MSc in Human Resource Management
Qualification details

The MSc in Human Resource Management offers an in-depth understanding of human resource (HR) management combined with a broader understanding of the organisational and management context within which HR management specialists must operate. It combines an emphasis on the development of HR management strategies with opportunities to develop specialist skills essential for practitioners. It is suitable for those who are at the start of their career as an HR professional or who aspire to enter the HR profession and it is also relevant to the experienced manager/HR professional with a degree who wants to gain a postgraduate qualification.

Throughout the MSc you will be encouraged to explore the strategic choices available to organisations in relation to human resource management and development. You will also consider international examples of human resource management and some aspects of comparative HR practice which will help to prepare you to work in the global economy. There will be a strong emphasis on practice-based learning so that you will be asked to evaluate research and theory and consider its relevance to practice. Training is also provided in academic and research skills, as preparation for further study and research in the field of HR management.

This qualification is offered online and so offers you the flexibility to study in your own time and to fit your study around your family and work commitments. You will take part in online discussions and work collaboratively with students from a wide range of organisational backgrounds including those working in other countries. You will need to be able to draw on experience of working in or with organisations but this experience can be drawn from a wide range of situations such as employment in public and private sector organisations and in self-employed or voluntary roles.

Through studying the MSc in HRM you will be able to:

- understand the role of the HR professional, the nature of professionalism and approaches to addressing ethical dilemmas.
- address business and change management issues and work at a strategic level in the organisation.
- develop specific organisational strategies in relation to HR issues such as employee relations, employee engagement, learning and development, employee resourcing and talent management.
- conduct research into business and management issues from a human resource management perspective.
- assess the relevance of theory for practice and apply it where appropriate to improve practice.
- develop skills essential for HR work such as: leading and working in teams, making decisions, managing financial information, communicating effectively and helping others to learn.

Career relevance and employability

This qualification is intended to provide a route to professional membership of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) (subject to the Institute’s approval), if you wish to develop a career in HR management. It will also provide training in research and academic skills if you want to develop an academic career in the field of HR management.

More generally, by studying a postgraduate business qualification you can expect your salary to increase and for it to have a positive impact on your career progression, as well as bringing improvements to your organisation.

Course Structure

The MSc can be achieved in three years based on approximately 12 hours of study per week. You can complete the MSc in a shorter time by studying more than one module at a time, but you should allow 12-13 hours of study a week for each 30-credit module you study.

From November 2014 you will have the option to complete your MSc in two years, but you will only have a full selection of optional modules if you take your first module in November rather than May.

You must complete this qualification within seven years.
For this 180-credit masters degree you require:

60 credits from the following compulsory modules:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Postgraduate compulsory modules</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The human resource professional (B863) - NEW</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human resource management in context (B864) – planned for May 2015</td>
<td>30</td>
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And 60 credits from the following optional modules:

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<tr>
<td>Managing research in the workplace (B865) – planned for November 2015</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment relations and employee engagement (B866) – planned for November 2015</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace learning: coaching and mentoring (B867) – planned for May 2016</td>
<td>30</td>
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And 60 credits from the following compulsory module:

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Dissertation (B804) – planned for November 2016</td>
<td>60</td>
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Learning outcomes

The qualification provides opportunities for you to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas:

Knowledge and understanding

- the role of the HR professional, the nature of professionalism and approaches to addressing ethical dilemmas
- organisational theory and behaviour, including the future of organisations and the management of change, and their relevance for the choices made about human resource management strategy
- the impact of the external context on the choices made about human resource management strategy; this includes globalisation and international forces, social and technological change and government policies and regulation
- the leadership management and development of people within the organisation
- employee relations and employee engagement strategies, learning and development strategies and interventions and employee resourcing and talent management.

Cognitive skills

- access and evaluate relevant published research and information across a range of areas relevant to the management and development of people in organisations
- assess the relevance of theory for practice and apply it where appropriate to improve practice
- develop and justify original arguments and reference the work of others.

Practical and/or professional skills

- lead and influence others effectively
- learn through reflection on practice and experience
- recognise ethical issues and use professional and ethical values to address these
- conduct research into business and management issues from a human resource management perspective, using digital information technologies as articulated in the Digital Information Literacy Levels Framework.
- demonstrate people management skills essential for HR work such as: selection interviewing; appraisal interviewing; disciplinary interviewing; delivering training; making presentations; project management and managing performance
- interpret financial information and manage financial resources
- manage and communicate information using IT applications and software packages, in accordance with the requirements of the Digital Information Literacy Levels Framework.

Key skills

- communicate effectively, orally and in writing, using a range of media and including writing assignments and business reports
- demonstrate self-awareness and the ability to reflect on experience and to plan and carry out continuous personal development
- manage interpersonal relationships, demonstrate sensitivity to diversity and perform effectively in a team environment
- use information technology effectively in communicating and working collaboratively with others, and in accessing and managing information in accordance with the requirements of the Digital Information Literacy Levels Framework.

Teaching, learning and assessment methods

The overall teaching across the qualification will offer an integrated learning experience. This will include study of materials supplied by the OU, online tuition provided by the tutor, activities including reflective practice, practical exercises, literature review and critiquing and collaborations with other students and finally continuous and end-of-module assessment.

The study materials will include a range of specially-written materials, case studies, original texts, study guides and assignments and multi-media material.

You will be expected to engage in a range of activities including reading texts, using numbers and statistics, researching and using relevant literature on contemporary issues and applying theories to practical situations.

Your tutor is your first point of contact and they will communicate with you via a tutor group forum. They will answer questions on materials and mark assignments.

You will be allocated a specialist HR tutor who will present...
online tutorials and online activities, give advice and guidance and assess assignments.

Programme days will be provided as an additionally-priced resource, and will be compulsory if you are seeking CIPD accreditation. These will provide opportunities to practise professional skills. They will also incorporate some face-to-face teaching.

Knowledge and understanding will be assessed through examinations, assessed assignments and online collaborative activities. Each 30-credit module will have two tutor-marked assignments (TMAs) and an examination or end-of-module assessment (EMA). The 60-credit dissertation module will provide training in research skills and will be assessed through a 10-15,000 word dissertation. The dissertation will be an independent piece of academic or applied research that will provide opportunity for you to develop and demonstrate research skills, and to develop deeper understanding of one or more parts of the curriculum.

Cognitive and practical skills are developed through a range of activities in each module. Case studies allow you to engage with human resource management issues in a range of contexts, and these will include international case studies. You will be prompted throughout the modules to search for and retrieve information in a digital environment, and will be given guidance on the use of databases. Online discussions and assessment activities will help you to develop and demonstrate critical thinking about the application of theory to practice.

Self-awareness, reflective learning and continuous professional development will be introduced in compulsory modules of B863 and you will be expected to keep a portfolio which will evidence your development of these skills. Further development of these skills will be a continuing theme throughout the programme. Guidance on communication skills will be provided in study materials, and they will be further developed through written assessments and online discussion forums. You will work collaboratively online with colleagues in activities which will contribute to module assessments.

Credit for previous study elsewhere
If you have already completed some successful study at postgraduate level in human resource management or a related discipline at another institution, we may be able to give you credit for this study that you can count towards this qualification.

You may be able to commence study of this qualification at a different point in the study pathway. If you wish to apply for transfer credit you must do so as soon as possible as it may impact on your choice of OU modules. If you are awarded credit for study completed elsewhere, you may find that you need to study fewer OU modules to complete your qualification with us.

About our business school
The Open University Business School is triple accredited (AACSB, AMBA and EQUIS).

For more than 30 years people around the world have been realising their potential through our innovative, practice-based courses. Their quality is underpinned by the latest leading-edge research and enriched by a global network of partnerships.

Our internationally-recognised teaching and learning methods take education right to the heart of leadership and management practice. Tutors are experienced business professionals, and because our distance learning approach allows managers to continue at work while studying, you can apply new knowledge and skills right from the start.

Once you have gained your qualification, you can join the OU Alumni Association, our vibrant and active alumni community with 280,000 members worldwide. You will enjoy many membership benefits, including regular newsletters, good networking opportunities and access to the alumni website.
Why choose The Open University?
No-one understands how to help students succeed and make knowledge stick better than us – we’re the experts in part time study. To do what we do successfully, year after year, requires exceptional technology, methods and staff. The way we work, works – not least because it’s flexible enough to work around you and your life.
Consider this: our learning materials are so good, over two thirds of the 100 largest universities in the UK use them too.
Everything we do is grounded in the research we’re internationally famous for – OU research changes the world. It’s this reputation as one of the world’s finest research universities that makes our qualifications so highly respected and our learning materials so sought after.

Can I study in any country?
This MSc in Human Resource Management is approved for study in most countries. Please use the Courses menu at [www.openuniversity.edu](http://www.openuniversity.edu) to see if it is available in your country.

Is an OU qualification recognised in my country?
An OU degree is equal in academic standard to a degree from any other British university. The University is subject to the same quality assurance procedures, through the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), as all other British universities, and uses external assessors and examiners to ensure comparability of standard and level in its courses.
To find out more about how the OU’s qualifications are recognised outside the UK, please go to [www.openuniversity.edu/brochures/recognition.pdf](http://www.openuniversity.edu/brochures/recognition.pdf).

What support will I receive?
The OU excels in its unrivalled support for students. You’ll have email and online support from a tutor and you will be able to discuss your study in online tutor group discussions, using our customised learning environment. Our community websites Platform and OpenLearn offer a different perspective on your subject, and a huge range of OU resources on YouTube and iTunes U can expand your understanding. In addition, you can tap into a range of enthusiastic and welcoming OU social network groups on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.
The Business School has representatives based throughout Europe who are available to provide advice and guidance on study plans and courses. For further details please go to [www.openuniversity.edu/contact-the-open-university](http://www.openuniversity.edu/contact-the-open-university).

Are there any entry requirements?
All entrants to this MSc in Human Resources Management must hold a bachelor’s degree awarded by a recognised UK university, or overseas equivalent.
You will also need a good level of spoken and written English, sufficient to be able to work effectively at postgraduate level; generally this means capability equivalent to an International English Language Test System (IELTS) score of 6.5.

How much will it cost?
For the academic year 2014/15, the tuition fee for students based outside of the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland is £12,030.
Unlike many schools, the OU fee includes the cost of books and study materials, access to a bespoke e-learning environment and project supervision.

When can I start?
To give you more opportunities to start, we have two intakes a year – November and May.

Can I meet and network with other students?
Definitely – when you start with the OU you automatically become a member of the Open University Student Association (OUSA). OUSA also runs a popular student forum site. For more information, go to [www.open.ac.uk/ousa/home](http://www.open.ac.uk/ousa/home).
Once you have gained your qualification, you can join the OU Alumni Association, our vibrant and active alumni community with 280,000 members worldwide. You will enjoy many membership benefits, including regular newsletters, good networking opportunities and access to the alumni website.

How is my privacy protected?
We record your personal information when you contact us and use this to manage registration, study, examination and other services. When you register, we’ll tell you more about how we process and use your personal information. For more information go to [www.openuniversity.edu/privacy](http://www.openuniversity.edu/privacy).

When should I apply?
Apply as early as you can – particularly if you wish to claim for credit for previous study. You must register before the enrolment deadline which is typically 2-3 weeks before the course begins. Registration and enrolment dates are shown in the Courses section on the qualification page at [www.openuniversity.edu](http://www.openuniversity.edu).
For more FAQs, go to [www.openuniversity.edu/faqs](http://www.openuniversity.edu/faqs).
What do I need to do next?

It takes just 2 simple steps.
Begin the process to secure your place.
Here’s how easy it is.

1. Register now

Go to www.openuniversity.edu, select the Courses section and the degree you require. You will then be asked to select your first module to register.

Alternatively call us on +44 845 241 6555.

Don’t worry, you don’t need to pay anything at this stage.

As soon as you have registered you’ll get an email confirmation which contains your login details.

2. Choose your first module, make payment to enrol

Before you start studying you will need to choose and register on your first module and arrange payment; instructions for this will be emailed to you.

Once complete you will officially be an Open University student – welcome!