1. The rise of employment law

This chapter defines some key terms and then focuses on the two questions that are most often debated when people consider the revolution in employment regulation that has occurred in recent decades: Why have we seen such a growth in the extent to which the employment relationship is regulated in the UK? What are the advantages and disadvantages of increased employment regulation for the UK’s economy and people? In answering these questions the chapter introduces some of the major themes which underpin the evaluative material in this text. It also considers attempts made by recent governments to lessen the burden of regulation on employers, most of which have been widely perceived as having had, at best, very limited effect. Finally, it considers the consequences and impact of how employment tribunal fees before they were abolished, and looks at the decline in membership of trade unions and its effect.
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