

Unit title	Developing Yourself as an Effective Human Resources or Learning and Development Practitioner
Level	4¹
Credit value	4
Unit code	4DEP
Unit review date	Sept. 2011

Purpose and aim of unit

The CIPD has developed a map of the HR profession (HRPM) that describes the knowledge, skills and behaviours required by human resources (HR) and learning and development (L&D) professionals. This unit is designed to enable the learner to develop a sound understanding of the knowledge, skills and behaviour required of a professional practitioner, whether their role is generalist in nature or specialist, for example L&D. It will enable learners to develop a personal development plan, following a self-assessment of learning and development needs, that meets their personal and professional requirements.

This unit is suitable for persons who:

- are aspiring to, or embarking on, a career in HR/L&D
- are working in the field of HR/L&D in a support role and wish to develop their knowledge and skills
- have responsibility for HR/L&D activities and decisions within an organisation without a specialist function
- are employees or independent consultants within the field of HR/L&D
- engage in CPD to enhance and maintain their professional practice and membership.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, learners will:

- 1 Understand the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be an effective HR or L&D practitioner.
- 2 Know how to deliver timely and effective HR services to meet users' needs.
- 3 Be able to reflect on own practice and development needs and maintain a plan for personal development.

¹ Equivalents in Ireland = 6; Scotland = 7

Unit content

Indicative content is provided for each of the learning outcomes of the unit. The content is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive but should enable achievement of the learning outcomes.

1 Understand the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be an effective HR or L&D practitioner.

Knowledge and understanding: overview of key knowledge requirements as identified in Band 1 and 2 of the CIPD's HR Profession Map (HRPM). www.cipd.co.uk/hr-profession-map

Abilities: overview of key abilities as identified in Band 1 and 2 of the HRPM.

Professional behaviours: overview and examples of professional behaviours covered in behavioural clusters in the HRPM.

Knowledge, skills and behaviours required to carry out role effectively: dependent upon own role, for example whether in a generalist HR role or in a specialist area such as L&D.

2 Know how to deliver timely and effective HR services to meet users' needs.

Definition of customer in HR-related customer service provision: for example employees, directors, line managers, potential employees; understanding of the customer service chain and offer; difference between end user and internal and external customers and the way in which the organisation's structure, values, goals, products and service may impact upon the relationship.

The importance of communication in customer service excellence: effective management of customer expectation, for example informing customers of exceptions to usual expectations such as delays; legislative impact; organisation processes and procedures; appropriate use of verbal and non-verbal communication; responding to the customer; adapting communication for different situations and individuals; ability to listen and interpret customers' needs and expectations; handling and resolving customer service problems; valuing complaints as a means for delivering service improvement; effective systems and processes, which include: informal methods, formal methods, appeals and escalation if required.

3 Be able to reflect on own practice and development needs and maintain a plan for personal development.

Definition of continuing professional development (CPD) and related concept: reflective practice; reflection 'in' and 'on' action; 'thinking performer' and 'business leader'; learning cycle; personal development plans.

Reasons for CPD: reasons why persons engage in CPD, for example: intrinsic motivation and commitment to lifelong learning; requirements of a professional role; requirement for membership of professional bodies; part of performance management/appraisal process; emphasis on CPD as an ongoing activity.

HR Profession Map: coverage of the core behavioural clusters and their relevance for HR professionals.

Self-appraisal: peer review; appraisal by line manager; an assessment of the link between the learners' current knowledge and skills and those they may wish to develop to improve within their role and also to align more with the wider organisational objectives; the importance of role-modelling a commitment to CPD in the workplace; identification of preferred learning methods, for example 'shadowing', e-learning, observation and practice.

Nature and types of personal development plans (PDPs): stages of personal planning; beneficiaries of PDPs; types of learning activity for self-development; developing personal objectives based on specific, relevant, measurable (or assessable), achievable, realistic and time-bound activities; understanding the importance of reviewing PDPs and adapting according to need; importance of being able to reflect on learning and future action planning.

Provide evidence of engagement with CPD: for example but not limited to: in-depth analysis of own career aspirations with action plan; CPD log; analysis of reflective process; analysis of one gap identified with action plan; demonstration of improved processes or implementation of HR strategy depth.

Unit title	Understanding Organisations and the Role of Human Resources
Level	3¹
Credit value	4
Unit code	3HRC
Unit review date	Sept. 2011

Purpose and aim of unit

This core unit provides an introduction to the role of human resources and learning and development (HR/L&D) within an organisation and the environmental context. By the end of this unit the learner will have developed their understanding of how HR activities support an organisation's strategy and assist the achievement of business objectives and how these are shaped by internal and external factors.

This unit is suitable for persons who:

- are aspiring to, or embarking on, a career in HR/L&D
- are working in the field of HR/L&D in a support role and wish to develop their knowledge and skills
- have responsibility for HR/L&D activities and decisions within an organisation without a specialist function
- are employees or independent consultants within the field of HR/L&D
- wish to understand the role of HR/L&D in the wider, organisational and environmental context.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, learners will:

- 1 Understand the purpose of an organisation and its operating environment.
- 2 Understand the structure, culture and functions of an organisation.
- 3 Understand how HR activities support an organisation.

¹ Equivalent in Ireland = 5; Scotland = 6

Unit content

Indicative content is provided for each of the learning outcomes of the unit. The content is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive but should enable achievement of the learning outcomes.

1 Understand the purpose of an organisation and its operating environment.

Organisation context, purpose, aims and objectives: mission and strategy; organisational values, goals, products and services, customers; business and financial objectives.

Impact of internal and external factors: tools for assessing the organisation's external and internal environment, for example the impact of the social, technological, economic, environmental, political, legal and ethical factors; industry-specific issues such as supply of labour internally and externally, skills shortages, cultural diversity, international and global work practices.

2 Understand the structure, culture and functions of an organisation.

Different types of organisation: for example size and structure: global, large, medium and small; industry/sector: private, public voluntary; functions within organisations; the organisation's strengths, weaknesses, sustainability; the impact of internal and external factors; attitudes of stakeholders on organisational culture and values; management structure and style; resources and performance.

3 Understand how HR/L&D activities support an organisation.

Main activities: evolution and purpose of the broad areas of HR/L&D practice, for example HR planning, recruitment and selection, performance management, training and development, employee involvement and participation.

The role in achieving organisational goals and business objectives: link between HR/L&D practices and policies to organisational objectives; competitive advantage and success; identification of organisation's current ability to meet current and future objectives.

The role of HR in supporting line managers and staff: informing and influencing people management practices within the organisation; channels of communication of rights and duties, for example staff handbook; identifying department and team objectives; individual management and business unit development needs through learning needs analysis, job analysis; recommend appropriate learning and development opportunities and solutions; evaluating learning outcomes against organisational objectives and performance; measuring the effectiveness of past and current training.

Unit title	Recording, Analysing and Using Human Resources Information
Level	3¹
Credit value	2
Unit code	3RAI
Unit review date	Sept. 2011

Purpose and aim of unit

This unit develops the learner's understanding of the important contribution that accurate data, whether stored manually or electronically, can make to the human resources (HR) or learning and development (L&D) function. The unit is intended to span the remit of data management for all areas including but not limited to HR planning, recruitment and selection, performance and reward management, absence management, disciplinary and grievance procedures and electronic record management for L&D. It covers the legal implications of collecting, storing and using personnel data and will enable the learner to record data and information and to interpret, analyse and present information clearly and accurately in an appropriate format in support of decision-making to meet organisation-wide objectives and support L&D solutions for individuals and groups within the organisation.

This unit is suitable for persons who:

- are aspiring to, or embarking on, a career in HR/L&D
- are working in the field of HR/L&D in a support role and wish to develop their knowledge and skills
- have responsibility for HR/L&D activities and decisions within an organisation without a specialist function
- are involved in maintaining the integrity and security of data and information systems
- access and interpret data in support of business decision-making.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, learners will:

- 1 Understand what data needs to be collected to support HR practices.
- 2 Know how HR data should be recorded, managed and stored.
- 3 Be able to analyse HR information and present findings to inform decision-making.

¹ Equivalent in Ireland = 5; Scotland = 6

Unit content

Indicative content is provided for each of the learning outcomes of the unit. The content is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive but should enable achievement of the learning outcomes.

1 Understand what data needs to be collected to support HR practices.

Why organisations need to record and manage HR data: why and how organisations collect and use information to inform decision-making in the wider context and how information on employees contribute to that process.

Range of data that is collected: including but not limited to attendance, contact details, contractual arrangements, financial information, staff turnover, HR planning, employee performance and skills, health and safety, surveys or questionnaires to measure staff satisfaction, L&D records, including but not limited to: induction records; employee skills gaps; support and development requirements; learning needs analyses; learner progress reports; evaluation of L&D interventions; L&D schedules; future organisational needs; future budgeting requirements; customer feedback.

How this data supports HR practices: for example to identify patterns of staff absence or identify trends in staff turnover, such as expansion or contraction of a particular department, to identify any skill gaps or L&D requirements in line with organisational objectives, training budgets; ways of measuring and recording cost–benefit information; using customer feedback to improve customer service: for example measuring service performance against service-level agreements, complaints logs, thematic analysis; trends.

2 Know how HR data should be recorded and stored.

Different types of HR information systems: for example computerised HR information systems: their advantages and disadvantages; the benefits of online information systems, for example a learning management system or virtual learning environment that allows learners to view and update their own learning; electronic personal development plans; the use of e-portfolios; supporting online learning; easy access to learning materials.

Legal requirements relating to data collection: organisational and legal requirements for keeping records; the protection afforded to individuals concerning the storage of their personal information, for example the purposes of data collection, the length of time the data is kept; codes of practice and regulation, for example the Information Commissioners Data Protection Code, the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Analysis of the impact: implications for sharing employee information, for example supplying a potential employer with a reference on behalf of an employee; the amount of information to be collected and the individual's rights pertaining to access to information where they are the subject.

3 Be able to analyse HR data and present findings to inform decision-making.

Input, retrieval, analysis and presentation of employee information: the ability to maintain and manipulate/update HR information for analysis, interpretation and presentation purposes whether stored electronically or manually; understanding and use of quantitative and qualitative methods, for example questionnaires and surveys, arrangement of meetings and focus groups and interviews in order to collect information and analyse it.

Presentation of information: understanding the requirements of the audience/users when presenting the information. Choice of presentational styles - written, oral, statistical, using spreadsheets, pie charts, bar charts and accompanying narrative.