MN5473 – SKILLS AND CHALLENGES FOR THE HR PROFESSIONAL

MODULE TYPE/SEMESTER: Core (20 credits), Semester 2

MODULE CO-ORDINATOR: Dr Shiona Chillas

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AIM: The module will build on students’ existing knowledge of HRM theory and practice. It aims to integrate theoretical perspectives from diverse literatures with practical challenges experienced by HR professionals in different organisational contexts. While many of the subject areas will be familiar to students (e.g. performance, skills, work organisation, conflict), in this module there will be a particular focus on contexts (both organisational and occupational). Through the use of case study material, students will be encouraged to identify tensions within the various topic areas, and additionally to build their skills base by proposing and evaluating options for HR practitioners. The module will cover key challenges for HRM, in theory and in practice.

METHOD OF TEACHING AND LEARNING: The module will be delivered by way of a series of 11 lectures, each focusing on a relevant topic in contemporary HRM. The lectures will be supported by a reading list comprising of theoretical and case study resources. In addition there will be a series of four, 2-hour, ‘skills sessions’ where groups of students will tackle a pre-set problem and offer practical, resource-conscious solutions. An emphasis on interactive discussion, joint problem-solving, teamworking and communication between staff and students will feature in these sessions.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: By the end of the module, students should be able to:
- Understand and differentiate different theoretical perspectives in the study of HRM;
- Critically evaluate a range of contemporary issues and challenges in the practice of HRM;
- Assess the role of context in particular functional areas of HRM;
- Develop the skills required to address particular challenges.

INDICATIVE TOPIC OUTLINE:
- Conceptual frameworks in HRM
- Financing HR initiatives
- HRM and Performance
- Work Organisation – HPWS and teamworking
- Conflict and Misbehaviour
• Employee Well-being and Work-life Balance
• Labour Markets and Skills: Supply/Demand/Development/Deployment
• Occupational Contexts: Managing knowledge workers
• HRM in the Creative Industries
• Ethics and HRM

ASSESSMENT
Individual assignment: 2500 management report (worth 30%)
Group presentation: based on one seminar session (worth 20%)
2-hour examination (worth 50%)

READING LIST
The following list is indicative rather than exhaustive. Key readings for each topic area will be
given before each lecture. Students are also encouraged to read widely in each topic area
from the list of relevant journals, cited in the Course Handbook and on Moodle.

Key Texts
Management, Oxford: OUP.
Boxall, P. and Purcell, J. (2011) Strategy and Human Resource Management (3ed), London:
Palgrave.

Additional Texts
Blyton, P., Heery, E. and Turnbull, P. (2011) Reassessing the Employment Relationship,
London: Palgrave.
Noon, M., Blyton, P. and Morrell, K. (2013) The realities of work: experiencing work and
employment in contemporary society (4ed), Basingstoke: Palgrave.
cases (3ed), London: FT Pearson.
London: FT Prentice Hall.