



Group Award Specification for:

**Professional Development Award in Human
Resource Management: An Introduction at SCQF
level 7**

Group Award Code: GT6W 47

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1 Introduction

The purpose of this document is to:

- ◆ assist centres to implement, deliver and manage the qualification.
- ◆ provide a guide for new staff involved in offering the qualification.
- ◆ inform course managers teaching staff, assessors, learners, employers and higher education institutes (HEIs) of the aims and purpose of the qualification.
- ◆ provide details of the range of learners the qualification is suitable for and progression opportunities.

The Professional Development Award (PDA) in Human Resource Management (HRM): An Introduction at SCQF level 7 was designed to provide an alternative study option for those who are considering a career in Human Resource Management, those already carrying out a role in this discipline or for learners who might not be able to commit to a full time HNC but would like to develop their skills in this area whilst achieving a recognised qualification.

The title of the award reflects the competencies its successful learners will have achieved as learners will be introduced to the subject Human Resource Management which will include a holistic overview of how HRM can add value to an organization. Learners will also develop a knowledge of the role of HRM as a key function within an organisation.

The qualification is aimed at a variety of learners, for example, those already working in an HR discipline, those who carry out HR functions in their jobs or those with a general interest in the subject area. The qualification may also be suited to learners who have completed an academic course and are looking to enhance their understanding of HRM with a view of making a career in this discipline.

The PDA framework is made up of existing mandatory units from HNC Human Resource Management which are optional units within the HNC Business Framework.

Successful completion of the PDA will provide learners with a foundation for further HRM units at more advanced SCQF levels and will also provide learners with transferable skills to add value in similar career disciplines.

2 Qualification structure

This group award is made up of 3 SQA credits. It comprises 24 Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) credit points all of which are mandatory. A mapping of Core Skills development opportunities is available in section 5.3.

2.1 Structure

For the PDA Introduction to Human Resource Management Award learners must achieve 3 SQA credits.

Learners must achieve three mandatory units.

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J2FH	34	Human Resource Management: Introduction	1	8	7
J2FK	34	Interviewing: Skills and Practice	1	8	7
J2FS	34	Recruitment, Selection and Induction	1	8	7
Total mandatory SQA credits required:			3		

3 Aims of the qualification

The overall aim of the qualification is to provide learners with an introduction to issues relevant to an HR discipline. It is designed to develop knowledge of the role of human resources management as a key function within organisations. This PDA at SCQF level 7 is aimed at learners who want to expand their skills in an HR discipline whilst achieving a recognised qualification. Successful completion of this unit will provide a foundation for further human resource management units at more advanced SCQF levels.

3.1 General aims of the qualification

The general aims of the PDA are to:

- ◆ Develop and enhance employment skills relevant to a HR or related discipline.
- ◆ Enable progression within the SCQF.
- ◆ Develop study and research skills.
- ◆ Develop transferable and Core Skills.
- ◆ Challenge and foster an enjoyment of the subject.
- ◆ Develop knowledge and skills such as planning, analysing and synthesising.

3.2 Specific aims of the qualification

The specific aims of the PDA Human Resource Management: An Introduction are to:

- ◆ Enable learners to develop knowledge and understanding of the operational areas of HRM.
- ◆ Develop learners' skills, knowledge and understanding of practical and administrative areas of HRM as preparation for employment at an appropriate level.
- ◆ Develop a range of core and transferable skills essential within HRM.
- ◆ Prepare learners for progression to further studies in HRM or related disciplines.

4 Recommended entry to the qualification

Entry to this qualification is at the discretion of the centre. The following information on prior knowledge, skills, experience or qualifications that provide suitable preparation for this qualification has been provided by the Qualification Design Team (QDT) as guidance only.

Learners would benefit from having attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by one or more of the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

For entry to the PDA Human Resource Management: An Introduction, learners would benefit from having attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by one or more of the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience: The benchmark for entry to this award has been taken as SCQF level 5 for all Core Skills except Numeracy which is set at SCQF level 4.

The awards are designed to develop all Core Skills towards SCQF levels 5 and 6 as appropriate. In addition, centres may wish to specify:

- ◆ Any relevant Scottish Group Award at SCQF level 5 or SCQF level 6.
- ◆ Any two relevant National Courses at SCQF level 6 together with three at SCQF level 5 or above.
- ◆ An SVQ in a relevant area at SCQF level 5 or 6.

Mature learners with no qualifications but with suitable workplace experience and/or and skills may be accepted.

4.1 Core Skills entry profile

The Core Skill entry profile provides a summary of the associated assessment activities that exemplify why a particular level has been recommended for this qualification. The information would be used to identify if additional learning support needs to be put in place for learners whose Core Skills profile is below the recommended entry level or whether learners should be encouraged to do an alternative level or learning programme.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	5	Written papers, reports, projects and presentations (oral and written) to questions and case studies based on non-routine and complex business problems/scenarios.
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	5	Use and application of standard ICT packages, for example Google Docs, Microsoft Office, Sage in order to research, interpret and present financial and numerical data.
Problem Solving	5	Problem solving is fundamental across a number of units.
Working with Others	5	Learners will demonstrate a high level of autonomy across all units and will also have to demonstrate their ability to connect with colleagues and this is specifically addressed in the Interviewing: Skills and Practice and Recruitment, Selection and Induction units.

5 Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs

This qualification was designed to meet a specific purpose and what follows are details on how that purpose has been met through mapping of the units to the aims of the qualification. Through meeting the aims, additional value has been achieved by linking the unit standards with those defined in national occupational standards and/or trade/professional body requirements. In addition, significant opportunities exist for learners to develop the more generic skill, known as Core Skills through doing this qualification.

5.1 Mapping of qualification aims to units

Code	Unit title	Aims			
		1	2	3	4
J2FH 34	Human Resource Management: Introduction	X	X	X	X
J2FK 34	Interviewing: Skills and Practice	X	X	X	X
J2FS 34	Recruitment, Selection and Induction	X	X	X	X

The specific aims of the PDA: Introduction to HRM are to:

- ◆ Enhance learners' knowledge of HR policy and practice.
- ◆ Provide opportunities to explore and evaluate effective human resource management functions.
- ◆ Develop skills in interview planning and technique.
- ◆ Develop an understanding of the recruitment and induction processes.

5.2 Mapping of National Occupational Standards (NOS) and/or trade body standards

The table below provides a mapping of the PDA mandatory units to the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Human Resource Management. These NOS were developed by Skills CFA, the government recognised standards setting body for HRM.

Code	Unit title	NOS code and title
J2FH 34	Human Resource Management: Introduction	CFAHR1: Implement and evaluate an HR strategy CFAHR6: Develop HR policies CFAHR14: Plan the structure and design of the HR function CIPD 3HRC: Understanding organisations and the role of HR
J2FK 34	Interviewing: Skills and Practice	CFAHR7: Plan and deliver recruitment CFAREC6: Assess jobseekers
J2FS 34	Recruitment, Selection and Induction	CFAHR7: Plan and deliver recruitment CIPD3CJA: Contributing to the process of job analysis

5.3 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification

Unit code	Unit title	Communication			Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
		W (R)	W (W)	O	UN	UGI	AI	PCI	CT	PO	RE	WCO	RCC
J2FH 34	Human Resource Management: Introduction	X	X	X			X	X	X			X	
J2FK 34	Interviewing: Skills and Practice	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
J2FS 34	Recruitment, Selection and Induction	X	X	X			X	X		X	X	X	X

Key:

Communication:	W (R) = Written (Reading)	W (W) = Written (Writing)	O = Oral
Numeracy:	UN = Using Number	UGI = Using Graphical Information	
ICT:	AI = Accessing Information	PCI = Providing/Creating Information	
Problem Solving:	CT = Critical Thinking	PO = Planning and Organising	RE = Reviewing and Evaluating
Working with Others	WCO = Working Co-operatively with Others	RCC = Reviewing Co-operative Contribution	

5.4 Assessment strategy for the qualification

Unit	Assessment			
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4
Human Resource Management: Introduction	Open-book. Integrated report.	Open-book. Presentation or report. Outcomes 2 and 3 can be combined in holistic assessment (different format to be used from outcome 1).		
Interviewing: Skills and Practice	Can be ongoing assessment or end of unit assessment. Role-play — interviews supported by written evidence.			
Recruitment, Selection and Induction	Outcomes 1 and 2 can be combined in a holistic assessment. Portfolio/report with practical element.		Open-book. Set of questions to provide evidence, for example induction pack.	

6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

Context and content:

The PDA in Human Resource Management: An Introduction has been designed to focus on the skills to allow those with an interest in, or experience of, working in an HR discipline to address challenges in the modern workplace. It seeks to build a set of practical skills that learners can utilise in their current or future workplace.

The PDA framework is made up of existing mandatory units from HNC Human Resource Management which are optional units in the HNC Business framework.

The content and context of these revised awards needs to be real, learner led and reflective of current HRM issues.

Delivery:

Centres can deliver the PDA in Human Resource Management: An Introduction on a full-time or part-time basis or on a blended learning model. The units can be delivered through a variety of approaches face-to-face, online or a combination of these.

Assessment:

The design principles encourage a holistic approach to assessment. In addition to traditional assessments such as reports, essays and case studies, innovative arrangements also let learners use ICT for providing their evidence and other methods such as group or collaboration assessment.

Assessment exemplars are provided for exemplification for all mandatory units. Assessment exemplars are accessible via the secure website which is available to centres via their SQA co-ordinator.

6.1 Sequencing/integration of units

The HRM awards are designed to provide flexibility in approach and generally may be taught in any order. For centres, how the awards are delivered may be dependent upon the availability of resources, staffing and general timetable requirements.

6.2 Recognition of prior learning

SQA recognises that learners gain knowledge and skills acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

In some instances, a full group award may be achieved through the recognition of prior learning. However, it is unlikely that a learner would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full group award.

The recognition of prior learning may **not** be used as a method of assessing in the following types of units and assessments:

- ◆ HN Graded Units.
- ◆ Course and/or external assessments.
- ◆ Other integrative assessment units (which may or not be graded).
- ◆ Certain types of assessment instruments where the standard may be compromised by not using the same assessment method outlined in the unit.
- ◆ Where there is an existing requirement for a licence to practice.
- ◆ Where there are specific health and safety requirements.
- ◆ Where there are regulatory, professional or other statutory requirements.
- ◆ Where otherwise specified in an assessment strategy.

More information and guidance on the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) may be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk.

The following sub-sections outline how existing SQA unit(s) may contribute to this group award. Additionally, they also outline how this group award may be recognised for professional and articulation purposes.

6.2.1 Articulation and/or progression

There are opportunities for learners undertaking the PDA: Human Resource Management: An Introduction to progress to further study. For example, Successful completion of the award will provide a foundation for further human resource management units at more advanced SCQF levels. The PDA may suit learners hoping to progress to the HNC in HRM or Business.

6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be particularly appropriate for some assessments across both awards. 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.

6.4 Support materials

A list of existing Assessment Support Packs (ASPs) is available to view on SQA's website.

Unit titles

Human Resource Management: Introduction
Interviewing: Skills and Practice
Recruitment, Selection and Induction

6.5 Resource requirements

There are no specific resource requirements for the award. It is expected that centres delivering the PDA Human Resource Management: An Introduction awards will have appropriate delivery staff in place with experience in the various subjects. General resources such as classroom, online delivery models and general access to reference and support materials via library or internet resources are sufficient for delivery of the programmes.

7 General information for centres

Equality and inclusion

The unit specifications making up this group award have been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners will 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.

Internal and external verification

All assessments used within this/these qualification(s) should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment* (www.sqa.org.uk/GuideToAssessment).

8 Glossary of terms

Embedded Core Skills: is where the assessment evidence for the unit also includes full evidence for complete Core Skill or Core Skill components. A learner successfully completing the unit will be automatically certificated for the Core Skill. (This depends on the unit having been successfully audited and validated for Core Skills certification.)

Finish date: The end of a group award's lapsing period is known as the finish date. After the finish date, the group award will no longer be live and the following applies:

- ◆ learners may not be entered for the group award.
- ◆ the group award will continue to exist only as an archive record on the Awards Processing System (APS).

Lapsing date: When a group award is entered into its lapsing period, the following will apply:

- ◆ the group award will be deleted from the relevant catalogue.
- ◆ the group award specification will remain until the qualification reaches its finish date at which point it will be removed from SQA's website and archived.
- ◆ no new centres may be approved to offer the group award.
- ◆ centres should only enter learners whom they expect to complete the group award during the defined lapsing period.

SQA credit value: The credit value allocated to a unit gives an indication of the contribution the unit makes to an SQA group award. An SQA credit value of 1 given to an SQA unit represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment.

SCQF: The Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) provides the national common framework for describing all relevant programmes of learning and qualifications in Scotland. SCQF terminology is used throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk.

SCQF credit points: SCQF credit points provide a means of describing and comparing the amount of learning that is required to complete a qualification at a given level of the Framework. One National Unit credit is equivalent to 6 SCQF credit points. One National Unit credit at Advanced Higher and one Higher National Unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points.

SCQF levels: The level a qualification is assigned within the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HNCs and HNDs are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8 respectively. Higher National Units will normally be at levels 6–9 and graded units will be at level 7 and 8. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2–6 and will normally be made up of National Units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

Subject unit: Subject units contain vocational/subject content and are designed to test a specific set of knowledge and skills.

Signposted Core Skills: refers to opportunities to develop Core Skills arise in learning and teaching but are not automatically certificated.

History of changes

It is anticipated that changes will take place during the life of the qualification and this section will record these changes. This document is the latest version and incorporates the changes summarised below. Centres are advised to check SQA's APS Navigator to confirm they are using the up to date qualification structure.

NOTE: Where a unit is revised by another unit:

- ◆ No new centres may be approved to offer the unit which has been revised.
- ◆ Centres should only enter learners for the unit which has been revised where they are expected to complete the unit before its finish date.

Version Number	Description	Date

Acknowledgement

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

Template version: July 2020

9 General information for learners

PDA in Human Resource Management: An Introduction

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

Whether you are interested in a career in HR, or if you have some industry experience and would like to broaden your understanding of Human Resource Management, this PDA is designed to act as a stepping-stone for learners who are unable to commit to full-time study in the HNC/HND courses. This PDA provides a stepping-stone towards an HNC in Human Resource Management or a HNC in Business.

As well as providing you with knowledge and skills in the HR and Business industry, on successful completion of the PDA learners will also achieve a recognised qualification. The award is made up of core units from HN Human Resource Management and HNC Business which will provide a solid foundational knowledge of HR.

The PDA is aimed at those who are currently in employment and who may be working in HR, carrying out HR functions or those with a general interest in the area. The PDA may also suit learners who have recently completed an academic course and are looking to enhance their understanding of HR or those who seek to find out what HR entails with a view to making a career in the area.

The course is also suitable for those learners who may wish to gain a holistic view of how human resource management can add value to an organisation as well as develop an understanding of the factors of change that have shaped and continue to influence the discipline of human resource management.

Successful completion of the award will provide a foundation for further human resource management units at more advanced SCQF levels.

This course offers a gateway to people currently working in HRM or those with an interest in it. Due to its compact nature, it may provide an opportunity for people to undertake a small course which may be appealing to learners with jobs or other commitments.

The PDA may appeal to learners fresh out of education as it provides a comprehensive insight into the profession, allowing learners the opportunity to explore career paths. The award would also provide a stepping-stone towards in HNC in Human Resource Management or HNC in Business.