

Unit 7: Strategic Human Resource Management

Level: 7

Unit type: Optional

Guided learning hours: 45

Credit value: 20

Unit introduction

Human resource management (HRM), as a concept, function and process, is fundamental to the delivery of an organisation's strategy. Without effective workforce planning it is unlikely that an organisation will have the right people, in the right place, at the right time to succeed.

Learners will examine the HR challenges that those responsible for strategic HRM will be presented with, in the context of an organisation exposed to changing national and international environments.

Learners will explore strategic HRM in practice as well as important considerations for a strategic HR manager, such as ethics, diversity and performance management.

Using this knowledge as a basis for examining current and emerging trends, learners will be able to critically analyse an organisation's approach to strategic HRM before making appropriate recommendations for improvement.

The unit draws to a close through the review an organisation's strategic management of its human resources function.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

To pass this unit, the learner needs to meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria determine the standard required to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria	
A	Understand strategic issues in human resource management (HRM)	A.1	Assess current contexts and challenges for strategic HRM
		A.2	Critically discuss the relationship between an organisation's strategic objectives, organisational change and HRM
		A.3	Critically analyse the impact of globalisation on HRM
B	Understand strategic HRM in practice	B.1	Analyse the value of effective workforce planning to an organisation
		B.2	Evaluate the ethical and diversity challenges that can arise in strategic HRM
		B.3	Critically discuss performance management as a strategic HRM tool
		B.4	Analyse legal and regulatory requirements on HRM practice
C	Understand the role of strategic HRM in delivering organisational strategies	C.1	Evaluate the value of an HR strategy to an organisation
		C.2	Analyse the relationship between organisational strategy and HR strategy
		C.3	Critically evaluate current and emerging HRM trends which could influence HR and organisational strategies
D	Be able to review an organisation's management of its human resources	D.1	Critically review the HRM context of an organisation
		D.2	Critically evaluate the extent to which an organisation's human resources are being strategically managed
		D.3	Develop justified recommendations for how an organisation could improve its strategic HRM for both current and future requirements

Unit content

Learning outcome A: Understand strategic issues in human resource management (HRM)

- *Current contexts and challenges for HRM:* HRM roles and responsibilities, organising the HRM function, modelling HRM, relationship between HRM and organisational performance, relationship between HRM and other organisational functions, changing nature of work, changes to management practice, evolution of strategic HRM.
- *The organisation, organisational change and HRM:* organisational structures, content versus process of change, types of change, the change process, change tools, role of HR in the delivery of change, models of change, communication during change.
- *Globalisation and HRM:* multinational enterprises and HRM, localisation versus standardisation, global challenges to HRM, global and emerging markets.

Learning outcome B: Understand strategic HRM in practice

- *Workforce planning:* intelligent workforce planning, employee engagement, recruitment and selection, training and development, international deployments, strategic forward thinking, changing demographics, importing knowledge and skills.
- *Ethics and diversity:* equal opportunities, strategic HRM and diversity management, national versus international diversity management, organisational justice, corporate social responsibility, developing an ethical organisation, global diversity.
- *Performance management:* reward strategies and systems, pay policy and HRM, fairness in reward, total reward, employee motivation, supervisor-subordinate relationship, performance management systems, talent management, HR development processes.
- *Laws and regulation:* the growth and impact of laws/legislation, trade unions, bargaining and negotiation, professional bodies, national and international laws/legislation, key health and safe working laws/legislation.

Learning outcome C: Understand the role of strategic HRM in delivering organisational strategies

- *HR strategy:* content issues, process issues, implementation issues, power and influence of the HR professional, universal approaches to strategic HRM, contingency approaches to strategic HRM, resource-based view (RBV), knowledge management.
- *Organisational strategy:* strategic options (e.g. diversification, internationalisation), competitive strategies, interactive strategies, business models, deliberate and emergent strategies, strategic capabilities.
- *Current and emerging HRM trends:* remote working, artificial intelligence, employer branding, employee experiences, learning management systems, talent acquisition, digital HR, HR analytics, use of short-term contracts and freelancers (GIG workers), agile workforce.

Learning outcome D: Be able to review an organisation's management of its human resources

- *Conducting a review:* relationship between theory and practice, application of HRM methods and tools, delivering organisational value, impact of globalisation, strategic relationships, compliance.
- *Justifying recommendations:* recommendations must be logically and fully supported, state the recommendations, establish reasons for the recommendations, provide supporting evidence, suggest timeframes if relevant.

Essential information for assessors

Essential resources

There are no specialist resources needed for this unit.

Suggested assessment approach

This section must be read in conjunction with *Section 6: Assessment*.

This unit is assessed internally by the centre and externally verified by Pearson.

The table below shows the suggested approach to assessments.

When preparing the assessment for this unit, the learner should be given an Assignment brief designed by the tutor. This brief should be set in a specific organisational context, it should draw on learning from the unit, and be designed in a way that enables learners to meet all the assessment criteria.

Learning outcome	Suggested assessment approach
A Understand strategic issues in human resource management (HRM)	An essay of approximately 4000 words to include a reference list. The reference list is not included in the word count.
B Understand strategic HRM in practice	
C Understand the role of strategic HRM in delivering organisational strategies	
D Be able to review an organisation's management of its human resources	A management report of approximately 1000 words to include a reference list. The reference list is not included in the word count.

Assessment requirements

Learning outcome A

This learning outcomes requires learners to engage with seminal and current literature where the focus is the broader contexts and principles of strategic HRM. It is expected that learners will engage with research that focuses on the broader, global HRM issues before investigating the issues faced by different sectors and organisations in their home country. Learners need to be able to critique arguments and premises identified in the literature and research if they are to fully appreciate the strategic principles and issues in a HRM context.

Learning outcome B

Building on the knowledge and understanding gained through learning outcome A, learners will explore the wider issues that impact on the practice of HR managers. It is anticipated that learners will explore each of the key considerations mentioned in this learning outcome, which could be supported through the use of an external analysis (such as PESTLE) and internal analysis (such as SWOT). Learners should be able to demonstrate an understanding of national as well as international regulations/laws that impact the management of human resources, using specific regulations/laws as part of their critical arguments.

Learning outcome C

To support the learner's ability to meet this outcome they could be directed to the knowledge gained from *Unit 1: Developing Strategic Management and Leadership*.

This learning outcome requires learners to focus on an organisation's strategy and how HRM strategies support the achievements of strategic objectives. It is anticipated that learners will explore the development of HR strategies in light of current and emerging trends and how any changes to a HR strategy could have a positive or negative effect on an organisation's achievement of its strategic objectives. Learners need to demonstrate an ability to be critical.

Learning outcome D

This learning outcome draws together all learning that has taken place in the previous learning outcomes by applying a learner's knowledge and understanding, alongside their ability to critique, to an organisation's strategic management of its human resources.

The organisation can be real, or one supplied through a case study. Learners are advised to develop their response to the assessment for this learning outcome as they progress through the unit's other learning outcomes. As with all other learning outcomes, learners need to demonstrate an ability to be critical.