

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

for the award of

MA Human Resource Management

Managed by Oxford Brookes Business School

Date approved:	February 2017 (Programme first validated in September 2011)
Applies to students commencing study in:	September 2020

RECORD OF UPDATES

Date amended*	Nature of amendment**	Reason for amendment**

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Awarding body:	Oxford Brookes University
Teaching institution and location:	Oxford Brookes University, Headington Campus
Language of study:	English
Final award:	MA
Programme title:	Human Resource Management
Interim exit awards and award titles available:	PGD-HRM: Postgraduate Diploma in Human Resource Management PGC-HRM: Postgraduate Certificate in Human Resource Management
Brookes course code:	BH71 / MA-HRM
UCAS code:	30369
JACS code:	N600
HECoS code:	100085
Mode of delivery:	Part-time (on-campus) Distance learning (part-time)
Mode/s and duration of study:	2 Years for part time (on-campus) 1 Year for part time (distance learning)
QAA subject benchmark statement/s which apply to the programme:	Master's degrees in Business and Management (2015)
Professional accreditation attached to the programme:	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
University Regulations:	The programme conforms to the University Regulations for the year of entry as published/archived at: http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/ Specific Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Programmes also apply. http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/current/specific/b4/

SECTION 2: WHY STUDY THIS PROGRAMME?

The MA in Human Resource Management programme is designed to meet the professional development needs of participants and their employing organisations. On successful completion, the programme enables Human Resource Management practitioners to make a substantial contribution to enhancing business performance through the effective deployment of theoretical concepts, personal knowledge and skills.

Crosscutting themes of the programme include:

- ethical practice and decision making, and the need for HR practitioners to develop and sustain an ethical framework within which to advise and manage, consistent with the CIPD Code of Practice and with employment law
- the impact of globalisation on all aspects of HRM, and the importance of HR practitioners being able to advise and manage within international, diverse workforces.

Progression through this structured programme of study builds incrementally to provide participants with challenging learning experiences which extend their human resource management knowledge and provide opportunities to practise and develop skills in a safe and supportive environment. The delivery of this programme is through part-time face to face and distance learning modes.

The teaching staff for this Programme include experienced HR Practitioners as well as Researchers in HRM so that students will benefit from being taught by a teaching team which is critically informed and practitioner orientated. Profiles of staff teaching on the programme can be found at <http://business.brookes.ac.uk/about/staff/>.

Completion of the MA enables participants to further develop their research skills by undertaking an in-depth study in their employing organisation, produce a dissertation and make recommendations that add value to the business. This consultancy opportunity often has a galvanising effect on the careers of participants who go on to achieve organisational leadership positions.

The programme is informed by syllabi of the CIPD Advanced Level Diploma. Hence successful completion of the Postgraduate Diploma as part of the MA enables participants to gain Associate Membership of CIPD.

The programme has three entry stages to suit the needs of different students and their different career aspirations.

- The majority of students enter at the start of the two year part time programme
- but it is also possible to enter for the second year and to choose at that point, at the same time as students who entered the first year, to aim for an award of PG Diploma or an award of MA HRM.
- Thirdly students who already possess a PG Diploma may join the programme to complete the work necessary to achieve the full MA HRM and may choose to conduct these studies wholly on line.

For full details of entry requirements see section 6 below.

SECTION 3: PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the programme, graduates will demonstrate the following Brookes Attributes:

3.1 ACADEMIC LITERACY

1. Show a critical appreciation of the relationship between human resource management and the operational requirements of organisations.
2. Demonstrate a systematic understanding of major contemporary research and debates in the areas of basic theories of Human Resource Management and Development, with a view to improving strategic organisational performance.
3. Demonstrate a systematic understanding of major contemporary research and debates in the areas of Organisational Behaviour, with a view to improving strategic organisational performance.
4. Demonstrate a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, in the specific areas of employee resourcing and talent management and employee relations.

3.2 RESEARCH LITERACY

1. Demonstrates a level of understanding that facilitates an evaluation of quantitative and qualitative research approaches.
2. Display a critical appreciation of the theoretical bases of rigorous and systematic management research, advanced scholarship and methodologies and can argue for alternative approaches to investigate a relevant organisational issue including collecting and synthesising data, critically evaluating problems and generating recommendations to deliver relevant outputs that will inform HRM decision making at a strategic level.

3.3 CRITICAL SELF-AWARENESS AND PERSONAL LITERACY

1. Demonstrate a commitment to develop a range of professional competencies in relation to the management and development of people in a variety of organisational settings and sectors, both nationally and internationally, including a continuing commitment to personal and professional development
2. Demonstrate an ability to assess critically business planning needs and their relationship to human resources planning, including managing organisational culture
3. Show evidence of a range of transferable intellectual skills, including: demonstrate self-direction in diagnosing problems; analyse complex issues; suggest innovative alternative actions; teamwork; leadership and communication skills; ability to act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional and academic level.
4. Demonstrate the self-confidence to manage others, to influence others including those in leadership positions, and tolerance of ambiguity; make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate conclusions to both HR specialists and non-specialists.

3.4 DIGITAL AND INFORMATION LITERACY

1. Demonstrate an ability to access and use technical IT accounting and management information to synthesise data using appropriate tools

3.5 ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

1. Demonstrate a critical appreciation of the organisational environment (both national and international) and the key factors that impact on management performance and ethical decision making at both strategic and operational levels.

2. Operate in complex and unpredictable/ specialised environments, while retaining an overview of ethical leadership governing good practice.

SECTION 4: CURRICULUM CONTENT & STRUCTURE

4.1 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS:

Code	Module Title	Credits	Level	Status	Coursework: Exam ratio
BMGT-7046	Developing Skills for Business Leadership	10	7	Compulsory for PG Dip and MA	100% CW
HRMA-7003	Management Research Report	20	7	Compulsory for PG Dip	100% CW
HRMA-7004	Understanding and Researching Organisations	20	7	Compulsory for MA	100% CW
HRMA-7005	Employment Law	20	7	Compulsory for PG Dip and MA	100% CW
HRMA-7006	Dissertation	50	7	Compulsory for MA	100% CW
HRMA-7022	Human Resource Management in Context	20	7	Compulsory for PG Dip and MA	100% Written Exam
HRMA-7023	Managing Employment Relations	20	7	Compulsory for PG Dip and MA	100% CW
HRMA-7031	Resourcing, Talent & Performance Management	20	7	Compulsory for PG Dip and MA	100% CW
HRMA-7044	Leading, Managing & Developing People	20	7	Compulsory for PG Dip and MA	80% Written Exam 20% CW
HRMA-7007	Independent Study	10	7	Optional	100% CW

4.2 PROGRESSION AND AWARD REQUIREMENTS

To gain the award of PG Diploma students must pass all modules except Understanding and Researching Organisations and Dissertation. To gain the award of MA students must pass or have credit for approved prior learning for all modules except for Management Research Report.

The award of PG Certificate is available following successful completion of any 60 level 7 credits. It must be noted that PG Certificate HRM is an Oxford Brookes University award only

4.3 PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

This programme is accredited against the CIPD Advanced Diploma qualification and incorporates the following CIPD Modules:-

HRM in Context (Code 7HRC)
 Leading, Managing and Developing People (Code 7LMP)
 Developing Skills for Business Leadership (Code 7SBL)
 Investigating a Business Issue (Code 7IBI)
 Managing Employment Relations (Code 7MER)

Template updated May 2016

Resourcing & Talent Management (7RTM)
Employment Law (7ELW)

Students will be eligible to become Associate Members of CIPD if they are able to gain the award of PG Diploma.

SECTION 5: TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

The programme is taught part time over two years.

Teaching methods use participants' knowledge and experience as a focal point for learning while studying, and we encourage them to apply their new learning in the work place as well as bringing their experience to the learning activities and discussion forums on-line as well as within the classroom. The learning delivery for this programme is a blended delivery of both on campus delivery as well as through distance learning (students entering via the third entry route cited in Section 2 and who are taking the final MA HRM stage only, Understanding and Researching Organisations and Dissertation, may choose to be taught wholly on line)

A full Induction is provided (face to face and on-line) to ensure that all students are well-orientated to the Programme's aims, assessment strategy and mode of learning within a University context.

The programme is delivered through a series of sessions. This series is made up, for each semester, of not more than five face to face sessions on campus in addition to on line sessions; some of which will be synchronous. However modules Understanding and Researching Organisations and Dissertation taken by students pursuing the full MA HRM are also available wholly on line; such students may therefore choose to do one or both of these modules by distance learning. Sessions can involve, for example, tutor input, analysis of case studies, problem-solving activities, computer-based business simulations, presentations, analysis of data for decision making, directed reading and research and role play. Participants are actively involved in their own development through structured activities, discussion and feedback, which is both formative and summative. These activities may be face to face or on line as appropriate. Particular importance is attached to asynchronous on line discussion groups facilitated by the tutor enabling the substantial experience of the cohort across a range of roles and organisations to come fully in to play. Reflecting on the learning and how it improves practice is an integral part of the programme. In addition, visiting practitioners and specialists, from industrial, commercial, voluntary sector and public sector bodies, are invited to contribute. Compulsory skills workshops held on campus on Saturdays also support students in developing professional skills towards the PG Diploma.

The development and application of research skills in the workplace reflects the view that a HR career is likely to depend increasingly on the capacity for conducting grounded empirical and literature-based research and analysis. Participants are expected to draw from a wide range of international journals and textbooks to inform their ideas. Each module specifically takes into account the increasingly diverse international work environment within which participants work.

Each student will have an Academic Advisor who will also play a key role in the studies. At the close of the first year of study, students will choose whether to progress with the PG Diploma route or aim for MA HRM award. There will be a full briefing process and time for reflection and discussion before the final choice.

Students are expected fully to commit to both the on campus and the on-line sessions as well as the weekend workshops according to the requirements of the module being undertaken. The assessment strategy has also been designed to encourage participants to relate knowledge, understanding and skills to real organisational issues. The emphasis is on applying learning to the workplace to develop and justify options for improving both people-management and organisational effectiveness. In line with CIPD accreditation requirements, some modules incorporate a case study examination.

Assessment methods seek to measure attainment of the learning outcomes through a variety of subject-appropriate methods. These might include assignments based on an evaluation of HR practice in the participants' own organisations, skills based assessments, online tests, reflective pieces which assess the capacity for self-reflection and personal development, case study examinations, role play, or analysis of international case studies.

Brookes Attributes

The Brookes Attributes are addressed through the teaching and assessment across all the Modules. Research Literacy underpins every module as students evaluate the robustness and credibility of the research and evidence base but it is also explicitly addressed in the Understanding and Researching Organisations module and within the capstone of the Dissertation/Management Research Report enabling these research skills to be exercised. Towards the end of the programme participants and representatives from their organisations are invited to contribute to the PG HRM Research Conference to share research findings from Dissertations and the Management Research Reports.

Given the vocational nature of the HR Profession, Critical Self-awareness and Personal Literacy is a central focus for the programme. There is a strong focus throughout the programme on developing the skills of a Reflective Practitioner. This is enhanced through the reflective practice aligned with each Skills workshop as well as embedded within the Developing Skills for Business Leadership module.

Digital and Information Literacy is also developed throughout the programme. Students will develop core skills in being able to identify and evaluate key digital-based resources as well as develop some technological skills in the communication and presentation of information.

Active Citizenship is also embedded in the programme. The role, contribution and impact of HR is critically examined through international contexts throughout the programme. The nature of the HR profession incorporates debates about ethical perspectives and incorporates a range of stakeholder perspectives. Students demonstrate inter-cultural communications skills through multi-cultural team working.

5.2 Assessment regulations

The programme conforms to the University's Academic Regulations; section B4 Specific Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Programmes

<http://www.brookes.ac.uk/Regulations/Current/Specific/B4/>

The programme also embeds the principles and practices within the Brookes Assessment Compact.

<https://www.brookes.ac.uk/ocslcd/consultancy/consultancy-areas/>

Assessments are carefully designed to contribute to formative developmental feedback and can incorporate peer feedback as well. All module guides include specific assessment criteria which are clearly communicated and an assessment calendar is also produced.

SECTION 6: ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAMME

6.1 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Entry criteria

At least a 2:2 honours degree or an internationally recognised equivalent from an approved Institution or a professional qualification from an approved and recognised professional body that is regarded as equivalent to a degree for this purpose, plus, a minimum of one year of relevant work experience

OR

Exceptionally, applicants who can show that they have qualifications, experience or both, that demonstrate that they have knowledge and capabilities equivalent to those possessed by holders of qualifications listed above, may be admitted with dispensation from the requirement to possess those qualifications. To this end a minimum of three years relevant advisory, supervisory or management employment experience may be acceptable.

Applicants seeking admission to the second year of the MA in Human Resource Management and intending to exit with the PG Diploma must possess the following:

A postgraduate Certificate in Human Resource Management from Oxford Brookes University or another

institution equivalent to 60 Level 7 credits that meets the requirements for a CIPD Advanced Certificate. Evidence of prior certified learning will be required for admission.

Applicants may also seek admission to the second year of the MA in Human Resource Management to convert an existing PG Diploma into an MA HRM; they must possess the following:

A postgraduate Diploma in Human Resource Management qualification from Oxford Brookes University or another institution equivalent to 120 Level 7 credits
OR

Exceptionally a candidate with seven years or more of prior experience at a senior managerial level may be admitted through the accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL) by submitting appropriate evidence. Any such accreditation will not exceed 120 Level 7 credits.

Applicants whose first language is not English

Where a candidate's first language is not English, the candidate must show the University that their level of English is high enough to study at postgraduate level. In addition to the academic entry qualifications, it is required that you have achieved a British Council IELTS level of not less than 6.0 with a minimum 6.0 in reading and writing and a minimum of 5.5 in speaking and listening.

6.2 DBS AND OTHER PRE-COURSE CHECKS REQUIRED

N/A

SECTION 7: PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

The programme is designed for participants who are employed in hr roles or managers with significant responsibility for people management who can readily access hr policies and procedures from their organisation. This master's programme aims to provide participants with the theoretical understanding, practical skills, self-confidence and self-awareness to make a substantial contribution to hr service provision in their employing organisation. On enrolment, participants often hold the roles of hr administrator or hr advisor. During the programme as the confidence and expertise of participants grows, promotion to more senior roles is the norm rather than the exception. Participants progress rapidly to hr officer and in many cases hr business partner roles either in their current or a new organisation. The programme provides participants with networking opportunities and through this a range of context-specific business contacts, who can be called upon to provide ongoing advice and support during the programme and following graduation. The University Careers Services has a very full range of resources and services to support student employability

<https://www.brookes.ac.uk/studying-at-brookes/courses/postgraduate/career-progression/careers-services/>

In addition to these services, the Thames Valley Branch of the CIPD organises an annual series of events that supports Continuous Professional Development and professional networking opportunities.

<https://www.cipd.co.uk/learn/branches/thames-valley>