Bachelor of Social Science Honours in Human Resource Management

Module Descriptors

Research Methodology (NQF 8, 20 credits)

This module explores various research methodologies frequently employed in studies within the social sciences. It further introduces the student to the philosophical assumptions that underpin research, as well as the paradigms embedded in one's choice and approach to research in a particular study. It explores the rationale behind adopting a quantitative or qualitative approach to research, relative to answering the research question/s. This module disseminates knowledge on the selection of a research design, sampling technique, data collection procedure, as well as the analysis of data and places emphasis on the importance of ethical principles that guide ethical research practices.

Strategic Human Resource Management (NQF 8, 15 credits)

This module addresses human resource topics from a strategic perspective. It considers how human resource management might aid in developing competitive advantage and what might be done to fulfil this potential. The module considers the origins of strategic HRM and compares it to the more traditional view of HRM. It discusses HR as a competitive advantage mechanism and presents strategic HRM as part of a bigger system or environment. It also addresses the concept of 'flexibility' and provides an understanding of flexible patterns of work. Within this module, different types of measurement of HRM are discussed and include the Balanced Scorecard, the HR scorecard and the Workforce scorecard. The technological influences of the modern working environment and its relationship to strategic HRM are discussed and a consideration for global trends is given.

Research Thesis (NQF 8, 36 credits)

This module provides an opportunity for the student to engage in the research process and to conduct a research study on a researchable topic. This module holds a dual focus whereby students will conceptualize the research, write the proposal and collect the data as a group project, and then analyse, write up and report on the findings in their individual capacity. Furthermore, this module enrols the student in areas that are key to the research process. These areas consist of: i) the conceptualisation of the topic guided by the assigned supervisor, ii) an extensive literature search, iii) constructing relevant research questions, objectives and/or hypotheses, iv) detailing the methodology underlying the study, v) analysing the data, as well as, vi) the presentation of the results. Ethical procedures specific to the research process will be explored, with strong impetus on the adherence of sound ethical practice in research and the dissemination of research findings. The research thesis module comprises of: i) the research proposal, ii) the research mini-thesis, and iii) the research day poster presentation, and is run over three academic terms.

Advanced Organisation Development and Design (NQF 8, 15 credits)

This module uses metaphors as a way of thinking about and seeing organisations and organisational life which may have implications about how we view the nature of organisations and therefore how we diagnose and intervene in organisational life. It examines the organisation as machine-like and attempt to understand the bureaucratic nature of organisations. It also explores how organisations can be living organisms with a focus on organisational needs and relationships in organisation. The module explores how organisations are brains, cultures, psychic prisons and also as flux and transformation. Organisations are envisaged as political as well as instruments of domination. Each metaphor provides a way of thinking about organisations, and allows students to explore the complexity of organisational life in a very practical manner. Overall, the module encourages students to vary their approaches to organisational analysis, design, and development as appropriate for the organisation they are dealing with.

Business Ethics for the HR Practitioner (NQF 8, 12 credits)

This module introduces students to important concepts in the area of business ethics, and the practice of governing and managing ethics in organisations. Students will also learn about classic and contemporary ethical theories and understand the relevance of these theories in the South African organisation. Utilising a range of case studies, students will examine the ethical dimension of business, the importance of ethics in business, ethical decision-making and the implications thereof. They will clearly understand their role in relation to both ethical HR practice as well as their role as custodian of ethical business practice

Advanced Employee Relations (NQF 8, 12 credits)

This module provides an advanced embedding of the theoretical knowledge and the practical skills to exercise fair labour practices in South African organisations. Within the historical and socio-political contexts of development of Employment Relations in South Africa, the student will engage with critical reflexivity in the employment relations management process both conceptually and practically.

Elective Modules

Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace (NQF 8, 10 credits)

This module comprehensively addresses occupational health and wellbeing and explores the multidisciplinary approach to the application of health and wellbeing in the workplace. It will look at the relationship between person-organisation fit and wellbeing. Students will engage with concepts related to the physical, psychosocial, environmental and organisational factors affecting occupational health. An exploration of workplace health promotion and interventions will be made with practical examples from South African organisations.

Utilising Assessments for Recruitment and Development (NQF 8, 10 credits)

In this module, students will gain knowledge in understanding assessments in the workplace. A historical overview of psychological assessments and assessments in general will be provided as a basis for understanding the South African Assessment landscape. Students will be required to understand how to effectively work with the concepts of personality, intelligence and ability in the search for talent for the workplace. An explanation for using personality, intelligence and ability assessment for recruitment and

selection as well as development for employees will be provided. Students will understand the regulations governing best-practice assessment use in the Human Resource Function. A strong emphasis on the scope of practice of Industrial Psychologists who work closely with HR practitioners in the assessment field will also be seen. The module will present competency-based assessments as HR Practitioner tools for assessing talent. Students will obtain an understanding of the concept of a competency framework in understanding what skills individuals are required to perform in particular roles in the workplace. Students will also learn how to develop assessment centres and development centres whilst using the competency framework as a foundation for assessing for role competencies.