Programme Specification

Masters, Postgraduate Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate in Human Resource Management

This programme specification applies to students starting the programme from 2021-22 onwards.

Information for students: the programme specification is the definitive document summarising the structure and content of your degree programme. It is reviewed and updated every year as part of Keele's Curriculum Annual Review and Development process. The document aims to clarify to potential and current students what you can expect from the study of the subject over the course of your programme.

Names of programme(s) and award title(s)	MA Human Resource Management Postgraduate Diploma in Human Resource Management Postgraduate Certificate in Human Resource Management
Mode of study	Full-time Part-time
Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award	Level 7
Duration:	Full time 12 months Part time 24-36 months (dependent on chosen route)

Details of professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) (If appropriate):
http://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/professionalstatutoryregulatorybodies/
External Examiner(s): Further information can be found at:
https://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/externalexaminers/currentexternalexaminers/

1. What is the philosophy of the Programme?

This is a high quality and distinctive programme for candidates with a first degree, or those with other acceptable qualifications and relevant experience, and is available by full-time study.

While it is recognised that many graduates will wish to work in the field of management, the aims of the degree are not purely vocational, but reflect the Human Resource Management (HRM) subject group's commitment to the subject as critical social science, and the conviction that this prepares students for employment in a range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations. It is a distinctive feature of this programme that the field of study includes the theory, development and practice of employment relations as a core part of human resource management.

The MA programme provides a thorough understanding of the employment relationship and an excellent grounding in the theory and practice of HRM, labour management and employment relations. It locates

these in a historically informed treatment of the whole subject area. It examines key institutions, problems and issues in contemporary HRM, including the rights and interests of employees as well as the formation and impact of public policy.

The main focus of the taught part of the course is on the United Kingdom, but this is set within a broader comparative perspective, enabling an assessment of contrasting systems of employment relations and an evaluation of a range of crucial issues on a global scale. For students who proceed to undertake a research based dissertation, the taught part of the course provides them with an important foundation upon which to conduct research in the United Kingdom and international locations. The taught part of the course provides you with an important foundation for the final 45 credits module, where you can choose from either a dissertation, consultancy project, placement or entrepreneurship module[1].

Our **aims** are:

- To provide academically rigorous education in Human Resource Management and associated disciplines;
- To develop the analytical skills of students;
- To develop key professional skills relevant to the role of human resource managers; and
- To develop a critical approach to HRM literature, issues, and practice.

To achieve these aims the course will strengthen and develop students' knowledge and understanding of:

- The nature of the employment relationship, the labour market and job regulation, and the regulatory and economic role of the state;
- The main theories and issues in labour management;
- The origins, scope and main functions of personnel and HR management, including the management of employee resourcing, development and performance;
- The methods of regulating the employment relationship, including trade unions and collective bargaining as well as non-union forms of employee voice and participation;
- The role of the state and international bodies in the regulation of the employment relationship;
- The market for labour, pay levels and inequalities and pay determination systems;
- The organisation of vocational and educational training systems, skills and skill shortages, and the management of employee development;
- The range of research methods, and research based knowledge that informs academic and practical analysis of contemporary issues in the field of study;
- The HRM function, notably in relation the role of Human Resources in managing procedures, in analysing statistical information to inform policy.

In terms of skills and other attributes, students are expected to:

- Develop the ability to analyse a variety of academic, practitioner and government published materials;
- Use their understanding of theory to analyse policy and practice in the field of employment;
- Synthesise information from reading, lectures and other learning resources;
- Make informed judgements using both empirical and theoretical knowledge;
- Manage and develop their own learning;
- Develop a critical awareness of their own knowledge and skills in relation to the HR profession through reflective practice.

Keele Graduate Attributes

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[1] Students who require a Study Visa to undertake the programme in the UK (including Tier 4) are not able to select this pathway due to UK Home Office (UKVI) restrictions. If a student has existing Immigration permission (visa) to be in the UK, they may be able to carry out entrepreneurship activities depending upon the specific conditions of their visa category.

Engagement with this programme will enable you to further develop your intellectual, personal and professional capabilities. At Keele, we call these our ten Graduate Attributes and they include independent thinking, synthesizing information, creative problem solving, communicating clearly, and appreciating the social, environmental and global implications of your studies and activities. Whilst you will undoubtedly have already developed these skills and abilities to varying degrees, such existing capabilities can always be deepened and enriched. Our educational programme and learning environment is designed to help you to develop further as a well-rounded postgraduate who is capable of making a positive and valued contribution in a complex and rapidly changing world, whichever spheres of life you engage in during and after your studies at Keele.

Please refer to the programme webpages for a statement of how you can achieve the Keele Graduate Attributes through full engagement in the programme and other educational opportunities at Keele. Further information about the Keele Graduate Attributes can be found here: http://www.keele.ac.uk/journey/

2. How is the Programme taught?

The mode of study is either full-time or part-time. The same teaching strategy is employed for both modes, yet the part-time programme is offered via blended learning (combining online study and face-to-face block teaching). Acquisition of knowledge and understanding is through HRM subject team and guest lectures, small-group discussions and tutorials, individual consultation, guided reading and self-study, and through the research dissertation, consultancy, placement or entrepreneurship module. These principal learning and teaching methods are assisted by a variety of other learning activities, such as group and individual presentations, individual feedback on assignments, the use of case studies and summative and formative assessment.

In addition, all modules of the taught part of the course have formative in-class activities that are not assessed but aim to provide feedback to students about their learning to improve their achievement of intended learning outcomes. A combination of group feedback and individual feedback where appropriate is provided verbally in class. In relation to essays, students have the opportunity to discuss on a one-to-one basis with their tutor their assignment plan and to receive written feedback where necessary. The following formative activities are incorporated into the MA in HRM modules:

- Case study workshops include class participation activities related to the presentations by external speakers.
- Meeting scenarios (over selection, appraisal, discipline, etc.) are included to develop practical skills related to the HR function.
- Lectures include a range of formative activities, including class discussions, group presentations, and a statistics exercise, to check understanding and to assist students when preparing for summative assessment.
- Tutorials focus on a range of formative activities, including class discussions, group activities, group or individual presentations, case studies, question and answer sessions, to check understanding and to assist students when preparing for summative assessment.
- All students are encouraged to submit an essay plan and a draft of their dissertation and receive comments back from tutors/supervisors. The purpose is for students to reflect on the feedback and use this to inform their writing up of the essay/dissertation.
- Essay guidance sessions are also provided for students to discuss their approach to the essay and to receive feedback before they submit.

Web-based learning using the University's virtual learning environment (KLE) and where appropriate other online platforms, like Microsoft Teams (MTs). The KLE is used to give students easy access to a wide-range of resources and research tools. Online platforms are used for remote teaching, including virtual classroom based activities and student networks.

The final 45 credits of the programme offer you a choice between dissertation, consultancy project, placement or entrepreneurship

- Dissertation - It requires independent thought and action and encourages the integration of course material with areas of individual expertise and interest. The context, data, analysis and conclusions of the study are to be presented for assessment in a dissertation. Completion of the dissertation is supported by an academic supervisor.

- Consultancy project - The aim is to encourage and enable you to reflect on an applied research placement and to develop and apply your skills within the management of organisations. Participation in the consultancy project is only available after a comprehensive selection process. Students who meet the criteria will be attached to an organisation/company for a period of between 8-12 weeks. The consultancy period plus a consultancy report, presentation, reflective piece and an organisation/company assessment will constitute the module's summative assessment.

- Placement project – It will be your responsibility, with the support of the University's Careers Service, to find and secure the placement which can last between 8 weeks -12 months. The placement should be a paid work placement at a suitable level for Master's study. During your time on the placement you will be required to complete an extended project on behalf of the organisation. The project report, presentation and a reflective piece and an organisation assessment will constitute the module's summative assessment.

- Entrepreneurship project - The aim is to allow you time and space to develop your own business idea. You will have access to facilities and expertise for a period of 8 weeks -12 months. During this time, you will be required to complete an extended portfolio of evidence, presentation to an external stakeholder and a reflective piece which will constitute the module's summative assessment.

- Students address the subject through study of:
    - Standard texts
    - Research monographs and academic journals at the forefront of knowledge in the subject area
    - Employer, union and government publications
    - Case studies
    - External presentations from practitioners in the field

Furthermore,

- Undertaking an independent dissertation project with the support of an experienced and research active supervisor allows students to formulate relevant research questions and also to devise and implement a feasible and methodologically sound strategy for answering them.
- The consultancy project will provide students with an opportunity to apply skills developed during the taught modules in a real business environment.
- Participating in the placement will give students the opportunity to gain extended work experience.
- The entrepreneurship project will enable students to develop their own business idea with the intention of building their own business.

Programme Team:

The MA Human Resource Management is delivered by Keele Business School (KBS). KBS staff have extensive teaching, research and work experience in their fields. The School maintains a strong commitment to excellence and innovation in teaching and research. All permanent staff have PhDs or other higher degrees or professional qualifications. All staff members engage with continuing professional development as academic teachers. All established staff have substantial teaching experience and/or formal teaching qualifications. All probationary appointments receive an intensive training programme on Teaching in Higher Education. Dedicated postgraduate administrative support is also provided.

3. What is the Structure of the Programme?

The full-time programme starts in September and lasts between 12 and 24 months, and the part-time programme starts in September and January and lasts between 24 and 36 months (part time) dependent upon the route chosen. There are eight taught modules, a 15 credit research methods module and a research dissertation, consultancy project, work placement or entrepreneurship project.

The structure of the year is as follows.

Part-time (September start)

Year 1			
HRM-40042	Foundations of Human Resource Management	30 credits	Semester 1
HRM-40041	Professional Skills and Practice in Human Resource Management	15 credits	Semester 1
HRM-40039	Workshops in Human Resource Management	15 credits	Semester 1-2
HRM-40043	Employee Resourcing and Development	15 credits	Semester 2
Year 2			
HRM-40044	Strategic Human Resource Management	15 credits	Semester 1
HRM-40045	Employee Relations and Reward	15 credits	Semester 1
MAN-40058	Creativity and Personal Development	15 credits	Semester 2
MAN-40192	Research Methods	15 credits	Semester 2
On completion of the taught modules the student may choose between a 45 credits HRM dissertation (HRM-40057) **OR** Consultancy Project (MAN-40198) **OR** Placement Project (MAN-40200) **OR** Entrepreneurship Project (MAN-40202) during semester 3 of year 2 or during year 3.			

Part-time (January start)

Year 1			
HRM-40042	Foundations of Human Resource Management	30 credits	Semester 2

HRM-40041	Professional Skills and Practice in Human Resource Management	15 credits	Semester 1
HRM-40039	Workshops in Human Resource Management	15 credits	Semester 1-2
HRM-40043	Employee Resourcing and Development	15 credits	Semester 2
Year 2			
HRM-40044	Strategic Human Resource Management	15 credits	Semester 1
HRM-40045	Employee Relations and Reward	15 credits	Semester 1
MAN-40058	Creativity and Personal Development	15 credits	Semester 2
MAN-40192	Research Methods	15 credits	Semester 2
On completion of the taught modules the student may choose between a 45 credits HRM dissertation (HRM-40057) **OR** Consultancy Project (MAN-40198) **OR** Placement Project (MAN-40200) **OR** Entrepreneurship Project (MAN-40202) during semester 3 of year 2 or during year 3.			

Full-time

HRM-40042	Foundations of Human Resource Management	30 credits	Semester 1
HRM-40041	Professional Skills and Practice in Human Resource Management	15 credits	Semester 1
HRM-40039	Workshops in Human Resource Management	15 credits	Semester 1-2
HRM-40043	Employee Resourcing and Development	15 credits	Semester 2
HRM-40045	Employee Relations and Reward	15 credits	Semester 2
HRM-40044	Strategic Human Resource Management	15 credits	Semester 2
MAN-40058	Creativity and Personal Development	15 credits	Semester 2
MAN-40192	Research Methods	15 credits	Semester 3
On completion of the taught modules the student may choose between a 45 credits HRM dissertation (HRM-40057) **OR** Consultancy Project (MAN-40198) **OR** Placement Project (MAN-40200) **OR** Entrepreneurship Project (MAN-40202) during semester 3.			

Students whose first language is not English are offered language classes, facilities and services by the University's Language Centre. In addition to credit-bearing modules on English for academic study, students also have access to one-to-one tutorials for individual help and advice, and to a wealth of resources for self-study and practice. Students requiring English language support (on testing) will be allocated to one or two of the following modules:

- ENL-40001: Academic English for Postgraduate Students 1 - semester 1

- ENL-40004: Academic English for Postgraduate Students 1-B - semester 2

- ENL-40002: Academic English for Postgraduate Students 2 - semester 1 or 2

For students required to undertake these English Language modules, determination of progression to the dissertation module (*as outlined above*) will include an evaluation of the student's engagement and performance on the respective English Language modules.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered	Principal forms of assessment (of the Learning Outcome) used
Systematic knowledge and understanding of the nature of the employment relationship, the labour market and job regulation,	Foundations of Human Resource Management (HRM-40042) Workshops in HRM (HRM-40039)	Essay Portfolio

and the regulatory and economic role of the state		
Critical knowledge and understanding of the main theories and issues in labour management	Foundations of Human Resource Management (HRM-40042)	Essay
	Stategic HRM (HRM-40044)	Poster presentation 3-hour unseen examination based upon case study document
Critical appreciation of the origins, scope and main functions of personnel and HR management, including the management of employee resourcing, development and performance	Professional Skills and Practice in HRM (HRM-40041)	Portfolio
	Employee Resourcing and Development (HRM-40043)	Report
	Workshops in HRM (HRM-40039)	Portfolio
Systematic knowledge and understanding of methods of regulating the employment relationship, including trade unions and collective bargaining as well as non-union forms of employee voice and participation	Employee Relations and Reward (HRM-40045)	Essay
	Strategic HRM (HRM-40044)	Poster presentation 3-hour unseen examination based upon case study document
Critical understanding of the market for labour, pay Levels and inequalities and pay determination systems	Employee Relations and Reward (HRM-40045)	ASHE Pay Exercise
	Workshops in HRM (HRM-40039)	Portfolio
Critical appreciation of the organisation of vocational and educational training systems, skills and skill shortages, and the management of employee development	Employee Resourcing and Development (HRM-40043)	2-hour unseen examination
	Workshops in HRM (HRM-40039)	Portfolio
Comprehensive understanding and appreciation of the HRM function, notably in relation the role of HR in managing procedures, in analysing statistical information to inform policy	Professional Skills and Practice in HRM (HRM-40041)	Portfolio
	Workshops in HRM (HRM-40039)	Portfolio
Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the range of research methods, and researched based knowledge to inform academic and practical analysis of contemporary issues in the field of study	Research Methods (MAN-40192)	Reflective analysis
	Dissertation (HRM-40057) **or**	Research plan, Ethical Review Research design
	Consultancy Project (MAN-40198) **or**	Dissertation

	Placement Project (MAN-40200) **or** Entrepreneurship Project (MAN-40202)	Coursework, oral presentation, reflective diary, practice based assessment
Develop the ability to analyse a variety of academic, practitioner and government published materials	All modules of the programme	All summative and formative assignments
Use understanding of theory to analyse policy and practice in the field of employment	All modules of the programme	Dissertation **or** Consultancy Project **or** Placement Project **or** Entrepreneurship Project
Synthesise information from reading, lectures and other learning resources	All modules of the programme	
Make informed judgements using both empirical and theoretical knowledge	All modules of the programme	
Manage and develop their own learning	All modules of the programme	

The exit routes from the award are as follows:

Successful completion of at least 60 credits for the taught part of the course leads to the award of a Postgraduate Certificate. Successful completion of all modules from the taught part of the course (120 credits) lead to the award of a Postgraduate Diploma. The addition of a successful completion of a research dissertation, consultancy project, placement project or entrepreneurship project leads to the award of a Masters' degree (180 credits)

4. How is the Programme assessed?

The MA programme consists of eight assessed taught modules and a research module, dissertation, consultancy project, placement project or entrepreneurship project (as outlined in Section 3 above).

The Foundations of Human Resource Management (HRM-40042) 30 credit module is assessed by two formative assessments (a group presentation and reference exercise) with the aim of building student understanding of key themes (nature of the employment relationship) and key skills (presentation referencing skills), prior to three summative assessments addressing the module ILOs and structured to allow students to develop their academic writing skills.

The Professional Skills and Practice in HRM (HRM-40041) 15 credit module is assessed by a portfolio which will contain students' coursework relating to a number of topics (reflection, statistical work, financial analysis, people management skills) covered in the module.

The Employee Resourcing and Development (HRM-40043) 15 credit module is assessed by a report and an examination.

The Employee Relations and Reward (HRM-40045) 15 credit module is assessed by an exercise based upon an analysis of the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) dataset and an assignment.

The Strategic HRM (HRM-40044) 15 credit module is assessed by a poster presentation and a 3-hour unseen examination based upon a case study document.

The Workshops in HRM (HRM-40039) 15 credit module is assessed by a portfolio which will contain students' coursework relating to the workshops delivered as part of the module.

The Research Methods (MAN-40192) 15 credit module will be assessed by two formative assessments (research plan and ethical review application) and a research design assignment.

Creativity and Personal Development (MAN-40058) 15 credit module is assessed by a group presentation on a real organisational problem and a reflective essay on team-working and addressing the real organisational problem.

The HRM Dissertation (HRM-40057) 45 credit module is assessed by a research based dissertation, while the Consultancy Project (MAN-40198) 45 credit module is assessed by coursework, an individual presentation, a reflective diary and a practice base assessment. The Placement Project (MAN-40200) 45 credit module is assessed by coursework, an individual presentation, a reflective diary and a practice base assessment. The Entrepreneurship Project (MAN-40202) is assessed by a portfolio, an individual presentation, a reflective diary and a practice base assessment (summative)

Marks are awarded for summative assessment designed to assess students' achievement of learning outcomes. This summative form of assessment is supported by a variety of formative assessment activities that comprise contributions to class discussions, individual and small-group tutorials, individual feedback on assignments, etc.

5. What are the typical admission requirements for the programme?

Applicants are normally required to hold at least a second-class honours degree (2.2 or above) or equivalent. Students who have appropriate professional qualifications or relevant work experience may also be considered. Applicants whose first language is not English will be required to show competency in English (IELTS 6.5 with minimum of 5.5 in each of the sub-tests, or equivalent).

It is possible for students to enter the course with advanced standing (or module exemption) based upon the accreditation of prior certificated learning (APCL) or accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL). Students wishing to apply for entry onto the course with advanced standing should contact the course director and read the university guidelines of the process:

http://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/accreditationofpriorlearning/

6. How are students supported on the programme?

Support for student learning on the Programme is provided in the following ways:

- Module and tutorial group leaders are responsible for providing support for learning on the modules and in the tutorial groups for which they are responsible. They also give individual feedback on in-course assessments and more general feedback on examinations.

- The Programme Director monitors overall student progress, undertake progress reviews and provide a general point of contact for students.

- The Programme Director is also responsible for all aspects of programme coordination. The Programme Director may be consulted on a wide range of issues and, among other things, commonly may be approached to provide a reference for job and other applications.

- The Programme Director act as a first point of contact for students on non-academic issues which may affect their learning and can refer students to a range of specialist health, welfare and financial services co-ordinated by the University.

- Each student is allocated a personal tutor who provides individual student support in accordance with the University guidelines.
- Non-native English-speaking students are offered language classes, facilities and services by the University's Language Centre. Students have access to one-to-one tutorials for individual help and advice and to a wealth of resources for self-study and practice.
- Additional help with University level study skills is available from the Learning Support Officer in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

All members of teaching staff on the Programme are available to see students during advertised weekly office hours and at other times by appointment.

Each student will work with an identified academic tutor for each module. The tutor's role is to help and advise their students on all aspects of the module, and they will comment on essay plans, and provide feedback for assignments. Both academic tutors and the Programme Director will maintain an overview of progress on the course, and provide feedback on course progress. Research supervisors are allocated to guide students during their work on the research dissertation consultancy project, placement or entrepreneurship module.

Named members of staff will be available to provide pastoral and non-academic support for students registered on the programme. There will be two sources available to students who wish to seek this support. These are:

a) A Personal Tutor who will tend to deal with most cases where a student requires support.
b) An independent adviser who will be available for those students who do not wish to discuss certain personal circumstances, or issues with the programme.

Finally, the Programme Director is available to discuss any academic or pastoral issues.

Students for whom English is not their first language are offered language classes, facilities and services by the University's Language Centre as detailed in section 3.

7. Learning Resources

Learning resources include:

- Purpose written module outlines for all taught modules on the course;
- Purpose written dissertation guidance notes;
- Selected digitised material available through the Keele Learning Environment;
- Visiting academic and practitioner speakers ;
- Site visits (where available).

Each module has a dedicated entry on the Keele Learning Environment (KLE). Students are able to access module outlines, lecture slides, additional resources and a variety of guidance notes, and are required to submit copies of their assignments via Turnitin.

During the induction week, the School or Faculty Learning Technologist provide sessions on learning technology utilised by the programme, including an introduction to the virtual Keele Learning Environment and assessment submission via Turnitin. Students on the programme also have access to a range of comprehensive video guides provided by Keele Business School, covering issues such as how to access Keele University Library Services, how to perform basic searches, and how to submit a Turnitin assignment, etc.

Students have access to the University's library facilities, including the loan of books and remote access to electronic resources such as online databases and journals from any PC with an Internet connection. See http://www.keele.ac.uk/library/. The library building also houses computing services. Students have access to a large number of open-access PCs as well as printing facilities. The library and computing services operate 24hrs facilities for substantial parts of the year.

8. Other learning opportunities

In either, or both, semesters there might be the opportunity to hear visiting speakers or to attend visits to organisations (subject to availability). There is no cost commitment required from the students for such visits.

This is a full-time or part-time taught Masters programme. Individual units are not currently available for continuing professional development.

9. Quality management and enhancement

The Programme Director is responsible for the day to day management of the programme. The Programme Director of the programme also reports to the School Education Committee.

To ensure that the MA Human Resource Management programme maintains the highest possible standards and ensures the effective management and continuous enhancement of the quality of learning and teaching, the programme employs the following procedures.

- Student Staff Voice Committee: This is an integral part of the monitoring and review procedures and provides a valuable source of information for the programme team. Student Staff Voice Committee meetings provide constructive feedback through student representatives.
- Student evaluation of teaching: Students have the opportunity to evaluate the programme through evaluation questionnaires. Data from the evaluations is reported at regular programme staff meetings and the Student Staff Voice Committee meetings.
- We also monitor student feedback through various other means, including feedback sessions, ad-hoc discussions with students in tutorials and lectures throughout the year, and individual discussions with Student Voice Representatives.
- Annual Programme Review: A range of data is used to inform the annual programme review. It comprises data such as student evaluations, external examiners report, and internal programme review and monitoring data.
- The programme is run in accordance with the University's Quality Assurance procedures and are subject to periodic reviews under the Internal Quality Audit (IQA) process.
- A senior member of academic staff from another university is appointed to act as external examiner on the programme. Further information can be found at: http://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/externalexaminers/

10. The principles of programme design

The Programme described in this document has been drawn up with reference to, and in accordance with the guidance set out in the following documents:

a. Keele University Regulations and Guidance for Students and Staff (www.keele.ac.uk/regulations).

b. The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies, Quality Assurance Agency, 2014 (https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/qualifications-and-credit-frameworks).

c. Quality Assurance Agency subject benchmark for Masters degrees in Business and Management, accessed at https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/sbs-business-and-management-15.pdf?sfvrsn=1997f681_16

11. Programme Version History

Version History	Date	CHANGES / NOTES
Date first created	Version 1: June 2012	
Revision history	22.11.201719.11.2018 19/12/18	New version to reflect changes to assessment required to meet CIPD approval requirements. If approved by FLTC the current programme will gain CIPD approval for the (2017-18) student cohort. Module revisions have already been agreed. New version to reflect introduction of additional projects for 60 credit module. Programme updated to include new projects for the final 60 credits.
Date approved by SLTC	13.12.17 21-11-18	
Date approved by FLTC	29.1.2019	
Date approved by SEC	28.04.2021	