

SQA Advanced Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Human Resource Management: Core Activities

Unit code: HR3A 47

Superclass: AJ

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Unit purpose

This Human Resource (HR) Unit is aimed at non-Human Resource Management (HRM) learners. It is designed to introduce them to the core Human Resource Management activities required in the workplace and the contribution that these can make to an organisation.

Outcomes

On successful completion of the Unit the learner will be able to:

- 1 Explain the recruitment and selection process
- 2 Explain the procedures for managing individual performance
- 3 Develop a plan for training and development
- 4 Explain the operation of grievance and disciplinary procedures within an organisation
- 5 Describe methods that HR can use to motivate staff

Credit points and level

2 SQA Credits at SCQF level 7: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7)

Recommended entry to the Unit

Entry to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, it is recommended that learners undertaking this Unit possess good communication skills at a level equivalent to SCQF Level 5 or similar qualifications or experience. It would be useful if learners had a general awareness of the activities and contribution of HRM within an organisation.

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit Specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

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.

Equality and inclusion

This Unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

National Unit specification: Statement of standards

Unit title: Human Resource Management: Core Activities

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Outcome 1

Explain the recruitment and selection process.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Key stages in a systematic recruitment and selection process.
- ◆ Recruitment methods.
- ◆ Selection methods.
- ◆ Induction.
- ◆ Legal requirements when employing staff.

Evidence requirements

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

- ◆ explain the key stages in the recruitment and selection of staff. This will cover:
 - recruitment methods
 - selection methods
- ◆ create an interview plan including appropriate questions
- ◆ design a checklist for induction

The evidence produced must be in line with current legislation.

Outcome 2

Explain the procedures for managing individual performance

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Purpose of performance management.
- ◆ Systems for managing individual performance.
- ◆ Setting performance standards.
- ◆ Giving and receiving feedback.

Evidence requirements

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

- ◆ explain the main objectives of performance review procedures
- ◆ explain the advantages and disadvantages for managing individual performance
- ◆ provide guidelines on good practice for conducting an individual performance review, including methods of setting performance standards

The evidence produced must be in line with current legislation.

Outcome 3

Develop a plan for training and development.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Purpose of training and development.
- ◆ Training needs analysis (TNA).
- ◆ Source of training.
- ◆ Learning styles.

Evidence requirements

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

- ◆ explain the purpose of training and development
- ◆ for an individual:
 - undertake a TNA
 - identify sources of training
 - identify appropriate learning styles
 - design a training plan

Outcome 4

Explain the operation of grievance and disciplinary procedures within an organisation.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Mechanisms for resolving conflict between individuals and organisations, including the role of ACAS.
- ◆ Disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- ◆ Legislative framework.

Evidence requirements

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

- ◆ explain the appropriate mechanisms required for dealing with conflict within an organisation in relation to relevant procedures, including the role of ACAS
- ◆ explain the stages involved in disciplinary and grievance procedures
- ◆ describe the appropriate planning, conduct and documentation necessary to meet legal and organisational requirements

Outcome 5

Describe methods that HR can use to motivate staff.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Factors that motivate individuals.
- ◆ Range of methods of motivating individuals.

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- ◆ Recognition of staff achievements.
- ◆ Impact of organisational culture on individual motivation.

Evidence requirements

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

- ◆ describe the factors which can motivate individuals
- ◆ explain how different methods of motivating individuals can be effective
- ◆ describe ways of recognising staff achievement
- ◆ explain how organisational culture can impact on individual motivation

National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Human Resource Management: Core Activities

Unit support Notes are offered as guidance and 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

It is anticipated that this Unit will be delivered within various different Group Awards. If learners have not already completed the SQA Advanced Unit HP74 47 Human Resource Management: An Introduction, then a short introduction should be provided to ensure learners have an understanding of the role of HRM and its main activities prior to undertaking this Unit.

The main purpose of this double credit Unit is to introduce learners to the following core areas of HRM:

- ◆ Outcome 1 introduces learners to a systematic recruitment and selection process, as well as induction.
- ◆ Outcome 2 looks at how standards of performance can be set, the parties involved, their roles and the giving and receiving of feedback.
- ◆ Outcome 3 then continues by looking at training and development and the development of a training plan for an individual.
- ◆ Outcome 4 looks at the main components of grievance and disciplinary procedures.
- ◆ Outcome 5 considers how HR can motivate staff, ways of recognising staff achievement and how the organisational culture can affect staff.

Outcome 1

Introduces a systematic recruitment and selection process and it is concerned with:

- ◆ Recruitment methods
 - Identify and justify the need
 - Job analysis
 - Job description
 - Person specification
 - How and where to recruit eg internal/external; jobcentreplus; headhunting; recruitment agencies; advertising; use of on-line websites etc
 - Application forms versus CV: content; advantages and disadvantages of each
 - Short listing of applications
- ◆ Selection methods
 - Choice of selection methods, eg psychometric tests; assessment centres; ability tests; interviews; in-tray exercises, etc
 - Reliability of selection methods
 - Validity of selection methods
 - Type of interview, eg one to one; panel, etc

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- ◆ Interview plan and appropriate questions
 - Selection criteria based on job description and person specification
 - Determine how interview will proceed, eg question and answers only; use of presentations; allocation particular questions/topics to interview panel members, etc
 - Types of questions, eg open questions
 - Timing and content of interview
 - Skills of interviewer(s)
 - Decision making process, eg how applicants will be scored
 - Completion of documentation

- ◆ Induction
 - Why have an induction programme?
 - Benefit of induction to an organisation
 - Benefit of induction to an individual
 - Induction checklist, as a minimum covering Health and Safety; organisation's policies and procedures; and a tour of the organisation's premises

- ◆ Legal requirements
 - Current requirements, eg Equal Opportunities; Data Protection Act, etc
 - Centres should review employment legislation on a regular basis as this is an area which can change rapidly.

Outcome 2

This continues from Outcome 1 by looking at performance within an organisation and is mainly concerned with:

- ◆ The purpose of performance management

- ◆ The psychological contract

- ◆ Performance management systems including:
 - Types, eg 360 degree; MBO; Performance Ranking, etc
 - Objectives
 - Constraints
 - Administration

- ◆ Methods of setting performance standards, such as:
 - Performance review
 - Motivation (although this is covered more fully in Outcome 5)
 - Link to organisational objectives
 - Roles of the various parties involved in the review process — and the wider roles of management and HR management in this process
 - Giving and receiving constructive feedback
 - Handling poor performance (ie mentoring; training; 'is person fit/capable for the job?')
 - Legislation

Outcome 3

This Outcome then takes the learner through one method of improving performance – ie training. The main content covers:

- ◆ The purpose of training and development within an organisation
- ◆ Principles of learning
- ◆ Training needs analysis (TNA), eg conducting a TNA interview
- ◆ Determine sources to meet the training needs
- ◆ Training methods/ activities/learning opportunities
- ◆ Availability of funding (both internal and external)
- ◆ Learning styles
- ◆ Key considerations in designing a training plan
 - Deadlines and timings
 - Prioritisation eg in line with organisational needs
 - The skills and/or knowledge to be developed
 - Resources required and methods of delivery
 - Expectations – of both the individual and the organisation
 - Benefits of a training plan

Outcome 4

This Outcome introduces the learner to the various mechanisms for resolving conflict within an organisation and is mainly concerned with:

- ◆ mechanisms for resolving conflict between individuals and organisations
- ◆ internal procedures and external bodies
- ◆ individual and collective procedures
- ◆ Disciplinary procedures:
 - purpose of disciplinary procedures
 - components of a disciplinary procedure
 - stages in a disciplinary action
 - roles of management and employee representatives in disciplinary action
- ◆ Grievance procedures:
 - purpose of grievance procedures
 - components of grievance procedures
 - stages in a grievance procedure
 - roles of management and employee representatives in grievances
- ◆ Legislative framework
 - unfair dismissal
 - constructive dismissal
 - employment tribunals
 - ACAS code of practice and good practice.

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- It is important for centres to review the employment legislation on a regular basis as this is an area that is changing rapidly.

Outcome 5

This final Outcome looks at how HR can help motivate staff; the importance of motivating staff; a range of methods to motivate individual members of staff; and the impact of the culture of the organisation on individual motivation:

- ◆ Methods used to motivate
 - Empowerment
 - Autonomy
 - Participation in training
 - Team-building activities
 - Psychological contract
- ◆ Effective communication
- ◆ Ways of recognising achievement
 - Monetary such as bonuses; vouchers; salary increases; promotion
 - Non-monetary such as training, staff award schemes (employee of the month, etc); additional annual leave; celebration of achievement
- ◆ Organisational culture impacting on individual motivation
 - How policies and procedures can help or hinder, eg introduction of an absence management policy; the performance management arrangements; appraisal systems; communication style and channels; operation of reward systems

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

This double credit Unit is designed as a servicing Unit for use across many Group Awards as well as a stand-alone Unit.

Where this Unit is being delivered within different Group Awards, it is anticipated that the Outcomes and assessments would be contextualised where ever possible.

A variety of teaching and learning approaches are appropriate for developing the knowledge and skills of this Unit, eg:

- ◆ tutor exposition
- ◆ class and group discussion
- ◆ individual and small group research projects
- ◆ role play
- ◆ case studies
- ◆ use of learners' own experiences

Learners should be encouraged to draw upon real work situations, policies and practice and review these in the light of their learning.

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of

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assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

This Unit can be assessed in variety of ways to stimulate the learner, such as use of case studies; production of reports; responses to questions in open-book conditions, observed presentations and role plays. The guidance below outlines assessment guidance on an Outcome by Outcome basis. However, centres may wish to integrate assessment of some Outcomes, eg possible integration of assessment for Outcome 2 (managing performance) and Outcome 3 (developing a training plan); also, with the use of an appropriate and robust case study, integrate the assessment of Outcome 1 (recruitment and selection), Outcome 2 (managing performance), Outcome 3 (developing a training plan); and Outcome 5 (motivation of staff).

Guidance on the assessment of individual Outcomes

Outcome 1: may be assessed through the use of open-book assessment or the production of a report (which could be based on case study materials) which cover all Evidence Requirements. Where a report is to be produced, it could be along the lines of the main body of the report covering the recruitment methods and selection methods, with appendices for the interview plan and the induction checklist.

Outcome 2: may be assessed through the production of a report, a briefing paper or responses to specific questions which cover all Evidence Requirements. Alternatively, assessment could be an observed presentation on either an individual basis or as a group.

Outcome 3: may be assessed through a variety of ways including an open-book assessment, using case study materials which cover all Evidence Requirements. Or a tutor observation of the TNA interview, together with the interview planning documents (showing the source of training, etc).

Outcome 4: may be assessed through a variety of ways including use of open-book questions or a role play based on case study materials which cover all Evidence Requirements.

Outcome 5: may be assessed through a variety of ways including an open book assessment outside class time covering all Evidence Requirements.

Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

Communication: Reading, Written and Oral at SCQF level 6.

Some Outcomes provide opportunities to develop communication skills, eg research for reports and/or responding to questions. This provides underpinning knowledge by reading

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complex information on theory and practical applications of HRM in organisational success. It is also likely that the report and/or responses will be in a written format.

Oral communication could be developed by group discussions through the analysis and evaluation of information related to each Outcome and through verbal exploration of complex issues and participation in role play in Outcome 4.

Problem Solving at SCQF level 6

Critical Thinking: As part of this Unit, learners will cover complex HRM situations that require analysis before approaches can be taken eg in recruitment and selection processes; grievance and disciplinary situations; performance management (both good and poor); motivation of individuals etc.

Planning and Organising: within this Unit, learners are involved with the efficient management of a variety of HRM plans/planning such as the production of training plans and interview plans which involve reviewing and research relevant information and issues, as well as identifying appropriate resources, agreeing priorities and meeting legal requirements.

Information Communication Technology at SCQF level 6

Accessing information: using software and Internet to research on current HRM theories, issues, methods and management practice will provide essential underpinning knowledge for the Unit. Also, learners are required to analyse and retrieve HRM information from a wide range of sources.

Providing and creating information: This Unit involves evaluating complex HRM information, issues and legislation, as well as the production of professional responses such as reports, training plans and induction checklist which can involve extensive access to and use of technology.

Working with Others at SCQF level 6

Working co-operatively: this Unit allows learners opportunities to use interpersonal skills in a wide range of HRM issues; analysing roles and behaviour of others; adapting own behaviour to deal with complexities of changing and challenging dynamics in aspects such as selection processes; grievance and disciplinary interviews and processes; performance management and motivation of individuals. Learners can also have the opportunity to develop these skills in role play situation(s) for assessment for Outcome 4.

Reviewing co-operative contribution: across the Outcomes in this Unit, learners have to resolve issues and handle the behaviour of other people, eg grievance and disciplinary procedures and interviews; motivation of individuals etc. They also have to make decisions and recommendation on HRM issues such as outcomes of grievance and disciplinary situations; selection of staff and agreed training opportunities within training plans.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of SQA Advanced Qualifications.

FURTHER INFORMATION: Call SQA's Customer Contact Centre on 44 (0) 141 500 5030 or 0345 279 1000. Alternatively, complete our [Centre Feedback Form](#).

General information for learners

Unit title: Human Resource Management: Core Activities

This section will help you decide whether this is the Unit for you by explaining what the Unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the Unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

This is a Human Resource (HR) Unit aimed at non-Human Resource Management learners. It is designed to introduce you to the core Human Resource Management (HRM) activities required in the workplace and the contribution that these make to an organisation. You will learn about a range of key aspects of HRM, such as:

- ◆ the stages of recruitment and selection processes
- ◆ procedures for managing the performance of individual members of staff
- ◆ planning for training and development activities
- ◆ grievance and disciplinary processes
- ◆ and how to motivate individual members of staff

Throughout this Unit you will need to refer to the relevant and current employment legislation as this is a vital (and ever-changing) aspect of HRM.

During the course of this Unit you'll take part in a range of interesting activities such as class and group discussions; projects; research and role plays. The Unit can be assessed in a variety of ways so you could be asked to produce evidence such as short reports, responses to questions and to case study materials, training plans, induction checklists and documentation used in the main areas of HRM, etc. Your tutor will confirm the exact assessment arrangements with you.

There may opportunities within this Unit to develop the following Core Skills:

- ◆ *Communication* at SCQF level 6.
- ◆ *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Information Communication Technology* at SCQF level 6
- ◆ *Working with Others* at SCQF level 6

On completion of this Unit on HRM core activities you will be able to:

- ◆ explain the recruitment and selection process
- ◆ explain the procedures for managing individual performance
- ◆ develop a plan for training and development
- ◆ explain the operation of grievance and disciplinary procedures within an organisation
- ◆ describe methods to HR can use to motivate staff

Good luck with your studies!