UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER
LEADING THE WAY

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Course record information

Name and level of final award	MA in Human Resource Management The MA in Human Resource Management is a Masters degree that is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards	Postgraduate Diploma in Human Resource Management Postgraduate Certificate in Human Resource Management
Awarding body/institution	University of Westminster
Teaching Institution	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution	Recognised Body
Location of delivery	Marylebone Campus
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode, length of study and normal starting month	One year full time Two years part time day/ evening; evening only September and January start.
QAA subject benchmarking group(s)	PG Business and Management
Professional statutory or regulatory body	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
Date of course validation/Revalidation	1998/2002/2008/2010/2014
Date of programme specification approval	2014
Valid for cohorts	2018/19
Course Leader	Cecilie Bingham
Course URL	westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate
Westminster course code	PMHRM01F (FT) PMHRM01P (PT)
HECoS code	100085
UKPASS code	P09FPHRM; P01FPHRM (FT)

P01EPHRM; P09EPHRM (PT- eve)
P01MPHRM; P09MPHRM (PT- day/eve)

Admissions requirements

There are standard minimum entry requirements for all postgraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information.

For most courses, a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements.

More information can be found here: westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply

Recognition of Prior Learning

Applicants with prior certificated or experiential learning at the same level of the qualification for which they wish to apply are advised to visit the following page for further information: *westminster.ac.uk/recognition-of-prior-certified-learning*.

Aims of the course

The MA Human Resource Management has been designed to fulfil two different sets of requirements: those of the University of Westminster for Masters programmes; and those of the CIPD, specified by its qualifications framework. This means that students completing the course will be awarded both a Masters qualification by the University *and* Associate status by the CIPD. Furthermore, those students with relevant managerial level experience will qualify as Chartered Members of the CIPD.

The rationale for the course is to expose students to a coherent and specialised body of knowledge relevant to the theory and practice of human resource management. The aim of the MA in Human Resource Management (MA HRM) is therefore to provide students with the opportunities to explore, analyse and research into Human Resource Management theory, practices and policies in order that they might pursue a professional or academic career in Human Resource Management on the basis of their critical evaluation and appreciation of:

- The theory and practice of organisations and human resource management
- The nature of management consultancy skills, analytic and diagnostic techniques
- The analysis of economic, global and local labour market factors influencing corporate strategy
- The ethical requirements within the workplace
- How the human resource specialist deploys knowledge-based analytical and problem-solving skills and competencies at both operational and strategic levels.

The course aims to expose students to a wide range of contemporary perspectives on key developments in human resource management and organisational analysis providing access to a range of alternative views, thereby encouraging them to explore relevant HRM issues and what these mean for different groups of individuals and organisations at local and national level. There is a focus on how research informs advances in professional knowledge and course participants should both demonstrate originality in the application of such knowledge and reflect on their own personal learning in the context of their continuing professional development. In this way course participants are expected to exhibit the

qualities of 'thinking performers', dealing with complex issues systematically and creatively and demonstrating originality in tackling and solving problems.

Consequently, the programme aims to enable students to build a body of practical skills and theoretical knowledge - from the operational through the tactical to the strategic - around the management of organisations and then to apply this knowledge to management problems and situations that affect professional practice. Students will, therefore, be able to diagnose problems, test assumptions, and offer apposite solutions.

As well as preparing students for further study or career progression, the MA HRM encourages them to:

- Develop a critical approach to HRM theories, literature, issues and practice
- Develop and use problem-solving, analytical, evaluative and interpersonal skills
- Continue their development of analytical, investigative research skills by designing a critical investigation into a relevant HRM topic of their choice in an area of human resource management.

To this end the course endeavours to provide students with an intellectually challenging learning environment that is commensurate with Masters' level study and promote lifelong learning.

Besides preparing students for further study or career progression, the MA HRM aims to promote the acquisition of skills that will enable students completing the course to:

- Interpret how the wider environment affects organisations through an analysis of factors in the business environment and continuing emphasis on horizontal, vertical and functional integration

- Commit to continuing professional development (CPD) showing an ability to plan and review, systematically and continuously, their personal development

Demonstrate competence in a wide range of generic and specific professional skills (e.g. business understanding, strategic thinking, professional and ethical behaviour and intuitive/creative thinking, communication and interpersonal skills).

Employment and further study opportunities

Those completing the course can be expected to find employment within HRM (either in the UK or abroad), further their existing HR careers, or to continue their studies in HR related fields. Providing, as it does, a higher degree qualification in a well-established management area, the course enables students to enhance their career prospects and marketability in the professional practice of HRM. Past students have gone on to become consultants (internal and external), HR managers, change management specialists, HR business partners, operations managers, civil servants, and mediators. Organisations that have employed our students include Arcadia, the BBC, Harrods, PwC, HSBC and the Royal Household.

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Opportunities for temporary work placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students

- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements, which will inform the service delivered to students.

Course learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These threshold statements of achievement and are linked to the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student will have gained on successfully completing a course.

Knowledge and understanding (KU)

Overall the course provides students with the ability to develop a systematic, integrated understanding and critical awareness of the current developments and issues in human resource management

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Comprehend and explain the impact of social, cultural, economic and political contexts on Human Resource Management.
- Evaluate and understand databases and information sources that provide up-to-date information about current and emergent theory, practice and issues in the field of human resources.
- Be analytically aware of the impact on, and implications of, diversity of people for HRM policies and practices.
- Discern HRM strategies that contribute to organisational effectiveness.
- Have a strong business understanding and awareness linked to an HRM perspective: able to view things from a corporate (not merely functional) perspective, including awareness of financial issues and accountabilities of business processes and operations, of 'customer' priorities, and of the necessity for cost/benefit calculations when contemplating continuous improvement or transformational change.
- Exhibit the skills and attitudes needed to work effectively in changing organisational roles, structures and working environments.
- Have a professional and ethical awareness of subject knowledge required for effective achievement in the personnel and development arena.
- Analyse the design of HRM processes and activities in order to discern whether they will add value to organisations and to the individuals within them.
- Evaluate factors in the work environment likely to enhance or inhibit the performance of individuals and teams, showing knowledge and insight in how to motivate others towards the achievement of shared goals, the establishment of professional credibility and the creation of reciprocal trust.

Specific skills (SS)

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Utilise a wide range of conceptual frameworks drawn from academic, organisational and social studies that will aid skills of analysis and problem solving within a business context.
- Systematically and creatively apply knowledge about different approaches to human resource management in different environments in order to challenge presuppositions, engage in research and evaluate theoretical perspectives

- Continue the process of learning and personal growth through self-directed development programmes in order both to develop as an autonomous professional and to respond to changing job demands and organisational problems.
- Demonstrate a wide variety of skills and competence related to the specialised practice of people management and development.
- Behave in an ethical and professional way exhibiting professional skills and technical capabilities, specialist subject knowledge, and the integrity in decision-making and operational activity that are required for effective achievement in the HRM arena.
- Think strategically, showing the capacity to create an achievable vision for the future; to foresee longer-term developments; to envisage options and consequences; and to select sound courses of action and to challenge the status quo.

Key transferable skills (KTS)

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Show autonomy and confidence in the appropriate use of academic and professional resources.
- Continue the processes of development and personal growth through self-directed learning.
- Communicate information, written and spoken, in a structured cogent and persuasive way.
- Recognise the processes of group functioning and how such knowledge might be deployed in leading, negotiating, motivating and handling conflict within groups.
- Think strategically; envisioning options and consequences; selecting sound, appropriate courses of action.
- Think analytically by engaging in a systematic approach to situational analysis, the development of convincing, business-focused action plans, and (where appropriate) the deployment of intuitive/creative ethical thinking in order to generate innovative solutions.

Learning, teaching and assessment methods

The programme draws upon the current research activities and specialist academic experience and skills of the HR teaching group and provides students and practitioners with a thorough grounding in the academic debates in and about HRM.

Great emphasis is placed upon the need to develop students' conceptual frameworks and skills in a rigorous manner but also in a vocationally useful way. At Masters Level students are expected not only to understand the nature of theoretical work, but also to be able to apply it, where feasible, to the resolution of practical problems. This emphasis on problem solving in turn necessitates an emphasis on the diagnosis of the nature and causes of managerial problems and on the distinction between symptoms and underlying causes. Students are thereby encouraged to think for themselves and to avoid the uncritical application of prescriptive techniques to managerial issues and problems.

Learning:
The learning environment encourages active, experiential and reflective learning by participants, with scope for group work and problem-based learning using case studies and analysis, synthesis and evaluation. The learning experience requires independent learning, critical evaluation, reflection, discussion and debate, as well as the opportunity, through the project, to research, in significant depth, a relevant topic.

A key feature of study within the MA HRM is the explicit development of transferable skills and aptitudes relevant for personal and career development within the HRM profession. One of the course aims focuses particularly on skill development, and the module Skills of the Manager/Consultant aims specifically to enable students to develop the interpersonal management skills needed for acting as an internal and external consultant to organisations. The module has been specifically designed to assist participants to define, develop and refine those managerial skills that will aid them in employment. Transferable professional and personal skills form part of the learning outcomes and assessment strategies a number of the modules on the course.

An annual HRM Conference and a number of skills-based workshops enhance student learning. Conference speakers are expert practitioners and academics who address a range of topics on a particular HR issue. Skills-based workshops include finance, introduction to employment law, interviewing skills, negotiation, disciplinary and grievance handling.

Teaching:
Teaching is through classroom based lectures and seminars involving a variety of methods of delivery and student participation including, exercises, group work, presentations, discussions, videos, workshops and role-plays and computer-aided techniques. Sessions typically involve a combination of tutor input and student participation and activity. In line with the 'thinking, ethical performer' ethos, reflective involvement in the learning process is regarded as essential.

There will be a degree of self-directed learning – based around information provided for each module, involving structured reading, analysis and problem solving. Students' personal contributions will therefore be a critical factor in influencing the successful achievement of the learning outcomes. Students' own current experience will be used wherever possible and, where appropriate, emphasis is placed on self-organised and group learning.

As indicated above, an annual HRM Conference and Skills-based workshops also enhance student learning.

Assessment:
Assessment for the majority of modules is a combination of in-course assessment and end-of- module examination. The weighting of each component varies from module to module. The overall strategy of Masters Level HRM assessment is that, in all subject areas, students are required to:

- Demonstrate an ability to go beyond the mere exposition and reproduction of textbook facts, (and concepts, approaches, models and theories) and apply these to practical situations.
- Provide evidence in their work of both analytical and critical ability, that is, to show an awareness of how all HRM practice is informed by theoretical presuppositions upon which analysis and critique can and should be exercised
- Demonstrate an ability to conduct empirical and/or theoretical work in a specialist project area

Modules are assessed using various appropriate methods drawn from the following list.

- Essay, case study analysis, or similar, word length typically 2,000 - 2,500 words
- Work-based report, critical evaluation of HRM policy or practice; word length typically in the range of 2,000 - 2,500 words
- Skills development practical assignment
- Literature review; word length typically in the range 2,000 - 2,500

- Classroom presentation and report of same
- Group-work assignment
- Project, 30-credit; word length typically in the range 8,500 - 10,000
- Examinations; written, typically 3 hours duration

Course structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study 180 credits per year.

Credit Level 7				
Module code	**Module title**	**Status**	**UK credit**	**ECTS**
7HURM012W	Managing Human Resources	Core	20	10
7HURM006W	HRM in a Business Context	Core	20	10
7BUSS014W	Skills of the Manager / Consultant	Core	20	10
7HURM016W	Project	Core	30	15
7HURM017W	Research Methods and Project Preparation	Core	10	5
ANY TWO from the following CIPD electives:				
7HURM003W	Employee Relations	Elective	20	10
7LEAD008W	Learning and Development	Elective	20	10
7HURM013W	Organisational Analysis Design and Development	Elective	20	10
7HURM015W	People Resourcing	Elective	20	10
7HURM018W	Reward Management	Elective	20	10
ANY TWO from the following generalist electives:				
7LEAD001W	Assessment for Individual Differences at Work	Elective	20	10
7LEAD004W	Designing and Delivering Training	Elective	20	10
7HURM004W	Employment Law for HR Practitioners in England & Wales	Elective	20	10
7HURM008W	International HRM	Elective	20	10
7LEAD012W	Management Development	Elective	20	10
7HURM010W	Managing Change	Elective	20	10
7HURM011W	Managing Diversity and Equality in Employment	Elective	20	10
7HURM002W	Contemporary Issues in Strategic HRM	Elective	20	10

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. In addition, timetabling and limited spaces may mean you cannot do your first choice of modules.

Professional Body Accreditation or other external references

The course leads to Chartered Institute of Personal Development (CIPD) professional membership. Westminster Business School is a CIPD approved centre. Westminster Business School will pay your CIPD joining fee and your initial membership fee. You will also be provided with a text book for each of your core modules.

Academic regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations. In some cases course specific regulations may be applicable.

How will you be supported in your studies?

Course Management
Two Course Leaders (one for full-time students and the other for part-time students) both from within the School of Organisations, Economy and Society will manage the course which is part of a family of Human Resource Management Masters programmes offered by Westminster Business School. The School also offers a Masters degree course in International Human Resource Management.

Academic Support

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Campus Registry. You will be given access to the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who is available to provide advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students. Further information on Blackboard can be found at westminster.ac.uk/blackboard.

Learning Support

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments. Further information on the Academic Learning Development Centre can be found at westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students[1] can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught at WBS. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

Support Services

The University of Westminster Student and Academic Services department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. Further information on the advice available to students can be found at westminster.ac.uk/student-advice. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University. Further information on UWSU can be found at westminster.ac.uk/students-union.

How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 1998 and has subsequently been revalidated a number of times. The validation panel included internal

---

[1] Students enrolled at Collaborative partners may have differing access due to licence agreements.

peers from the University, academic(s) from another university and a representative from industry. This helps to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers.

The course is also monitored each year by WBS to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including evidence of student achievement, reports from external examiners in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme.

A Course revalidation takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with Revalidation panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

How do we act on student feedback?

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through student engagement activities at Course/Module level, students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Student representatives are elected to expressly represent the views of their peers. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the student representatives.

- There are also School Staff Student Exchange meetings that enable wider discussions across the School. Student representatives are also represented on key WBS and University committees.

- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.

- The University also has an annual Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey or PTES which helps us compare how we are doing with other institutions, to make changes that will improve what we do in future and to keep doing the things that you value.