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MODULE SPECIFICATION FORM

Module Title: Investigating a Business Issue	Level: 7	Credit Value: 15

Module code: BUS7AJ	Cost Centre: GAMG	JACS3 code: N215

Trimester(s) in which to be offered: 1/2	With effect from: Sept 2017

Office use only: To be completed by AQSU:	Date approved: August 2015 Date revised: August 2017 (change to trimester offered) Version no: 2

Existing/New: New	Title of module being replaced (if any):	BUS741 Employee Reward Management BUS743 Human Resource Management BUS742 Managing Employee Relations

Originating Academic School: Business	Module Leader: Carrie Foster

Module duration (total hours):	150	Status: core/option/elective (identify programme where appropriate):	Core
Scheduled learning & teaching hours	50		
Independent study hours	100		
Placement hours	0		

Programme(s) in which to be offered: MA Human Resource Management Programme	Pre-requisites per programme (between levels):

Module Aims: The purpose of this module is to enable leaners to address a real life HR issue developing core academic research skills with an emphasis on scientific enquiry and dissemination of outcomes.

Intended Learning Outcomes:

Knowledge and Understanding:

At the end of this module, students will be able to;
1. Identify and critically evaluate business issues of strategic relevance: undertaking of a literature search of contemporary practice and research and development of a critical literature review in the chosen area.
2. Analyse a range of philosophies, approaches and strategies for undertaking empirical research distinguishing the validity of a methodology for a specific investigation. Generate, compile, interpret and evaluate data in a comprehensible manner.
3. Critically evaluate data and decide upon prioritized resource allocation, generate, compile, interpret and evaluate data in a comprehensible manner.

Transferable/Key Skills and other attributes:

Students will be able to;
- The ability to conduct research into business and management issues either individually or as part of a team through research design, data collection, analysis, synthesis and reporting.
- The ability to conduct research into business and management issues. Students will learn the skills of researching the learning needs of organisations by taking account of the needs and aspirations of employees and other stakeholders.
- Identifying assumptions, evaluating statements, reviewing evidence, identifying values and generalising appropriately.
- Exhibit personal effectiveness: critical awareness, self-reflection and self-management and ability to learn through reflection on practice and experience.

This module maps against the CIPD module 7IBI Investigating a Business Issue from an HR Perspective

Assessment:

The assessment will require the learner to demonstrate the ability to investigate and diagnose a 'live' people management and development issue or problem, to locate their work within the body of contemporary knowledge, to collect and analyse data, to derive supportable conclusions and to make practical and actionable recommendations for change, improvement or enhancement to current practice. The learner will also be expected to write a Personal Learning Statement to analyse and evaluate their experience of conducting their research.

Assessment number	Learning Outcomes to be met	Type of assessment	Weighting	Duration (if exam)	Word count (or equivalent if appropriate)
1	1, 2 & 3	Report	100%		7,000

Learning and Teaching Strategies:

The teaching and learning strategy aims to produce professionals who are not only able to perform effectively in their present roles; but who have developed the skills, insight and confidence to develop and learn to mobilisation of their organisational workforce.

The teaching methods are designed as a blended learning programme, combining tutor moderated or led interactions with digital learning resources, access to self-study resources and networked and collaborative learning among students as part of the regions HR community.

The syllabus for the module will be delivered over a twelve week period (Trimester.) Both Distance Learning and Blended Learning Students will be provided with the same access to study materials through Glyndŵr University's Virtual Learning Environment, Moodle including; Panopto Digital Lectures, Online Subject Guides, Learning Resources, Library Resources, Residential Weekends and either online (Distance Learning Students) or Face-to-Face (Blended Learning Students) tutorials.

A fundamental feature of the CIPD Professional Standards is that qualified professionals should have strategic awareness, a business orientation and be concerned with adding value through people management and development practices. It is expected that qualified professionals should be able to write a competent report – on a people management and development issue – that seeks to persuade businesses or business partners to change or adopt a particular policy or practice.

Owing to the eclectic range of perspectives on organisations, the impact of organisational context and consequent research strategies the learners are encouraged to take a collaborative approach to learning with peers from a wide range of backgrounds to enable them to benefit from their varied perspectives.

Therefore teaching and learning activities will involve examination of knowledge, concepts and issues in relation to reward management, and the discussion of current problems and emerging thinking. These activities are intended to 'stretch' students by encouraging them to tolerate the complexity and ambiguity that must exist in real situations. The range of teaching practices deployed includes: online digital lectures, tutorials, case studies, discussions, coaching, skills development workshops

The range of teaching practices deployed includes: lectures, case studies, discussions and guided reading to allow for dissemination of knowledge which can be explored in a safe environment. Activities are intended to challenge students understanding of the dimensions of reward practice by encouraging them to tolerate the multidimensional and inclusive perspectives that exist in a range of organisational situations. Having a variety of ages, skills, experience and background means that the students learn to help themselves and each other, thus enhancing their collaborative and interpersonal skills. Similarly having to voice opinions and put their case helps to develop their presentational and persuasive skills, as do the assignments.

Students must be able to direct their own learning and develop their own learning strategies, the requirements for this is introduced at the induction and reinforced in all modules.

Syllabus outline:

This module provides students with;
- Key elements of professional competence; strategic awareness, business orientation and concern with adding value through Human Resource Practice.
- The ability to research relevant topics and write reports that can persuade key stakeholders in the organization to change or adopt a particular policy and practice.
- An opportunity to demonstrate an ability to diagnose and investigate a live, complex business issue from an HR perspective, to locate the work within the body of contemporary knowledge, to collect and analyse data, to derive supportable conclusions and to make practical and actionable recommendations for change, improvement or enhancement of current practice.
- A critical evaluative approach, empirical investigation and analysis and a combination of academic research and business report writing skills.
- An opportunity to reflect on the implications for professional practice from an ethical, professional and continuous professional development standpoint.

Indicative module content
1. Identify and justify a business issue that is of strategic relevance to the organisation.
2. Identify a suitable topic for the project. Potential sources might include critical incidents, significant external or internal influence, change management initiatives, risk assessment, internal or external diagnostic, and a chronic or acute problem. Plan and design a project that has strategic relevance and the potential to add value to the organisation.
3. Critically analyse and discuss existing literature, contemporary HR policy and practice relevant to the chosen issue. Knowledge of literature and contemporary HR practice; information search and retrieval; analysing sources of data; writing a critical literature review; academic referencing.
4. Compare and contrast the relative merits of different research methods and their relevance to different situations. Research methods: understanding different methods of data collection (for example interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, participant observation), the strengths and weaknesses of each and the circumstances in which they might be used; ethical considerations.
5. Undertake a systematic analysis of quantitative and/or qualitative information and present the results in a clear and consistent format. Data analysis: the use and value of different analytical tools for interpreting data; systematic data analysis; identification and explanation of emerging patterns and how to deal with conflicting evidence; effective interpretation and presentation of data.
6. Draw realistic and appropriate conclusions and make recommendations based on costed options. Drawing reasoned conclusions from data collected and presented; production of realistic, timely and effectively justified recommendations and costed implementation plans; awareness of potential resistance to recommendations and how this might be overcome.
7. Develop and present a persuasive business report. Developing and presenting a report: the importance of clear aims, objectives and appropriate terms of reference; awareness of time management and project development; potential barriers and how they might be overcome; the structure and content of a management report; principal techniques of communication and persuasion appropriate to a business report presentation skills.
8. Write a reflective account of what has been learned during the project and how this can be applied in the future. Developing the skills of critical reflection.

Bibliography:

Essential

Anderson, V. (2013) Research Methods in Human Resource Management: Investigating a Business Issue (3rd Edition) London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
Sanders, K., Cogin, J. A., and Bainbridge, H. T. J. (2014) *Research Methods for Human Resource Management (Routledge Advances in Management and Business Studies)* Routledge

Other indicative reading:

Bryman, A. (2012) *Social Research Methods* (4th Edition) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Becker, B. E., Ulrich, D. and Huselid, M. A. (2001) *The HR Scorecard: Linking People, Strategy, and Performance* Harvard Business Review Press
Creswell, J. W. (2013) Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches (4th Edition) Sage Publications
Dewberry, C. (2004) *Statistical Methods for Organizational Research: Theory and Practice.* London: Routledge
Hughes, M. (2010) *Managing Change: A Critical Perspective* (2nd Edition) London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
Morris, C. (2011) *Quantitative Approaches in Business Studies with MyMathLab Global* (8th Ed) Financial Times/ Prentice Hall
Sanders, K., Cogin, J. A. and Bainbridge, H. T. J. (2014) *Research Methods for Human Resource Management.* Routledge
Saunders, M. N. K., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2012) *Research Methods for Business Students* (6th Edition) Financial Times/ Prentice Hall;
Symon, G. and Cassell, C. (2012) *Qualitative Organizational Research: Core Methods and Current Challenges.* London. SAGE Publications Ltd
Ulrich, D. and Brockbank, W. (2005) *The HR Value Proposition* Harvard Business Review Press

Journals

Human Resource Management Journal
International Journal of Human Resource Management
People Management
Personnel Review
Work, Employment and Society

Websites

www.cipd.co.uk - Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
www.employmentstudies.co.uk - Institute for Employment Studies
www.ilo.org - International Labour Organization
www.bis.gov.uk - Department of Business, Innovation and Skills
www.ons.gov.uk - Office for National Statistics
www.europa.eu/employment - European Union Employment and Social Affairs
www.managers.org.uk - Chartered Management Institute
www.tuc.org.uk - Trades Union Congress
www.independent.co.uk - Independent newspaper
www.telegraph.co.uk - Daily Telegraph newspaper
www.bbc.co.uk/news/ - BBC News website
www.cnn.com/BUSINESS - CNN Business News