

Module title	Human Resources Management in Context
Level	7 ¹
Credit value	15
Module code	7HRC
Module review date	Sept. 2011

Purpose and aim of module

Human resource (HR) professionals and managers operate within increasingly complex and changing organisational and contextual circumstances, whether in the market, public or 'third' sectors and whatever the size of their organisations or the types of goods or services these enterprises produce for their customers or clients. This module provides learners, first, with an understanding of the principal internal and external environmental contexts of contemporary organisations, including the managerial and business context, within which managers, HR professionals and workers interact in conditions of environmental turbulence, change and uncertainty. Second, the module examines how those leading organisations respond to these dynamic environmental contexts. Third, the module indicates how leaders in organisations, and those in the HR function, and line managers with HR responsibilities, need to recognise and acknowledge that corporate decisions and HR choices are not always shaped by managers alone. They are also shaped by internal and external forces beyond their immediate control. Having studied this module, learners will be aware that managers and HR professionals in different types of organisation (small, large, national, global), in responding to their internal, business and external environmental contexts, not only have opportunities and choices when taking organisational and HR decisions but also face some constraints on their autonomy in determining their futures. This module explores the implications for professional practice and provides opportunities for applied learning and continuous professional development.

This module is suitable for persons who:

- have responsibility for human resource (HR) decision making within an organisation at either operational, tactical or more strategic level
- are HR professionals in a team or HR functional management role who are seeking to enhance and develop their career
- have responsibilities for the HR function and activities within an organisation without a specialist function
- are independent or employed consultants who support organisations in meeting their goals
- have HR career and CIPD professional membership aspirations.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this module, learners will be able to understand, analyse and critically evaluate:

- 1 Contemporary organisations and their principal environments.
- 2 The managerial and business environment within which HR professionals work.
- 3 How organisational and HR strategies are shaped by and developed in response to internal and external environmental factors.

¹ Equivalent in Ireland = 9; Scotland = 11

- 4 The market and competitive environments of organisations and how organisational leaders and the HR function respond to them.
- 5 Globalisation and international forces and how they shape and impact on organisational and HR strategies and HR practices.
- 6 Demographic, social and technological trends and how they shape and impact on organisational and HR strategies and HR practices.
- 7 Government policy and legal regulation and how these shape and impact on organisational and HR strategies and HR practices.

Indicative module content

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

1 Understand, analyse and critically evaluate contemporary organisations and their principal environments.

Perspectives on organisations; types, objectives and the components of organisation; managerial, internal and external environments; organisational stakeholders; theories of organisation; the search for performance, profit and efficiency; old and new organisational forms; the factors influencing structures, processes and boundaries in organisations; integration, control and HR issues; boundary-crossing, networking and strategic alliances; continuity and change in organisations; corporate governance and accountability, including business ethics and corporate social responsibility; implications and impacts on organisations, HR strategy and HR practices, especially for sustainable development.

2 Understand, analyse and critically evaluate the managerial and business environment within which HR professionals work.

Management, managing and managerial functions within organisations; power, authority and influence; the search for managerial legitimacy; the finance, marketing, operations and strategic management functions; risk analysis; customer care; quality management; performance management; models and roles of the HR function; forces shaping the HR agenda; the HR equation – work, reward, job satisfaction and the psychological contract; the politics of management and the change agenda; implications and impacts on organisations and HR strategy and HR practices.

3 Understand, analyse and critically evaluate how organisational and HR strategies are shaped by and developed in response to internal and external environmental factors.

Debates about strategy; the rational approach to strategy; emergent and other approaches to strategy; tools and techniques of environmental analysis; formulating and implementing strategy; internal and external constraints on strategy; shaping the external environment; the emergence of HR strategy; approaches to the development of HR strategy, such as best practice, best-fit and the resource-based view of the firm; horizontal and vertical integration; debates about effective strategic leadership; implications and impacts on organisations and HR practices.

4 Understand, analyse and critically evaluate the market and competitive environments of organisations and how organisational leaders and the HR function respond to them.

Structure and workings of market economies; macro-economic policy including monetary, fiscal and taxation policy; determinants of supply and demand in the marketplace; public management and administrative reform; sources of competitive advantage; organisational responses to competition and hyper-competition; elements of the financial system; labour markets and the changing nature of work and employment; implications and impacts on organisations, HR strategy and HR practices.

5 Understand, analyse and critically evaluate globalisation and international forces and how they shape and impact on organisational and HR strategies and HR practices.

The nature and origins of globalisation; the factors influencing globalisation; the consequences of globalisation; critiques of globalisation; organisational, governmental and intergovernmental responses to globalisation; the European Union; mixed and micro-political approaches; major international organisations; multinational corporations and the local and global market; culturalist and institutional approaches; implications and impacts on organisations, HR strategy and HR practices.

6 Understand, analyse and critically evaluate demographic, social and technological trends and how they shape and impact on organisational and HR strategies and HR practices.

Determinants of population trends; the working population; immigration and employment of migrant workers, work permits; international comparisons; family structures; gender, ethnicity and diversity in organisations and society; social stratification; public services and changing social values; individualism, consumerism and secularism; developments in technology; information and communication technologies; impact of technology on people, organisations and markets; knowledge and learning in organisational and economic life; implications and impacts on organisations, HR strategy and HR practices.

7 Understand, analyse and critically evaluate government policy and legal regulation and how these shape and impact on organisational and HR strategies and HR practices.

Economic and industrial policy; social policy; education and training policy; EU institutions and economic and social policy; comparisons of party policies and legislative programmes; political institutions and democratic incrementalism; how organisations influence public and intergovernmental policy; forms and extent of legal regulation, including employment legislation; implications and impacts on organisations, HR strategy and HR practices.

Module title	Investigating a Business Issue from a Human Resources Perspective
Level	7 ¹
Credit value	15
Module code	7IBI
Module review date	Sept. 2011

Purpose and aim of module

Key elements of professional competence are strategic awareness, a business orientation and a concern with adding value through human resource (HR) practice. Qualified professionals should be able to research relevant topics and write reports that can persuade key stakeholders in the organisation to change or adopt a particular policy and practice. This module provides the opportunity for learners to demonstrate the ability to diagnose and investigate a live, complex business issue from an HR perspective, to locate the work within the body of contemporary knowledge, to collect and analyse data, to derive supportable conclusions and to make practical and actionable recommendations for change, improvement or enhancement of current practice. The applied nature of the report requires a critical evaluative approach, empirical investigation and analysis and a combination of academic research and business report writing skills. It requires reflection on the implications for professional practice from an ethical, professional and continuous professional development standpoint.

This module is suitable for persons who:

- have responsibility for HR decision making within an organisation at either operational, tactical or more strategic level
- are HR professionals in a team or HR functional management role who are seeking to enhance and develop their career
- have responsibilities for the HR function and activities within an organisation without a specialist function
- are independent consultants who support organisations in meeting their goals
- have HR career and CIPD professional membership aspirations.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this module, learners will be able to:

- 1 Identify and justify a business issue that is of strategic relevance to the organisation.
- 2 Critically analyse and discuss existing literature, contemporary HR policy and practice relevant to the chosen issue.
- 3 Compare and contrast the relative merits of different research methods and their relevance to different situations.
- 4 Undertake a systematic analysis of quantitative and/or qualitative information and present the results in a clear and consistent format.
- 5 Draw realistic and appropriate conclusions and make recommendations based on costed options.
- 6 Develop and present a persuasive business report.
- 7 Write a reflective account of what has been learned during the project and how this can be applied in the future.

¹ Equivalentents in Ireland = 9; Scotland = 11

Indicative module content

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

1 Identify and justify a business issue that is of strategic relevance to the organisation.

Identify a suitable topic for the project. Potential sources might include critical incidents, significant external or internal influence, change management initiatives, risk assessment, internal or external diagnostic, and a chronic or acute problem. Plan and design a project that has strategic relevance and the potential to add value to the organisation.

2 Critically analyse and discuss existing literature, contemporary HR policy and practice relevant to the chosen issue.

Knowledge of literature and contemporary HR practice; information search and retrieval; analysing sources of data; writing a critical literature review; academic referencing.

3 Compare and contrast the relative merits of different research methods and their relevance to different situations.

Research methods: understanding different methods of data collection (for example interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, participant observation), the strengths and weaknesses of each and the circumstances in which they might be used; ethical considerations.

4 Undertake a systematic analysis of quantitative and/or qualitative information and present the results in a clear and consistent format.

Data analysis: the use and value of different analytical tools for interpreting data; systematic data analysis; identification and explanation of emerging patterns and how to deal with conflicting evidence; effective interpretation and presentation of data.

5 Draw realistic and appropriate conclusions and make recommendations based on costed options.

Drawing reasoned conclusions from data collected and presented; production of realistic, timely and effectively justified recommendations and costed implementation plans; awareness of potential resistance to recommendations and how this might be overcome.

6 Develop and present a persuasive business report.

Developing and presenting a report: the importance of clear aims, objectives and appropriate terms of reference; awareness of time management and project development; potential barriers and how they might be overcome; the structure and content of a management report; principal techniques of communication and persuasion appropriate to a business report; presentation skills.

7 Write a reflective account of what has been learned during the project and how this can be applied in the future.

Developing the skills of critical reflection.

Module title	Leading, Managing and Developing People
Level	7 ¹
Credit value	15
Module code	7LMP
Module review date	Sept. 2011

Purpose and aim of module

This module aims to provide learners with a rigorous framework of knowledge and understanding concerning people management and development that they will need whatever the degree of specialisation they later elect to follow. It has a number of distinct learning objectives. First, the module seeks to familiarise learners with major contemporary research evidence on employment and effective approaches to human resource (HR) and learning and development (L&D) practice. Research focusing on the links between people management practices and positive organisational outcomes is covered, as is research that highlights major contemporary changes and developments in practice. Second, the module introduces learners to major debates about theory and practice in the specific fields of leadership, flexibility and change management, the aim being to help them become effective managers as well as effective HR specialists, managing others fairly and effectively and increasing levels of engagement, commitment, motivation and performance. The module also introduces the major aims of HR and L&D and explores how these are achieved in practice in different types of organisational scenario. Finally, the module requires learners to reflect critically on theory and practice from an ethical and professional standpoint and provides opportunities for applied learning and continuous professional development.

This module is suitable for persons who:

- have responsibility for human resource (HR) decision making within an organisation at either operational, tactical or more strategic level
- are HR professionals in a team or HR functional management role who are seeking to enhance and develop their career
- have responsibilities for the HR function and activities within an organisation without a specialist function
- are independent or employed consultants who support organisations in meeting their goals
- have HR career and CIPD professional membership aspirations.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this module learners will be able to:

- 1 Review and critically evaluate major contemporary research and debates in the fields of human resource management (HRM) and human resource development (HRD).
- 2 Evaluate major theories relating to motivation, commitment and engagement at work and how these are put into practice by organisations.
- 3 Debate and critically evaluate the characteristics of effective leadership and the methods used to develop leaders in organisations.

¹ Equivalents in Ireland = 9; Scotland = 11

- 4 Contribute to the promotion of flexible working and effective change management in organisations.
- 5 Critically discuss the aims and objectives of the HRM and HRD function in organisations and how these are met in practice.
- 6 Assess the contribution made by HRM and HRD specialists in different types of organisation.
- 7 Promote professionalism and an ethical approach to HRM and HRD practice in organisations.

Indicative module content

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

1 Review and critically evaluate major contemporary research and debates in the fields of HRM and HRD.

Major research studies on contemporary developments in the HRM and HRD fields published in the UK and overseas, including those carried out or sponsored by the CIPD; evidence on links between HR practice and business outcomes; measuring the value of the HR function; HRM and HRD practices in the most successful organisations; developing an effective interface between HR and line management through partnership working.

2 Evaluate major theories relating to motivation, commitment and engagement at work and how these are put into practice by organisations.

Understand, explain and evaluate major theories relating to motivation, commitment and engagement at work and how these are put into practice by organisations; major motivation theories and their critics; the significance of effective leadership, reward, performance management and career development opportunities.

3 Debate and critically evaluate the characteristics of effective leadership and the methods used to develop leaders in organisations.

Types of leadership and management styles and their impact; characteristics of successful and unsuccessful leaders; developing effective leaders in organisations.

4 Contribute to the promotion of flexible working and effective change management in organisations.

Understand and contribute to the promotion of flexible working and effective change management in organisations; the growing significance of flexibility; different types of flexibility; the contribution made by HRM and HRD specialists to the promotion of flexible working; effective approaches to change management and major theories in the field; the central role played by people management practices in the effective management of change.

5 Critically discuss the aims and objectives of the HRM and HRD functions in organisations and how these are met in practice.

Organisation and job design; attracting and retaining people; motivating and managing performance; efficient administration of the employment relationship; managing employee relations; training and developing people; rewarding people.

6 Assess the contribution made by HRM and HRD specialists in different types of organisation.

Major contemporary developments in HRM and HRD practice in larger private sector companies, small and medium-sized enterprises, public sector organisations, voluntary sector organisations and international corporations.

7 Promote professionalism and an ethical approach to HRM and HRD practice in organisations.

Major debates about professionalism and ethics in organisations; common ethical dilemmas faced by managers and ways of resolving these; equity and fair-dealing; managing within the expectations of the law.

Module title	Developing Skills for Business Leadership
Level	7 ¹
Credit value	15
Module code	7SBL
Module review date	Sept. 2011

Purpose and aim of module

Successful human resource (HR) professionals have different approaches to their work, sharing a range of diverse personality traits, attributes and beliefs. These underpin skills proficiency, but cannot in themselves be described as 'skills'. Yet often they are central determinants of an individual manager's effectiveness and are developed consciously over time and with an awareness of differing cultural contexts and operating environments. A key purpose of this module is thus to encourage learners to develop a strong sense of self-awareness and of their own strengths and weaknesses as managers and colleagues. The module is primarily concerned with the development of skills, and specifically seeks to develop and improve a range of definable skills that are pivotal to successful management practice and to effective leadership. These include thinking and decision-making skills, the management of financial information, managing budgets, a range of teamworking and interpersonal skills and others associated with developing personal effectiveness and credibility at work. The module also seeks to develop further more-specialised skills that are of particular significance to effective higher-level people management and provides opportunities for applied learning and continuous professional development. Finally, the module seeks to help learners make the most of their formal programmes of study with the inclusion of key postgraduate study skills and requires critical reflection on theory and practice from an ethical and professional standpoint.

This module is suitable for persons who:

- have responsibility for human resource (HR) decision making within an organisation at either operational, tactical or more strategic level
- are HR professionals in a team or HR functional management role who are seeking to enhance and develop their career
- have responsibilities for the HR function and activities within an organisation without a specialist function
- are independent or employed consultants who support organisations in meeting their goals
- have HR career and CIPD professional membership aspirations.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this module learners will be able to:

- 1 Manage themselves more effectively at work or in another professional context.
- 2 Manage interpersonal relationships at work more effectively.

¹ Equivalentents in Ireland = 9; Scotland = 11

- 3 Make sound and justifiable decisions and solve problems more effectively.
- 4 Lead and influence others more effectively.
- 5 Interpret financial information and manage financial resources.
- 6 Demonstrate enhanced IT proficiency.
- 7 Demonstrate an essential people management skill-set.
- 8 Demonstrate competence in postgraduate study skills.

Indicative module content

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

1 Manage themselves more effectively at work or in another professional context.

Self-awareness, dimensions of personality and individual differences, time management, personal organising skills, stress management; principles of continuous professional development; professional and ethical approaches to self-management at work.

2 Manage interpersonal relationships at work more effectively.

Characteristics of effective teams and team-building, assertiveness, interpersonal communication, effective negotiation, handling emotion and conflict, written, verbal and non-verbal communication, networking, negotiating; organisational politics and the need to act in a politically astute and ethical manner to secure HR objectives; liaising with customers.

3 Make sound and justifiable decisions and solve problems more effectively.

Systematic and evidence-based decision-making, testing ideas, creative and team-based decision-making, evaluating evidence and options, ethical decision-making; communicating and justifying decisions; proactive approaches to problem-solving; consulting skills.

4 Lead and influence others more effectively.

Effective supervision and team leadership, coaching and mentoring, effective delegation, resolving conflict between team members, positively motivating others to raise their level of performance; chairing meetings and co-ordinating discussions; leading and facilitating change; providing direction; influencing thinking and decision-making on the part of others.

5 Interpret financial information and manage financial resources.

Structure, content and interpretation of simple balance sheets, profit and loss accounts and trading statements; ratio analysis; basic costing concepts and techniques; cash flow and cash budgets; budgetary planning and control.

6 Demonstrate enhanced IT proficiency.

Information-handling skills, commonly used IT applications and software packages, statistical techniques and the presentation of statistical data.

7 Demonstrate an essential people management skill-set.

Selection interviewing, appraisal interviewing, disciplinary interviewing; delivering training, making presentations; project management; managing poor performance (including absence, lateness and incompetence).

8 Demonstrate competence in postgraduate study skills.

Accessing and evaluating published research evidence, critical thinking, developing and justifying original arguments, referencing the work of others, effective essay and report-writing; effective revision and examination preparation.