This chapter considers the laws that affect trade unions and employment relations at a collective level, with the exception of strikes and other industrial action which are examined in Chapter 10. The chapter begins by considering the legal status of a trade union and the statutory concept of trade union independence. The applicability of trade union law to workers in the gig economy is also considered. The focus then shifts to the ways in which the law seeks to secure freedom of association, by provisions which protect and support union membership and activities including giving protection against discrimination and providing rights to time off for union duties and activities. The chapter then turns to the concept of recognition of unions for collective bargaining, and the legal rights that come with recognition. It also examines the statutory system for securing recognition. The relevance of the European Convention on Human Rights is considered throughout as are the changes made by the Trade Union Act 2016. The law relating to domestic and European works councils is also considered.
9. Collective labour law

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