SQA Advanced Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: Human Resource Management Practice (SCQF level 8)

Unit code: J45T 48

Superclass: AJ

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Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

Unit purpose

This unit is designed to provide learners with broad knowledge and skills required to understand and analyse the procedures and processes relating to the employment of people by an organisation.

Outcomes

On successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

1   Advise on the recruitment, selection and induction of employees.
2   Explain the fundamentals of employee pay and reward.
3   Provide advice on employee performance review.
4   Provide advice to managers on the wellbeing, health and safety of employees.

Credit points and level

2 SQA unit credit(s) at SCQF level 8: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8).

Recommended entry to the unit

Entry is at the discretion of the centre. Learners would normally be expected to have competence in Communication Skills at SCQF level 5 or similar qualifications or experience.

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the support notes section for 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.

Statement of standards

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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.

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. Learners 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
Advise on the recruitment, selection and induction of employees.

Knowledge and/or skills

♦ Job analysis
♦ Job description
♦ Person specification
♦ Recruitment and selection
♦ Induction
♦ Current legislation

Outcome 2
Explain the fundamentals of employee pay and reward.

Knowledge and/or skills

♦ Fundamentals of pay and reward
♦ Job evaluation techniques
♦ Reward and recognition good practice

Outcome 3
Provide advice on employee performance review.

Knowledge and/or skills

♦ Performance review
♦ Role of individuals involved in performance review
♦ Conducting a performance review meeting

Outcome 4

Provide advice to managers on the wellbeing, health and safety of employees.

Knowledge and/or skills

♦ Key attributes of workplace wellbeing
♦ Ergonomics at work
♦ Stress at work
♦ Mental health at work
♦ Health and safety legislation

Evidence requirements for this unit

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

Outcome 1 — Advise on the recruitment, selection and induction of employees.

Learners will be required to:

♦ explain the job analysis process and its role in recruitment
♦ create a job description and a person specification
♦ provide detailed advice on popular sources of recruitment
♦ identify different selection methods
♦ identify the ethical issues surrounding selection and recruitment
♦ design an induction programme and checklist for a new employee
♦ demonstrate an understanding of recruitment law and good practice

Outcome 2 — Explain the fundamentals of employee pay and reward.

Learners will be required to:

♦ explain the purpose of pay structures and pay progression
♦ compare the strengths and weaknesses of different job evaluation methods
♦ evaluate different approaches to employee rewards and benefits

Outcome 3 — Provide advice on employee performance review.

Learners will be required to:

♦ identify the objectives, benefits and barriers of performance management
♦ compare different approaches to reviewing performance
♦ identify key skills required for effective performance review meetings
♦ develop good practice guidelines for those responsible for reviewing performance

Outcome 4 — Provide advice to managers on the wellbeing, health and safety of employees.

Learners will be required to:

♦ identify the key aspects of workplace wellbeing
♦ explain the benefits and barriers to adopting and maintaining workplace ergonomics
♦ describe three strategies for minimising and managing stress in the workplace
♦ provide guidance on promoting and supporting positive mental health
♦ identify the rights and responsibilities outlined in current health and safety legislation
♦ describe the accurate recording and reporting of workplace accidents

Support notes

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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

The unit is primarily intended to prepare learners in the procedures and processes connected with the employment of people by organisations. The unit should be seen in the context of an organisation from any sector that employees 100 people or more. It is vital that learner submissions are based on current legislation and practice.

In addition, the pro-active, strategic role that the modern human resources specialist has to undertake should be contrasted with more traditional view of the department as re-active and advisory. The value added by the function should be stressed.

Outcome 1 focuses on the recruitment, selection and induction of employees. Learners should demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between all aspects of this outcome.

Job analysis

Key purposes of job analysis may include establishing the content and focus of the role in question, necessary skills levels, responsibilities, training needs and the demands of the working environment and as a result a key source of information for the job description. Use of job analysis in the selection process should highlight its application in job advertising, determination of salary levels, interview questions and in determining and designing other selection activities. The connection to effective induction, performance appraisals, ongoing learning and development needs could also be included in a good answer.

Job description

The job description sets out the key roles and responsibilities of the role in question. Job descriptions will speak in clear and direct language that potential candidates can understand and relate to. Job descriptions should include clear descriptions of the tasks involved in the role and can be seen as an opportunity to promote the vacancy to potential candidates. Job descriptions should be positive and avoid any description or language that may be seen as discriminatory.

Sources of recruitment

These must be current and reflect current trends on the marketplace. At the time of writing these could include, but are not limited to internal job boards, organisational website, referrals, press adverts, career fairs, recruitment agencies, and social media. Learners should be able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the resources identified — these arguments could be

structured around cost, time scales, accessibility, flexibility, targeting of appropriate job markets, and responsiveness.

Selection methods

Responses should reflect current schools of thought on selection. Methods could include the selection interview, panel interviews, group interviews, assessment centres, psychometric testing, telephone and video conference interviews, experiential approaches and observational activities.

Ethics

Learners should identify unethical practices and unethical behaviours in the selection process — these may include activities that break trust or confidentiality and cost job seekers money. Misleading advertising, unequal treatment of candidates, and questions and activities that are discriminatory may all be mentioned. The ethics of using social media must be covered and here responses may include the platforms used, screening methods, confidentiality, and discretion. The use of pseudonyms and identification could also be discussed. Codes of practice in recruitment should cover advertising, applications, the verification of details, interview selection criteria, the interview itself and the protection of candidate information.

Induction

The induction programme should include a clear definition of the purpose of the plan, practical information about the organisation, its policies and process, specific organisational information on strategy, goals and objectives as well as its culture. A good induction will pay attention to orientating employees to the building, the people, teams and significant individuals. Health and Safety, IT and security set up organisational information, culture and values, benefits and policies, roll specific information and initial learning and development needs. It should be recognised that a good induction will prepare the individual before the day of the first activity, will be staggered to avoid information overload and should continue through the initial stages of employment.

Recruitment law

Learners should draw attention to the law surround job advertising, criminal record checks, checking the right to work, discriminatory practices, data protection and equal opportunities. A good answer will refer to the equality legislation, discrimination legislation, legislation covering ex-offenders, immigration laws and data protection rules.

Good practice

Responses should demonstrate an understanding of the importance to both employer and employee of ensuring the best person is recruited for their vacancy. Good practice should be identified as adopting approaches that are transparent, fair and consistent and that reflect guidance from professional roles such as the CIPD and ACAS.

Outcome 2 is about employee remuneration systems — reward for employment in the form of pay, salary, or wage, including allowances and benefits.

Pay systems

These could include but are not restricted to timework; payment by results schemes; profit sharing; skill-based schemes; performance-related pay; harmonised/single status schemes gig economy, mobile payment. Learners should identify any current trends in payment approaches.

Job evaluation schemes

There are two main types of job evaluation: analytical schemes, where jobs are broken down into their core components, and non-analytical schemes, where jobs are viewed as a whole.

Candidates could discuss analytical schemes such as points rating and factor comparison. Non-analytical schemes may include but are not limited to, job ranking, job comparisons and classification.

Rewards and benefits (different approaches)

Organisations can be argued to be taking increasingly varied approached to employee reward and benefit schemes, and learners should demonstrate a current knowledge of varying approaches. They should also demonstrate an understanding that rewards and benefits increasingly reflect an organisation's culture and values alongside being motivators to assist in the achievement of business objectives.

While the array of potential employee benefits is large and learners should, during their discussion make clear that while benefits have financial implications for the employer, they are not financial packages offered to the employee. Reward, as a term will tend to cover the all benefits linked to pay.

Outcome 3 focuses on the performance review.

Performance management — benefits and barriers

Learners should be able to discuss the actions taken to manage performance -these could include performance-related pay, the performance development review and learning and development opportunities. Barriers and benefits should also be identified and could include but are not limited to:

Benefits
♦ Increased motivation
♦ Increased employee engagement
♦ Increased management insight into strengths and weaknesses of individuals and teams
♦ Equality and consistency of opportunity

Barriers

♦ Process becomes overly administrative
♦ Lack of management skills
♦ Lack of financial support
♦ Lack of time to undertake management activity and/or support identified actions

Reviewing performance

Learners should discuss current trends in performance review, a good answer would identify the strengths and weaknesses of each approach. For example, learners could discuss the traditional appraisal interview, discussing the need for managers to have the time to conduct the process effectively, the skills and knowledge to achieve good outcomes, and the organisational support to manage agreed objectives. The impact of failing to honour the appraisal discussion could be illustrated in terms of loss of trust, lack of motivation and general cynicism leading to an overall negative impact on performance.

Learners could also discuss the 360 degree appraisal, continuous performance management, observational approaches, and informal discussion.

Key skills

Learners should be able to identify and discuss several skills required for effective performance management. Key skills could include but are not limited to:

♦ Effective planning
♦ Active listening
♦ Effective questioning
♦ Constructive feedback
♦ Setting of achievable short to medium term goals

A good answer would also acknowledge the impact of poor performance management skills in relation to equality, motivation, positivity and achievement.

Good practice guidelines

Learners should compile a set of good practice guidelines which draw on all aspects of the work covered in outcome 3.

Outcome 4 focuses on the health, safety and wellbeing of employees.

Workplace wellbeing

Learners should be able to define and discuss workplace wellbeing and identify current trends. Answers should address the impact of workplace wellbeing on motivation, achievement and goal actualisation. This overview should take a wider overview of wellbeing and should not focus significantly on ergonomics, stress management, or mental health, although it may allude to them. The CIPD's Key Domains of Wellbeing may prove a good resource for this element.

Workplace ergonomics

The discussion of workplace ergonomics should capture the fact that ergonomics focuses on fitting a safe and comfortable workplace around the employee's needs. Learners may discuss employer requirements and current trends, for example, the now widely identified need for regular movement during an office worker's day. Legal responsibilities for ergonomics within the workplace should be outlined.

Stress management

Candidates should identify the growing impact of stress within the workplace and therefore the need for effective stress management within organisations. The duty of care place on employers by the health and safety executive should be clearly identified. Answers should also demonstrate an understanding of the types of actions organisation can take to minimise and manage stress.

These could include but are not limited to:

♦ Managing workloads
♦ Effective and supportive line management
♦ Promotion of positive working environments and relationships
♦ Job design
♦ Positive approaches to change management

Mental health

The learner should identify the grave implication of not managing mental health in the workplace and would be expected to discuss the legal responsibilities of managing mental health in the workplace. The learner may refer to government initiatives, for example, at the time of writing — voluntary reporting on disability, mental health and wellbeing would be relevant.

Positive action in relation to mental health in the workplace could include but is not limited to:

♦ Early identification
♦ Effective signposting
♦ Appropriately developed people management skills
♦ Workplace initiatives such as Mental Health First Aid training days
♦ Job design
♦ Positive mental health campaigns and awareness raising activities.

Health and Safety legislation

Learners should demonstrate an overarching awareness of common law and current health and safety legislation and must effectively reference their sources. Answers should include an employer's duty to recruit competent and safety conscious staff; to provide a safe place of work; safe system of work and adequate plant and equipment.

Main legislation must be mentioned and any current changes to the law identified. It would be expected that learners would refer The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 in their answers.

Accident recording

Learners should briefly discuss accident causation, preventable accidents, and unforeseeable accidents. Submissions should identify the recommended procedures for recording accidents and near misses and identify when incident, injury, disease or dangerous occurrence needs reporting (RIDDOR).

Guidance on approaches to the delivery of this unit

Learners should be encouraged to make use of their own experience, particularly any work experience, which involves contact with the human resource department. Failing this, learners should be encouraged to make use of the wide range of academic and professional literature available. Learners should be directed to consider information published within ACAS, UK.GOV and CIPD portals and should reference all sources to these areas.

Reference to current human resource management issues is to be encouraged and the use of case study materials to compare practices could be used to justify recommended strategies and procedures.

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.

Clear and comprehensive procedures should be in place and efforts should be made to incorporate a variety of assessment techniques such as written reports, projects, oral presentations, role plays and case studies. The use of posters, leaflets and digital applications would also be acceptable approaches. Centres may consider assessing outcomes 2 and 3 as one submission. Where cross unit/outcome assessment opportunities exist, these should be used.

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

Efforts should be made to ensure the originality, authenticity and currency of the assessed work.

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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, such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres wishing 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

There are opportunities for learners to develop Core Skills in this unit as noted below.

Communication: Reading, Written and Oral

Outcome 1 provides learners the opportunity of researching a range of current information on recruitment, selection and induction of new employees. This provides underpinning knowledge by reading complex information.

Oral communication can be developed in all outcomes through group discussions which will analyse and evaluate related information on the recruitment, selection, induction processes, remuneration systems, performance management and appraisal and finally the health, safety and wellbeing of employees.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

IT skills can be developed through internet research on the various topics included in this unit and on the presentation of evidence which is likely to be presented in an electronic report format.

History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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 Practice (SCQF level 8)

This section will help you to 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 unit provides you with general understanding of human resource management practice. It will cover:

♦ **Recruitment, selection and induction of employees.** You will learn about the procedures involved in recruiting new employees, including the development of job descriptions and person specifications. You will investigate contemporary recruitment sources and selection techniques and develop a plan and checklist for the induction of a new member of staff.

♦ **Employee remuneration practice.** You will cover the systems that employers use to reward employees for their work, eg pay, salary, or wage, including allowances and rewards/benefits, eg company car, health insurance, pension plan, gym membership, subsidised canteen.

   You will also look at the job evaluation schemes, eg analytical and non-analytical schemes.

♦ **Employee performance review**. You will learn about the performance review processes, rating methods and the roles of the individuals involved. You will also consider best practice and develop guidelines for the conduct of a performance review interview.

♦ **Health, safety and wellbeing of employees**. This will cover the rights and responsibilities of employers and employees under current health and safety legislation; the costs and benefits of adopting ergonomic working practices; strategies for dealing with increased levels of stress in the workplace and mental health, etc.

There are opportunities for you to develop the Core Skills of *Communication* and *Communication and Information Technology (ICT)* while undertaking this unit although there is no automatic certification of these Core Skills.

For successful completion of the unit, you will be required to provide evidence that you have met the requirements of the unit. You can present your evidence in a number of ways such as a report, presentation, project, etc. Your tutor will explain exactly what is expected of you.