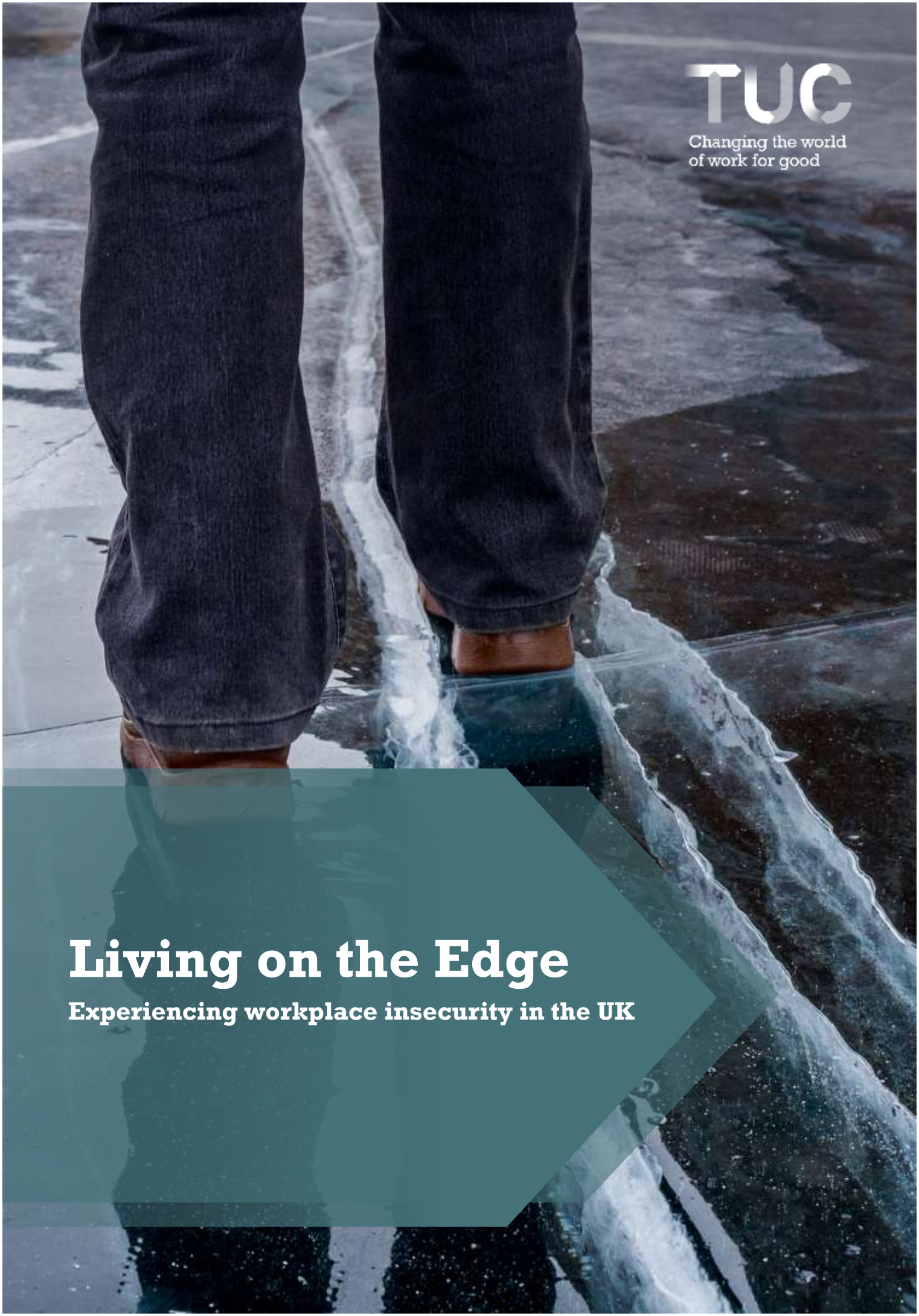

TUC

Changing the world of work for good

Living on the Edge

Experiencing workplace insecurity in the UK

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Contents

Executive Summary

Overview of the report

- The TUC estimate that there are now 3.2 million people in insecure work in the UK, including those on zero hours contracts, insecure agency work, and low paid self-employment (TUC 2017). However, less is known about workers' lived experiences of insecurity. The aim of this report is to shed light on the day-to-day problems experienced by workers in insecure forms of employment.
- The report comprises an analysis of representative survey data and a detailed investigation of insecure work in insecurity in three sectors: retail and logistics/delivery, and higher education. For each sector, workers from three regions of the economy (east of England, Yorkshire and London) were interviewed.
- The survey data come from Wave 6 of the Understanding Society survey (USoC), which was undertaken in 2015 and covered 19,156 employees. The analysis covers issues such as the times of day at which employees work, their job autonomy, training and job satisfaction and their ability to make transitions from less secure to more secure employment.
- The investigations of the sectors explore connections between insecurity, work pressures and work-life balance and examine the ways in which workers attempt to cope with insecurity and, in some cases, unpredictable job demands.
- The report highlights difficulties in the workplace, such as intimidation and pernicious forms of performance management, and in the home, such as the difficulty of managing household finances where incomes from work are low and hard to predict. The study also reports workers views about workplace representation and the issues that they would like trade unions and policy makers to address.

Main survey findings

- The Understanding Society survey allows us to compare the experiences of workers in casual, permanent and fixed term jobs. 'Casual' work here includes agency work, seasonal work and other types of non-permanent work, excluding fixed-term employment. The survey findings show that workers in casual employment are more likely than those in permanent or fixed-term jobs to be young, non-white and employed in an elementary occupation. Workers in casual employment are less likely than those in permanent and fixed-term jobs to have a means of representation at the workplace. Workers employed on a casual or fixed-term basis are less likely to be trade unions members than those with a permanent contract.

The survey finding shows that casual work has an independent impact on workers' job satisfaction:

- Workers in casual employment are more likely to have no regular hours of work and work on weekends. They experience lower job satisfaction and life satisfaction than other workers.
- The odds of experiencing job satisfaction are lower for those with no regular hours of work.
- Perceived low employment security and working weekends are associated with higher levels of higher anxiety and depression.
- Anxiety levels tend to be higher among workers who have no normal working times.
- It is sometimes claimed that casual work serves as a step to better paid and more permanent jobs, the research found that in fact casual workers were significantly more likely to find themselves out of work than those with a permanent contract.
- Compared to workers with a permanent contract, larger proportions of workers in casual or fixed-term employment anticipated losing their job in the next 12 months.
- Controlling for other factors, workers in fixed-term or casual employment are more likely to drop out of the labour market than workers in permanent jobs.
- Women are more likely than men to leave employment.
- Workers with at least one dependent child aged less than 16 years are more likely to leave employment than those without dependent children.
- The likelihood of leaving employment is higher for individuals who self-identify as non-white, young workers and those in elementary occupations.
- The likelihood of securing a permanent contract appears to be lower for women than for men, for those with dependent children when compared with those without, for non-white workers and for those employed in elementary occupations.

Retail

- Several contractual forms were in use, including fixed hours, zero hours contracts and short-hours (or guaranteed hour) contracts.
- Working hours tended to be unpredictable. This was true even for those on full-time, fixed hours contracts.
- Flexibility tended to work in favour of employers and not employees. Shifts were changed at very short notice to cover staff shortages and fluctuations in demand.
- Requirements to 'flex-up' created challenges for workers with childcare or other caring responsibilities, as well as for those receiving benefits.
- Workers believed that refusing to agree to a shift change could make them vulnerable and that they could be starved of hours in the future.

- Although elements of unpaid labour were apparent, in the form of the removal of unpaid breaks and reduction of premia for weekend and night work, it was the insecurity of hours (and sometimes pay) that led to stress amongst retail workers.

Logistics Sector

- Supply chain and cost cutting pressures within the logistics sector have a major impact work and employment and are reflected in the contractual status of employees. In warehousing these pressures are witnessed in the growth of ZHC and in Parcel delivery the growth of self-employment
- Self-employed workers in both parcel delivery and working for the company we have called 'Gigtaxi' throughout this research reported increasing cost pressures, performance management measures, and low rates of pay. These logistics workers stated that once they had covered all their costs, including supply and servicing their vehicle, they were often working for below minimum wage rate.
- Surveillance monitoring coupled with draconian performance management regimes were evident in warehousing and parcel delivery. Expected performance targets cause stress and anxiety for many workers.
- Long working hours were evident in parcel delivery and amongst Gigtaxi drivers.
- Workers in logistics across all regions are turning to unions to provide protection and to negotiate fairer terms and conditions of employment. Self-employed workers are increasingly organizing with the support of union campaigns.

Higher Education

- The evidence from higher education highlights the plurality of forms that insecure work takes within the sector.
- Workers in the sector reported on the impact of insecurity on their well-being. Referring to the 'scare of precarity' respondents highlighted the constant cycle of insecurity; the search for the next contract or the next hour of teaching, as well as living with the fear of redundancy or the 'fear of the axe'.
- Workers experienced pay insecurity. One respondent argued, 'I'm working but I am not able to access the normal things of life.'
- All respondents reported on the significant amounts of unpaid labour they were systematically performed.
- Many respondents remarked that their commitment to their profession was exploited by their employer.
- The Union was regarded as having a positive role in attempting to deal with precarious work in the sector.

Conclusions

- The survey results revealed clear lines of division in the labour market experiences of permanent employees and the casual workforce.
- As compared to permanent employees, workers in casual employment are more likely: to be young, non-white and employed in an elementary occupation; experience lower job satisfaction and life satisfaction; have perceived low employment security; and higher levels of anxiety and depression and are more likely to anticipate losing their jobs and withdraw from the labour market.
- Women are more likely to leave employment and have a lower likelihood of securing a permanent contract than men. Workers in fixed-term and casual employment are less likely than those in permanent jobs to be represented at work and are less likely to be trade unions members.
- The (in)ability to escape from the fear of insecure work and to have the capacity to sustain a reasonable existence was endemic in the three sectors studied in this report. Referred to by one respondent as the 'scare of precarity', workers across all sectors and in all regions highlighted the number of ways in which this fear manifest.
- Guaranteed Hours Contracts or Short-Hours (flexi) contracts provide a number of fixed and guaranteed hours per week, but this is predicated on workers being available for additional hours which they often felt that they could not refuse.
- Respondents reported significant fluctuations in both levels of pay and/or the regularity of payment. Many of the workers interviewed reported that they struggled financially and expressed considerable anxiety about 'making ends meet' and supporting themselves and their families. Respondents across all sectors reported significant financial hardship.
- Self-employed workers revealed that they often worked for a relatively low wage and as a result struggled financially.
- Respondents often expressed a sense of 'worthlessness' verging on despair that they experienced because of insecure and precarious work.
- Insecure and precarious work tilts the employment relationship heavily in favour of the employer: managers have discretion over the allocation of hours to workers, and the withdrawal of hours/contracts is used as a mechanism of control, which can lead to serious abuse.
- ZHC, hourly paid and/or self-employment rely upon significant elements of unpaid labour. The dynamics of unpaid labour can take a variety of forms across all sectors.
- Employees attachment or commitment to their profession can at best ameliorate some of the worse excess of insecure work. It should be noted however that this attachment does not negate the financial hardship workers experienced.

- Respondents across all sectors reported the implementation of draconian performance management regimes allied to growing levels of bullying and harassment from first-line supervisors.
- Our evidence reveals that workers in all of the sectors of our study are turning to unions to provide protection and to negotiate fairer terms and conditions of employment. Self-employed workers are increasingly organizing with the support of union campaigns.

Introduction

Recent headline labour market indicators suggest that the UK labour market is ostensibly performing well. Not captured in the headline measures, however, is the growth in specific types of employment that are low paid, insecure and precarious. The TUC (2017: 12) has estimated that 3.2 million workers in the UK face insecurity in work. Insecure workers include people employed on zero hours contracts, people in insecure temporary work, including agency, casual and seasonal workers, and low-paid self-employed workers.

The number of workers on zero hours contracts increased from 70,000 in 2006 to 810,000 in 2016 (TUC 2017: 12). According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS)[1], 2.8% of all people in employment were employed on a zero-hours contract in their main job during October to December 2016[2]. Self-employment has also increased and accounts for almost one-third of the additional employment created between April-June 2010 (approximately the start of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government) and January-March 2017. As the Resolution Foundation[3] has shown, many of those workers who have recently joined the ranks of the self-employed would prefer to have an employment contract. Moreover, 1.7 million self-employed workers are thought to receive less than the government's National Living Wage (TUC 2017: 12). The collapse of the courier firm City Link in 2015 drew attention to the vulnerable position of self-employed people working as contractors while the 2016 Employment Tribunal ruling that prevented Uber from classifying drivers as self-employed highlighted the problem of bogus self-employment[4] in the gig economy.

The proportion of workers in temporary jobs increased slightly during the 'Great Recession', but has more recently edged downward. In January-March 2017, 5.9 percent of all employees were in temporary jobs. Of these workers, 27 percent reported that they had taken a temporary job because they were unable to find a permanent position (ONS 2017). The critical question, for those for whom temporary employment is not freely chosen, is whether and how quickly workers can move into permanent jobs. Workers with temporary contracts receive less employer-funded training than permanent employees, which may negatively affect their chances of moving into more secure employment (Bryson 2007;

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[1].https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/articles/contractsthatdonotguaranteeaminimumnumberofhours/mar2017

[2] In addition, since April 2014 the ONS has published estimates of the number of contracts that do not guarantee employees a number of hours of work. The estimates are based on a survey of businesses and complement the data concerning zero-hours contracts. The findings from the November 2016 survey of businesses suggest that 1.7 million contracts did not 'guarantee a minimum number of hours, where work had actually been carried out under those contracts'. This figure amounts to 6% of all employment contracts.

[3] http://www.resolutionfoundation.org/app/uploads/2014/05/Just-the-job-or-a-working-compromise.pdf

[4] The OECD (2000: 156) has described BSE or 'false' self-employment as consisting of 'people whose conditions of employment are similar to those of employees, who have no employees themselves, and who declare themselves (or are declared) as self-employed simply to reduce tax liabilities, or employers' responsibilities'.

Cutuli and Guetto, 2013). Evidence from a number of EU countries suggests that temporary jobs can serve as career traps rather than stepping stones (Korpi and Levin, 2001; Scherer, 2004). More generally, upward transitions within the labour market have become more problematic as the number of relatively low-paying, (mainly) service sector jobs has grown (Goos and Manning 2007; Nolan and Slater 2010). Young workers in particular are facing longer and more complex education-to-work transitions, involving increasingly differentiated trajectories and less security than in the past (Green, 2013). Analysis by the TUC (2017) has shown that the growth in insecure work is concentrated in particular sectors. Hospitality (restaurants, pubs etc.) accounts for one-fifth of the increase in insecure employment since 2011.

Insecurity at work is partly a function of the employment rights framework. Employment protection legislation in the UK, as measured by the OECD's EPL index, has long been among the weakest in the OECD (only the USA has consistently ranked lower). Over the past few years, employment rights in the UK have been altered in ways that might encourage the growth of insecurity at work. In April 2012, the minimum period of employment service for unfair dismissal claims was increased from one to two years. In April 2013, the Coalition government reduced the minimum consultation period required in respect of large-scale collective redundancies involving more than 100 workers from 90 to 45 days. The following month, measures were introduced that permitted private sector employers to offer prospective employees a financial stake in their business, on the condition that key employment rights were foregone. The government also made it easier for employers to dismiss staff who are deemed to be 'under-performing' by introducing measures to facilitate 'consensual termination' of the employment relationship through Acas conciliation, settlement agreements and 'protected conversations' between employees and employers. Alongside these measures, a new fees regime was introduced for Employment Tribunals, which led to a fall in the number of claims and concerns about the ability of workers to access justice (Busby et al. 2013). This measure now abolished due to legal action from Unison, nevertheless reveals the political climate in relation to workers rights and protection within the workplace. More recently, the government reformed collective employment rights by introducing additional constraints on the ability of trade unions to take industrial action.

Although the growth of insecurity can be charted by examining phenomena such as zero hours, short-hours or guaranteed hours contracts and bogus self-employment, less is known about workers' lived experiences of insecurity. The aim of this report is to shed light on the day-to-day problems experienced by workers in insecure forms of employment. The report examines different manifestations of insecurity in three sectors: higher education, retail and logistics/delivery. In the majority of cases access to insecure workers was secured through union contacts at workplace and/or local level. In each of the sectors individual interviews were undertaken coupled with additional focus group(s) of three or four workers. The names of organisations and respondents have been anonymised. The report highlights difficulties in the workplace, such as intimidation and pernicious forms of performance management, and in the home, such as the difficulty of managing household finances where incomes from work are low and hard to predict. The study also reports workers views about workplace representation and the issues that they would like trade unions and policy makers to address.

The report is organised as follows;

Chapter 2 draws on the Understanding Society Survey (USoC), which contains information gathered from almost 17,000 households in the UK, in order to compare workers in permanent, fixed-term and casual forms of employment. This section of the report examines the extent to which these workers vary in relation to their job autonomy, wellbeing and hours of work. It also examines the extent to which workers in non-standard jobs can progress into more secure forms of work.

Chapters 3-5 draw on qualitative research data from interviews and focus groups to examine the experiences of insecure workers in retail, logistics/transport and higher education. These sector chapters also include vignettes of the experiences and narratives from individual workers which shed additional light on the problems faced by workers in insecure jobs.

Conclusions are presented in Chapter 6.

Chapter 2

Survey Findings

This chapter examines the extent to which experiences of work and potential drivers of insecurity differ according to the contractual status of workers. The analysis compares workers in permanent jobs with those in casual and fixed-term employment. The findings are derived from Wave 6 of the Understanding Society survey (USoC), which was undertaken in 2015. The survey covered 19,156 employees (the self-employed are excluded from the analysis). Of these, 92.4 percent had a permanent job, 2.9 percent had a contract for a fixed period, 1.6 percent were in casual work and 1 per cent were agency workers. The remaining employees were seasonal workers or had some other form of non-permanent employment. In the analysis presented in this Chapter, the category 'casual employment' comprises casual workers, agency workers, seasonal workers and all other workers in non-permanent jobs, excluding those with a fixed-term contract. The latter are treated as a separate category.

The findings presented in this chapter cover issues such as the times of day at which employees work, their autonomy, training and job satisfaction and their ability to make transitions from less secure to more secure employment. Many of the Tables in this chapter report percentages and in most cases, they have been rounded up or down. The exception is Table 2, which contains several cells with very small percentages. These have been left unrounded.

Table 1 provides information about the sample, comparing workers in permanent, casual and fixed-term employment.

The Table contains cross-tabulations, which allow workers to be compared according to their age group, occupation group, ethnic group and gender. The figures shown in Table 1 are percentages, accompanied by chi-square test statistics[5]. The main findings are:

- 44 percent of those in casual employment in 2015 were young workers aged 18-24 years.
- 29 percent of those in casual employment worked in elementary occupations.
- The percentage of workers who identified as 'non-white' in casual jobs was, at 16 percent, double the percentage identifying as non-white in permanent and fixed-term jobs.
- Casual employment was relatively rare in higher-level occupations.

[5] The X2 column reports chi-square test statistics for the cross-tabulations of age, occupation, ethnic group and gender. This test is used to ascertain whether a relationship exists between two categorical variables (e.g. age and contract type). The chi-square statistic, in conjunction with the 'p' value, establishes whether the variables are independent or related. If statistical significance (p) is greater than .05, we would conclude that there is no relationship. Values smaller than .05 indicate that a relationship exists. The lower the value of p, the more confident we can be that a relationship exists.

- However, substantial percentages of workers with fixed-term contracts were to be found among professional and associate professional and technical occupations.
- Women were disproportionately represented among workers with a fixed-term contract (60 percent of all workers with a fixed-term contract were women).

Table 1. Contract type by age, occupation, ethnic group and gender (%)

		Permanent	Casual	Fixed-term	X^2
Age	18-24	11	44	25	911.688***
	25-34	20	15	19	
	35-44	22	11	18	
	45-54	28	14	21	
	55+	19	16	17	
Occupation	Managers/senior officials	16	2	8	556.894***
	Professionals	13	9	30	
	Associate professional and technical	17	12	18	
	Admin/secretarial	12	9	14	
	Skilled trades	7	4	4	
	Personal service	10	14	13	
	Sales/customer service	8	13	4	
	Process, plant machine ops.	7	8	2	
	Elementary	11	29	8	
Ethnic group	White	91	84	92	50.376***
	Non-white	9	16	8	
Gender	Men	49	48	40	17.252***
	Women	51	52	60	

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

2.1. Working time and job autonomy

In Table 2 workers' normal working times are compared. Three findings stand out: firstly, a relatively large percentage of workers in casual employment (12 percent) have no regular pattern of work; secondly, compared to workers in permanent and fixed-term posts, they are more likely to work only in the evenings; and thirdly, they are less likely to work during the day.

As shown in Table 3, weekend working, while widespread across all types of employment status, appears to be most common among workers in casual employment. Thirty-four percent of those in casual employment stated that they work most or every weekend, compared to 21 percent of those in permanent jobs and 12 percent of workers with a fixed term contract.

Table 2. Times of the day at which people work (%)

	Permanent	Casual	Fixed-termt	X^2
Mornings only	4.2	4.4	2.8	299.885***
Afternoons only	1.3	3.1	1.1	
During the day only	67.4	49.6	72.5	
Evening only	1.9	7.1	2.4	
At night	2.2	3.4	0.9	
Both lunchtimes and evenings	0.6	2.4	1.1	
Other times of the day	0.3	0.0	0.2	
Rotating shifts	8.6	6.5	5.0	
Varies/no usual pattern	5.2	12.0	6.1	
Daytime and evenings	8.0	10.8	7.8	
Other	0.2	0.6	0.0	

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Table 3. Weekend working (%)

	Permanent	Casual	Fixed-term	X^2
Most/every weekend	21	34	12	111.818***
Some weekends	35	30	33	
No weekends	43	37	55	

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Workers also differ in relation to the amount of autonomy they have in their jobs. As shown in Table 4, except for autonomy over work hours, a larger percentage of workers in permanent jobs said that they had a lot of autonomy in their work when compared with workers with fixed-term contracts. The difference is even greater when workers in permanent and casual employment are compared. For example, 42 percent of those in permanent jobs stated that they had a lot of autonomy over job tasks, compared to 33 percent of workers in fixed-term employment and 22 percent of workers in casual

employment. For every item in Table 4, workers in casual employment were the most likely to claim that they had no autonomy in their jobs. For example, 52 percent of casual workers said that they had no autonomy over their hours of work, compared to 36 percent of those in permanent jobs and 35 percent of those in fixed-term jobs.

Table 4. Autonomy (%)

		Permanent	Casual	Fixed-term	X^2
Over job tasks	A lot	42	22	33	236.615***
	Some	33	33	34	
	A little	14	20	18	
	None	12	25	14	
Over work pace	A lot	46	31	41	121.118***
	Some	29	29	33	
	A little	13	19	14	
	None	12	22	12	
Over work manner	A lot	56	36	50	196.113***
	Some	28	33	34	
	A little	10	17	11	
	None	6	14	5	
Over task order	A lot	55	31	52	244.030***
	Some	28	34	31	
	A little	10	18	10	
	None	8	17	7	
Over work hours	A lot	24	13	25	115.175***
	Some	22	16	23	
	A little	18	20	17	
	None	36	52	35	

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

2.2. Training

The USoC findings suggest that the percentages of fixed-term employees who wanted (63 percent) and expected (49 percent) to receive work-related training were larger than the percentages of permanent employees wanting and expecting training. In both cases the percentage of workers wanting training was larger than the percentage that expected to receive it. Workers in casual employment were the least likely to say that they wanted training (45 percent) or expected to receive it (31 percent).

Table 5. Workers wanting and expecting work-related training (%)

		Permanent	Casual	Fixed-term	X^2
Would like work-related training	Yes	52	45	63	44.228***
	No	48	56	37	
Expect work-related training	Yes	44	31	49	57.227***
	No	56	69	51	

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

As shown in Table 6, casual workers were also the least likely to have received any form of training (employer-provided, government training scheme, university/college or other type) in the time since the previous wave of the survey.

Table 6. Whether training has been received since previous interview (%)

	Permanent	Casual	Fixed-term	X^2
Yes	38	29	43	31.961***
No	62	71	57	

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

2.3. Wellbeing and job satisfaction

In Table 7 we examine whether workers are satisfied with their jobs. The USoC question on which Table 7 is based asked workers whether they were somewhat, mostly or completely satisfied with their job. Workers who fell into one of the categories have been grouped together in a single 'Yes' category[6]. It is clear that a smaller percentage of workers in casual jobs said they experienced job satisfaction when compared with workers in permanent and fixed-term employment.

Table 7. Are you satisfied with your job? (%)

	Permanent	Casual	Fixed-term	X^2
Yes	79	72	82	26.202***

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Lower levels of satisfaction on the part of casual workers when compared with workers with permanent or fixed-term contracts are also apparent in relation to overall life satisfaction, as shown in Table 8. Although a pattern is difficult to discern, 59 per cent of workers with permanent contracts said that they were mostly or completely satisfied with their life, compared to 53 percent of casually employed workers and 56 percent of workers with a fixed-term contract.

Table 8. Satisfaction with life overall (%)

	Permanent	Casual	Fixed-term	X^2
Completely dissatisfied	1	2	1	38.946***
Mostly dissatisfied	5	6	5	
Somewhat dissatisfied	7	8	9	
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	9	7	8	
Somewhat satisfied	19	24	21	
Mostly satisfied	50	41	47	
Completely satisfied	9	12	9	

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***P<0.001

[6] The remaining categories in the survey were 'completely dissatisfied', 'mostly dissatisfied', 'somewhat dissatisfied' and 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'.

To probe workers' wellbeing further a logistic regression was conducted (Table 9). The model examines whether the likelihood of experiencing job satisfaction is related to different worker characteristics (such as age and gender) and the times at which they work[7].

Variables

Job satisfaction: job satisfaction has two **possible** values: 1 = having some positive level of job satisfaction; 0 = having a negative or neutral level of job satisfaction.

Occupation: we have used the ILO's International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO)[8] and the four skill levels that are commonly used to group occupations together[9]. Level 4 includes legislators, senior officials and managers and professionals. This is the reference group for Table 9, against which the three other occupation groups are compared. Level 3 comprises technicians and associate professionals. Level 2 comprises clerks, service workers, shop and market sales workers, skilled agricultural and fishery workers, craft and related workers and plant and machine operators and assemblers. Level 1 is composed of elementary occupations.

Age: four age groups are shown in the Table. The reference group, against which each one is compared, is '55 years and older'.

Sector: those who work in the private sector are compared with a reference group comprising those who work in public organisations and NGOs.

Working time: the 'job hours' variables measures the number of hours workers typically work in a week. The reference group is composed of those working 30-39 hours. 'Work weekends' measures whether workers sometimes or always work at the weekend while 'no normal working time' includes anyone who does not state that they usually work in the morning/afternoon or during the day.

Ethnic group: people who self-identified as 'non-white' in the survey are compared with those who identified as 'white' (the reference group).

Contractual status: workers in casual and fixed-term employment are compared to those in permanent jobs (the reference group).

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[7] The first column in Table 9 contains regression coefficients, standard errors (in parentheses) and significance levels (indicated by asterisks). The significance level tells us whether we can be confident that there is a real effect (indicated by the presence of one or more asterisks in the Table). The second column displays odds ratios. An odds ratio shows the odds of a particular outcome occurring (in this case, the odds of experiencing job satisfaction) in one group compared to another 'reference group'. An odds ratio of 1 indicates that the odds of the outcome occurring are equal in both groups. Values greater than 1 indicate that the odds are higher in the group being examined when compared to the reference group, whereas values below 1 indicate that the odds are lower.

[8] http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_172572.pdf

[9] http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/research/classification/isco88/english/s2/

The main findings from Table 9 are as follows:

- Workers in lower-level occupations (levels 1 and 2) are less likely to experience job satisfaction than those in the highest-level occupations (level 4).
- Women are 1.24 times more likely than men to experience job satisfaction.
- Workers in casual employment are less likely to experience job satisfaction than those in permanent jobs.
- Workers with very short hours (1-15 hours) are more likely to experience job satisfaction than those who work 30-39 hours (the reference category).
- The odds of experiencing job satisfaction are lower for those with no regular hours of work than for those with regular hours.
- There is no appreciable difference in the odds of experiencing job satisfaction when workers who identify as 'non-white' and 'white' are compared, nor is there a difference when workers with fixed-term contracts are compared to those with permanent contracts.
- The likelihood of experiencing job satisfaction appears to be unrelated to age.

Table 9. Job satisfaction – logistic regression

	B (SE)	Odds Ratio
Level 3	-.042 (0.05)	.96
Level 2	-.22 (0.05)***	.80
Level 1	-.32 (0.07)***	.72
Age18-24	-.07 (0.07)	.93
Age 25-34	-.04 (0.06)	.96
Age 35-44	-.10 (0.06)	.91
Age 45-54	-.11 (0.06)	.90
Female	.22 (0.04)***	1.24
Non-white	-.02 (0.07)	.98
Private sector	-.01 (0.04)	.99
Casual	-.22 (0.10)*	.80
Fixed term	.10 (0.18)	1.11
Job Hours 1-15	.31 (0.08)***	1.36
Job Hours 16-29	-.05 (0.05)	.95
Job Hours 40+	.02 (0.05)	1.02
Job Hours NA	.01 (0.11)	1.00
No normal working time	-.22 (0.05)***	0.8
Work weekends	.07 (0.04)	1.07

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

We also ran regressions that examined the extent to which workers experienced job-related depression and job-related anxiety[10]. Research in occupational psychology (see Warr, 1990; 2013) has found that 'enthusiasm-depression' and 'contentment-anxiety' are the main dimensions in which workers' feelings about their jobs vary. The dimensions capture a wider range of emotional responses than measures of 'job satisfaction' in enabling job-related pleasure and stimulation to be distinguished from each other (e.g. the possibility that jobs might be pleasant and not induce anxiety, yet also be unstimulating) (Green, 2006: 153).

[10] Using scales in USoC that are based on Warr (1990). Further information is available at: https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/documentation/mainstage/dataset-documentation/wave/2/datafile/b_indresp/variable/b_jwbs1_dv
and https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/documentation/mainstage/dataset-documentation/wave/2/datafile/b_indresp/variable/b_jwbs2_dv

Tables 10 and 11 contain the same groups as shown in Table 9, with three additions:

- 'Satisfied with job' comprises workers who experience job satisfaction. The reference group is those who do not experience job satisfaction.
- 'Low job security' includes all workers who thought that they were likely or very likely to lose their job in the next 12 months. The reference group is those who thought job loss unlikely or very unlikely.
- 'Dependent 16 yr. old children' comprises workers who were responsible for at least one child aged 16 years or younger. The reference group is all other workers (i.e. those with no child care responsibilities or older children).

The Tables include regression coefficients and standard errors. Positive coefficient values (B) indicate that feelings of depression or anxiety are lower for the groups shown in the Tables when compared with the reference groups[11]. The results suggest that:

- Compared to workers in Level 4 occupations, workers in Level 1, 2 and 3 occupations experience lower levels of anxiety.
- However, workers in Level 2 occupations experience higher levels of depression than those in Level 4 occupations.
- Women tend to experience anxiety and depression to a greater degree than men.
- Those who identify as 'non-white' tend to experience more anxiety and depression than those who identify as 'white'.
- Job satisfaction is associated with lower levels of anxiety and depression.
- Workers in casual employment do not differ from those in permanent jobs in terms of the levels of anxiety and depression they experience.
- Having a fixed-term contract is associated with lower levels of anxiety and depression when compared to having a permanent contract.
- Perceived low employment security and working weekends are associated with higher levels of anxiety and depression.
- Anxiety (but not depression) appears to be a worse problem for workers who have no normal working times.
- Among workers who do have normal working hours, those who work 1-15 or 16-29 hours experience less depression and anxiety than those who work longer hours.
- With regard to age, workers in the reference group (55 years old and over) fare better than younger workers.
- Workers with at least one dependent child tend to experience lower levels of depression when compared to other workers. Having a dependent child appears to make no difference to anxiety levels.

[11] Scales were reverse coded.

- Workers in the private sector appear to experience less anxiety than those employed in the other parts of the economy, but do not differ in relation to levels of depression.

Table 10. Job-related anxiety

	B (SE)
Level 3	.35 (0.05)***
Level 2	.63 (0.05)***
Level 1	.81 (0.07)***
Age18-24	-.17 (0.07)*
Age 25-34	-.34 (0.06)***
Age 35-44	-.22 (0.07)**
Age 45-54	-.15 (0.06)*
Female	-.69 (0.05)***
Non-white	-.33 (0.07)***
Private sector	.39 (0.04)***
Casual	.05 (0.10)
Fixed term	.26 (0.17)*
Job Hours 1-15	1.03 (0.08)***
Job Hours 16-29	.42 (0.06)***
Job Hours 40+	-.07 (0.05)
Job Hours NA	.64 (0.11)***
No normal working time	-.16 (0.05)**
Work weekends	-.35 (0.04)***
Dependent 16 yr old children	.03 (0.03)
Satisfied with job	1.66 (0.05)***
Low security	-1.84 (0.10)***

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001. R2 = 0.16

Table 11. Job-related depression

	B (SE)
Level 3	-.01 (0.05)
Level 2	-.11 (0.05)*
Level 1	-.10 (0.07)
Age18-24	-.20 (0.07)**
Age 25-34	-.26 (0.06)***
Age 35-44	-.20 (0.06)**
Age 45-54	-.15 (0.05)**
Female	-.33 (0.04)***
Non-white	-.15 (0.07)*
Private sector	.04 (0.04)
Casual	.11 (0.09)
Fixed term	.34 (0.11)**
Job Hours 1-15	.66 (0.07)***
Job Hours 16-29	.22 (0.05)***
Job Hours 40+	-.05 (0.05)
Job Hours NA	.14 (0.10)
No normal working time	-.06 (0.04)
Work weekends	-.19 (0.04)***
Dependent 16 yr old children	.06 (0.03)*
Satisfied with job	2.09 (0.05)***
Low security	-2.77 (0.9)***

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001. R2 = 0.24

2.4. Feelings about the future

Section 2.4. explores workers' expectations concerning their future and their actual experiences in relation to labour market mobility.

Table 12. Aspirations and expectations (%)

		Permanent	Casual	Fixed-term	X^2
Would like a better job with the same employer	Yes	36	38	49	50.795***
	No	58	54	45	
	NA	6	8	6	
Expect a better job with the same employer	Yes	14	16	25	60.501***
	No	81	77	70	
	NA	5	7	6	
Would like a new job with a new employer	Yes	28	54	43	284.388***
	No	72	46	57	
Expect a new job with a new employer	Yes	13	43	37	636.681***
	No	87	57	63	

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Table 12 examines workers' aspirations and expectations with regards to their future employment. Almost half of those workers with a fixed-term contract (49 percent) stated that they wanted a better job with the same employer. Workers in casual employment, by contrast, appeared to be oriented more towards obtaining a new job with a different employer (54 percent).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, workers in casual and fixed-term employment were more likely than those in permanent jobs to expect to lose their job in the next 12 months. Twenty-three percent of those in casual employment and 35 percent of those in fixed-term employment thought it likely or very likely that they would lose their job (Table 13). The corresponding figure for those in permanent jobs, by contrast, was 6 percent.

Table 13. Perceived likelihood of job loss in the next 12 months

	Permanent	Casual	Fixed-term	X^2
Very likely	2	10	16	1060.724***
Likely	4	13	19	
Unlikely	34	34	36	
Very unlikely	61	42	29	

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

To explore this issue further, two longitudinal logistic regression models were produced. The first model (Table 14) predicts the likelihood of different types of people dropping out of work altogether between Wave 5 and Wave 6 of the USoC survey (i.e. between 2014 and 2015). People moving from work to retirement are excluded. The model shows that:

- Individuals who were in casual employment in Wave 5 were almost 4.6 times as likely to drop out of work altogether as those in permanent jobs.
- Workers with fixed-term contracts were 3.6 times as likely to drop out of work when compared with those in permanent jobs.
- Women were 1.5 times more likely than men to leave employment.
- Workers with at least one dependent child aged less than 16 years were more likely to leave employment than those without dependent children.
- The likelihood of leaving employment was higher for individuals who self-identified as non-white compared to those who self-identified as white.
- Those employed in the private sector were more likely to drop out of work than workers employed elsewhere.
- Young workers were more likely to drop out than those aged 55 years and older (the reference group). People aged 18-24 years were 5.4 times more likely to drop out.
- Those in elementary occupations (Level 1) were 2.8 times more likely than workers in the highest level occupations (Level 4) to drop out.

Table 14. Likelihood of dropping out of work

	B (SE)	Odds Ratio
Level 3	-.01 (0.15)	.99
Level 2	.59 (0.13)***	1.81
Level 1	1.03 (0.14)***	2.81
Age18-24	1.69 (0.15)***	5.41
Age 25-34	.55 (0.17)**	1.73
Age 35-44	.17 (0.18)	1.18
Age 45-54	.28 (0.17)	1.33
Female	.43 (0.09)***	1.54
Dependent children <16 years	.18 (0.06)**	1.20
Non-white	.387 (0.12)**	1.47
Private sector	.44 (0.10)***	1.55
Casual	1.52 (0.12)***	4.56
Fixed term	1.28 (0.17)***	3.6

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

The second model (Table 15) predicts the likelihood of having a permanent contract in Wave 6 (2015), based on workers' starting position in Wave 5 (2014). The main findings are that:

- The odds of workers who were in casual employment in 2014 having a permanent job in 2015 were 13% of the odds for those who already had a permanent contract in 2014.
- The odds for workers with fixed-term contracts were 7% of those for workers who already had a permanent contract.
- Women had lower odds than men of having a permanent job.
- Young workers had lower odds than those aged 55 years and above. The odds of having a permanent contract were poorest for workers aged 18-24 years.
- Non-white workers had poorer odds of having a permanent job than those identifying as white.
- Workers with at least one dependent child aged less than 16 years were slightly less likely to have a permanent job than those without dependent children.
- People employed in elementary occupations had a much lower likelihood of having a permanent contract when compared with those in the highest level occupations.

Table 15. Likelihood of having a permanent job

	B (SE)	Odds Ratio
Level 3	.10 (0.09)	1.11
Level 2	-.16 (0.84)	.85
Level 1	-3.10 (0.11)**	.735
Age18-24	-.98 (0.11)***	.376
Age 25-34	-.33 (0.11)**	.716
Age 35-44	.10 (0.12)	1.11
Age 45-54	.02 (0.11)	1.02
Female	-.30 (0.07)***	.74
Dependent children <16 years	-.10 (0.05)*	.91
Non-white	-.26 (0.10)**	.77
Private sector	.05 (0.07)	1.05
Casual	-2.05 (0.10)***	.13
Fixed term	-2.63 (0.12)***	.07

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

2.5. Trade Union membership and representation

The final set of issues examined in Chapter 2 concerns representation and trade union membership.

The first two rows of Table 16 compare the percentages of permanent, casual and fixed-term contract workers who said that there was a trade union or staff association at their workplace which negotiated over the pay and conditions of people doing their sort of job. Workers in fixed-term contract posts were the most likely to indicate that a union or staff association was present (58 percent). Only 27 percent of workers in casual employment indicated that there was a union or staff association at their workplace. The figure for workers with permanent contracts was 49 percent.

Those who said that a trade union or staff association was present were then asked whether they were a member. Almost 60 percent of workers in permanent jobs said that they were members, compared to 43 per cent of fixed term contract workers and 29 percent of casual workers.

Table 16. Union membership and representation

		Permanent	Casual	Fixed-term	X^2
Trade union or staff association in the workplace	Yes	49	27	58	152.504***
	No	51	73	42	
Member of a trade union, if one is present at the workplace	Yes	59	29	43	97.418***
	No	41	71	57	

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***P<0.001

Summary

- Workers in casual employment are more likely than those in permanent or fixed-term jobs to be young, non-white and employed in an elementary occupation.
- Workers in casual employment are more likely to have no regular hours of work and work on weekends. They experience lower job satisfaction and life satisfaction than other workers.
- The odds of experiencing job satisfaction are lower for those with no regular hours of work.
- Perceived low employment security and working weekends are associated with higher levels of higher anxiety and depression.
- Anxiety levels tend to be higher among workers who have no normal working times.
- Workers with a casual or fixed-term contract are more likely to anticipate losing their jobs than workers with a permanent contract.
- Workers in fixed-term or casual employment are more likely to drop out of the labour market than workers in permanent jobs.
- Women are more likely than men to leave employment.
- Workers with at least one dependent child aged less than 16 years are more likely to leave employment than those without dependent children.
- The likelihood of leaving employment is higher for individuals who self-identify as non-white, young workers and those in elementary occupations.
- The likelihood of securing a permanent contract appears to be lower for women than for men, for those with dependent children when compared with those without, for non-white workers and for those employed in elementary occupations.

- Workers in casual employment are less likely than those in permanent and fixed-term jobs to have a means of representation at the workplace. Those in casual and fixed-term employment are less likely to be trade unions members than those in permanent jobs.

Chapter 3

Retail

Context of the sector

A recent Joseph Rowntree Report identifies retail as the largest low paying sector with 1.5 million in low pay (Ussher, 2016), over half of workers (57%) in retail (British Retail Consortium, 2016). Two thirds of low paid retail workers are women, a disproportionate number of workers are from BME backgrounds (Ussher, 2016), with one third are under 25 (BRC, 2016). The Joseph Rowntree report states that workers in retail are more likely to be in receipt of housing benefit (8% compared to 3% for other employees), Working Tax Credit (11% compared to 6%) and Child Tax Credit (15% compared to 10%). Their research finds that there are high levels of under-employment and one half of workers feel 'over-qualified' for the work they do. They report that half of retail workers want more hours and the other half want more control over the hours that they have, with part-time workers more likely than full-time workers to fall into the latter category.

The Joseph Rowntree report recognises a possible preference for the flexibility of minimum hour's contracts in retail (2016:20). ONS figures show that 8.4% of people in employment in the wholesale and retail sector were on ZHC for the period October to December 2016; in terms of occupation 2.8% of those employed in sales and customer services were on such contracts (ONS, 2016). However, the CIPD suggest short-hours contracts are more prevalent in retail, particularly in larger organisations (2015). It defines short-hours contracts as where an employer guarantees a small minimum number of hours each week (up to eight in their report) and has the option of offering additional hours, which the employee 'may have the option of being able to refuse' (CIPD, 2015:3). The CIPD quote USDAW's 2014 survey in suggesting short-hours contracts are 'commonplace' in the retail sector. Its Combined Labour Market Outlook Survey for 2015 showed that 11% of employers in retail used ZHC and 18% short-term hours contracts. In the USDAW survey half of respondents regularly worked additional hours above their contracted hours, but three quarters of these would like to have had these guaranteed.

Data on retail is based upon focus groups and interviews involving retail workers and trade union representatives where possible. The participants, worked for two large national retailers, NationalsupermarketA in London and NationalsupermarketB in East of England. Terms and conditions of employment in NationalSupermarketA and B were covered by collective agreements negotiated nationally. The evidence from the research indicates that workers experiences at local level did not always reflect these national agreements. Finally in Yorkshire data was secured from respondents at national (largely) franchised fast food chain in Yorkshire (Fastfoodchain).

Experiencing Insecurity

In NationalSupermarketA in London a proportion of workers across a number of stores were on flexi-contracts with core or guaranteed hours of between 4 and 16 hours.; and then available hours on top. Employees on these contracts are obliged to work their agreed core hours and any hours that fall within their agreed availability window, providing appropriate notice has been given. As one respondent described:

> *'You're told that these are the core hours which you'll have permanently every week. Are you able to fulfil these hours and commit to these? If you say, yes, then they'll ask you for your availability window. So, okay, what other hours are you willing to do? And then the flexibility comes if you are offered a job - they will say, okay, you think that you are available on such and such days, from this hour to this hour, we can as an employer give you a minimum of 24 hours-notice and request you to work these hours if there are insufficient volunteers or there's absences, sicknesses. So, short term you could be given 24 hours-notice'.*

The ratio of those on full-time contracts, part-time contracts and flexi-contracts varied between stores, but seemed particularly prevalent in larger stores and it was reported that new recruits, often younger workers, were generally employed on flexi-contracts and that there was little choice over contracts or hours, as Shay commented:

> *'You are more or less expected, or you're just put in anyway. There's no, like, can you do this? Can you do X amount of hours? Can you do X amount of hours this day? You're more or less actually put in for, say, seven-and-a-half or eight hours a day, boom, boom... Without being asked, or any consent, you'd have to basically ask not to do that. And they'd more or less go, well, "why can't you? Give me an excuse why"'*

Workers can be 'flexed up', for example Asad had a 16 hour contract but worked between 45 and 50 hours per week. At the same time if the demand for work dipped because of changes to deliveries management could suggest that workers book holiday or were sent home and this was also the case when the store was quiet or the budget for staffing in a particular department had run out.

The main characteristic of flexi-contracts was the unpredictability of working hours, which rarely coincided with contractual hours. Shifts were communicated through Whatsapp and workers reported that they were changed at less than the required 24 hours' notice as Anna described, 'You get phone calls or texts, you need to be in tomorrow. That's it, pure and simple'. Short-term notice was put down to the fact that workers could give two hours' notice of absence, which then created immediate staff shortages. This also led to staff 'flexed-up' mid-shift where they were asked to stay extra hours and felt obliged to do so. Workers reported that staff could be asked to do back-to- back double shifts to cover for staff shortages, in one case 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. and then 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. in a 24 hour period, with night-team members working their shift from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. being obliged to return at 3 p.m. on the same day to work to 11 p.m. Workers talked about the pressure they were under to demonstrate flexibility with fear of dismissal if they refused hours.

Respondents in the East of England who worked for NationalsupermarketB were on permanent contracts, but which were also known as flexi-contracts. They worked five out of seven days and there are two shifts 6am-3pm and 1pm to 10pm. Although shift rotas were meant to be advertised with three weeks' notice, respondents reported that this rarely happened and that shifts were changed at short notice. As one respondent Steve describes:

> *'We don't have a regular shift pattern, all our hours change from day to day or week to week rather, we don't have a fixed pattern as such. In my interview they told that I would have three weeks' worth of rotas. So, we know we could plan ahead, we were supposed to have three weeks upfront. But recently it's been a week in advance. We don't get any notice, no notice at all. Another chap on my department, last week it was actually, he came into work at six o'clock in the morning thinking that he was in and he wasn't because they' changed the rota. Without telling him, no phone call, no courtesy call or anything. So he came in and then they turned around to him and said, no, you've got to go home'.*

Steve was clear he wanted regular fixed shifts. The changes to shifts also meant that workers could be called in without having the required rest between shifts, Simon reported that he should have had a seven to eight hour gap between his shift, but had been in situations where he finished at 10pm and was expected to be coming in the next morning at 6am. This meant he go only three or four hours sleep. Full-time weekly hours are 36.75, with four long days of nine hours (including an unpaid lunch break) and a short day of eight hours (both including an unpaid lunch break). However, it was reported that with the upheaval in shifts the short day sometimes got lost. There is pressure for employees to work over weekends so that both Steve and Simon had difficulties getting weekends off, but also two days off together in compensation. While full-timers are expected to be flexible, part-time shifts were supposed to be fixed, but were also increasingly being put under pressure to work weekends, with a number feeling obliged to do so to keep their jobs. Respondents reported that there were occasions when workers walked out of the job rather than take on another shift after their scheduled hours. Incidents of employees being required to work 10 weekends without a break were also forwarded by respondents, with young workers reported as taking sickies to ensure they were able to have a social life at the weekend.

In the fast food chain in Yorkshire all workers were on ZHC, which could involve working anything up to 48 hours per week and once again this could mean having insufficient time off between shifts as a union officer reported:

> *'They won't say "well I'm supposed to have an 11-hour break, because they won't necessarily know". Or they might do a 12-hour shift with no breaks because they've been "too busy" in inverted commas you know. And they won't know to challenge it. It's just the norm. And it's shocking; it really is, but for an employer to say people choose to be on zero-hours contract when they're working, 30 hours a week, 40 hours a week and then drop down to zero because they've upset their manager. That's wrong. They're not choosing to work on a zero-Hour Contract. They've been given a job and forced into it'.*

The union officer described how the control that managers had over the allocation of hours led to abuse as a union officer described:

'We've had young members speak at conference about their experiences where they've on a zero-hour's contract and they've got a manager in the store and this can be male or female, we've had it from both sides where they've made advances to the younger people in the stores and when they've rebuked them, they've not given them any shifts. I find this a lot, that it's giving incredible power to first line managers who are responsible for how much you're going to get every week'.

In London/SE General Assistants got £8.34 per hour after six months, but there was variation depending on section, location and skill. Sick pay was based upon contracted hours rather than available hours and this had been the case for holiday pay, but this was now paid on average hours over the previous 12 weeks. Double time on Sundays had been reduced to time and a half and the £2 per hour premia for night work now kicked in at midnight rather than 10pm-6am. It was reported that location allowances had also been cut. The workers discussed the fact that younger workers (under 18s) were on lower age-related rates despite doing the same work and referring to themselves as 'the cheap ones'. There is also a suggestion that younger workers are more likely to be on flexi-contracts. Those on flexi-contracts were also seen as less likely to get training and promotion. Full-time workers did not necessarily feel that they had more job security than those on flexi-contracts, since they perceived that the company might get rid of more expensive staff first, particularly in an environment where the company had for the first time in years talked about redundancies or transfer to concessions within stores. Workers reported that they would have 15 minutes deducted if they did not clock in automatically and there were instances where they did not take their one and a half hours paid breaks.

In NationalSupermarketB in East of England, following the introduction of the NLW, hourly rates had increased from £6.83 to £8.20 and then £8.50 per hour. Steve was a fishmonger in the store and had pushed for a pay rise to £9.40. At the same time as the introduction of higher rates the premium for Sunday working (time and a half) had been removed and weekends and evening working was paid at a flat rate. Similarly, employees no longer got 30-minute paid breaks. Employees get holiday pay, but there was an issue as to when staff could take holidays with the store often refusing holiday requests and staff then building up entitlement which they could not take by the end of the year and which were then lost. This was put down to insufficient staffing. Occupational Sick Pay is available after one year's service, but if employees have a 'record of improvement' against their sickness record they will not get sick pay until after three days. Respondents reported that there was pressure on workers to attend work when they were sick and they were fearful of phoning in sick so either did not do so or came into work regardless. Respondents also gave examples of where workers went sick because of the changes in shifts and their lack of control over working time.

In the fast food chain there were a number of incidents where workers had not been paid sick and had been put down as absent when sick and had subsequently had shifts removed from them.

In the supermarkets changes to shifts at short notice had an impact on work-life balance. The contractual hours of part-time workers were generally arranged around home commitments and the push for flexibility undermined these arrangements, particularly childcare. As union rep Steve had dealt with issues where staff had been expected to work a

late shift, but had no childcare to cover it. He reported how the unpredictability of hours and fact he went for months without a weekend off had an effect on his family life.

> *'I won't see my kids before they go to school and won't see them during the day and I won't see them when I get home. Sometimes I won't see them for 48 hours depending on how my hours work, which, I'm a big family guy and it hurts, it hurts not seeing my kids. And I'm sure there are plenty of other people out there as well that are in the same predicament as what we are. And, so yes, it hits emotionally'.*

Many respondents highlighted that unpredictable working hours had a significant impact on their work-life balance. Many retail workers argued, they could not easily make plans outside work. Medical appointments and social events often had to be cancelled at short notice. One respondent, stated that he was reluctant to plan his social life in advance, for example booking concert tickets, because there would be no guarantee of the time off. This meant using holiday to enable him to have a social life.

In NationalsupermarketA in London, it was reported that the store employed a high number of students on flex-contracts put under pressure to come in when they have exams and scared to refuse in case they were penalised if refused. For Anna in NationalsupermarketB:

> *'These zeros, I don't think work for anybody. To me the flexi-contracts they're exactly the same. You're either on a contract, or you're not. If you want to work six hours, that's your choice. You may only want to work one day a week. That's your choice. But if there's no other choice and you need work, you'll take it. But that's not a living, is it? No. People, you know, take it in desperation. But the reality is, you might as well not work. You might as well be on benefits, if that's what they're giving you'.*

Respondents across the retail sector reported the difficulties of building up a credit history on unpredictable hours and then being able to get a mortgage or loans. A number of workers said that they struggled to pay bills or 'go without'. One respondent, Shay argued: 'You don't much have a lifestyle, with all of this you're just literally working to survive'.

While Steve and Simon were in dual earner households and said they generally managed financially workers in fastfood in Yorkshire appeared to struggle more. The union officer reported a case of a young woman worker:

> *'She said, people were asking to do extra hours at FastFoodChain. Apparently, you get your lunch free or you get a meal a day free if you do a shift and she said people were putting themselves down to do extra work even if it was in another store, just because they knew they would get something to eat. And she said it's not the healthiest thing but you know if it's food or not food, even if it's the unhealthiest food, it's better than having nothing. And she said that lots of her friends that work in FastFoodChain walk to work because they can't afford to pay the bus fare. So they might walk for an hour, and then do an eight-hour shift, and then walk an hour home again'.*

Insecurity and Work Pressures

In both national supermarkets work pressure was put down to insufficient staffing levels and in the case of NationalsupermarketB the removal of a layer of managers. Staff were given target hours in which to empty the cages of deliveries calculated on the basis of the number of items. For delivery drivers work schedules were shaped by delivery slots with routes worked out by GPS and six minutes allowed to deliver the shopping before the next call; work was monitored by handheld devices which flagged up late deliveries. A similar traffic light system operated for those in store, including recording checkout scanning and queues. Stock controllers were monitored on changing price labels and numbers of price errors. Workers reported the stress of self-scan checkouts where often only one person was deployed and made responsible for loss when customers frequently walked off without paying when they could not operate the machines.

Respondents across the sector reported that the continual changes to shifts had an impact upon them both physically and mentally and that while they had fixed and permanent contracts the demand for total flexibility and resulting inability to predict hours left them feeling insecure as one interviewee Steve reported:

> *'I think obviously my contract itself is quite secure. But with regards to, again, the hours, very insecure, because you don't know when you're going to be in, what you're going to be doing, whether you're going to be on the late or early. There's a major impact. I am literally at their mercy for these shift patterns. In quite a big way because sometimes you don't know where you're coming and going really, you feel like, a bit jet lagged sometimes. Sometimes you don't know what day it is, because I'm not doing a structured Monday to Friday, nine to five job, I'm doing lates, earlies, middles, here and there. I think if affects your mental health too, to be honest, because you just don't know when you're coming and going, really'.*

Insecurity and Workplace Protection

In East of England and London all those interviewed were USDAW members and a number were reps, reflecting union recognition in the national supermarkets. In Yorkshire a different union was trying to organise in the fastfood chain and had run a local recruitment campaign in the Heart Unions Week. In NationalsupermarketB reps raised the importance of the unions continued involvement in negotiations not only over pay, but also over rostas, shift patterns and working hours:

> *'I think this is slipping through the cracks, about hours, and even more so now where everywhere now is it's that word flexibility, and a lot of our members feel left in the dark about it. They're unsure about it, a lot of them have actually said to me "if that's the case then I'm going to leave the company".*

He reported that members were concerned about staff shortages and the pressure of work as well as health and safety issues; union reps were also involved in discussions over entitlement to take holiday. In NationalsupermarketB Aoife, a union rep reported involvement in disciplinaries over sickness and absence and believed that the union protects and unites the workers and ensures that the company follows procedures, as she commented 'if there wasn't a union staff would be flying out of the door'.

Summary

- The evidence from the retail sector suggests plurality of contractual forms including fixed hours, ZHC and short-hours (or guaranteed hour) contracts. In the latter, there is little correlation between the number of core hours for which a worker is contracted and the actual hours they work. The key characteristic is the unpredictability of hours and this is true even for those on full-time fixed hours.
- Flexibility worked in favour of the employer and not employees. In all cases shifts were changed at very short notice to cover staff shortages and fluctuations in demand. Requirements to 'flex-up' offered challenges for those dependent upon childcare and those with children in general and those on benefits. It could minimise rest breaks between shifts or require the unscheduled extension of shifts.
- Workers did not necessarily feel their jobs were impermanent, they certainly felt that if they did not agree to shift changes with very little no notice they would make themselves vulnerable and could be starved of hours in the future.
- Whilst elements of unpaid labour were creeping in, in the form of the removal of unpaid breaks and reduction of premia for weekend and night work, it was the insecurity of hours (and sometimes pay) that led to stress amongst retail workers.

Aoife – 'You try to do your best and sometimes you can't'

Aoife is a Team Leader at the checkout for NationalsupermarketA, who in the previous two months, had moved onto a full-time fixed contract, but previously had been on a flexi contract with 26 core hours and her 'availability window' including Saturdays and Sundays. She calculated that around 70% of employees in her store were on flexi-contracts. She had hardly ever worked to her contractual hours, at times doing over 50 hours per week. This had caused a problem since she is a single parent and gets help with council tax and housing benefit; however she had been forced to pay money back as she went over the cut-off point for benefits. Aoife said she had prayed for a full-time fixed contract, but still felt insecure because 'the hiring and firing is just constant'. She emphasised the unpredictability of hours where you could be asked to stay on some days and sent home on others:

'You don't know, one minute they're saying you do overtime this hour, do overtime that hour. Sometimes they'd ask you to do overtime over 40 hours. Sometimes it was too much especially with childcare issues - they didn't care about that. You speak to the manager, you speak to the personnel manager they didn't care about that, especially at Christmas, they just want you to work. And as soon as Christmas is gone then you don't get no overtime for three months and you're stuck and financially you can't cope. Your child's shoes break, you need to buy new shoes, oh, let's go and get a cheap £10 pair, they're only going to last two weeks. You can't afford to buy a better pair of shoes for your kids at school'.

In one case she had been informed by a Whatsapp text at 11.30pm to start work at 6am the next morning and at other times had been given two hours' notice of the need to be at work in two hours' time. Aoife talked about staffing reductions in the

past two and a half years and the increased intensity of work. She is a union rep and reported involvement in disciplinaries over sickness and absence and felt that the union protects and unites the workers and ensures that the company follows procedures: 'if there wasn't a union staff would be flying out of the door'. Aoife highlighted the stress that flexi contracts could cause:

'When you're on a contract like a flexi contract and you don't know each week how many hours you're going to be working it's very hard and very stressful in a family home to run a family home. Therefore, you're constantly stressed, you put the stress on your children, you put the stress on the workers around you and it is demoralising it really is, you try to do your best and sometimes you just can't'.

Chapter 4

Logistics and Transport

Context of the Sector

Workers' employment conditions in the logistics and transport sector have been subject to much media attention in recent years. Numerous media exposes have highlighted that logistics and transport workers, symptomatic of workers in the new economy, are experiencing high levels of precarious work with ZHC and bogus self-employment common place. Employment conditions in warehouses and distribution centres have been highlighted for their draconian monitoring and surveillance regimes, coupled with pernicious performance management. Sports-Direct, amongst others has been characterised as the modern day satanic mill. Subject to recent parliamentary review it is commonly used as a reference point for bad employment practises. A number of Uber drivers, seeking legal redress for their 'bogus self-employed' status have recently won the right to be classed as workers rather than self-employed, suggesting that these drivers will be entitled to holiday pay, paid rest breaks and the national minimum wage. Uber is appealing the decision. The logistics and transport sector, in short, provides compelling insights into the nature of work in the contemporary economy, embracing issues of complex supply chains, insecure and precarious work as well as new performance management regimes.

The logistics infrastructure of stock holding, warehousing and distribution centres as well as transport and delivery is recognised as being an integral part of the contemporary global economy. With the increasing geographical fragmentation of production logistics provides the necessary capacity to integrate the movement of goods (and people) increasingly under the supremacy of dominant market players (Newsome 2015). The dominant players have increased control over the logistics function and focussed upon driving down costs and guaranteeing service delivery. In turn, this reconfiguration has not only created an expanding logistics infrastructure, but has created an increasingly competitive market for logistics companies. Dominant players can protect themselves from disruption by spreading risk across many competing logistics providers both in-house and third party. Contracts between retailers and logistics (warehouse and parcel delivery) providers are thus short-term and contingent controlled by client organisations and subject to significant cost pressures.

Logistics workers find themselves within a 'perfect storm' of globalisation, supply chain and competitive pressures allied to de-regulation and eroding collective regulation. In addition, new logistics technologies have the capacity to track the movement of products in a seamless flow from production to points of passage, gateways and ports finally to distribution and delivery. This algorithmic optimisation and routing software can not only manage inventory and monitor the real-time movement of products but can also monitor the performance of labour. Research evidence highlights that employees within the sector are subject to increases in atypical employment with growing levels of workplace insecurity with growing numbers of self-employment workers paid by piece-rate.

The evidence for this chapter is drawn from three aspects of the logistics sector. Within the northern region interviews and focus groups were undertaken with self-employed parcel delivery workers, so called 'life-style couriers'. In the East of England interviews and focus groups were undertaken with warehouse workers from a large online shopping warehouse 'WRCO'. Finally, several focus groups and interviews were undertaken in London with Gigtaxi drivers. Once again, the interviews explored the experiences of these insecure workers as well as focusing on the work pressures they were subjected to.

Experiencing Insecurity

Within WRCO, all staff are on ZHC. Working hours and shift patterns (am, pm and night shift) are relatively predictable. Shifts are 7.5 hours with a half hour unpaid break. The contract currently guarantees 360 hours a year. The rate for most pickers is £7.60, and there is no additional payment for night shifts or over-time. Following the introduction of the living wage the weekly number of hours per week was reduced. The Union FTO argued,

> *"It used to be forty hours, I think, until recently, and then the minimum wage – well, the living wage, whatever you want to call it – was increased. When that was increased, the hours went down to 37. They had the increase but their hours were reduced with the unpaid break. So that meant that they have actually, technically, lost about £2,500 – a year because of the changes, the legislation, the agencies have changed their hours according." Union FTO WRCO*

All workers indicated that they wanted to have a permanent contract, which would enhance security and remove the sense of vulnerability that they currently experienced on a daily basis. As one respondent argued, "We work at WRCO in order to earn money. This is not lovely work for all of these people. It would be better if we work not nervous. Not nervous." ZHC created a climate of fear as all respondents were aware and had witnessed the removal of workers at a moment's notice. One respondent argued, "And that's the real issue – fear, that's what they rely on." The Union FTO echoed this view,

> *"the thing with the ZHC, it's not just the so-called flexibility, i.e. you don't know how many hours you're going to get from one week to the next. What's the real issue here is, the fact that they can get rid of people like that. People can turn up and be told they are not wanted. And that's fear" …*

This fear and sense of uncertainty was also reflected in financial insecurity and concerns about regular income and paying bills. Respondents highlighted that bad landlords in the local community also added to their concerns over finances. The struggle to make ends meet was often a constant battle. In addition, the precarious work position also impacted on taking time-off work to deal with child-care issues.

Gigtaxi drivers by contrast are classed as self-employed drivers. This type of contract was regarded as being typical within the taxi trade. One respondent argued, "It is assumed that you've come in from the trade. And in the trade, you were self-employed before, so you're going to be self-employed here. They don't say anything else to you about it. They show you how to use the equipment, the iPad, how it works" All respondents highlighted that the benefit of working for Gigtaxi was that you were able to work when you wanted. The

message was clear, "you can just switch off the app and that's it." In addition, drivers remarked that the benefit of the Gigtaxi model was that it removed 'deadtime' from driving. Drivers can respond to jobs in whatever locality they are located removing the time required to travel to jobs.

> *"The only good thing about Gigtaxi is with the black cabs you've got to go around like a gerbil in a cage to find the job. With Gigtaxi, you've got to do the same but it's most likely that you'll get a job from all angles."*

Rates of pay to the driver are calculated via the app on the basis of the distance and time. Gigtaxi take 20% cut from all jobs and drivers cover all of their costs. One respondent highlighted, "All of the risk is with us. Everything is with me. All they've got is just the app. And they try all sorts to get more money from us."

Drivers referred to the introduction of a new service called Gigtaxi pool where separate passengers from the same locality could pool a ride. For these pick-ups Gigtaxi increased their cut to 35% of the total paid. Drivers were aggravated that they had little influence on how the rates of pay were set per job, allied to the percentage rate they were required to pay to Gigtaxi. Reference was made by drivers to Gigtaxis seemingly burgeoning profits in relation to the low rates of pay they could secure. One driver reported,

> *"Now if I'm a professional dentist, I have a range of customers who come to me for my labour. With Gigtaxi, Gigtaxi is the company and a range of people providing labour go to Gigtaxi. And Gigtaxi then says, you're self-employed, so under the existing law we're not liable for a range of things. And we have said, okay, fine. Except if I would be earning £10 an hour as an employed driver, I would also be getting sick pay, holiday pay, pension, and other benefits. Yet Gigtaxi would be paying me £10 and from that I would be paying my own holiday pay, my sick pay, my pension, and other benefits. Well that means I must not be getting £10, I must be getting £3. I'm earning below the national minimum wage... I cannot tell Gigtaxi to F off. Gigtaxi can tell me to F off. Gigtaxi is ignoring that all together, Gigtaxi's just saying, you're all self-employed, what are you complaining about? You can go somewhere else. Really? Where else can we go?"*

The Parcel delivery couriers were similarly all classed as self-employed and contracted by Parcel Co. All respondents provided their own vans, covered insurance, fuel as well as tax and national insurance. They also observed that the wear and tear on their vehicles meant that they often had to replace their vans and/or ensure they were reliable. The nature of this self-employment and its associated insecurity, was highlighted as being a daily cause stress and anxiety. Parcel co delivered parcels to the respondents home six days a week. Parcel delivery workers are then required to scan all the parcels onto the system, checking them off against a 'manifest'. This routine of checking, scanning, and loading can take up to two hours every morning. Often parcels are missing from the manifest, or sometimes parcels are included for which there is no record. Delivery workers receive no payment for this aspect of their daily routine.

The quantity of parcels that arrive each morning is unknown and often unpredictable. Parcel delivery workers are paid according to how many parcels they deliver (and collect) in a day. With numerous parcels to deliver (100 plus), respondents are relatively confident

that should be able to reach a pay rate for the day that is at least equivalent to the minimum wage. If a smaller number of parcels arrive for delivery (less than 40), they noted that once they had covered their costs, it would be likely that they would earn in the region of £5 or less per hour. Respondents commented:

> *"You're talking insecure work, you don't how many (parcels) are coming. We could all get up tomorrow, and we could have a hundred. That's a good day's work, we'll all be above minimum wage. We could also get up, and have ten. You live day to day. The wage I am on, we'll live, but it won't pay the bills"*

> *"I've no life whatsoever. We have to work with what they agree with, or you don't work. They're spiralling down to be as cheap as possible for the customer...And it's at your expense, basically. Because all the cost for their operation gets passed on to the courier".*

Insecurity and Work Pressures

Corresponding work pressures were also highlighted by all respondents in WRCO. These pressures had several key dimensions: firstly, work was allocated to pickers through headsets which dictated the nature and quantity of a pick. As the instructions were all in English, many of the respondents highlighted that they did not understand what was being said or what a given pick required. Secondly, respondents stated that they felt pressured by the daily performance targets. The IT system also recorded every movement of workers and this was used as a performance measure. Any inactivity is monitored and respondents were required to account for any 'dead-time.' One respondent referring to the fork lift 'trucks' used to move products within the warehouse argued,

> *"I work nightshift, and sometimes the trucks are so bad – they are no good. I look for sometimes 15 minutes, to get a good truck. I get nervous, because I don't work. And supervisor said to me, say to me why don't work?"*

Thirdly, respondents also highlighted the imbalance of power between themselves and first line supervisors who dictate their hours and monitored their performance. Reference was made to the opportunity this imbalance presented for bullying and abusive behaviour towards insecure workers. At its worse, respondents highlighted that they were aware of the sexual harassment of women workers by male supervisors. Other women respondents highlighted that security searches could also be intimidating when they could be requested by security safe to remove clothes to be searched. Finally, in the pursuit of the daily performance target and to the absence of sick pay, health and safety was reported as being regularly jeopardised within WRCO. The Union rep argued, "they have to buy their own protective clothing and they had a choice, £10 or £40 shoes. When you're only earning £7.60, many people would buy the £10 shoes, and they were working all day, it was not unusual for people to have swollen feet, swollen legs, swollen ankles. But they had to keep going, because there's no sick pay. It's not good."

Gigtaxi drivers reported that to compensate for the low rates of pay they often worked long hours to secure a 'reasonable' income. Respondents highlighted that to earn 'decent' money they were aware that drivers would be putting in long shifts and sometimes resorted to sleeping in their cars. "They put in the hours, they sit in the car and they just sleep in the car, they do everything in the car. And as time goes on you cannot keep driving because I do not drive, my eyes feel like they want to close, I go home. But, this is what Gigtaxi refuses to do. That if somebody's been online in there since about ten/twelve hours, they should shut down their app".

For Gigtaxi drivers the star rating system, which gives customers (and drivers) the opportunity to rate the driving experience could present an added work pressure. If drivers accumulated bad ratings and/or customers complained they could be frozen out of the app for a given period of time Drivers highlighted that this system was often unfair and they felt they did not have any opportunity to respond to complaints themselves.

Parcel delivery workers also reported growing work pressures. These pressures were predicated upon a combination of their insecure self-employed status, costs pressures and service delivery requirements from Parcel Co and the capacity of IT to monitor the movements of these remote workers. Parcel co had within the last 12 months introduced a new system whereby customers could specify whether they wanted a morning, midday or afternoon delivery. As a result, all of the respondents had to now ensure that they delivered all specified times at the right time. They were also required to send a text to the customer highlighting the two-hour window within which their parcel would be delivered. Parcel delivery workers argued, this massively increased the length of their working day in that they could not decide routes for themselves based upon efficiency. Instead they were now required to adhere to the customer requests for am and pm deliveries. Workers had not been given extra payments to accommodate this shift in working patterns. The expectation to conform to this requirement was felt to contravene any notion that they were self-employed workers with autonomy to devise how they wish to route their deliveries in each day. One respondent argued,

> *"When we first started, there was no a.m., no p.m.'s. No hassle, no nothing. There is the tracking with them, the proper receipt scanning outside of doors. As many signatures, as possible. Messages through contact telephone numbers while you're out in the field delivering. You're not self-employed!"*

Drivers had expressed concern to Parcel Co indicating that the new regime was not part of the contract. The response was that their contract was overruled by the business need and satisfying customers. It was also suggested to drivers that if they did not like the new arrangements they could leave. To ensure targets were met and deliveries met the delivery slot targets Parcel Co instigated a tighter monitoring and surveillance regime. They introduced a new layer of managers, referred to as 'compliance managers' to ensure that the new requirements observed. One respondent who had been put on 'report' for failing to meet delivery time slot requirements was closely monitored through the hand-held scanners as well as by the compliance manager following her by car as she was out delivering. The respondent stated that being followed and monitored to such a degree made her feel 'awful'.

"He's watching me. He wanted to know what time I scanned the card to put through the letterbox. He's physically tracking me through that scanner, and I've asked him not to. I haven't given him consent to do it. He told me he wanted to know when I was stood at a door, when I scanned the parcel, and what time I was there. I feel like Big Brother's watching me. It's awful. I can't do my job correctly... I'm stressed."

Other respondents argued that this level of control and monitoring was unacceptable given their self-employed status. They argued, "if you want self-employment, then no control. If you want control, then you've got to give the rights"

The level of control Parcel Co had over these delivery workers also extended to an array of sanctions and penalties that drivers were threatened with if they did conform to the new time slots. Drivers reported being put on 'improvement plans' for specified periods of time to improve their delivery rates. This period of improvement would be followed by a review meeting with compliance managers. Drivers also highlighted that they were also regularly threatened with the removal of parcels and no further work. They stated, 'they are always saying we will suspend your parcels.". Drivers also questioned the belligerent tone of managers at Parcel Co.

"This is the whole thing now that's coming onboard. That basically, they're using self-employment to absolutely rip the bottom out of the market. They have no interest in the final mile and how that gets delivered. They're taking the profit on it, but they don't pass it down to us".

Insecurity and Workplace Protection

Growing levels of unionisation and organising campaigns were in evidence in this sector. All respondents in WRCO highlighted that union activity had made a significant difference to their conditions and experience of work and within the wider community. Numerous examples were forwarded of how the union had managed to remove some of the worst excesses of the draconian management regime. Union reps were keen to extend the role of the union further. They expressed concerns over the dubious role the employment agencies played in exacerbating the levels of insecurity and fear amongst WRCO workers. Union reps argued, that workers were subject to the day to day management of both the organisation and the employment agency as their direct employer. The result was often conflicting decisions were made, with both parties both absolving themselves of responsibility. "This is the agencies' mentality: Body, job, off you go. Body, job. off you go. That can't be right?"

Similarly, self-employed workers in Gigtaxi and Parcel Co were looking towards union and collective agreements to regulate the terms and conditions under which they sold their labour and provided a service to these organisations. These self-employed workers in both organisations recognised the role that collectivism could play in mediating and negotiating relationship between themselves and their 'employer'. One Gigtaxi driver argued,

"I'm optimistic in the sense I believe that people are looking around and saying, hey you know, we need protection. And yes, I'm self-employed, but I want to have a fair pay. It's going to be difficult with an atomised workforce, principally one with minority people in it. But that's been done before, if you remember Grunwick".

Summary

- Supply chain and cost cutting pressures within the logistics sector have a major impact work and employment and are reflected in the contractual status of employees. In warehousing these pressures are witnessed in the growth of ZHC and in Parcel delivery the growth of self-employment
- Self-employed workers in both parcel delivery and Gigtaxi reported increasing cost pressures, performance management measures, and low rates of pay. They revealed that once they had covered all their costs, servicing their vehicle, they were often working for below minimum wage rate.
- Surveillance, monitoring coupled with draconian performance management regimes were evident in warehousing and parcel delivery. Expected performance targets cause stress and anxiety for many workers.
- Long working hours were evident in parcel delivery and amongst Gigtaxi drivers.
- Workers in logistics across all regions are turning to unions to provide protection and to negotiate fairer terms and conditions of employment. Self-employed workers are increasingly organizing with the support of union campaigns.

Liz – Parcel delivery courier, self-employed.

Liz is self-employed and she is feeling stressed. She has been working long hours delivering parcels. In addition to her own work she had been helping a colleague, Dave, cover his round. His new born baby is ill in hospital and he wants to visit as much as he can. The company had threatened that they will sack him if he is not able to cover his round.

Despite being self-employed, Liz has been placed on report in recent weeks for not meeting her delivery targets and not delivering parcels in the required time slots. She finds the new time slots for delivery stressful. The new slots mean she must deliver when Parcel Co want her to deliver, not how she feels she can best cover her route. The new time slots and the pre-planned route is adding to her costs and she is getting no extra payment. Some days she does not earn equivalent to the minimum wage an hour. She worries about money constantly.

Liz also finds the monitoring of what she is doing all the time unbearable. 'Its creepy' she says, 'they are following me, even my customers have noticed." Liz recognizes that she has no rights and there is nothing she can do about the monitoring and the new targets. She feels disposable and vulnerable and that she could be just discarded at any moment.

"it's awful to think, that after doing years for them. Doing all the hard work, building a round up from being 35 parcels on an average day to doing sometimes to 150 plus or nearer to 300 when its busy at Christmas. They could just go, 'see you later'. You've got nothing and that's what they threaten you with".

Chapter 5

Higher Education

Context of the Sector

The proliferation of 'casualised' or insecure contracts in higher education has been subject to growing media and union attention in recent years. A recent report in the Guardian newspaper for example accused vice-chancellors of adopting a 'Sports Direct model' in British Universities by employing increasing numbers of highly qualified, often junior, academics on a plethora of insecure and casual contracts (Guardian 16/11/2016). Despite a funding regime which has seen student fees rise to £9000 per year and vice-chancellors pay surge, evidence indicates that front-line teaching and research staff are employed in increasing numbers on insecure, hourly paid and/or fixed term, contracts.

Faced with the seemingly perfect storm of Brexit, the creeping marketization of higher education, and an increasingly uncertain funding regime, employers have seized the opportunity to manage risk by reducing the employment security of academic staff. UCU has been central to highlighting the growth of insecure work in Britain's Universities and its impact on academic staff, also exposes the apparent paradox that students paying high fees are likely to be taught by a growing army of academic staff on insecure contracts. In a report drawing on data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) UCU reveals that 53.2 per cent of all academic staff and 49 per cent of teaching staff at UK universities are employed on what can be regarded as "insecure contracts".

Total academics (open-ended, fixed-term and atypical academic staff) 273,898
Total open-ended or permanent contracts 128,302
Total fixed-term contracts 70,034
Total atypical academic contracts 75,562
Percentage working on insecure contracts 53.2%

Insecure work in the university sector – an overview Source: HESA data analysed by UCU

This report also highlights a sizeable proportion of academic staff at more junior levels who are increasingly working in an environment where insecurity and precarity is the norm. In addition, the growth of precarity amongst academic staff is more likely to be witnessed within the Russell group of elite UK universities.

Here we explore the experience of work for workers on insecure contracts in UK universities. The research data for this chapter is drawn from a series of focus groups and interviews with insecure workers across a range of HE institutions in London, East of England and the North of England. Respondents in this sector were employed on a variety of insecure contracts, notably zero-hours contracts, fixed term research contracts, fixed term teaching

contracts as well as hourly paid/or 'casual' worker contracts. Most respondents were under 35, drawn from an array of subject disciplines and with an equal split of men and women. In the London region respondents worked for one major HE institution. In the other regions, many respondents also worked at one of the major HE institution in the region. However, in some cases, particularly for hourly paid staff, respondents would work (or be available to work) at many institutions in their locality.

Experiencing Insecurity

Respondents in all regions highlighted an array of differing types of insecure contracts in place at their institutions. These included;

i) Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA)

This contract is specifically designed for PhD students who may be required to teach as part of their doctoral studies. Respondents in all regions highlighted that in essence these were zero hours contracts as often they had no specified hours. One respondent at a northern university stated,

> *"basically, you sign the contract, where it's not stipulated how much work you're going to get. It's just stipulated that now you can work. Whatever amount of work you do, it's not specified in the contract, and what modules you're on, all that thing, it's not stipulated. And now you are GTA. Now you have a GTA contract, which means you can take on the teaching that the department allocates to you." Respondent Northern University*

GTA respondents stated that University Departments were reluctant to call them ZHC, preferring to see them as part of an apprenticeship to securing a permanent post on completion of a PhD. One respondent argued that it is presented as a reasonable deal in that it is an opportunity to boost your CV in preparation for an academic career. "It gives you teaching experience that is not something I would revolt against" Each institution had a formula for working out rates of pay, levels of pay for preparation time as well as for meeting with students and for marking. The GTA contract offers some protection in that there is cap on the number of hours PhD students should teach. Respondents on GTA contracts highlighted that hours could be relatively unpredictable over the course of the academic year. Often GTA would be required to pick up additional seminar groups over the course of the academic year as student numbers fluctuate. The insecure nature of income was also highlighted; if you are absent due to sickness you would receive no pay. The message was also clear, "you're off sick for a month, there's nothing coming in". In addition all acknowledged that the periods over the Christmas, Easter and Summer breaks were difficult as they were unable to secure any income.

ii) Fixed term contract workers (or Teaching and/or Research staff)

Fixed term contract workers represent another group of insecure workers in UK universities. Respondents in all the regions highlighted the use of fixed term contracts for both lecturing staff as well as research staff. Whilst fixed term contract workers may be regarded as enjoying a degree of relative stability, (compared to other types of HE contracts) it was clear that respondents on these contracts struggled to cope with levels of unpredictability in their lives. One respondent from the Eastern region, a full-time senior research scientist,

referred to a new type of contract the University had introduced for research only employees. He stated,

> *"I am on a so-called open-ended research contract, it effectively means that you are meant to be guaranteed the same rights as a full-time employee, but it was only as good as the amount of external funding you have coming in. What seems to be becoming more common is that the institution doesn't want to underwrite you in between any gaps in funding. So even though you're told you're a valued part of the institution, I'm only paid for the specific time that's costed in my grant, and if that external funding falls to zero – this is actually written in the letter to me – then I would be made redundant. There's, very much an axe over your head the whole time. Since 2001 I've worked here, and I think the treatment that individuals like myself have received, in that regard, is not what you would expect from a serious employer". Fixed term research scientist, East of England University*

Workers on these types of fixed term contracts referred to difficulties the levels of insecurity presented in their working lives. Many referred to the constant pressure of looking for the next contract whilst simultaneously performing well in your current role (just in case there was a possibility of a contract extension and/or a permanent role). Respondents highlighted the lack of career development opportunities available to them as fixed term workers. Others referred to not being invited onto committees and or working groups, as well as being overlooked to be part of research teams and bids. One respondent from London argued; that she felt 'kept out all the time' she argued, 'it's all about gatekeeping, where you have to keep this boundary between permanent staff and us. It's like they fear contamination."

Respondents also referred to being stuck in a constant cycle of insecure work. One fixed term research worker from the East of England argued, "you have two jobs – the job that you're currently in and currently getting paid for and then you have this constant thinking of applying for the next thing". Dedicated time available within the working day to seek out more permanent employment was left to the discretion of line managers/ department heads. In the London institution, however, UCU had negotiated an agreement to build in development opportunities and networks for all fixed term contract workers. Yet the threat of redundancy letters arriving when funding ran out, or nearly ran out, was regarded as an inevitable part of working life. One respondent argued, "I have had two redundancy notices, then the extension finally comes and I stay."

Allied to workplace pressures, respondents referred to the impact on their lives outside of the University. Financial insecurity was a dominant feature of their lives. One respondent stated, 'I simply cannot make any financial decisions because I am insecure'. Fixed term contract workers, particularly when the contract was less than 12 months, were unable to secure preferred housing options – obtaining a mortgage was impossible and securing private rented accommodation presented many obstacles. All respondents highlighted that they relied on family, friends, and /or partners to provide necessary financial security. The pressure to be geographically mobile, to be available to move to the next job anywhere across the country also presented personal challenges. Many referred to the social isolation and sheer loneliness of moving from city to city chasing the next short-term contract, often leaving social networks and established relationships behind.

iii) Hourly paid lectures / or casual worker contract

Finally, respondents on hourly paid contracts or flexible casual work agreements provided insights into some of the most precarious work conditions in sector. Respondents on these types of contracts highlighted the levels of unpredictability associated with the numbers of hours they would receive over the course of an academic year. Hours would be regularly be allocated to hourly paid staff at the last minute, when they were required to fill in gaps in existing cover, provide additional sessions if student numbers unexpectedly rose or cover for absence. Hourly paid lecturers in both the East of England and in the northern region when possible would try and obtain teaching hours at all the HE institutions in the region in order to secure sufficient number of hours to live on. One respondent from the east of England revealed the lengths to which he would go to secure hours of work. He argued,

> *"the way in which I contracted the jobs it was just by emailing people. Emailing the right people at the right time. When I realised basically at the beginning of last year that there were gaps in the timetable and then I tried to propose myself to fill up the gaps. The rest, it was like last minute requests, to cover. I even got a request in the toilet once".*

Correspondingly given the unpredictability associated with the number of hours all respondents highlighted that when work was offered they were too scared to turn it down.

> *"you feel that whatever is being offered to you, you don't really want to reject it, because, that might be the person that needs to give you hours in the future. I took literally everything I could. But that was like basically eliminating the rest of my life. Can you teach a seminar group tomorrow? Every Wednesday, da-da-da. Yes, I can do that. Or the latest one I got is doing marking for somebody that felt sick. The marking for essays, submitted yesterday. I got the email the day before yesterday, can you do that? Yes, of course I can do that. I can never say no, because if I said no, they'll just find somebody else, and that'll be the end of me. So, I feel like I've got to do everything perfect, and on time. They can't sack a fulltime member of staff all that easily, but they can easily cut me out. So, that's the insecure employment".*

Allied to the unpredictability in terms of the number of hours available, hourly paid workers also faced levels of unpredictability in terms of both the level and frequency of pay. Each institution had differing formula for rates of pay, amounts paid for preparation time, rates for marking and student consultation times. All respondents highlighted that depending on their familiarity and/or expertise with a topic preparation time was inadequate to cover required levels of prep before teaching sessions. Whilst on the surface hourly rates appeared to be relatively high in some institutions ie £25 per hour, the amount of work required for the one hour of paid contact teaching meant that rates in real terms could drop below minimum wage. Respondents from the North of England highlighted that in some departments rates could be as low as £10 per hour. What is clear from the research evidence is that decisions over pay levels, the payment of preparation time was decentralised and often worked out at a very local level. A respondent from the East of England stated,

"some schools pay down to £10 an hour with no preparation time. People accept like less than minimum wage and you're in a university. I heard the story of this guy that was paid exactly the same for being a tutor here as he did for working in a factory. He eventually went to work in the factory because it was more convenient for him because he was granted more hours. When a place like the university, with these fees, needs to hire people at that rate, it's really ridiculous. That's something to me that is really, really depressing."

Allied to the levels of pay, the lack of pay over the summer months was also highlighted as creating additional pressures and stress for hourly paid workers. Respondents in the East of England highlighted that claiming job seekers allowance was the only way to sustain an income during the summer periods. Others referred to the use of payday loans to ensure their rent would be paid. One interviewee argued, "I'm a very frugal person, fortunately, but I'd not wish anyone to live this kind of lifestyle. It's not sustainable."

Overall the evidence from all respondents in HE regardless of contractual status reveal what was referred to as the 'scare of precarity' on their lives, emotional welfare and sense of well-being. Independently of each other many respondents highlight that this way of living was 'unsustainable'. Others referred to the very real sense that they were knew they were being exploited, that somehow they felt they did not count, that their welfare was of no concern to institutions to which they gave to so freely and with such dedication. Below are some direct quotes of how these workers articulated the impact of insecurity on themselves and their sense of wellbeing.

"you have to cope when you've got responsibilities, but it is stressful. About four, five years ago, I voluntarily sought, for the first time in my life, the counselling services here. I'm telling you it to demonstrate that it does put you under an exceptional amount of stress. It's not sustainable – for people who want to life a decent life – you can't always jump through the hoops – it's totally counterproductive to any kind of stability.

"it makes me feel like a second-class citizen. Because, you know, I'm working, but I can't access the same opportunities as people expect".

"The scare of precarity, I think, is the best expression, because it really leaves a mark on your life. It changes completely your plans. I didn't take a holiday for the last two years basically because of this circle of be aware, be alert, find things, try to be available, try to be ready. That's absolutely detrimental to your personal life, you don't get a personal life anymore. They are potentialities of work, it's not even work that creates a whole condition of uncertainty, of anxiety. Anxiety is the strongest drive, I would say."

All respondents also referred to their commitment to academia, passion for their subject and dedication to notions of scholarship and knowledge. Many hoped that permanent work would eventually appear if they just kept going, kept preserving. Yet, many recognised that despite their commitment to scholarship and to the creation of a positive learning experience for students that the institution was exploiting them. Hourly paid workers referred to being the 'financial cushion' of the University, others referred to seeing themselves as the 'cheap, dirty fix' One respondent from the East of England argued,

"Here I feel I'm a worker, fully worker, and there's no remnant of something related to knowledge or scholarship. I think that that's what they exploit. The fact that most do not perceive themselves as workers but as doing a mission. I mean, that's their basis for exploitation, I would say. Because they rely on the good will of a lot of people who put in that extra effort."

Insecurity and Work Pressures

The changing nature of academic employment through the 'marketisation' of HE, the introduction of student fees, increasing workloads and the introduction of performance management and monitoring regimes through the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and the introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) is well documented by UCU. Permanent, relatively secure academics are by no means immune from these pressures. But the focus here is on exploring how these workplace pressures (endemic in the sector) impact on insecure HE workers.

Hourly paid workers in all regions emphasised the considerable amount of unpaid labour they regularly and systematically performed. This reliance on unpaid labour in UK universities manifest in a number of ways. Firstly, unpaid labour resulted from the amount of time that teaching preparation actually took compared to the amount of time that workers were actually paid for. Secondly, marking time was also regarded as being massively underpaid. Thirdly respondents across the regions highlighted that hourly paid staff are often not paid for contact time with students, for one to ones with students or for answering the relentless amount of email they were bombarded with on a daily basis. Finally, respondents all highlighted being available for students, responding to their queries, dealing with their issues was something that was not paid for through hourly contracts. One respondent observed,

"When you finish a seminar, you've got a queue that want to talk with you. You walk and they follow you and you continue giving to them. I mean, you're working, basically. On top of that, I don't have an office. I need to work in the library. Working in the library or being at the café means that you're exposed to students that literally stand next to you and start waiting if you're busy with someone else. You cannot just say leave me alone, I'm not paid for this. You can spend the full day on unpaid work, a very good service for the university. These students will say, like oh, the University is so amazing because tutors are so available to help you and give you feedback, it's so good. But I don't get paid for that. I put the work in, they get the benefit."

'Servicing' the needs of students and being subjected to constant student evaluation was also regarded as an added work pressure and performance management regime. Fear of complaints by students however unsubstantiated, coupled with poor student evaluation scores and student survey results were highlighted as an added sources of strain. One hourly paid worker from the northern region argued, "By accident I used to work in call centre as a student and that's absolutely the same kind of practices, the same kind of relationship that you have with other people, with the customers basically."

Finally, respondents from all regions indicated that their insecure status meant that they felt their efforts in the workplace were seldom acknowledged and rarely reciprocated. Respondents highlighted the strain of performing at the highest levels all of the time but

with little coming back from the employer. Below are a range of comments as to how insecure workers experienced this pressure.

> *"I get no feedback from colleagues or the feeling that you have done a good job, I get great feedback from students – but nothing comes back."*

> *"I feel like I've got to perform at the highest levels all the time. And you know, it's good to perform, but that's just my own self-respect. I would anyway. But, I feel like I've got to, otherwise that could be the end of me."*

> *"I think winning another £1-million grant still wouldn't give me any guarantee of security. You know, I've earned well over £2 million worth of grants just in the last few years at the university, and yet still there's no sense of any security".*

> *"Obviously I've proved my worth that, I can do this job and I can do my job well, so it works both ways doesn't it? It's like I can do my job, I can do my job very well and you keep renewing my contract, but at what point does it become that actually you should just make me permanent now and stop messing me about".*

> *"I never say no to anything. It's mentality that I think that if you want to leave a good impression you need to show that you are hyper-flexible, hyper ready to help. You know, you like to show that whatever is offered to you, you don't refuse It".*

Insecurity and Workplace Protection

All respondents were members of UCU and highlight the positive role that the union has played in protecting their interests, providing support and a sense of collectivism often absent from insecure workers daily lives. Respondents reported that faced with redundancy situations, non-renewal of contracts, lack of payment for marking UCU had provided constructive support. However, all respondents were mindful of the competing pressures on union resources, lay officials time and wider priorities facing the sector. Anti-casualisation officers in both the Northern region and the East of England also highlighted the difficulties in reaching out to precarious workers often absent from University mailing and email lists.

> *"I got to talk with precarious workers here in the university, they feel that they are all on their own. Two days ago, I had this talk with this woman for two hours, she was almost crying she was so stressed. I was explaining that this is how the system is designed to be, she said, like I'm so happy I'm not alone, I was sure I was the only one struggling like this much with my workload."*

Many acknowledged the competing priorities of permanent members of staff compared to their insecure counterparts. The suggestion here was 'they've worked very hard to save for a good retirement, as everyone does. But do they want to strike, or risk their job, or risk their careers for people on temporary contracts? I don't know."

Yet despite the obstacles and the awareness that the public policy agenda was unlikely to change all respondents strongly argued for the plight of insecure workers to be higher up the policy agenda. The view amongst respondents was that hourly paid staff are particularly vulnerable because of their insecure status. The ideal situation for many hourly paid staff who responded was that where possible hourly paid staff would be placed onto temporary

contracts at the very least. Many highlighted examples of good practise negotiated by UCU whereby workers on temporary contracts were allowed development time in their contracts, offered the support of mentoring in fashioning their CV in order to secure permanent employment.

Summary

- The evidence from higher education highlights the plurality of forms that insecure work takes within the sector.
- In overall terms however, workers in the sector reported on the impact of insecurity on their well-being. Referring to the 'scare of precarity' respondents highlighted the constant cycle of insecurity; the search for the next contract or the next hour of teaching, living with the fear of redundancy or the 'fear of the axe', as well as the pressure of feeling vulnerable.
- The impact of insecure on their finances was clearly articulated, as one respondent argued, 'I'm working but I am not able to access the normal things of life.'
- All respondents highlighted the large amounts of unpaid labour they were systematically required to perform.
- Many remarked that their commitment to their profession, to notions of scholarship and providing students with a positive learning experience was exploited by the Universities.
- The Union was regarded as having a positive role in attempting to deal with precarious work in the sector.
- The message from respondents was clear, more effort was required (often unpaid) but with little substantive outcome in return.

Martin – 'Paupers Contract'

Martin, employed by agency, works at a University in the East of England. He has been working as a part-time hourly paid lecturer since completing his PhD 2012. This year he is teaching across eleven modules, as well as supervising 12 undergraduate dissertation students. He has recently secured a book contract to publish his research and has several publications resulting from his PhD. Martin feels stressed all the time managing his heavy workload, as well as trying to satisfy the seemingly insatiable expectations of his students. He also feels exploited. He stated, "I have been doing this for a number of years, working very hard, getting great student feedback and I've got nowhere." He is worried about his future, about paying his rent, living a decent life and being able to settle down with his girlfriend. He refers to being on a 'paupers contract' and having to rely on living with friends as he can't rent a flat as he is not in permanent work. Most of all he is anxious as he has seen the lists for next year's teaching, his courses have been removed and his personal tutees reallocated to permanent colleagues. "It doesn't take a genius to work out what is going on" he states, "I am not part of the plan for next year, it's the way the sector is going and its wrong." Nobody has spoken to him about it, replied to his emails for clarity or explained what is happening. Martin does not know what he will do.

Chapter 6

Summary

Experiencing Insecure Work – The survey results.

The survey results revealed clear lines of division in the labour market experiences of permanent employees and the casual workforce. Thus:

- As compared to permanent employees, workers in casual employment are more likely to: be young, non-white and employed in an elementary occupation; experience lower job satisfaction and life satisfaction; have perceived low employment security; and higher levels of anxiety and depression.
- Perceived low employment security and working weekends are associated with higher levels of anxiety and depression. Anxiety levels tend to be higher among workers who have no normal working times.
- Workers with a casual or fixed-term contract are more likely to anticipate losing their jobs than workers with a permanent contract. They are also more likely to withdraw from the labour market.
- Women are more likely to leave employment and have a lower likelihood of securing a permanent contract than men. Workers with at least one dependent child aged less than 16 years are more likely to leave employment than those without dependent children.
- The likelihood of leaving employment is higher for individuals who self-identify as non-white, young workers and those in elementary occupations.
- Workers in casual employment are less likely than those in permanent and fixed-term jobs to have a means of representation at the workplace. Those in casual and fixed-term employment are less likely to be trade unions members than those in permanent jobs.

Experiencing Insecurity – The 'Scare of Precarity'

The (in)ability to escape from the fear of insecure work and to have the capacity to sustain a reasonable existence was endemic in the three

sectors studied in this report. Referred to by one respondent as the 'scare of precarity', workers across all sectors and in all regions highlighted the number of ways in which this fear was manifest. This section reports on how respondents 'experienced' insecurity.

- The insecurity of working hours had a significant impact on respondents in all sectors. All respondents subject to unpredictability over working hours highlighted the seemingly endless pressure/strain of having to be available for the 'possibility' of work at all times. Among hourly paid lecturers, there was a feeling that work could never be declined in case it was not offered again. In warehousing, workers feared turning down additional hours, or refusing alternate shift pattern or overtime with limited notice in

case it diminished for the same reason. All respondents highlighted the negative and far-reaching impact of this unpredictability on their work-life balance. The associated difficulties for workers across the sectors included;

  - The difficulties associated with trying to organise any form of caring responsibilities (child care, elderly relatives).
  - The ability for workers to spend time with their families and/or to plan a social life in advance, to take holidays (particularly when family members lived in another country).
  - Finally, the opportunity to identify periods during a working-day or week when they could escape from the pressures of (non-)work.

- Guaranteed Hours Contracts or Short-Hours (flexi) contracts provide a number of fixed and guaranteed hours per week, but this is predicated on workers being available for additional hours which they often felt that they could not refuse. It should be clear that GHC or SHC are not fixed hours contracts and thus are not an acceptable alternative to ZHC. While workers may **apparently** have fixed weekly hours and permanent contracts, employer demands to change shifts and/or to work additional hours at short notice means that they experience insecurity in their work and home lives.
- Insecure hours meant significant fluctuations in both levels of pay and/or the regularity of payment. Many of the workers interviewed reported that they struggled financially and expressed considerable anxiety about 'making ends meet' and supporting themselves and their families. As expressed in the quantitative data, many referred to the impact this fear of insecurity had on their health, overall well-being and stress levels. Many highlighted associated difficulties with benefits when hours were irregular and/or there was pressure to work unscheduled extra hours which could take workers (and their overall household income) over the benefit cut-off. Workers also reported that they could not build up a credit history to secure mortgages or loans. Securing safe and affordable housing was also regarded as problematic, leaving insecure workers at the mercy of unscrupulous land-lords as witnessed by migrant warehouse workers. Hourly paid staff in HE experienced long periods throughout the summer without pay and reported on the difficulties this presented highlighting the high levels of anxiety and financial hardship that they suffered. All respondents highlighted the frugal life-styles they adopted in order to survive financially. Evidence from the sectors highlighted the common use of pay day loans, their reliance on support from family and friends in periods of hardships and their reliance upon state benefits to support them through periods of acute financial adversity. Many workers expressed that recent changes in state benefit made their feelings of financial insecurity and vulnerability even more acute. Workers on fixed term contracts, protected to a limited degree from the worse excess of pay unpredictability, also reported on the financial constraints the absence of a permanent contract posed.
- Self-employed Gigtaxi drivers and parcel delivery couriers reported high levels of wage insecurity. All self-employed workers in the study revealed the growing imbalance between the costs of maintaining their vehicles and their income. Many stated that they often worked for a relatively low wage, below minimum wage, and as a result

struggled financially. All self-employed drivers reported on their frustration that despite growing their growing costs, their 'employers' were relentless in pursuing cost-cutting measures and refused to consider rises in rates of pay.

- Finally, the respondents often expressed a sense of 'worthlessness' verging on despair that they experienced because of insecure and precarious work. Some referred to the long hours they were required to work to make ends meet but never actually feeling that 'they were getting anywhere' or that their efforts increased their sense of security. Others clearly articulated that they were aware they were a throwaway 'financial cushion' for their organisation, and that as a result they felt disposable, and invisible. Many expressed that the levels of insecurity that they experienced made them feel exploited and afraid, that their vulnerability was abused but that they had no option but to acquiesce and carry on.

Insecurity and Work Pressures

Insecure and precarious work tilts the employment relationship heavily in favour of the employer, managers have discretion over the allocation of hours to workers, and the withdrawal of hours/contracts is used as a mechanism of control, which can lead to serious abuse. In recent years growing research evidence has highlighted growing work pressures and fear at work for all groups of employees (Gallie et al 2013) Indeed, our survey results point to growing levels of insecurity for permanent employees. Other studies highlight that these workplace-based pressures are exacerbated by supply chain pressures and the dynamics of 'fissured workplaces' (Newsome et al 2015, Weil 2014). Presented in this report are the ways in which workplace based pressures are experienced by precarious/insecure workers.

- ZHC, hourly paid and/or self-employment rely upon elements of unpaid labour. The dynamics of unpaid labour can take a variety of forms. For example, the use of unpaid labour may be because work may be intermittent with periods when workers are effectively forced to be available to the employer, but are not paid. In HE high levels of unpaid work were reported, as a result of workers having to respond to relentless student emails, preparation and marking, as well as providing student feedback and attending meetings. In parcel delivery, payment was only forthcoming after a successful delivery. The scanning, sorting and loading of parcels ready for transportation are non-paid activities. Non-delivery (if a customer is out) is also unpaid. In warehousing, turning up to work and then being sent away as you are not required for work similarly resulted in work costing money for which there was no payment.
- Across all sectors, the fear of having hours withdrawn discourages workers from going sick or taking holiday, while requirements to work additional hours may not allow for sufficient rest periods between shifts or to hours that go over the WTD
- Non-standard contracts have allowed employers to accommodate the introduction of the NLW through either the expansion of unpaid elements in the working day, reducing hours and removing additional payment for evenings and weekend shifts.
- Employees attachment or commitment to their profession can at best ameliorated some of the worse excess of insecure work. It should be noted however that this

attachment does not negate the real financial hardship workers experienced. HE respondents referred to their commitment to students, to notion of scholarship and to intellectual achievement. It was also clear however that respondents felt this commitment was being exploited.

- Respondents across all sectors reported the implementation of draconian performance management regimes allied to growing levels of bullying and harassment from first-line supervisors. Within logistics particularly respondents highlighted growing levels of monitoring and surveillance via IT systems. The IT systems have the capacity to render more transparent the required levels of performance for workers and to monitor them more closely. In the absence of any financial inducement to reach required levels of performance, workers in logistics particularly reported on growing levels of direct control and close supervision and bullying as mechanism to ensure targets were reached. Across social care, retail and the logistics sector growing work intensification and the removal of unproductive time was also reported. By contrast in HE, respondents highlighted the real fear of receiving bad student evaluations and the impact this could have on the capacity to secure continued work.

Insecurity and Workplace Protection

- Respondents were asked to report on what public policy intervention they would like to see to protect insecure workers. Without exception, all respondents reported that would welcome greater interventions to limit insecure work. All respondents indicated that they would like ZHC to be banned.
- Our evidence reveals that workers in all three sectors are and across all regions are turning to unions to provide protection and to negotiate fairer terms and conditions of employment. Self-employed workers are increasingly organizing with the support of union campaigns. Numerous examples were forwarded of how the union had managed to remove some of the worst excesses of the workplace insecurity and offer protection wherever and whenever possible.

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