

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Collective Employment Relations: Practice

Unit code: DN7C 35

Unit purpose: This unit is designed to enable candidates to develop knowledge and skills of employment law issues and to apply them to a practical employment setting. Candidates will develop an awareness of the context of employment practice and identify the key issues that impact on the work situation relating to the areas of employee relations, dispute resolution, health and safety and the termination of employment.

On completion of the Unit the candidate will be able to:

1. Explain the nature of employee relations.
2. Explain the processes for the maintenance of effective employee relations within the workplace.
3. Conduct and evaluate a negotiation.
4. Explain the requirements for a safe and healthy working environment.
5. Explain the design and implementation of policies and procedures for terminating employment.

Credit points and level: 2 HN Credits at SCQF level 8: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Access to this unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, candidates would normally be expected to have competence in communication skills at Intermediate 2 (SCQF Level 5) or similar qualifications or experience. It is recommended that candidates have undertaken the HN unit Collective Employment Relations: Law or a similar course of study prior to starting this unit.

Core skills: There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards core skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components.

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes. It is an Optional Unit in the HND Human Resource Management.

General information for centres (cont)

Unit title: Collective Employment Relations: Practice

Assessment: This unit is assessed by four assessments. Outcomes 1 and Outcome 2 are assessed jointly by a report. Outcome 3 is assessed by observation and is supported by an observation checklist and self-evaluation report. Outcome 4 and Outcome 5 are each assessed by an extended response.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Collective Employment Relations: Practice

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and evidence requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Explain the nature of employee relations

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Approaches to employee relations
- ◆ Concepts
- ◆ Contextual factors
- ◆ Participants in employee relations

Evidence requirements

Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ describe the main approaches to employee relations
- ◆ provide definitions of the employee relations concepts
- ◆ identify contextual factors that impact upon employee relations
- ◆ explain the role/ roles of the main participants in employee relations

Assessment guidelines

This outcome is assessed jointly with Outcome 2 by a report.

Outcome 2

Explain the policies and procedures for the maintenance of effective employee relations within the workplace

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Employee relations processes - mechanisms for resolving conflict, traditional and alternative
- ◆ Strategies for participation and involvement
- ◆ Industrial Action
- ◆ Conciliation and Arbitration

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Collective Employment Relations: Practice

- ◆ Legislation and Codes of Practice

Evidence requirements

Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ explain and apply mechanisms for resolving conflict
- ◆ describe the different strategies employers may adopt in relation to participation and involvement
- ◆ explain the process by which industrial action may be taken
- ◆ ensure that all explanations and descriptions are in line with current legislation and Codes of Practice

Assessment guidelines

This outcome is assessed jointly with Outcome 1 by a report

Outcome 3

Conduct and evaluate a negotiation

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Process of negotiation
- ◆ Preparatory stages for a negotiation
- ◆ Procedures for conducting a negotiation
- ◆ Documentation of the outcomes of a negotiation
- ◆ Evaluation of own performance
- ◆ Evaluation tools

Evidence requirements

Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Undertake preparatory work – planning for a negotiation
- ◆ Conduct an effective negotiation
- ◆ Describe follow up procedures as appropriate
- ◆ Evaluate own performance

Assessment guidelines

This Outcome is assessed by observation of performance of a practical negotiation exercise. This should be supported by a checklist and a self-evaluation report. The negotiation role play may be a team exercise.

This Outcome should be scheduled for preparation prior to the negotiation exercise taking place. If centres wish to do this they may wish to reschedule this outcome to follow the either Outcome 4 or 5 if they wish the role play to concern health and safety issues or the termination of employment.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Collective Employment Relations: Practice

Outcome 4

Explain the requirements for a safe and healthy working environment

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Responsibilities and rights of employers and employees for health, safety and welfare
- ◆ Principles of designing health and safety policies and procedures in accordance with legislative and organisational requirements
- ◆ Implementation of health, safety and welfare policies and procedures
- ◆ Procedures for monitoring and reviewing health and safety policies and procedures
- ◆ Legislation and codes of practice relating to health and safety

Evidence requirements

Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their skills and/or knowledge by showing that they can:

- ◆ identify the responsibilities of employers and employees for health, safety and welfare
- ◆ Advise on the construction of health and safety policies and procedures
- ◆ Explain procedures for implementation, monitoring and reviewing health and safety policies and procedures

Evidence given is in line with current legislation, codes of practice and good practice

Assessment guidelines

This Outcome is assessed by an extended response. It could take the form of a briefing paper, a report presenting evidence after conducting a risk assessment, a response to a case study or in response to specific questions

Outcome 5

Explain the design and implementation of policies and procedures for terminating employment

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Reasons for the termination of the employment contract – employer and employee
- ◆ Principles involved in designing procedures for termination
- ◆ Codes of practice, common law and statutory legislation in relation to termination procedures
- ◆ Implementation of termination procedures

Evidence requirements

Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Design procedures for the termination of employment
- ◆ Provide a rationale for the design
- ◆ Explain the operation of procedures for the termination of employment

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Collective Employment Relations: Practice

Advice is in line with relevant Codes of Practice, current legislation and good practice.

Assessment guidelines

This Outcome is assessed by an extended response. It should be a response to a case study and ensure coverage of all the evidence requirements.

Administrative Information

Unit code:	DN7C 35
Unit title:	Collective Employment Relations: Practice
Superclass category:	AJ
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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Collective Employment Relations: Practice

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This unit in essence picks up where Collective Employment Relations: Law finishes off. Candidates need to be able to apply the principles of the law in a range of situations and advise managers on appropriate steps as well as the legal implications of actions taken.

As in Collective Employment Relations: Law, for this essential underpinning knowledge to remain current and valid, it is imperative that institutions review and update the content of the Unit on an annual basis and amend as required.

Outcome 1 is concerned with an overview of employee relations covering the following areas: approaches to employee relations – unitary, pluralist and Marxist, systems etc; concepts – fairness and equity, power and authority, individualism and collectivism, rights and responsibilities; contextual factors – PESTEL factors, historical developments; participants in employee relations; – management, employees, employer organisations, employee organisations and a consideration of the role of the State and state agencies.

Outcome 2 is concerned with employee relations processes and covers issues relating to personal contracts, union recognition, non-recognition, de-recognition and an analysis of the processes of joint regulation, employer regulation, state regulation, regulated collectivism, third party intervention, industrial sanctions, and co-determination..

Outcome 3 is concerned with the employee relations practice of negotiation and covers: the process of negotiation, procedures for conducting a negotiation, psychology of the negotiation process, behaviours expected in a negotiation, formulating and presenting arguments effectively, packaging and bargaining processes within a negotiation, handling conflict in a negotiation situation, possible impact of “failure to agree”, procedures for documentation of the outcomes of negotiation.

Outcome 4 is concerned with the application of health and safety legislation within organisations. Candidates should know how to keep up to date with legislation and the various sources of law, Common Law, Statute, and the European dimension. Safety management should concentrate on the importance of health, safety and welfare systems within organisations, the policy statements, organisation and arrangements for health and safety and welfare, safety committees and safety representatives, hazards, risk assessment and the control and monitoring arrangements associated with management’s responsibility for health, safety and welfare.

Outcome 5 is concerned with the application of common law and statutory legislation in relation to the termination of the employment contract. This includes: reasons for termination, policies and procedures: notice periods, capability issues, absence, redundancy, transfer of undertakings (TUPE regulations), the duty to consult, notice periods, redeployment, redundancy pay, holiday pay, pay in lieu of notice, garden leave, exit interviews.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Collective Employment Relations: Practice

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This unit is optional to and delivered within the HNC/HND Human Resource Management Group award but could be delivered within other appropriate awards as a Stand Alone Unit.

If this unit is being delivered within different group awards, it is anticipated that the outcomes and assessments are contextualised as is appropriate.

Teaching should be focused on helping candidates to understand not just how the law works but how it has an impact on the practical issues facing managers and team leaders. Although the outcomes contain a range of theoretical aspects, the emphasis should be on understanding impact of these aspects rather than just studying this aspect for its own sake. To aid this process, the use of recent examples drawn from current affairs is to be encouraged using classroom discussion, video of current employment news footage and review of professional as well as political journals. It is often useful in this context to invite a speaker from organisations such as ACAS or the HSE to speak to students about their role and remit. It is also useful to establish links with the local Branch of the CIPD in order to liaise with the view of arranging joint events for instance.

Given the reliance on a candidate being familiar with the principles of employment law, it is anticipated that this unit follows on from Collective Employment Relations: Law.

A variety of teaching and learning approaches could be utilised throughout this unit. Tutor exposition, class and group discussion, individual and small group research projects, role play and case studies are all appropriate for developing knowledge and skills. Candidates should be encouraged to draw upon real work situations, policies and practice and where appropriate review these in the light of their learning.

This unit may be assessed by a variety of methods both oral and written. It is recommended that the third outcome is assessed in some practical way where possible. It is possible to integrate the assessment of this outcome with some of the other outcomes such as outcome 2,4or 5; where this approach to assessment is adopted for example, in relation to outcomes 4 or 5, it may be more appropriate to reschedule the teaching of outcome 3 until after the outcome chosen for integration.

Open learning

Delivering this unit on an Open Learning basis is possible, although if centres use sampling or a practical assessment for one of the outcomes suitable arrangements will be required, either asking candidates to attend the centre or by getting authentication of evidence by an appropriate person, such as a line manager.

For further information and advice, please see *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning* (SQA, February 2001 – publication code A1030).

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Collective Employment Relations: Practice

Candidates with additional support needs

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on the SQA website www.sqa.org.uk.

General information for candidates

Unit title: Collective Employment Relations: Practice

Individual Employment Relations: Practice and Collective Employment Relations: Practice are intended for anyone either working at or aspiring to work at the level of personnel/human resources assistant or administrator whose role might be to provide support for employee relations aspects of the HR function. It is also suited to line managers, supervisors or team leaders who wish to gain a practical overview of employee relations issues affecting their management role. It is also of use for owners or managers of small businesses who similarly wish to gain skills in this area.

Employee relations is a very broad topic, Individual Employment Relations: Practice reviews practical issues relating to individual performance management, discrimination, and grievance and discipline procedures. Collective Employment Relations: Practice reviews the applied aspects of issues such as dispute resolution, health and safety and termination of employment. The aim of both units is to provide you with a working toolkit of how to apply employment law in practical terms in the workplace.