



**Programme Handbook
MSc Strategic Human Resource Management
Version 2: December 2025**

What is the course about?

This is a Strategic Human Resource Management programme designed for those in, or aspiring to, senior positions or those looking to transition to a career in this area. The MSc Strategic Human Resource Management course at Arden University has been designed to prepare professionals for the fast-evolving nature of the profession recognising the impact of HR Analytics, technological advancements and the newly designed Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development profession map.

This programme is accredited to the CIPD. The CIPD is a professional association for human resource management professionals. It is the main professional body to accredit and award professional HR and L&D qualifications. The CIPD's qualifications are recognised professional standards for HR and training specialists working across the UK's public, private and charity sectors. It is also recognised in many overseas countries.

CIPD Membership

In order to successfully complete the course, you must become a CIPD member. Your membership fees are included in your course fees. Becoming a CIPD member will give you access to member resources that are useful for completing your assignments and at the time of completion you will be awarded with your certificate. When you begin the course, you will be sent details directly by the CIPD to initiate the process of becoming a CIPD member.

CIPD Memberships include:

Student membership – when you commence your programme with Arden you will be registered as a student member

Foundation membership – this is designed for people professionals with a CIPD level 3 Foundation Certificate

Associate CIPD - You will be awarded Associate membership when you successfully complete your programme, progressing to an Associate membership will:

- ✓ Allow you to use the designation Assoc CIPD after your name
- ✓ Enhance your career prospects and earning potential
- ✓ Show your commitment to high standards and ethical compliance
- ✓ Support your job and professional development through exclusive access to a growing and vibrant community of HR and L&D professionals, leading-edge resources and tailored development tools

Chartered MCIPD – If you have the right level of experience, you can upgrade your Associate membership to Chartered Member or Chartered Fellow. Progressing to Chartered Membership will inspire confidence with employers and clients and help to further your career - opening doors to promotion, a higher salary and an increased range of job opportunities through:

- ✓ your exclusive access to senior networks
- ✓ a platform to have real influence and inspire the next generation
- ✓ the CIPD's thought-leadership, leading-edge research and policy reports
- ✓ using the professional designation and letters Chartered MCIPD after your name

Chartered FCIPD - If you have the right level of experience you can upgrade to Chartered Fellow. It is the highest grade of membership CIPD has to offer. Chartered Fellowship offers you an exciting platform to affect change and engage in the big debates with business and government policy. You'll be able to deepen your engagement with the CIPD and the profession through:

- ✓ shaping the policy agenda
- ✓ voting on key CIPD matters
- ✓ contributing to key CIPD research
- ✓ using the professional designation and letters Chartered FCIPD after your name

Full details of CIPD membership grades are included on their website:

<https://www.cipd.co.uk/membership/grades>.

The CIPD Profession Map.

This programme is aligned to the CIPD Profession Map. The Profession Map sets the international benchmark for the people profession. The map enables people professionals to make better decisions, act with confidence, perform at your peak, drive change in your organisation and progress in your career. The Profession Map focuses on the knowledge and behaviours you need to create value and make an impact at work, shifting the focus from generic best practice to values-based decision-making.



Course Aims

The overall aim of the MSc Strategic Human Resource Management course is to develop the analytical and strategic skills of students using concepts derived from a wide range of academic disciplines, thus enabling them to respond creatively and effectively to the challenges of the global business environment. In line with the CIPD philosophy our programme reflects the need in emphasis on the understanding of and reflection on theoretical content, as well as the development of the skills required in Strategic HRM.

This overall aim embraces several distinct and individual aims:

- To provide a coherent and integrated programme of study that will enable students to respond effectively to increasingly complex, dynamic and diverse external environments.
- To encourage a sustained, reflective and critical approach to contemporary and future practice thereby enhancing professional and personal development that meets the requirements for Masters level study.
- To enable students to analyse complex contemporary practice so that they are able to effectively and confidently manage strategic level issues.
- To provide an opportunity for participants to critically evaluate and apply Human Resource Management 'next' practice in a range of contexts

Programme learning outcomes

The learning outcomes are aligned to the CIPD Profession Map which sets the international benchmark for the people profession incorporating three key values:

Principles led: seeing beyond rules to do what is right in work, people and professional matters

Evidence based: professional judgement is supported with strong evidence from diverse sources

Outcomes driven: championing better work and working lives to make a difference across the personal, professional and social levels.

Learning outcomes are also specified for each module, which are detailed in the module specifications at the end of this handbook.

Intended learning outcomes and the means by which they are achieved and demonstrated			
Learning outcomes		The means by which outcomes are achieved	The means by which these outcomes are demonstrated
Knowledge and understanding			
LO1	Apply and synthesise knowledge and understanding relevant to the management of people within an organisation	Learning outcomes will be achieved via engagement with the online module learning material and the online tutoring and programme participant support mechanisms, both of which are delivered via Arden's iLearn platform (a Moodle-based system). The learning material comprises purpose-written self-contained lessons with frequent activities and feedback to generate learning and reinforce the knowledge acquisition through frequent application of learning to specific examples. Embedded within the text are links to further reading and appropriate websites. Feedback within the learning material is provided to allow programme participants to check their understanding with that of the tutor. Additionally, group	The outcomes will be demonstrated by successful completion of the assessments, which will be written in a way that requires students to apply the knowledge that they have learnt to a variety of situations. There will also be monitoring of engagement with discussion forums and activities, to assess the application of the material.
LO2	Advise an organisation on appropriate strategies to assist their management of people		
LO3	Critically analyse the context in which an organisation operates, and understand the impact that this may have on Strategic HRM activities		
LO4	Demonstrate a critical understanding of current thinking and research in a range of strategic management		

	<p>topics relevant to People Management</p>	<p>learning activities direct programme participants to the tutor-facilitated discussion forums where they engage in discussion with their peers and receive formative feedback from the module tutor.</p> <p>Each of the 20 credit modules provides programme participants with an understanding of key theoretical and practical issues, debates and academic informed literatures.</p> <p>Teaching/learning methods adopted are transferrable across modules and are similar across modules and include online class discussions, exercises/case studies and group discussions.</p> <p>For each subject being taught a programme of structured online learning activities using both formative and summative assessment is applied. The emphasis is on action learning through the mediation of the module leader for each module.</p>	
Intellectual (thinking) skills			
LO5	To apply and where appropriate synthesise models and theories to different situational contexts	Intellectual skills are acquired through engagement with the online module learning material and the online tutoring. At all stages of their course, in all modules, programme participants are encouraged to take a critical and evaluative approach to the subject.	The first skill will be demonstrated through the successful completion of the coursework assignments and exams.
LO6	Undertake research on a contemporary people management topic and report the findings of the research with appropriate recommendations	Acquisition of transferrable skills takes place throughout the modules Programme participants are gradually required to take responsibility for their own learning throughout the programme. The tutorial support mechanisms are intensive during the first study period of the programme and programme participant engagement, achievement with progression monitored regularly and	The second skill will be demonstrated through the completion of a research project, which will relate to an HR issue in a business context.

		followed up on an individual basis thereafter.	
Practical Skills			
LO7	Develop personal skills to increase effectiveness in strategic leadership and people management strategies	The development of practical skills takes place throughout the programme. A number of activities are added into the learning material requiring students to apply the knowledge that they are learning, and to think about the way that they could use this knowledge in their professional practice. Discussion forums allow students to debate both future and contemporary people management strategies.	These outcomes are demonstrated by engagement in discussion forums, and the content of the assessments. If students have engaged in debate and thinking about the theoretical and practical issues they will show stronger practical skills.
LO8	Identify practical solutions to theoretical and practical people related problems		
Transferable Skills			
LO9	Effectively plan and undertake personal development including the awareness of an ethical and socially responsibly dimension to decision making	As the programmes progresses work becomes more complex and students are tested on their abilities to respond positively to feedback from a variety of audiences, as well as to manage increasingly large workloads.	To develop transferable skills all assignments must meet time deadlines and word count guidelines. All assessed work must be submitted independently even where group activity has been an element of the process. Students must take responsibility for their own work.
LO10	Critically reflect to support enhanced learning, self-awareness and interaction with others	Students are required to complete a number of assignments and a Dissertation that rewards independence, originality and critical enquiry and which further enhances communication and self-reflective skills.	All assignments require students to adopt a spirit of critical enquiry and self-reflection which is rewarded in marking guides. These guides are shared with students.

Programme Structure

Level	Module title	Credit	Module type
7	Induction and Post Graduate Study Preparation	0	M
7	Strategic Planning and Ethical Decision Making	20	M
7	People Analytics and Value Creation	20	M
7	Strategic Employment Relations and Employment Law	20	M
7	Organisational Development, Culture and Change	20	M
7	Resourcing and Rewarding Talent	20	M
7	People Development, Well-Being and Performance	20	M

7	Research Project	60	M
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Programme Delivery

Students are able to undertake this programme via distance learning in part time mode. Students will generally complete the programme over two calendar years, where they are able to study flexibly across the digital modes of attendance.

Prior to the commencement of teaching, all students are expected to engage with the MSc Strategic Human Resource Management induction programme. As part of this induction, we aim to equip students with an awareness of key academic requirements at postgraduate level.

Assessment and Feedback

The assessments on your course are varied to not only suit the modules' learning outcomes, but also to enable you to experience and adapt to different forms of assessment activity. This is important as it supports your development as an independent learner and provides opportunities for you to develop skills and attributes that will be valuable for your future.

The following table provides a summary of the assessment requirements in this programme.

For postgraduate modules, a pass on the module requires a weighted average of 50% across all components and a minimum qualifying mark of 40% on each component. Students who have not achieved the qualifying mark in each assessment component are deemed to have failed the module and are referred for re-assessment in all component(s) where less than 50% has been achieved, even if the aggregate mark for the module is 50% or higher.

Assessment summary

Module title	Component number and type	Weighting	Word count / duration	Core
Strategic Planning and Ethical Decision Making	Assignment: Formal report in response to client live case study (3000 words)	100%	3000 words	Core
People Analytics and Value Creation	Assignment: Individual podcast presentation with slides	100%	15 minutes (podcast), Maximum of 1,500 words (slides)	Core
Strategic Employment Relations and Employment Law	Assignment: Problem solving exercise consisting of 6 short case studies (150 words per each blog)	100%	3000 words (6 x 600 words case studies)	Core
People Development, Well-being and Performance	Blog portfolio (3500words) Five blogs in total (700 words each). Submitted in weeks 3, 5, 7 and 2 blogs submitted in week 10. Students will also have the option of submitting 3.5-minute videos instead of written blog posts.	100	Five blogs in total, comprising of 700 words each. 3,500 words in total. Submitted in weeks 3, 5, 7, with 2 blogs submitted in week 10. Blog video posts will be a maximum of 3.5 minutes each.	Core
		100%		

Module title	Component number and type	Weighting	Word count / duration	Core
Resourcing and Rewarding Talent	Assignment: Consultancy case Study Report (revolving cases)	100%	3000 words	Core
Organisational Development, Culture and Change	Assignment: Autoethnography (3000 words)	100%	3000 words	Core
Research Project	Final Report	100%	12,000 words	Core

Preparing for your future

An MSc in Strategic Human Resource Management adds to your existing experience to develop your knowledge and understanding and equip you with a deeper understanding of Strategic Human Resource Management and business. Some MSc students will have begun their studies with a clear idea of their next move after the end of the course while others may be considering a variety of options, such as:

- Moving into a higher-level people management post within your current employment.
- Setting up your own business or becoming self-employed.
- Changing career direction

An MSc in Strategic Human Resource Management prepares graduates for a variety of senior international roles. At Arden University, you will have the opportunity to consider your career, reflect on your previous experiences, on your progress and plan your next move. The Careers team offer confidential advice in 1-2-1 career coaching sessions to help you with your career decisions, mock interviews to ready yourself for challenging recruitment rounds, and provide the opportunity for you to realise your full potential as one of tomorrow's people management leaders. Support is also available to develop important careers related skills and knowledge, such as CV, Cover Letter, LinkedIn design, and assessment centres.