

CANDIDATE DETAILS

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Membership number	
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CIPD Advanced Level Examinations

**Leading, Managing and Developing
People**

May 2021- Examiners Report

Date: 27 May 2021

Time: 09.50-14.00

- This exam starts at 09.50 (UK time) and finishes at 14.00 (UK time)
- The first 10 minutes of this exam is intended for reading and question planning
- Once complete, you must save this file with your Candidate Number as the file name and send to exams@cipd.co.uk by no later than 14.15 (UK time)
- You should only type in the answer boxes provided, do not make any changes to the exam question or other parts of the paper.

A note from your Chief Examiner:

1. Look carefully at each question and spend some time identifying exactly what is required.
2. Set out some brief notes that provide you with a structure for your answer.
3. Keep referring back to these notes and to the question(s) as you write your answer.
4. After writing each answer, check carefully that every part, both within and between the question(s) is answered.

RULES OF EXAMINATION

By submitting your work for marking you are agreeing to the below conditions

- Answer **all** of Section A.
- Answer **five** questions in Section B (**one** per subsection A to E).
- Read each question carefully before answering.

Information

- Equal marks are allocated to each section of the paper.
- Within Section B equal marks are allocated to each question.
- If a question includes reference to 'your organisation', this may be interpreted as covering any organisation with which you are familiar.
- The case study is not based on an actual organisation. Any similarities to known organisations are coincidental.

You will fail the examination if:

- You fail to answer five questions in Section B (one per subsection) **and/or**
- You achieve less than 40% in either Section A or Section B **and/or**
- You achieve less than 50% overall.

In accordance with the [CIPD Plagiarism Policy for Online Remote Examinations](#) you must:

- **not** have any assistance with the exam from friends, family, centre staff or any other person(s).
- **not** allow friends, family or any other person(s) to sit the exam in their place.
- **only** access course notes or text books (either physical books or downloaded e-books).
- **not** use the internet (other than for sitting the exam), email or additional equipment during the exam. This includes potential technological/web enabled sources of information such as an iPod, a mobile phone, a MP3/4 player or similar device, a smartwatch or a wrist watch which has a data storage device.
- **use** quotation marks for any quotes provided within an answer and clearly reference the source.
- **not** be involved in any unfair or dishonest practice during the exam.

If any of these conditions are not met during the exam or are later found to be breached, an investigation will take place and could result in possible **disqualification**.

The only material you are allowed to bring to the exam is a printed copy of the case study provided it is free of notes.

You may only use your phone or email in order to contact CIPD if you experience any issues during the examination.

May 2021- 7LMP Examiners Report

Introduction

A total of 317 candidates sat the 7LMP examination in May. The overall pass rate was 71% which was a touch lower than has been achieved by most recent cohorts. There were, however, a remarkably high number of merits and distinctions awarded on this occasion, comprising almost 30% of the papers. The final breakdown of marks was as follows:

Grade	7LMP	
Distinction	18	5%
Merit	76	24%
Pass	132	42%
Marginal Fail	12	4%
Fail	79	25%
Total	317	
Pass Rate	71%	

On this occasion the papers were marked by Andrew Hambler, Cecilia Ellis, John Mitchell, Mary Louca, Catherine Jones, Graham Perkins, Christine Parkin-Hughes, Esther Park, Jon Smith and myself. Jon Smith also kindly assisted me with the moderation on this occasion. Detailed feedback on each question is as follows:

SECTION A

This is the case study that was released to you 4 weeks ago. You can read below and also open in a web browser using the link below to refer to when answering your questions:

<https://www.cipd.co.uk/learn/training/pre-2021-qualifications/advanced-exam-info/case-studies>

Note: In your responses, you are allowed to improvise or add to the case study details provided below. However, the case study should not be changed or compromised in any way.

Croquembouche Coffee Houses (CCH) is a privately owned company that runs an established chain of cafes in sixty locations around the UK. Most are located on high streets and in shopping centres, but there are also units located in large railway stations and some airports. The company sells a wide variety of speciality coffees, cakes, sandwiches and other beverages. It markets itself as a sustainable business with high standards of business ethics.

Throughout the Twentieth Century there was a single Croquembouche coffee house located prominently in Central London. This was then taken over by a by a company that was keen to profit from the fast growth in the UK's coffee shop market. Much money was invested in building the chain and for several years good profits were made. After 2015 though, problems started to arise. Sales began to slump in a number of locations as competition from ambitious independents and other coffee shop chains became more intense. Issues arose concerning unpaid debts and the company started to struggle financially. By the time of the Covid pandemic it was in serious financial difficulty and in danger of becoming insolvent. In 2021 the company was sold to a consortium of four former CCH managers with finance largely provided by a venture capital fund.

While there are many factors behind Croquembouche's recent poor performance, it is clear that poor management of people has been a major problem area for some time. Staff turnover was running at over 100% in 2019 and employee engagement levels have been very poor in several coffee shops for some years. Good evidence of these matters is found on the Glassdoor website where hundreds of current and former employees have written disobliging reviews of their experiences working for the company. Overall ratings since 2015 have been below 3 out of 5, which is considerably lower than the scores typically achieved by CCH's major competitors.

The following are a representative sample of some of the comments that have been left in the Pros and Cons section on Glassdoor:

"Lovely regular customers. Met some good friends"

"Friendly and supportive staff who were happy to swap shifts. Tips"

"Staff discount on cakes and food"

"The only good thing was that it was located only three minutes walking from the place that I used to live."

"You learn basic management tasks and can improve your communication skills. Free lunch and cakes."

"I guess it pays your bills if you're single and live in shared accommodation"

"If you want a culture where the quality of the product, the customer, the brand and the staff are key to how the business works, avoid Croquembouche."

"Nothing at all was positive"

"No real opportunities for advancement"

"Never put enough staff on shift. Bad at giving breaks, you can work an 8-9 hour shift and not be given a 30-minute break. Never know when your shift will end."

"Every unit is understaffed, always."

"It was soul-destroying, you're taken advantage of and paid very little and you are spoken to by management like you're a child (in front of customers)"

"No gratitude for anything, lazy people get paid the same as hard working employees"

"Payroll is terrible, consistently mess up pay and will throw the blame on each other rather than own their own mistakes."

"Head office only cares about the numbers, not the people"

"Some managers are controlling to the point of bullying. While others couldn't care less. The unit managers and HQ are also incompetent. Nothing gets resolved quickly or accurately."

"Horrible management, no training at all"

"Terrible company to work for expected to give absolutely everything for nothing in return. Won't pay for overtime."

"A lot of unfairness. If the manager is your friend you'll have advantages Senior managers tend to be offensive and won't think twice before humiliating you."

"Customers can be super nasty. They will call you names and shout at you for the smallest things."

"The staff at my store are nice. You get free food and drink, even though you aren't officially allowed it. You get to keep your tips if you are a waiter."

"Management are underqualified and not trained. Many health and safety violations, especially regarding food. Equipment doesn't get fixed, and the lack of training means things break a lot"

"Management are more concerned about reaching unrealistic goals than the wellbeing of their staff or the quality of service provided Longstanding staff are not appreciated or rewarded. Low pay. Little to no training."

"Rude customers sometimes, repetitive and same tasks most shifts"

"A very poor company on SOOOOO many levels - they won't care about you - don't go & work for them - they are full of the proverbial !!"

Please note that the comments and mark section are for CIPD use only.

SECTION A

Learning Outcomes:

LO2: Evaluate major theories relating to motivation, commitment and engagement at work and how these are put into practice by organisations.

LO6: Assess the contribution made by HRM and HRD specialists in different types of organisations).

It is recommended you spend equal time on each question in this section.

Question 1

You have recently been appointed as the first ever HR Director at Croquebouché Coffee Houses. Your remit is to bring forward proposals for new approaches, policies and practices which will:

- Identify the most important, single, immediate HR priority and the best way to tackle it effectively and rapidly.*
- To establish measurable levels of staff engagement and improve them by 50% over the next two years.*
- To reduce staff turnover levels in the coffee houses by 50% a year.*
- To ensure that scores and anonymous reviews left by employees and former employees on Glassdoor in the future are as positive as those of your major competitors.*

A budget of £350,000 a year will be made available to you in order to meet these objectives provided the senior management team is convinced that your proposals will have the required impact.

Set out with persuasive business justification how you would go about meeting these four core objectives.

Chief Examiner comments on Question 1

It became clear when marking the first papers to arrive with us that we had a significant problem to resolve which had not been one we had to confront when marking the last two diets of online exams. A significant minority of candidates had apparently cut and pasted pre-prepared material into their answer sheets rather than writing answers to the Section A questions in the allocated time. In some cases the amount of text extended to over 10,000 words (16,000 in one case). Some had subsequently adjusted their pre-prepared notes to fit the questions, but others had not. So we had to read through a lot of material that was unfocused and, in many cases, really amounted to notes for an answer rather than a properly constructed answer written in response to our questions. On the one hand this practice did not break any of the rules set out in the exam rubric, but on the other it is clearly most unfair to the majority of candidates who did write answers in the allocated time. The cut and pasters, of course, also bought themselves a great deal additional time to work on Section B. For future cohorts we will have to establish new rules to make sure that there is a level playing field and that this can not happen again, but when marking this cohort's work we were obliged to use our judgement as best we could to achieve fairness to all. We thus marked work that looked as if it had been pasted in, but reduced the marks awarded when, as was often the case, no serious attempt had been made to structure work around the four headings set out in the questions or where one or more had not been properly addressed. However, where a full and well-informed answer was 'hidden' in extensive cut and pasted material, we sought to mark that fairly. As always what we are looking for are direct answers to our specific questions, which are well-informed, well-argued and persuasively justified. Cut and pasted answers often failed to meet these criteria despite being very extensive and full of references.

That said, there was plenty of scope here for candidates to develop original arguments, particularly in respect of the first objective in the list. People had different views about the key immediate priorities. The health and safety issues relating to hygiene and equipment were frequently discussed as being a priority, especially considering that this company looks to base part of its consumer appeal on its ethical approaches. Other quick wins would be the announcement of a general intent to improve HR practices, to listen to staff views and potentially a commitment to carry out a comprehensive staff survey and to act on it. Paying overtime would be a good way of signalling very clearly that things are going to change.

Longer term there needs to be investment in basic management training and a formal complaints / grievance system set up to deal rapidly with complaints about bullying, rudeness and favouritism. Payment systems need to be made far more professional and be fair as well as seen to be fair. While it will probably not be possible, at least in the short term to improve pay rates, there is a lot to be gained from showing greater respect towards employees and noticing / praising / thanking them for what they do. Some form of performance-based bonus scheme might also achieve much if properly designed. Mystery shopper reports on service levels are a good means of achieving this, and they can be team based as well as a vehicle for rewarding outstanding individual customer service.

Exit interviews carried out confidentially would help identify specific reasons for leaving and hence provide the basis for taking steps to reduce staff turnover. Training (or lack of it) is also clearly a major issue. So standards need to be set and communicated clearly, with thoughtful and effective training interventions introduced so that all new staff and all new managers are properly trained to undertake their roles much more effectively. Rude customers are a big source of dissatisfaction and steps can be taken to tackle this through management training aimed at supporting staff when it happens and taking steps to prevent it from happening in the first place.

Staffing levels are also an important source of dissatisfaction and presumably poor customer feedback too. Coffee houses struggle to retain regular customers if they are always short-staffed, so there is a good rationale for improving things in this area. This may take time to address as it is probably a function of poor line management leading to poor absence, high turnover and a lack of new recruits.

Most of all it seems that there is low trust between management and staff in this organisation. Staff perceive that managers do not care about them or value their contribution. They feel talked down to. This is a cultural issue that needs to be tackled with transparent discussion and potentially some form of 360 degree appraisal system for coffee house managers.

There were some excellent answers that tackled all these issues head on, made thoughtful recommendations and justified proposed expenditure well. Some candidates had clearly researched the industry extensively and were able to cite examples from real companies to illustrate points and justify their proposals. The most common limitation was a failure to address all four of the points in the question. The final one on Glassdoor reviews specifically was often avoided completely.

SECTION B

Answer **FIVE** questions in this section, **ONE** per subsection A to E.

For example, you need to answer either:

A1 OR A2
B3 OR B4
C5 OR C6
D7 OR D8
E9 OR E10

DO NOT ANSWER BOTH QUESTIONS IN EACH SUBSECTION

SECTION B

Please only answer A1 OR A2.

A1

Learning Outcome 1 - Review and critically evaluate major contemporary research and debates in the fields of HRM and HRD

In 2021 the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) published a research report entitled "Employee Resilience: An Evidence Review". Here a "resilient employee" was defined as being someone who is able to withstand and thrive in stressful conditions while also being able to bounce back quickly from challenging or traumatic experiences.

- i. *Explain why it is of benefit to employers to have among their staff a good proportion of people who are resilient. Illustrate your answer with examples.*

AND

- ii. *Identify two distinct steps your organisation could take to help build greater*

Chief Examiner comments on Question A1

This question was intended to test knowledge and understanding of Learning outcome 1 (Review and critically evaluate major contemporary research and debates in the fields of HRM and HRD).

It is useful to have people who are resilient because they can help others take an organisation through difficult periods successfully and assist teams in re-establishing equilibrium again afterwards. They do this partly through their example and partly through the support they are able to provide for colleagues during tough periods. The covid pandemic provided good examples, but candidates successfully drew on a variety of periods of organisational stress and challenging change episodes to illustrate these points.

The two major HR interventions that are typically discussed in the context of improving employee resilience are, first, recruitment and promotion (i.e.: selecting people as staff members and promoting people to leadership roles who exhibit emotional resilience). The extent to which individuals have this attribute varies greatly, and team members who are not so naturally resilient still have important roles to play and will bring other characteristics to their work. But there is a good

case, particularly in uncertain and volatile business environments, to include at all levels in an organisation some resilient characters who can help make the organisation as a whole more resilient. Secondly, there is plenty of scope for training people to become more resilient. The CIPD research report suggest interventions aimed at developing “self-awareness, critical reflection, relaxation and mindfulness in combination with goal-setting, coaching and small group discussions to improve participants’ emotional self-efficacy and stress reactivity” – so there were plenty of alternatives to argue for here. As always, the persuasiveness of the justification provided was of central importance when marking these answers.

SECTION B

Please only answer A1 OR A2.

A2

Learning Outcome 1 - Review and critically evaluate major contemporary research and debates in the fields of HRM and HRD

In recent years a great deal of research has been published which concludes that organisational trust is strongly linked to superior business performance. It appears to show that organisations which are characterised by 'high trust workplace cultures' are better able to attract, retain and engage people than those where trust is in short supply. A high-trust culture is said to have a 'family feel' about it that brings out the best in its members.

- i. *To what extent do you consider your organisation to have the attributes of a 'high trust culture'? Justify your answer.*
- ii. *What steps would you recommend were taken by senior managers and the HR function to build higher levels of trust in your organisation?*

Chief Examiner comments on Question A2

This question was also intended to test knowledge and understanding of Learning outcome 1 (Review and critically evaluate major contemporary research and debates in the fields of HRM and HRD).

This proved to be a popular choice, a good majority of candidates answering it. Their answers were very interesting to read, as they were often quite critical of their own organisations.

The nature of answers to part 2 here clearly varied a lot depending on what had been written in response to part 1. With part 1 some argued that their cultures are very trusting, others that trust is in short supply. Most took a more balanced position. What mattered from a marking perspective was that their answers were credible and persuasively justified.

Answers to part two focused mainly on soft HRM, on openness, transparency, genuine and authentic relationships, approachability as far as senior leaders are concerned, encouraging honest feedback, showing emotion where appropriate, the building of positive psychological contracts, ensuring fairness and equity in the way people are treated, and more use of 'we' than 'I' in internal communications. Humour can also be helpful when building trust, social events being encouraged among teams and informal support being given to those who are going through challenging times either at work or home. Key of course is avoiding over-promising and then dashing expectations. HRD interventions are the best way to achieve these things, but also appointing team leaders who have a good amount of emotional intelligence and understand the need to embrace diversity and celebrate team achievements. Praise much more than criticise. Boost esteem etc.

The weaker answers here tended to be descriptive in nature, setting out what candidates' organisations had done in the past to build trust rather than justifying recommended courses of action for the future as was required by the question.

SECTION B

Please only answer **B3** OR **B4**.

B3

Learning Outcome 3: Debate and critically evaluate the characteristics of effective leadership and the methods used to develop leaders in organisations.

Theories of 'servant leadership' suggest that senior leaders who look to serve the needs of others and empathise with them rather than focusing on their own ambitions are best placed to motivate employees from the millennial generation (i.e: people born in the late 1980s and 1990s). This is because their values align well.

To what extent do you agree with this point of view? Justify your answer with reference to your reading, published research, personal experience and observations.

Chief Examiner comments on Question B3

This was a challenging question, but one which a good majority of candidates attempted. Some answers were rather thin, other wrote about other approaches such as authentic leadership (not quite the same thing) but the best ones gave good examples and wrote thoughtful responses.

There was here plenty of scope here for candidates to develop original arguments and to justify them. The extent to which people concur with characterisations of the millennial generation being distinct and having their own set of values which place significance on ethics, CSR, authenticity and social justice etc tends to depend on when they were born. Millennials tend to be more likely to see their own generation as being rather more special than those of us who are older. In any event what we were looking for here was a well-informed and persuasive argument in answer to the question. Good answers partly reflected on servant leadership traits / styles and partly on the values of the millennial generation, bringing these together in an argument which was more or less supportive of the proposition in the question. There

was also plenty of scope here for more sceptical and critical voices who may doubt how realistic it is to run organisations as a servant in tough, competitive conditions where difficult decisions sometimes have to be made which do not fit so closely with servant leadership traits and values. Some stronger answers took this approach.

SECTION B

Please only answer B3 OR B4.

B4

Learning Outcome 3: Debate and critically evaluate the characteristics of effective leadership and the methods used to develop leaders in organisations.

Suppose that you have been appointed to a new HR management post in a well-established organisation that employs 5000 people in an industry of your choice. At present 95% of the workforce comes from an ethnic minority group and there are no senior leaders or managers who are from those minority groups. You have been asked to develop policies and practical initiatives which will bring about greater diversity while complying with the law. In practice this will mean promoting 'positive action', diversity and inclusion.

- i. Drawing on published research, explain why continued under-representation of people from ethnic minorities is most likely to be a feature of this organisation, particularly among the senior management team?
- ii. What THREE distinct interventions would you recommend were taken to address this under-representation. Justify your answer.

Chief Examiner comments on Question B4

This question was answered effectively by a large number of candidates, some of whom clearly have a particular interest in inclusion and diversity issues and were able to draw on statistics and examples to make out good, strong arguments here

There is, of course, a substantial research literature on these issues and we expected some reference to be made to it. Opinion is divided on the extent to which direct racism remains a driver of inequality in UK society generally and hence among decision makers in industry. It is certainly less overt than was the case in the past, but covert racism remains in some organisations as is occasionally demonstrated by evidence presented in employment tribunal proceedings. However, most contemporary research now focuses on unconscious bias, stereotyping and the tendency people have to deny their own internalised prejudices. It was in these areas that we were able to mark some very well-informed answers to part 1.

Answers to the second part varied a lot. What was important was that three sound suggested courses of action were presented which were distinct from one another (i.e.: not three different training programmes) and effectively justified. At the start of

“Race in the workplace The McGregor-Smith Review” (2015) there is a helpful paragraph that summarises the key steps organisations need to take in order to become truly inclusive:

“Fixing this will involve a critical examination of every stage of the process, from how individuals are recruited to how they are supported to progress and fulfil their potential. The importance of effective mentoring, sponsorship, role models and networks in delivering positive action needs to be understood at all levels of an organisation, with leaders taking responsibility for creating truly inclusive workplaces”.

There were thus plenty of possibilities for answers to the second part, which was generally answered effectively. Occasionally though we were presented with lists of bullet points with no further explanation or justification. At M level we really need to see more than that.

SECTION B

Please only answer C5 OR C6.

C5

Learning Outcome 4: Contribute to the promotion of flexible working and effective change management in organisations.

An article in the Economist published in March 2021 reflected on the likely long- term effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the future of work. It cited research from DEMOS which argued that as far as office workers are concerned, it is likely that a hybrid model will soon emerge in which employees will spend their working days in 'nowhere virtual offices'. They will move between 'home, the coffee shop and a co-working space'. Hybrid models allow people more freedom to decide when they work during each day and week. The article concludes with the following observation:

"Get ready to ask people you meet not 'where do you work?', but 'when do you work'?"

What do you consider will be the main advantages and disadvantages for both

Chief Examiner comments on Question C5

Unsurprisingly given its topicality and personal resonance for so many in the current situation, this question was chosen by a very considerable majority of candidates. Most answered it effectively and fully, although some missed important key points relating to employer cost savings associated with more hybrid working.

For employees the main advantage is a reduced need to commute into an office. This will free up time and thus permit a higher quality of life. It also makes longer commutes feasible, thus providing more scope to move house further away from the workplace and save a great deal of money each year. This creates greater choice by way of location, again potentially increasing quality of life. The second great advantage is flexibility across the working day, week and year. This has the potential to allow better work-life balance and will make it easier to juggle work and domestic activity. So reduced stress could be an outcome, making it less likely that people will develop mental health (and hence physical health) issues.

For employers the main advantages are reduced costs in terms of office space, energy bills and – potentially – greater productivity. The last point is yet to be established, but if people are happier they tend to be more productive. Moreover, commuting and working set hours can be tiring so a hybrid model may serve to increase engagement and hence productivity.

For employees the main disadvantages are for people whose personal living arrangements are not conducive to home working. This is true for people living in bedsits and small apartments, people living in noisy homes and people who live alone and relish the social life they have which is associated with commuting into work and post-work social activities. There is also a great danger that work and home lives can become unhealthily intertwined, leading people to work longer hours and employers to expect this.

For employers the main disadvantage is loss of control. It is much harder to supervise people who work according to a hybrid pattern and hence new models of management will need to evolve. It is also much harder to build a genuine esprit de corps among team members when they are not meeting face-to-face each day. Trust is harder to establish and this has a knock-on effect on knowledge transfer, engagement more generally and potentially on discretionary effort.

SECTION B

Please only answer C5 OR C6.

C6

Learning Outcome 4: Contribute to the promotion of flexible working and effective change management in organisations.

You have been appointed to a senior HR role in a manufacturing company. The site at which you work currently manufactures two types of product, but a rationalisation programme being initiated by the parent company means that as of next year only one product will be manufactured following the introduction of new machinery. The change programme will result in the internal redeployment of some employees to new roles, a big retraining exercise and significant redundancies. The site you work at is unionised with, at present, good employee relations. The company does not run any other operations in the UK.

You are asked to prepare a briefing paper for the senior management team at your site which makes justified recommendations concerning:

- i. How the coming planned period of disruptive change should be communicated to staff;*
- ii. The fairest way to manage the up-coming redundancy programme.*

What key points would you make. Justify your answer

Chief Examiner comments on Question C6

Because so many were attracted to question 5, relatively few chose this one. But most who did wrote strong and thoughtful answers. The truth is, of course, that managing the scenario presented is going to be difficult, and candidates who supposed otherwise were not being realistic. These types of change episode create winners and losers. This is an inherently divisive situation, but that does not mean that it cannot and should not be handled professionally from an HR point of view. The key to answering the first part of the question well was transparency in communication. The company needs to be upfront about what it is planning to do and why it is necessary. Pretending that things will not be as bad for some employees as they will be, or trying to paint the situation as being positive for people is inappropriate as it will breed discontent and is more likely to lead to a breakdown in trust and the fuelling of adversarial industrial relations. There is also considerable danger here of rumour mills operating in such a way as to reduce trust and increase fear unnecessarily. So the company should communicate openly, in detail, quickly and using multiple channels to set out its position and plans. There is no need to be overly pessimistic. There will after all be new opportunities for some. The need is to be straight, honest and accurate in communicating plans both to trade union representatives and the workforce as a whole.

The best way to approach redundancies is first via consultation with representatives. The again should be to do this as soon as possible and to involve trade unions in the design of the detailed redundancy programme. A voluntary redundancy programme should be established, followed by fair and open process of selection for involuntary redundancy. Practical assistance in the form of outplacement training and time off for job searches should be a priority. There will also need to be a recruitment freeze which holds as far as is possible. Priority for new positions should be given to people who are at risk of redundancy. Procedural fairness and professionalism are necessary to maintain throughout the programme.

SECTION B

Please only answer D7 OR D8.

D7

Learning Outcome 5: Critically discuss the aims and objectives of the HRM and HRD functions in organisations and how these are met in practice.

You receive the following e-mail from a senior manager:

"Hi. I am at a conference in the USA and I have met a consultant who thinks that profit sharing is the most effective form of reward policy. She advocates investing 10% of each month's profits into a high interest-bearing trust fund and then distributing the monies equally to all employees who contributed a few years' later in the form of big bonus payments. She tells me that these kinds of scheme allow financial control while also helping to recruit, retain and motivate talented people. She says that there are no downsides. I would like to know your opinion."

Draft a reply to this e-mail setting out your views on the proposed profit sharing arrangement with its delayed pay-out feature.

Chief Examiner comments on Question D7

This was answered by a minority of candidates, but those who did answer it wrote thoughtful and effective answers on the whole. Many took a critical stance, pointing out the disadvantages and justifying this position with some persuasion. These kinds of profit-sharing scheme are common in the USA and have some merit when viewed from an HR perspective. The delayed payments allow larger sums to be paid out (hence motivating people more and attracting strong candidates) while also serving as a highly effective employee retention device. People stay longer than they might otherwise choose to because they know that in two or three years' time a big payment may be coming to them. The fact that all employees are treated equally is a feature of the scheme that makes it attractive from an employee point of view. Managers do not benefit disproportionately. The big drawback is that employees may decide to leave in large numbers at the same time after receiving their lump sum payments. Moreover, as with all profit-sharing arrangements, weak performers

benefit as much as strong performers which may undermine team coherence and can be perceived as being unfair.

SECTION B

Please only answer D7 OR D8.

D8

Learning Outcome 5: Critically discuss the aims and objectives of the HRM and HRD functions in organisations and how these are met in practice

In recent years a lot of employers have moved towards a 'values-based' approach to recruitment and selection'. This involves placing less emphasis on skills when making staffing decisions and focusing more on the extent to which people are likely to 'fit in' with the prevailing values of an organisation.

A senior manager asks you to write a briefing paper to help provide answers to the following three questions in respect of your own organisation:

- i. To what extent do we currently practice values-based recruitment?*
- ii. What are our three most important organisational values?*
- iii. How might we improve our capacity to recruit people who share these values?*

What key points would you make? Justify your answer.

Chief Examiner comments on Question D8

A good number of candidates have written about values-based recruitment and selection in their answers over recent years, so this question was designed to give them an opportunity to do so in a more focused way. A considerable majority took up the challenge.

Answers to the first two parts varied considerably depending on what currently happens in candidates' own organisations. What mattered from a marking perspective is that answers were credible, persuasive and well-informed. We needed more than just bullet points in respect of part ii for high marks. We needed to see some justification or examples to back up general assertions. Good answers to part iii looked at aspects of the whole recruitment and selection process from initial job analysis, through to person specifications / competency frameworks and on to recruitment advertising and selection methods that focus on values (personality tests, interview questions, assessment centre exercises etc).

The main limitation was that some answers did not really focus 100% on values, discussing skills, personal attributes and even technical abilities. Most, however, fully appreciated the thinking behind the question and gave solid answers to all three parts.

SECTION B

Please only answer E9 OR E10.

E9

Learning Outcome 7: Promote professionalism and an ethical approach to HRM and HRD practice in organisations.

Technology is increasingly providing employers with new ways of monitoring employee performance. An example is a requirement for staff who move around sites or travel away from workplaces as part of their jobs to wear smart wristbands. These not only provide a means of communication and information to assist someone to do their job effectively, but can also allow records of their location, speed of work, physical health and stress levels to be gathered for analysis by their employers. They also potentially provide managers with the opportunity to eavesdrop on conversations.

Advocates of the use of wristbands argue that using technology to monitor employee performance is not new and that the use of wearables allows employers to do this more effectively. Critics, by contrast, have deep concerns about the ethics associated with the use of wearable monitoring devices.

- i. What is your view on this issue? Are wearables such as smart wristbands ethical or unethical in principle?*
- ii. What safeguarding measures could be established to ensure that wearable technologies are not used unethically?*

Chief Examiner comments on Question E9

This question invited candidates to discuss a significant contemporary management development from an HR ethics perspective.

It proved a popular choice of question, although some answers tended to drift away from a focus on ethics to wider considerations (legal compliance, employment relations etc). An ethical case can be made in favour of wearables which focuses on giving employees the opportunity to monitor and review their own performance with a view, for example, to improving productivity and reducing health and safety risks. There are also considerable advantages associated with being able to access information remotely and to playback recordings etc. The data gathered can also be analysed and used to underpin organisational innovation that might, for example, reduce health and safety risks or provide employees with the opportunity to earn more through smarter working.

The ethical concerns relate primarily to issues of privacy and confidentiality. Data gathered via smart wristbands can include sensitive information (heart rate, blood pressure etc), but they also serve to permit employers to snoop on what their employees are doing, the conversations they have and their physical location continually. They are thus inherently intrusive, while also acting as a statement of mistrust – we monitor you because we do not trust you to do your work as instructed. There is also the potential for these devices to allow the abuse of power by employers, for example by pushing people to work harder than is good for their health and well-being.

SECTION B

Please only answer E9 OR E10.

E10

Learning Outcome 7: Promote professionalism and an ethical approach to HRM and HRD practice in organisations.

The CIPD's 'professional map' includes a section entitled 'professional values' which contains the following statement:

"We understand the implications of our decisions beyond the interests of our own organisations, for the good of wider society".

Drawing on your reading and personal experience identify THREE distinct ways in which decisions taken by HR managers often have either a direct or an indirect impact on 'the good of wider society'. Illustrate your answer with examples.

Chief Examiner comments on Question E10

There were many possibilities here and considerable freedom for candidates to develop their own arguments. Most focused on issues such as sustainability (particularly in respect of the environment, pollution and climate change), corporate social responsibility (CSR) more generally (including philanthropic and charitable activities), social inequality (wages, executive remuneration), health, safety and wellbeing, and of course, diversity and inclusion. There were then specific examples which related to certain types of organisation (voluntary sector, public sector, international businesses) and could be used to illustrate good points here.

For most this was, of course, the final question and some were running out of time and steam by this point. Some answers were thus a touch brief and did not include full justification for points made. On the whole though, good, sound answers were written.

GENERAL COMMENTS

This was the third paper to sat over a longer period and typed up at home rather than in a traditional exam room setting. It was the first cohort, however, in which gaming of the system was apparent with cutting and pasting of pre-prepared answers to Section A making it harder to achieve fairness when marking. We hope we managed to account for this effectively and will be bringing forward suggestions at the exam board aimed at ensuring that the issue is tackled for future exams. I think this will be possible and that the many advantages of these online exams can be retained for the future.

Stephen Taylor (Chief Examiner LMP)
and on behalf of the CIPD Team of Examiners

----- END OF EXAMINATION -----

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