOWN	0
	4 questions reduced to an enumerated list (showcard) asking respondents to select factors influencing pay settlement	FLIVING FRECRUIT FPERFO FPROD FACTION	3 (approx)
		FAWARDSI	1
		FAWARDSL	1
		FWHOID	1
		FWHERE & FWHERE2	2
	Amend to focus on arrangements for managers and senior administrative employees and a second question on non-managers (reduce from 9 to 2)	FSOC1, FSOC2, FSOC3, FSOC4, FSOC5, FSOC6, FSOC7, FSOC8, FSOC9	3 (approx)
		FWRITE	1
		FAPPWHEN	1
		FWHOAPP	1
Section G		GWORKISS	1
		GRESOLVE	1 (open ended)
	Reduce from 10 to 6 types of industrial action	GACTION	0 (10 to 6 items)
	Follow ups reduced to 6, OR repeat GACTION with a reference period going back 2-3 years	GACTYR01 GACTYR02 GACTYR03 GACTYR04 GACTYR05 GACTYR06 GACTYR07 GACTYR08 GACTYR09 GACTYR10	-4
	Reduce from 10 to 6 threats of potential industrial action	GPSTYR	0 (10 to 6 items)
Section		HAWARE	1 (7 items)

H			
		HCOMP1, HCOMP2 HCOMP3	3
		HWHYNOT	1 (open ended)
		HOTHAWAR	1 (7 items)
		HOTHCMP1, HOTHCMP2, HOTHCMP3	3
		HORWARN, HWARNING, HSUSPEND, HDEDUCT, HDISMISS,HTRAN SF, HSUSNUM, HSUSTYP	3 (approx, as replace with 1 showcard)
	Reduction in size of list from 16 options to 5	HTYPE	0 (16 to 5 items)
	Consolidation of these 6 questions into 1 question as an enumerated list (show card)	HORWARN HWARNING HSUSPEND HDEDUCT HDISMISS HTRANSF	3 (approx. as replace with showcard)
		HREVIEW	1
Section I		ITOLD	1 (7 items)
		IWHYNOT	1 (approx 4 items)
	Open ended question	IEFFECTS	1 (open ended)
		IOUTCOM	1
		IADJUST	1
	Rationalised into 1 question	IPTELIG, IPTGRP	1
	Rationalised into 1 question	IFLEXELIG IFLXGRP	1
	Rationalised IMATFULL & IMATWEEKS	IMATWKS	1
	Rationalised IPATPAId & IPATFULL)	IPATFULL	1
		IPARENT	1 (6 items)
		IPARPAID	1
	Unreliable questions better to match with RIDDOR data	IINJURY INUMINJ	1
	Unreliable questions better to match with RIDDOR	IILLNESS ILLNUM	1
Section J		JSOCTEM	1 (approx 3 items)
		JSOCFIT	1 (approx 3 items)

		JWHYOUT	1
		JWHYIN	1
		JWHYTEM	1
		JWHYFIT	1
		JOBSEC	0 (reduce 9 to 2)
		JNEWREP	1
	Of limited value	JSTIME	1
		JCLTIME	1
	Move to EPQ(1)	JTIMEARR	0
		JOVERTIM	1
		JOVERTIT	1
		JEXHMAN	1
		JEXHMANI	1
Section K	Move 1, 2 or 3 to EPQ	KACTIVS, KACTIVM, KPRIVPUB	0
		KPRIVPUB	1
		KLARGE	1
		KQUAL	1
		KRANK	1
		KWRKPLACE	1
		KTARCON	1
		KEMPINF	1
	Keep only primary question on whether bench marked or not KBNCHMA	KBNCEST1, KBNCEST2, KBNCEST3	3
		KESTPER3	1
Section L	Move 1 to EPQ	LMANCHA	0
	Approximate total suggested questions dropped		150

