



## Industrial Relations Unit (IRRU)

Seminar Speaker Series – Autumn 2021 (Term 1)

**Professor Jill Rubery, Director, Alliance Manchester Business School**

**Speaker:**

**Title:**

**The complexities of fair wages**

**Date:**

**Wednesday 08 December 2021**

**Venue:**

**Zoom Meeting**

**Time:**

**14:00 – 15:30 (GMT)**

**Abstract:**

This paper draws on recent work that reflects on the complexities in setting minimum wages and on case studies of barriers to revaluing front line workers under Covid. In both cases a multi-dimensional framework is used that has been developed on the basis of combining and extending two distinct but overlapping and complementary frameworks (Rubery (1997) and Figart et al. (2002)). Each of these recognised the multiple social and economic functions played by wages and consequently the potential for conflicting pressures and contradictory outcomes and for variations in the roles played by particular functions in different historical and spatial contexts. The framework covers five functions of wages, as price of labour, as source of living standards, as means of class distribution, as social practice and as means of control of the labour process. It therefore draws on insights into the drivers of wage setting and the impact of wages from the disciplines of economics, industrial relations, sociology, management, politics, all also viewed through a feminist lens. The conclusions in relation to both the conundrum as to the appropriate level for the minimum wage and how to overcome barriers to revaluing the labour of front line workers are that what is needed is a multi-dimensional policy and social action agenda to shape a fair wage structure, to match the multiple dimensions and functions of wages.

**Registration:**

**Book now via Eventbrite:**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/irru-202122-speaker-series-with-professor-jill-rubery-tickets-191656117607>