

Victoria University of Wellington



## MASTER OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

**MMPM 505**

### HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

(First Trimester Course – 15 points)

#### 2005 COURSE OUTLINE

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#### Module Dates, Times and Locations

Module One:	Wednesday 16 February 2005	8:30am - 6:00pm
Module Two:	Wednesday 6 April 2005	8:30am - 6:00pm
Module Three:	Wednesday 1 June 2005	8.30am - 6.00pm
Locations:	Pipitea Campus. Rooms will be advised prior to each module.	

## Course Objectives

This paper provides an overview of how the elements of Human Resource Management relate to and affect organisational strategies. The focus will be on the strategic contribution of HRM rather than the development of operational skills. The paper will explore the policies and practices which need to be considered if the frequently used phrase "people are our greatest asset" is to ring true for members of an organisation. Objectives are:

- To use different models of strategic human resource management to assess the extent to which human resources and organisational strategies of a particular organisation are aligned.
- To identify potential strengths and weaknesses of different strategies in the areas of employee influence, recruitment and selection, performance management, rewards and the design of work.
- To apply insights from theory and research to case examples of public sector practice and to your own organisation.

## Readings

Managing Human Resources in New Zealand, by Keith Macky and Gene Johnson, McGraw Hill, Second Edition

Textbooks are available from Vicbooks, Student Union Building, Gate 3, Kelburn Parade, PO Box 12337, Wellington. You can purchase textbooks in person or by mail order, telephone (04) 463 - 5515, fax (04) 471 - 2124, email: [vuwtexts@vicbooks.co.nz](mailto:vuwtexts@vicbooks.co.nz) or online: [www.vicbooks.co.nz](http://www.vicbooks.co.nz).

Also provided is a book of readings that focuses particularly on links between organisational and human resources strategies and provides ideas about other books and articles you might consult. Do check the University library's current book collection by searching on the most recent listings under the subject term of 'personnel management'.

If you are really keen and have the funds, there's a very recent book which is directly relevant to performance management issues in the New Zealand public sector – 'Obedient Servants? Management Freedoms and Accountabilities in the New Zealand public sector' by Richard Norman, Victoria University Press, 2003. (\$39.95, available from good bookshops like Bennetts Government Books or Technical Books, Waring Taylor St, Wellington!).

## Course Structure

Our time together consists of three very full days, a total of 22.5 teaching hours. The best use of this time, in my experience, is to enable a diverse group of public sector managers to debate the issues they face, rather than spend time conveying lecture-based knowledge. Class time needs to be fun - fast paced, varied in activity, and a motivator to learn more and put ideas into practice. To use class time most effectively, I need your assistance with the pre-readings. One of the lessons of

Human Resource Management research is that tasks that get rewarded and noticed are more likely to be carried out than those that don't. In keeping with this principle, there is a small reward at each session for pre-reading. Near the beginning of each session, I will run a 15 question, 20-minute open book quiz, worth five marks per time. These will be questions requiring answers of a few words or short sentences, and will be marked by someone else in the class before being handed in. Responses will help shape discussion for the day, identifying areas that are well known and subjects which create difficulty. Questions will be drawn from the readings recommended for each session, as described below.

You will need to attend class to take this test – in the interests of fairness to the whole class, individual sittings following the class will not be available. Should absence because of illness be an issue regarding a pass / fail grade, there will be an opportunity to consider an aegrotat grade based on marks for other tests and assignments.

## **MODULE ONE:**

### **An overview of Human Resource Management**

- Evolution of the term from 'personnel'
- Different types of HRM
- Contributors to HRM theory – scientific, humanistic, excellence schools.

### **Strategic Human Resource Management**

- Private sector models of strategy and their applicability to the public sector
- The stake-holder approach (Beer et al)
- Contingency approaches
- Competitive advantage and 'resource based' theory (Pfeffer and others)

### **READINGS:**

Macky and Johnson, Chapters 1 – 3.

Hendry, Storey, Legge, Fisher et al, Beer et al, Gratton, Pfeffer, Boxall and Purcell, Ulrich.

Case Study about the establishment of NZAID. What strategic human resources issues needed to be addressed in order to establish NZAID?

## **MODULE TWO:**

Brief presentations of strategic issues identified in assignment one will form a significant part of this module. As far as possible, presentations will be clustered into these HRM topics, which will be the focus for the module.

Employment relations

Job Analysis

Human Resource Planning

Recruitment

Selection

## READINGS:

Macky and Johnson, Chapters 4 – 8

Norman and Gregory (2003), Norman (2004), Boston (2001).

Case study: Staff turnover in the Victorian Treasury. What can the department do to reduce high levels of staff turnover?

## MODULE THREE:

Brief presentations of a selection of reports based on the literature review assignment will be sought during this module.

Topics from the textbook to be specifically covered are:

- Performance management and appraisal
- Training and Development
- Rewards and remuneration

## READINGS:

Macky and Johnson, Chapters 9 – 13.

Behn.

Case study: Cave Creek. Read Part A as background and focus particularly on Part B. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the organizational design and performance management system adopted?

## Assessment

The purpose of assessment is three-fold: to ensure that you have met the standard of work required of the course; to give you feedback on your performance to assist you with your future study; and to provide the teaching staff with feedback on the progress of the class. You will be assessed on the basis of your individual work, but it is also possible to work as a group for assignment one, the case study analysis. A very important part of this course is the submission of papers before the module. For module one, it will not be possible to mark assignments, but the hand-in on the Monday is requested so a programme for the Wednesday module can be organized. For the third module, a hand-in is sought on the Thursday before the module so research papers can be marked and handed back at the module.

Quick quiz assignment at each module. Five marks per module – 15% total

Assignment one (strategic alignment). Due 10 am, Monday, 4 April (40%)

Research / literature review report:

- Part A. Outline of research topic - Due at the 6 April module so feedback can be provided the following week (10 %).
- Part B. Completed report – Due 10 am, Monday, 26 May (35%).

## **MMPM 505 Assignment One**

**(Total value - 40%)**

With your organization, or an organisation to which you can gain access:

Evaluate the degree to which the business strategies and human resources policies and practices are aligned.

As part of this evaluation:

- Identify the major strategic human resource issues facing the organisation.
- Identify and analyse in 500 - 1000 words, one operational human resources issue which significantly affects the ability of the organisation to succeed with its strategic aims.

**You will need to consider:**

- The main external contextual and environmental factors which affect the organisation (The “Harvard map” provides a good checklist for these).
- The strategies which the organisation has adopted to respond to these environmental factors.
- The consequences of the strategic choices made by the organisation in terms of competence, cost effectiveness, congruence and commitment (Beer et al - the ‘Harvard map’). You may want to include the additional factors considered by Jeffrey Pfeffer (p33).

The report should be approximately 2000 words excluding appendices. Use appendices to provide detailed, supporting evidence, while using the body of the report for analysis.

**Assessment method:**

Assessment of the assignment will be based on the criteria below. The marks allocation column shows the approximate weighting that will be given to different aspects of the report. Ticks will be placed in the relevant columns to provide feedback about each element of the report. The ticks will be converted to a mark out of 40.

Group case studies are feasible if pre-arranged, as these can enable greater depth and breadth of analysis. For a group of two, the word length would be approx 3500 words. For a group of three, it would be approx 4500 words. All members in a group would then receive the same mark.

	Marks Allocation	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Identification of the key strategic issues affecting the organisation. How well does the report cut through complexity and detail to identify the most critical issues?	8					
Identification of the strategic human resource issues which most directly affect organisational success. How well is the case for their impact made – e.g. with statistics, financial information or argument about the extent to which these issues affect organisational performance?	10					
Analysis of a key operational human resources issue and its impact on organisational performance? This section should provide more detail as backup to the strategic overview.	8					
Use of theoretical frameworks. Does the report show an understanding of the interconnectedness of HR issues identified in theories about strategic human resource management?	8					
Written communication - structure and expression and technical features such as accurate referencing, spelling, punctuation, grammar.	6					

**Explanation of the rating scale used for both assignments:**

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Description</b>
Excellent	The quality is performed to a very high level of proficiency, i.e. it is at a standard that makes it exceptional for the level of the class concerned.
Very Good	The quality is performed to a high standard. Students have reached a level which clearly exceeds "competency."
Good / competent	The quality is clearly demonstrated without being exceptional in any way. Students can be thought of as competent in respect of this quality.
Satisfactory	The quality is demonstrated to a minimally acceptable level. There may be flaws but these are not serious enough to "fail" the student on this quality.
Unsatisfactory	The quality is absent or performed to a very low level, or the performance is seriously flawed in this respect.

**MMPM 505**  
**Assignment Two – Research Report**

**Part A: A two page outline (10%)**

**Part B: Full report (35%)**

**(Total value - 45%)**

This report provides an opportunity to assess theory and research relevant to a strategic issue identified through the case study report. This is an opportunity to move from diagnosis to prescription, based on knowledge of the relevant literature.

For Part A, the initial outline, set out a clear statement of your research question or hypothesis, and identify specific references you have identified from an initial scan of available literature. Issues likely to arise with a literature review are covered in the attached information from Paul Leedy. Please use the style of referencing adopted by the Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources, and provided in the book of readings.

The Part B, full report, should be approximately 2000 words in length, excluding appendices.

Research report criteria are:

	Marks Allocation	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Initial outline (Part A): How well is the research question defined? How well does the two-page overview describe the project? How well is the relevant area of literature identified, making it clear that this will be a well-focused report? (i.e. be specific with references you have identified or intend to consult)	10					
Final report: (Part B): How well does the report provide a clear definition of the issue under investigation?	5					
Literature Review: How well does the review identify and reference relevant literature?	10					
Application: How well is theory and research applied to the issue under study?	5					
Conclusions: How well are findings drawn from the literature-based review of the issues?	5					
Technical features: e.g. accurate referencing, spelling, punctuation, grammar, and sentence construction.	5					



## **Background to conducting a literature review.**

**Extracted from: *Practical Research - Planning and Design***

**By Paul D Leedy**

**Macmillan, New York, 1989**

### **Understanding the Role of the Review**

As a general rule, students do not understand the purpose of investigating the literature related to their research problem. Its function derives from a fundamental position among researchers that the more one knows about the peripheral investigations germane to one's own study, the more knowledgeably one can approach the problems inherent in one's own area of investigation.

Such exploration and discussion occupies the section in the research proposal or in the completed research report known as the *review of the related literature*. The italicized words are emphasised intentionally to stress what needs stressing. They describe precisely what the related literature section does. Its function is to "look again" (*re+view*) at the *literature* (the reports of what others have done) in a *related* area: an area not necessarily identical with, but collateral to, your own area of study.

\* ***Be systematic and thorough.*** "Make haste slowly" is a sound rule for the researcher. Too many students make careless, half-complete jottings.

\* ***Relate your bibliography to your problem.*** Always keep your research *problem-oriented*. In gathering bibliography, ask yourself, how does this item of literature relate to my problem? Discover a nexus between the problem and the literature.

To avoid being accused of irrelevancy, on each bibliographical source card indicate precisely how the particular item that you are recording relates to your problem. The preceding specimen card includes a space for this information. The competent researcher never forgets that everything that is done serves only one purpose: to contribute to the solution of the problem.

### ***How to Write the Section on the Related Literature***

\* ***Get the proper psychological orientation.*** You need to be clear in your own thinking. Know precisely what is it that you are attempting to do. The review of the related literature section is a *discussion* of the studies, research reports, scholarly or broad spectrum writings that bear directly upon your own effort.

First, there are always the classic studies, the historically oriented writings that have prepared the way for your research effort as well as those of others. These studies are the efforts of the trailblazers of the discrete area within which your problem lies. They connect your special realm of interest to the broad historical horizon from which you can gain perspective for your own efforts.

Begin your discussion of the related literature from a comprehensive perspective, like an inverted pyramid: broad end first. Then you can deal with more and more specific or more localised studies that focus more and more on your specific problem.

\* ***Emphasise relatedness.*** Keep your reader constantly aware of the manner in which the literature you are discussing is related to your problem. Point out precisely what that relationship is.

Remember that you are writing a review of the *related* literature. Too many discussions of the literature are nothing but a chain of pointless, isolated summaries.

\* ***Review the literature; don't reproduce it!*** The review of the literature section of a proposal or a dissertation is perhaps one of the most challenging to write. It requires that you keep a clear focus on just what this section is intended to do.

### ***Showing the Relatedness of the Literature to the Research Project***

Many discussions of the related literature never quite make the nexus between the discussion of the literature others have produced and the research that one is doing. The following procedures are recommended to prevent such a hiatus:

1. Write your problem at the top of the page where you cannot lose sight of it. In this location you will be constantly reminded of the central axis around which everything else revolves.
2. Dissect the problem by numbering its various subparts.
3. Divide the page into two columns by drawing a vertical line down the middle of the page starting below the statement of the problem.
4. Cite each specific study in the left-hand column.
5. In the right-hand column, opposite each study, note the particular subdivision of the problem to which the study relates, and note also the rationale for including it in the review of literature.
6. Gather together all the citations that refer to a particular aspect of the problem, so that you have as many groups as you have subdivisions of your main problem.
7. Study these groups in relation to each other, with the view of planning and organizing discussion of the related literature.
8. Write the review. Head each section with headings whose wording contains the identical words found in the statement of the problem.

By following this procedure, you will avoid mere bibliographical prattle under the guise of reviewing the literature presumably related to your problem.

### ***Summarise What You Have Said***

Every discussion of literature and associated research relating to the problem under consideration should end with a brief section in the form of a summary in which the author gathers up all that has been said and sets forth its *significance* in terms of the research problem. Perhaps the important question that any researcher can ask - and it should be asked continually throughout the whole progress of the research study - is:

‘Now, what does it all mean?’

## General University Policies and Statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly those regarding assessment and course of study requirements, and formal academic grievance procedures.

### Student and Staff Conduct

The Statute on Student Conduct together with the Policy on Staff Conduct ensure that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect. The Statute on Student Conduct contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps can be taken if there is a complaint. For queries about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor. This Statute is available in the Faculty Student Administration Office or on the VUW website at: [www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct).

The policy on Staff Conduct can be found on the VUW website at: [www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/staffconduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/staffconduct).

### Academic Grievances

If you have any academic problems with your course you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned or, if you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the Associate Dean of your Faculty. Class representatives are available to assist you with this process. If, after trying the above channels, you are still unsatisfied, formal grievance procedures can be invoked. These are set out in the Academic Grievances Policy, which is published on the VUW website: [www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/academicgrievances](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/academicgrievances).

### Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means **no cheating**. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. Plagiarism is **prohibited** at Victoria.

The University defines plagiarism as follows:

*Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not.*

‘Someone else’s work’ means anything that is not your own idea, even if it is presented in your own style. It includes material from books, journals or any other printed source, the work of other students and staff, information from the Internet, software programs and other electronic material, designs and ideas. It also includes the organisation or structuring of any such materials.

***Plagiarism is not worth the risk.***

Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct ([www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct)) and may be penalised severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning,
- suspension from class or university,
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University’s website at: [www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html).

## **Students with Disabilities**

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities an equal opportunity with all other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, then please contact the Course Coordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services to confidentially discuss your individual needs and the options and support that are available.

Disability Support Services are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building, Telephone: (04) 463 - 6070, Email: [disability@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:disability@vuw.ac.nz).

The name of your School’s Disability Liaison Person is in the relevant prospectus or can be obtained from the Administrative Assistant.

## Student Support

Staff at Victoria want students' learning experiences at the University to be positive. If your academic progress is causing you concern, the following staff members will either help you directly or quickly put you in contact with someone who can.

	<u>Staff</u>	<u>Location</u>
FHSS	Ann McDonald	Student Support Coordinator, 2 Wai - te - ata Road
Law	Kirstin Harvey	Old Government Building, room 103
Science, and Architecture and Design	Liz Richardson	Cotton Building, room 150
Commerce and Administration	Colin Jeffcoat	Railway West Wing, room 119
Kaiwawao Maori	Liz Rawhiti	Old Kirk Building, room 007
Manaaki Pihipihinga	Melissa Dunlop	14 Kelburn Parade, room 109D
Victoria International	Anne Cronin	10 Kelburn Parade, room 202

The Student Services Group is also available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at: [www.vuw.ac.nz/st\\_services/](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/) Email [student-services@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:student-services@vuw.ac.nz).

VUWSA employs two Education Co-ordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building, Telephone: (04) 463 - 6983 or (04) 463 - 6984, Email [education@vuwsa.org.nz](mailto:education@vuwsa.org.nz).