

Victoria Management School  
**MMBA 519: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**  
Trimester Two 2013  
**COURSE OUTLINE**

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**Trimester Dates:** Monday 15 July to 17 November 2013

**Start Date:** Monday 15 July 2013

**Lecture Times:** Monday 5:40 pm to 7:30 pm

Location: Rutherford House Lecture Theatre 2

**Format:** One two-hour session per week

The course has a final examination, to be held in the period of 25 October to 16 November 2013.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course is designed to enable students to:

- achieve a sound understanding of contemporary human resource management issues
- analyse HRM issues, with respect to external and internal influences
- develop the ability to think about the trade-offs involved in HRM decisions
- understand how organisational strategy, global competition, technological change, workforce characteristics and government regulation influence HRM decisions
- appreciate how different HRM policies and practices relate to one another

There will be a strategic focus to the course, with the objective of understanding how human resource management policies and practices can be implemented and integrated in the strategic management of organisations and in a volatile and changing operating environment. A key assumption of the course is that students, as managers in their workplaces, need to understand the effective application of HRM to business issues and to have the ability to critically assess the HRM options available to them.

The focus for class sessions will less on describing the various HRM functions and more on looking at the rationale for using one HRM approach or tool over another. While there will be some overview of the various components of effective HRM, class sessions will emphasise the strategic imperatives underlying how HRM can contribute to organisational and business success.

In general the course will be structured thematically, looking at the people-related variables that need to be addressed in order to contribute to an effective business e.g. motivation, work effectiveness, career management, change, and diversity.

To achieve these objectives, the course requires active participation from students during class.

## LEARNING FRAMEWORK

Given the breadth of the topic and the fact that there will be only 24 hours of class contact time, the course will require some self-learning by students.

The design of this course is based on two main learning streams:

- descriptive information on the various functional processes of HRM (e.g. recruitment and selection, training and development, remuneration etc.) will come from the textbook – in other words the “what” of HRM.
- the thinking around the HRM issues one needs to consider in working with these processes, and the underlying challenges relating to strategic HRM’s contribution to the business, will primarily be developed in class – the “how” and the “why”.

Therefore the following learning structure will apply:

- At the first class session students will be given a schedule of all lecture topics and their dates.
- Together with this, a full reading schedule for the textbook (and other possible reading) will be given out. This reading schedule will show the chapters to be read in the context of the topic or theme that each chapter supports e.g. chapters on remuneration and performance management will be relevant to the class sessions on employee motivation.
- A full set of slides on HRM processes will be posted on Blackboard at the start of the course to support the textbook reading.
- Each student will receive a folder of readings comprising a range of book extracts, journal/magazine articles, government reports and newspaper articles - arranged by topic. These readings focus on HRM issues, themes and challenges, and will form the basis for class discussion.
- Students will be expected to have read the relevant textbook chapter and folder articles before the scheduled class topic.
- The first 20-30 minutes of each class session will be devoted to highlighting any implications of, and answering questions about, the HRM processes described in the preparatory textbook reading for that week. (If the questions and input from the class indicates that longer is required, then we will take the time needed to ensure understanding.)
- The remainder of each class session will focus on the wider HRM topic for that week that is set out in the course programme. Discussion will be based on specific articles, case studies and general class insights into the topic.

## TEXT

Nankervis, A., Compton, R., Baird, M. and Coffey, J. (2011). *Human Resource Management: Strategy and Practice*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. South Melbourne: Cengage Learning.

**The core text should be used as resource that will be helpful throughout your studies; however, it is only a starting point. You are expected to read more widely around the course topic areas drawing on academic journal articles, books, reports and case studies.**

The textbook has an Australian context, but it contains many generic analyses of HRM practices and processes and contains up-to-date perspectives of some significant HRM issues.

There is also a book of course readings that will be used as the basis for class discussion and analysis.

Additional books which you may find useful to supplement the core text include:

Bryson, J. and Ryan, R. (2012). *Human Resource management in the Workplace*. Australia: Pearson.

Macky, K. (Ed). (2008). *Managing Human Resources: Contemporary Perspectives in New Zealand*.. Australia: McGraw Hill.

Baron, J.N. and Kreps, D.M. (2000). *Strategic Human Resource Management: Frameworks for General Managers.*, Brisbane: John Wiley & Sons.

Rasmussen, E. (Ed). (2010). *Employment Relationships: Workers, Unions and Employers in New Zealand*. Auckland University Press.

Millmore, M., Lewis, P., Saunders, M., Thornhill, A. & Morrow, T. (2007). *Strategic Human Resource Management: Contemporary Issues*. Essex: Pearson Education Limited.

Kirton, G. and Green, A.M. (2005). *The Dynamics of Managing Diversity; A Critical Approach*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Burlington: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.

Legge, K. (2005). *Human Resource Management: Rhetorics and Realities*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mabey, C., Salaman, G. and Storey, J. (Eds). (1998). *Strategic Human Resource Management: A Reader*. London: Sage Publications.

Rasmussen, E. (2004). *Employment Relationships: Workers, Unions and Employers in New Zealand*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Auckland University Press.

Rasmussen, E. and Lamm, F. (1999). *An Introduction to Employment Relations in New Zealand*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Auckland: Pearson Education New Zealand.

Rudman, R. (2002). *Human Resources Management in New Zealand*. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Auckland: Pearson Education New Zealand.

Useful Journals:

- Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources
- Employment Today
- Harvard Business Review
- Human Resources
- Human Resource Management
- Human Resource Management Review
- Human Relations
- International Journal of Human Resource Management
- New Zealand Journal of Human Resource Management
- Personnel Management

**Workload**

Students can expect the workload to be approximately 8-10 hours work outside class for every 2 hour class.

It is assumed that students will attend all classes and read all of the required readings. The lecture topics will be given out at the first class session.

**Assessment**

Method of assessment	Due Date	Percentage
Group exercise	tba	10%
Proposal for case study:	5 August	5%
Case study analysis	7 October	35%

**Group presentation - 10%**

If not already in a work group, students will be allocated to a work group. Each week from Week 2 an issue, case, question or exercise will be scheduled for class discussion two weeks later, and a group will be selected to facilitate that discussion. All students, however, are expected to read and think about the case/question/exercise in advance and come prepared to participate.

The timetabling of group work will depend to some extent on the size of the class and the number of work groups.

The evaluation of your group exercise will depend on your overall contribution, as demonstrated by:

- Demonstrated understanding of the issue being covered
- Knowledge of HRM principles as they relate to the issue
- Ability to both ask relevant questions of the class and answer questions from the class.
- Skill in facilitating the class discussion

**Individual case study**

You will be required to select an organisation or firm and critically analyse three of its HRM practices in the context of the business issues facing the organisation/firm.

**(a) Initial proposal - 5%**

You are to write a two-page proposal indicating:

- which organisation or firm (a private, public or voluntary sector one) you intend to study;
- the HRM practices and processes you intend to focus on – select **three** interconnected practices (this will be explained further at the first class session)
- what sort of information you will collect and how you will collect it. Use, as appropriate, primary and secondary information sources, e.g. interviews, company reports, business and strategic plans, stock market information, company brochures, collective agreements, union newsletters, newspaper articles, available surveys, books, journals, case studies, etc. Report on the availability of those data sources for the organisation you intend to study.

**THE PROPOSAL IS DUE ON 5<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2013 IN CLASS.**

**(b) Detailed case study - 35%**

You are to prepare a case analysis - maximum 6,000 words - that contains the following:

- A brief description of the organisation or firm and its context/environment.
- A brief description of the business strategy followed by the organisation or firm.
- An identification of the major business issues facing the organisation or firm and their current or potential impacts on it.
- A description of each of your selected HRM practices - this is a “current state” description.
- A brief analysis of the complementarity of the HRM practices i.e. how effective they are (or otherwise) in complementing/reinforcing each other.
- A detailed analysis of the effectiveness or otherwise of the HRM practices in contributing to (a) the overall business strategy and (b) addressing the business issues facing the organisation/firm.
- An outline of the implications of your findings for the organisation and recommendations (as appropriate) relating to addressing any HRM gaps.

In your analysis you should ensure that you include the material and topics covered in class including the applicable theories.

## THE CASE ANALYSIS IS DUE ON 7<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2013 IN CLASS.

### Final examination

The final examination will be a three hour closed book exam administered during the period of 25 October to 16 November 2013. The examination will be based on the lecture material, the readings and case discussions.

### Mandatory Course Requirements

To meet the mandatory course requirements for MMBA 519, students must:

- Contribute to, and participate in, the assigned group exercise
- Complete the individual assignment proposal and the case analysis
- Achieve 40% of the marks available in the final examination.

### Grading and Assessment Structure

	Grade	Percentage Range	Assessment Criteria
<b>Pass</b>	A+	85% and over	Excellent and wide ranging use of literature with clear understanding of implications. Excellent logical argument, strong evidence of critical thinking, evidence of original and creative thinking, clear structure, well presented with no grammatical or spelling errors and excellent referencing.
	A	80-84%	
	A-	75-79%	
	B+	70-74%	Wide ranging use of literature with some implications outlined. Clearly developed logical argument, evidence of critical thinking, logical structure and presentation, few grammatical or spelling errors, good referencing style.
	B	65-69%	
	B-	60-64%	
	C+	55-60%	Limited use of literature presented in a mostly descriptive manner. Adequate argument, little evidence of original or critical thinking. Logical but pedestrian structure with some errors in grammar, spelling and referencing style.
	C	50-54%	
<b>Failure</b>	D	40-49%	Little use of literature, which is poorly and descriptively presented. Argument at times confusing. Illogical or unclear structure with poor use of grammar and syntax. Referencing poor and inconsistent.
	E F K	Below 40% Overall fail Fail to meet mandatory course requirements	

### Penalties - for Lateness & Excessive Length of Assignments

- (i) In fairness to other students, work submitted after any deadline will incur a penalty for lateness. **The penalty is 10% of the marks available (marks available means what the assignment is worth e.g. 20 marks) for an assignment submitted after the due time on the due date for each part day or day late.** For example if an assignment is out of 20 and the assignment receives a mark of 14 i.e. 70% of 20, then one day late means the mark will be out of 18 and the student will receive 70% of 18). **Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays** will be included when counting the number of days late. Assignments received **more than 7 days after the due date** will not be accepted and the student will **automatically fail the Mandatory Course Requirements.**
- (ii) Course Outlines provide a signal to students of forthcoming workload, dates of submission etc, and thus student study plans should take account of course requirements across all courses. Consequently, workload issues related to other courses and employment will not be accepted as reason for dispensation from mandatory requirements or waiver of penalties.

**Extensions** to submission deadlines for any assigned work will only be granted in **exceptional circumstances**.

- (iii) Students who know that they may be unable to comply with any of the mandatory requirements should make a written application for an extension to the due date for submission of assigned work or for waiver of a penalty, **in advance**, to the **Course Supervisor** or **Course Administrator**, providing documentary evidence of the reasons of their circumstances.

All such applications must be made **before** the deadline and be accompanied by documentary evidence, e.g. a medical certificate, or counsellor's report clearly stating the degree of impairment, and the dates the illness or event prevented you from undertaking your academic studies. This can be applied retrospectively.

- (iv) In the event of unusual or unforeseeable circumstances (e.g. serious illness, family bereavement or other exceptional events), that precludes an application in advance, students should make contact with the **Course Supervisor** or **Course Administrator** as soon as possible, and make application for waiver of a penalty as soon as practicable.
- (v) Specified word limits should be adhered to, especially so when they provide a guide to limiting the student's coverage of a topic. **The penalty will be 10% of the grade for an assignment which is more than 200 words over the word limit.**

### **Policy on Remarking**

Every attempt is made to ensure that the marking is consistent across tutors and fair to students.

Students may ask for their written work to be remarked. A different tutor will do the remarking and provide comments. The original marking sheet is removed to ensure the process is independent. If the mark differs by 10% or less the two marks are averaged. If it exceeds 10% then it is independently marked by a third marker and the average of the two closest marks is taken. Experience from previous years is that almost all remarks are within 10% and where there is a change in mark, half the assignments go up and half go down. Occasionally there is a significant shift in the mark.

Application for remarks must be made within 5 days after the marks are available. To apply for a remark, complete the request for re-examination of assessed work form (Annex B) stating which sections (criteria listed in the mark sheet) you wish re-examined. Write on why you think the mark does not, in your view, fairly reflect the quality of your work. Hand this with your assignment into the following place:-

- Pipitea Campus – the Reception Desk on Level 10 Rutherford House where your assignment will have the **time, date and signature** noted on the front cover by the person receiving it.

Allow up to 5 days for remarks to be completed.

### *Referencing*

There are many different styles of referencing and the Faculty of Commerce & Administration at VUW has decided to make APA (American Psychological Association) referencing style the common standard across the Faculty. The Commerce and Central Libraries hold the APA Style Guide. You can also access the information from the online VUW library site

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/library/research/reference/referencingguides.aspx>

### **Communication**

Information on course-related matters will be announced at class and posted on the **Blackboard** website at <http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz/>. It will be crucial for you to regularly check Blackboard for messages, announcements and materials.

### *Email Contact*

Students wishing to contact staff by email should adhere to the following instructions:

Include the **Course Code**, your **Name**, your **Student ID** and the **Topic** in the subject area of the email, e.g. MGMT300\_Smith\_Pauline\_3000223344\_Ass1 Query

All students must use their VUW SCS email account and ID. Otherwise, email will be classified as Spam and will be dumped without being read. All emails with attachments will be dumped, unless requested by staff.

### **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. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

*The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.*

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

*Note: including the work of others will not be considered plagiarism as long as the work is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.*

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalised severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

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

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

**For the following important information follow the links provided:**

#### **General University Policies and Statutes**

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/academic.aspx>

#### **Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices**

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fca/studenthelp/Contactus.aspx>

#### **Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme**

[http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/mentoring/](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/mentoring/)

For information on the following topics, go to the Faculty's website [www.victoria.ac.nz/fca](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fca) under Important Information for Students:

- **Academic Grievances**
- **Student and Staff Conduct**
- **Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments**
- **Student Support**