2.0 PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

2.1 Course Record Information	
Name and level of final & intermediate Awards	**MA in International Human Resource Management**
Awarding Body	University of Westminster
Location of Delivery	Marylebone Campus
Mode of Study	Full
UW Course Code	PWBSIHRM
JACS Code	N600
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	PG Business and Management
Professional Body Accreditation	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
Date of initial course approval/last review	May 2008
Date of Programme Specification	2014

2.2 Admissions Requirements

Standard Qualifications for Admission to the Course

- A UK Honours degree 2.2 or above (or overseas equivalent) in Business Studies, Public Administration, Sociology, Psychology, Social Science or in a discipline relevant to human resource management.

or

- A degree supplemented by a qualification or by qualifications from a course of study which includes a substantial business or management studies component. Examples would include a Management Diploma, HNC or HND.

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)

The University operates a system of awarding credit for accredited prior learning, which may contribute up to a *maximum of 50% of the credits* required for an award. All awards for APL must comply with Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) regulations. If students think their prior accredited learning (e.g. other study they may have undertaken may qualify them for accreditation and thereby exemption from one or more modules), they are advised to contact the CIPD's

Membership and Education Department before applying for APL through the University. The student will be required to submit specific evidence (i.e. a letter of accreditation from the CIPD) that will be considered by the Course Leaders or their nominees. All APL applications must be considered by the University's APL Board. Any credit awarded for prior certified or experiential learning will be notified to the Conferment Board. Until a student who has applied for APL has been formally advised of the outcome of their application for credit they should register for, and participate in, their normal module load, including any modules for which they are seeking credit. For further details please refer to the full regulations governing APL, that appear in Part 2 Section 4 of the Handbook of Academic Regulations 2009.

Applicants without Standard Qualifications

The University welcomes applications from persons with certificated learning, or who have had a significant amount of relevant working experience and who are able to demonstrate that they will be able to study effectively at Master's level.

Some applicants may be interviewed by the Course Leader or a member of the teaching team and/or be required to submit a 1000 word essay on a selected aspect of human resource management.

Language Proficiency

Postgraduate applicants who have not had their secondary or tertiary education through the medium of English should normally have attained the equivalent of an IELTS score of at least 6.5 with a minimum 6.5 score in each component

2.3 Aims of the course

The rationale for the course is to expose students to a coherent and specialised body of knowledge relevant to the theory and practice of international human resource management.

The aim of the MA in International Human Resource Management is therefore to provide students with the opportunities to explore, analyse and research into Human Resource practices, policies and theory within a global context in order that they might pursue a professional or academic career in International Human Resource Management.

The MA IHRM however is designed to fulfil two different sets of requirements: those of the University of Westminster for Masters programmes; and those for students wishing to undertake a CIPD course as specified by its Professional Standards. As such it offers modules *fully compliant* with the CIPD's qualifications framework and has been approved by the Institute as meeting the Knowledge Criteria for Chartered Membership. This means that students successfully completing the course will be awarded both a Masters qualification by the University and, once students have successfully shown the CIPD evidence of relevant workplace practice, they will gain the professional level of one of the following:

- Associate Membership
- Chartered Membership
- Chartered Fellowship.

The programme aims to develop students' awareness of the challenges and issues concerning International HRM (IHRM) in order that they acquire a balance of theoretical and practical skills allowing intellectual, personal and professional development in the field. Students participating on the course will be encouraged to develop a range of skills, including those of independent learning and enquiry that will serve as a foundation for lifelong learning and personal development.

The rationale for the course is to expose students to a wide range of contemporary perspectives and key developments in and around the field of international human resource management and organisational analysis, thus providing them with access to a range of alternative views and thereby encouraging them to explore relevant IHRM issues and, in particular, what these mean for different groups of individuals and organisations at local, national and international levels.

Students will therefore acquire a coherent, specialised body of knowledge relevant to the theory and practice of HRM. There is a strong 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. Such study will enable them to be better able to pursue a professional or academic career in International Human Resource Management on the basis of their critical evaluation and appreciation of:

- The theory and practice of organisations and human resource management.
- Comparative HRM and employee relations practices.
- Analysis of economic, global and local labour market factors influencing corporate strategy.
- The nature of management consultancy skills, analytic and diagnostic techniques.
- Ethical requirements within the workplace.
- How the human resource specialist deploys knowledge–based analytical and problem solving skills and competences at both operational and strategic levels.

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 within different international contexts and then to apply this knowledge to management problems and situations that affect professional practice.

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

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

Besides preparing students for further study or career progression the MA IHRM encourages them to promote the acquisition of skills that will enable students completing the course to:

- Interpret how wider cultural and environmental factors affect organisations by an analysis of factors, global and national, impacting upon the business environment
- 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).

2.4 Employment and Further Study Opportunities

Those completing the course can be expected to find employment within the IHRM arena, either in the UK or abroad, or to continue their studies in HR related fields. Providing successful students with a higher degree qualification in a well-established management area the course facilitates the development of the critical thinking necessary to plan and manage international human resource strategies. All students will have enhanced their career prospects by gaining a substantial awareness of how organisations operate in an increasingly international business environment. This, together with a developing understanding of cross-national similarities and differences across HRM policies and practices, will augment their potential employability and marketability.

Graduates from the programme will be able to develop an international management career within a wide range of business management opportunities potentially working locally, nationally and trans-nationally for global corporations, trans-European, trans-Asian, African or Australasian companies, management consultancy, general HRM or as expatriate HRM specialists. Additionally the course may enable graduates (and their employing organisation) to facilitate organisational development, such as a move from national to international operations. Past students have gone on to become consultants (internal and external), HR managers, compensation and benefits managers, change management specialists, HR business partners / operations managers, civil servants, and mediators. Companies that have employed our students include Price Waterhouse Coopers, Cap Gemini, BBC, and Visa.

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. employability skills. A Master's degree in combination with a CIPD qualification will enhance student employability and marketability. Membership of the CIPD will enable students to attend Branch meetings, network with other professionals in the field and augment their CPD. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses.
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are occasionally 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.

2.5 MA IHRM Learning Outcomes

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

2.5.1 Knowledge and Understanding

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 successfully completing the course students will be able to:

- Analyse and interpret academic and professional data and information from different countries and international sources.
- 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.
- Comprehend and explain the impact of social, cultural, economic and political contexts on Human Resource Management
- Diagnose human resource problems and apply appropriate solutions taking particular account of specific international, national and local contexts, institutions and cultures.
- Be analytically aware of the impact on, and implications of, diversity of people for HRM policies and practices.
- Discern appropriate HRM strategies that contribute to organisational effectiveness.
- Have a strong business understanding and awareness linked to an HRM perspective (nationally and internationally: 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 the necessity for cost benefit calculations when contemplating continuous improvement and 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 performance in the HRM arena.
- Analyse the design of HRM processes and activities in order to discern whether they will add value to the organisation and the individuals within them.
- Critically evaluate the factors contributing to the work environment that are likely to enhance or inhibit the performance of individuals and teams, showing appropriate 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.
- Show autonomy and confidence in the 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.

2.5.2 Specific Skills

On successfully completing the course students will be expected to demonstrate that they can:

- 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 international 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.
- 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 IHRM arena.
- Recognising processes of group functioning and how such knowledge might be deployed in leading, negotiating, motivating and handling conflict within groups.
- Think strategically showing the capacity to create an achievable vision for the future; to foresee longer-term developments; to envisage options and consequences; to select sound courses of action and to challenge the status quo.

2.5.3 Key Transferable Skills

On successfully completing the course students will be expected to demonstrate that they can:

- Show autonomy and confidence in the appropriate use of academic and professional resources.
- Communicate information, written and spoken, in a structured cogent and persuasive way.
- Think strategically; envisioning options and consequences; selecting sound, appropriate courses of action.
- Think analytically by; engaging in a systematic approach to situational analysis, developing convincing, business-focussed action plans, and (where appropriate) deploying intuitive /creative ethical thinking in order to generate appropriate innovative solutions.
- Continue the processes of development and personal growth through self-directed learning.

2.6 Teaching, Learning 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 IHRM.

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 ethically apply it, where appropriate and 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 sets out to promote 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 IHRM is the explicit development of transferable skills and aptitudes relevant for personal and career development within the IHRM profession. One of the course aims focuses particularly on skill development and lifelong learning encouraging the development of those interpersonal management skills needed for acting as an internal and external consultant to organisations whether they be based locally, nationally or globally. Transferable professional and personal skills form part of the learning outcomes and assessment strategies on a number of the modules on the course.

An annual HRM conference and a number of skills-based workshops enhance the opportunities for student learning. Conference speakers are expert practitioners and academics who address a range of topics on a particular issue. Skills-based workshops are popular with students who relish the opportunities to practice and share some of their classroom based experiences and learning. Workshops include finance, legal aspects, interviewing skills and negotiation.

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.

The learning environment encourages active, experiential and reflective learning by participants, with plenty of scope for group work, discussion and problem based learning using case studies, analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

The learning experience requires a degree of self-directed independent learning, critical evaluation and reflection – 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. Discussion, debate and sharing experiences are crucial parts of the course.

Students will have the opportunity, through the project to research, in depth, a relevant topic.

A key feature of study within the MAIHRM is the explicit development of transferable skills and aptitudes relevant for personal and career development within the HRM profession both within the UK and abroad. 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 internal and

external consultant to organizations. This module has been specifically designed to assist participants to define, develop and refine those managerial skills that will aid them in their professional careers. Transferable professional and personal skills form part of the learning outcomes and assessment strategies for a number of the modules on the course.

The annual **HRM Conference** also enhances student learning. Conference speakers are expert practitioners and academics who address a range of topics on a particular HR issue.

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 IHRM 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 IHRM 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. To find out which assessment methods apply to modules *you* will be undertaking you will need to refer to the module outlines in Appendix 3.

- Essay, case study analysis, or similar, word length typically in the range 2,000 - 2,500.
- 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 8,000 - 10,000.
- Examinations; written, typically 3 hours duration.

Academic regulations

The MA in International Human Resource Management and its intermediate awards operate in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) in 2008.

All students should make sure that they access a copy of the current edition of the general University handbook called Essential Westminster, which is available at westminster.ac.uk/essential-westminster. The following regulations should be read in conjunction with Section 18: Modular Framework for Postgraduate Courses and relevant sections of the current Handbook of Academic Regulations, which is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations

Award

To qualify for the award of MA in International Human Resource Management a student must have:

- obtained a minimum of 180 credits at Level 7 (this may include a maximum of 30 credits at Level 6 where validated as part of the award);

- attempted modules worth no more than 240 credits; and

  Note: A first attempt of any module will count as an attempt, and a re-attempt of any module that a student has failed will count as a further, separate attempt. Re-assessment following referral at the first sit will not count as a further separate attempt.

- satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant Course Scheme.

The University may award:

- a Masters Degree with Merit to a student whose marks average at least 60% across modules at Level 7.

- a Masters Degree with Distinction to a student whose marks average at least 70% across the modules at Level 7.

N.B. Please note that the pass mark for each module is 50%. Students have to pass all modules to qualify for the award of a Masters degree.

2.7 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.

Credit level 7 MA IHRM

Module Code	Module Title	Core / Option	Credit Value
BHRM701	Comparative Employment Relations	Core	20
BHRM702	Managing Human Resources	Core	20
BEQM706	HRM in Context	Core	20
BFIN714	Skills of the Manager Consultant	Core	20
BHRM709	International Personnel Management	Core	20
BHRM707	Organisational Analysis Design and Development	Core	20
BHRM	Project	Core	30
BHRM713	Research Methods	Core	10
	One CIPD elective from:		
BHRM705	People Resourcing	Elective	20
BHRM706	Reward Management	Elective	20
BLDE702	Learning and Development	Elective	20
NB *Not ALL option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year*.			

2.8 Support for Students

On arrival, an induction programme will introduce students to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which they will be studying, the Library and IT facilities and to the Campus Administration. Students will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course.

Learning support includes the Library, which across its four sites, holds printed collections of 412,000 books, 1,600 journal subscriptions and substantial audio visual collections. Access to over 6,500 electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books, exam papers and links to recommended websites) is facilitated through infoLinX, the library portal.

There are over 3,500 computers spread over the four University campuses available for students' use. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students can access course materials and communicate with staff and other students via message boards.

At University level, Services for Students provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. The International Education Office provides particular support for international students. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support all students during their time at the
University

2.9 Reference Points for the course

Internally

- University Teaching and Learning Policy
- Westminster Business School Teaching and Learning Strategy
- Westminster Business School Staff Development Policy
- Quality Assurance Handbook, University Regulations for PG Modular Framework
- Educational Initiative Centre: Guide to HE and Career Management Skills

Externally

- The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development's Professional Standards
- QAA 'Academic Standards' for Masters awards in Business and Management

2.10 Quality Management and Enhancement

Course Management

A Course Leader from within the Department of Human Resource Management will manage the course, which is part of a family of Human Resource Management Masters programmes offered by Westminster Business School. The Department also offers a Masters degree in Human Resource Management.

Twenty full-time-equivalent staff and fifteen visiting lecturers who, between them, have extensive business, consultancy and research achievements, staff the Department. Not

all staff teaching on the programme are from the HRM Department, some are drawn from the Department of Leadership and Development and others from the Finance and Business Law Department and the Economics and Quantitative Methods Department: all of these departments are part of the Westminster Business School. Where appropriate outside speakers (often practitioners within the HR field) are able to supplement the lecturing staff by giving special talks/lectures. The HRM Department is fortunate to have links with the Sorbonne and guest lecturers from this institution occasionally deliver talks to the MA IHRM students.

Course Approval, Monitoring and Review

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2008. The Panel included internal peers from the University and external subject specialists from academia and industry to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other Universities and the relevance to employers. Periodic Course Review helps to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. The course was modified in 2012 in order to comply with the CIPD professional standards leading to the knowledge part of Associate CIPD Membership.

The course will be monitored each year by the School to ensure that it is running effectively and that issues that might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the outcomes from each Course Committee, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from External Examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. The Campus Academic Standards Group audits this process and the outcomes are reported to the Academic Council of the University, which has overall responsibility for the maintenance of quality and standards in the University.

Student involvement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Student feedback is important to the University and student comment is taken seriously. The most formal mechanism for feedback on the course is the course committee. Student representatives will be elected to sit on the committee to represent the views of their peer group in the discussions held at the committee. The University, together with the Students' Union, work to provide a full introduction to the role of the Course Committee.

All students are invited to complete a Module Feedback 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 Student Experience Survey, which elicits feedback from students about their course and University experience.

Students meet with Review Panels when the periodic review of the course is conducted to provide oral feedback on their experience on the course. Student feedback from course committees is part of the Faculty's' quality assurance evidence base.

Student meetings are also held on an annual basis with representatives of the Campus Academic Standards Group as part of the annual monitoring process.

Staff Development

The Department has at least one away-day per year to identify and address ways of improving the design and delivery of its courses. Staff in the Department attend events organised by the Campus Academic Standards and the Campus Teaching and Learning Groups around current teaching, learning and assessment issues.

Each year Westminster Business School sets aside a sum of money to support staff activities that assist in developing their role within the HRM Department. The staff development fund supports a range of activities including conference attendance and the payment of fees for higher degrees.

Appraisal

The School operates a University appraisal system which is developmental in focus. The Appraisal form encourages staff to identify their own development needs and wishes, including those in relation to developing effective teaching strategies.

Peer Observation

The School operates a peer observation scheme aimed at achieving continuous improvement of the teaching and learning process.

In-house Staff Development

The University's Educational Initiative Centre offers a continuous programme of seminars and courses, directed towards disseminating good practice on teaching and learning, which staff can attend free of charge.

Membership of Institute of Higher Education Academy

All staff are encouraged to be members of the Academy. Many staff in the HRM department are Fellows of the HEA and regularly attend the HEA conferences which have covered a range of topics such as enhancing the International Student Experience, Assessment Strategies etc.

Whistleblowing

The University's whistleblowing policy has been introduced to help staff raise concerns about malpractice such as fraud, a danger to health, safety or the environment, a crime or a serious breach of the University's internal policies, in the right way and without worry.

Annual Monitoring and Review

Please refer to the University's Quality Assurance handbook.

For more information about this course:

http://www.wmin.ac.uk

Please note – This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification should be read in conjunction with the Course Handbook provided to students and Module Handbooks which provide

more detailed information on the specific learning outcomes, content, teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module.