Unit 12: Human Resources in the Aviation Industry

Unit code: R/504/2286

QCF Level 3: BTEC Nationals

Credit value: 9

Guided learning hours: 54

Aim and purpose

The aim of this unit is to give learners knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of human resources departments within aviation organisations and the skills of human resources personnel.

Unit introduction

Key to successful recruitment and staff management in any organisation is a well-organised and effective human resources (HR) department. This is particularly true within the aviation industry due to a high level of competition between organisations and the regulated environment staff must work within.

Selecting the right candidate to become part of the airline, airport or handling agent team is a skill that must be learned. Not only should the hopeful applicant comply with required academic entry criteria, they must also satisfy other criteria – some specified by the company, others statutory. Do they have industry experience? Do they have the required licence? Are they a team worker? Are they a leader? It is the responsibility of the HR officer to ensure that staff not only meet or exceed the basic advertised requirements, but that they will fit well into the existing workforce.

Effective HR managers have the ability to communicate, plan, assess and make sound decisions. Learners will gain an insight into the function and responsibilities of an aviation industry HR department. With an element of practical role play, the unit enables learners to plan and execute the recruitment cycle, from advertising a post to interviewing and appointing new staff.

The unit concludes with an illustration of the types of legislation and company policy that apply to the job roles most learners are likely to encounter. This can be tailored to suit the locality where the course is being delivered.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

1   Know the functions of Human Resources (HR) departments within aviation organisations

2   Be able to carry out recruitment for the aviation industry as part of the HR team

3   Understand employment legislation relating to the aviation industry

4   Know company employment policy and standards.

Unit content

1 Know the functions of Human Resources (HR) departments within aviation organisations

The functions of HR:

- maintain operational efficiency, e.g. adequate staffing, streamline job roles

- staff development, e.g. task-specific training, general training, up-skilling, continuing professional development (CPD)

- fulfil company objectives, e.g. ethnic mix, gender mix, skilled workforce

- comply with employment legislation, e.g. discrimination (age, gender, race, religion), Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks, data protection

Role and responsibility of HR:

- recruitment, e.g. advertising, interview, appoint, induction

- training, e.g. coordinate, allocate, record, evaluate

- manage employment procedure (appraisal, promotion, grievance, maternity, sickness and absence, disciplinary, redundancy, termination, retirement)

2 Be able to carry out recruitment for the aviation industry as part of the HR team

Plan recruitment:

- job description, e.g. job role, prerequisites (skills, experience, licence), hours, location

- advertise, e.g. budget, design advert, newspaper, trade journal, TV/radio, social media, in-house

- shortlist applicants, e.g. criteria for initial rejection/interest

- prepare interview, e.g. location, documents, interview panel, group interview, telephone selection, interview activities

Selection process:

- assess candidate, e.g. personal statement, group task, aptitude test, individual interview, telephone screening

- confirm qualifications, e.g. academic, training, licences, experience, employment history, references

- make a decision, e.g. offer employment, notify unsuccessful candidates

- administration, e.g. notify department head, payroll, security

3 Understand employment legislation relating to the aviation industry

Employment legislation:

- pre-employment checks, e.g. employment history, CRB checks, references
- training, e.g. general security awareness (GSAT), manual handling
- general, e.g. minimum wage, discrimination, data protection, employment contract, working hours, minimum age, medical checks (vision, hearing)

Impacts of compliance:

- negative impacts, e.g. recruitment delays (CRB checks, references, employment history), expense (to applicant, to employer, training requirements), restricts recruitment pool (security, health, age)
- positive impacts, e.g. avoid prosecution, filters out inappropriate candidates

4 Know company employment policy and standards

Company policy and standards relating to personnel:

- behaviour, e.g. to staff, to customers, absence, sickness, misconduct
- health and safety, e.g. legal standards, company standards
- security, e.g. legal standards, company standards (property, data, revenue)

Maintain company policy and standards relating to personnel:

- safety management system (SMS), e.g. risk assessment, intervention, appraisal, disciplinary procedures
- training, e.g. new skills, recurrency, behaviour
- feedback, e.g. from staff, from supervisors, from managers, from trade unions

Sources of information and advice:

- regulatory bodies, e.g. Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Department for Transport (DfT), European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA)
- trade bodies, e.g. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)
- trade unions, e.g. General and Municipal Workers (GMB), UNISON, British Airline Pilots Association (BALPA), Guild of Air Traffic Controllers (GATCO)

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 Describe the functions of the HR department within an aviation organisation	**M1** Explain how an aviation HR department is used to implement company objectives whilst complying with current employment regulations	
P2 Outline key roles and responsibilities of the HR department		
P3 Plan a recruitment programme for an aviation organisation [SM]	**M2** Reflect on the success of the recruitment and selection process	**D1** Discuss how an effective recruitment process ensures that the most suitable candidates are selected
P4 Carry out the selection process [CT]		
P5 Outline current employment legislation	**M3** Explain how legislation and company standards provide protection to both staff and customers	**D2** Design an audit system that would allow an HR manager to ensure that both legislation and company standards are being met
P6 Explain how complying with current employment legislation impacts on the aviation industry		
P7 Describe aviation policies relating to personnel standards		
P8 Describe the procedures and systems used to maintain aviation personnel standards		
P9 Outline sources of information and advice for HR departments in the aviation industry		

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

It is expected that this unit will be delivered in a classroom setting. The inclusion of airport visits and speakers will help to put the rules, regulations and industry requirements that must be complied with as part of the HR function into context.

Initially, an overview of the function of HR should be given. This should give learners an understanding that HR is involved in much more than 'hiring and firing'. Together with this, the specific roles of HR in an aviation environment must be explained. It may be appropriate to deliver and assess these two segments together due to the logical links. Including a visiting speaker with knowledge of aviation HR would be valuable at this stage.

The ability to recruit staff is a key element in the HR agenda. Through practical demonstration and role play, planning and selecting staff should be the next topic. Recruitment can be divided into four sections: how to create a job description (using real job roles); how to create a job advertisement (based on actual examples); how to read applications and shortlist candidates; how to prepare to interview. Using criteria from the unit content, this should be delivered and assessed as a practical element.

Selecting staff requires not only knowledge (for example company requirements, legislation) but also judgement. This can be emphasised by using groups within the class to interview peers and provide post-interview critiques. Decisions can then be made (with reasons) regarding suitability of candidates.

Following the selection process, learners must be introduced to the skills of writing acceptance and rejection letters, with clear guidance as to why they should be handled differently.

Key elements of employment legislation should be explored with learners. Again, this would be an ideal time to involve a visiting speaker who is able to speak with authority about current rules, their intended purpose and implications within the aviation industry.

Learners must be made aware of the role of HR in maintaining personnel standards within an aviation organisation. Suggested areas for inclusion are found in the unit content together with sources of information and advice that are accessible by all.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way in planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Introduce the unit. Provide an overview of HR activities, using actual aviation organisations. A visiting HR speaker would help with this input.
Provide an outline of roles that HR personnel undertake within an aviation organisation.
Expand on the roles and functions of P1 and P2 to demonstrate, in practical terms, how the HR department is used to help meet company objectives whilst ensuring compliance with employment regulations.
Preparation for assignment **Assignment 1: Functions and Responsibilities of HR** (P1, P2, M1) **Feedback on assignment**

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Plan and prepare for a recruitment session. This involves creating a recruitment guide, deciding on a job description, creating an advertisement, deciding on shortlist criteria and preparing the interview location.
Practical delivery and assessment – interview techniques (e.g. group tasks, tests, one to one), selecting and notifying candidates.
Building on delivery so far learners must reflect on the recruitment and selection process to establish why certain elements worked well and others require adjustment. This would best be prepared immediately after assessment of P3 and P4. Time should be allowed for learners to create a brief reflective log which can be delivered verbally. These reflections can be expanded to discuss how the interview process is designed to select the most suitable candidate.
Preparation for assignment **Assignment 2: The Recruitment Process** (P3, P4, M2, D1) **Feedback on assignment**
A visiting HR speaker would be very useful to ensure up-to-date legislation and industry standards are introduced to learners.
Linked closely to (and possibly delivered with) P5, learners will discuss how complying with legislation has an impact on aviation organisations.
Preparation for assignment **Assignment 3: Legislation** (P5, P6) **Feedback on assignment**
Class discussion – why company policy and standards exist. Specific aviation examples should be included. The key areas of behaviour, health and safety and security must be included.
Class discussion – linked to P7, methods by which an HR department can contribute to maintaining previously discussed standards. This must include the development of personnel as well as disciplinary options.
Tutor input and research – investigation of sources of guidance that could be used by an HR department. This should include regulatory bodies, trade unions and trade bodies.
Class discussion and design project – how compliance with legislation and company standards helps protect staff and customers, using specific examples from the aviation industry. Concluding with the design of an audit system that an HR manager could use to help ensure compliance is maintained. This should include a generic safety management system (SMS), risk assessment (RA) protocol, training records and qualification records.
Preparation for assignment **Assignment 4: Company Policy and Standards** (P7, P8, P9, M3, D2) **Feedback on assignment**

Assessment

It is anticipated that this unit will be assessed using a mixture of practical and paper-based evidence. By the nature of the job, a combination of knowledge and judgement is required to demonstrate an understanding of the significant role HR plays in aviation.

P1 – P2 – M1

To achieve P1, learners must describe the functions of HR within an aviation organisation. This involves choosing a suitable organisation (for example airline, airport, ground handling agency (GHA)) and describing how HR fulfils the expectations listed in the unit content.

To achieve P2, learners must outline key roles and responsibilities as listed in the unit content. It might be convenient to assess P1 and P2 together as an introduction booklet for new HR assistants.

To achieve M1, learners must explain how the management of HR policies ensures that an organisation's objectives can be met without breaching employment regulations. To support explanations, examples should be included.

P3 – P4 – M2 – D1

To achieve P3, learners must plan a recruitment programme for an aviation organisation. The plan should include a job description and an advertisement including a plan of how and where advertising will take place, together with criteria for shortlisting applicants and requirements for the interview.

To achieve P4, learners should conduct the selection process. This is a practical assessment that should include all aspects of the unit content including: assessing the candidate, confirming their qualifications, making a decision and carrying out related administrative tasks. Tutors should complete observation records detailing the learner performance through all aspects of the unit as detailed above with clear indicators of the achievement of P4. Observation records should be signed and dated by the tutor and the learner.

To achieve M2, learners must reflect on the success of the recruitment and selection process undertaken in P3 and P4. It is expected that learners will be given time to prepare a brief reflective log soon after the selection process is complete, then deliver the results as a presentation or in writing for assessment.

To achieve D1, learners must discuss how effective recruitment processes are used to select the most suitable candidates. This must include key elements from P1 to P4, using the interview held in P4 to comment on best practice.

P5 – P6 – P7 – P8 – P9 – M3 – D2

To achieve P5, learners must identify current employment legislation under the three points: pre-employment checks, training, general. As this is an area that changes frequently, the content examples should be considered as a guide – the most up-to-date regulations must be used.

To achieve P6, learners must explain how complying with current employment regulations impacts on aviation organisations. Using two specific aviation organisations (for example airline, airport, GHA) learners should indicate how a minimum of three rules (for example age, discrimination, working hours, security) affect the recruitment process.

To achieve P7, learners must describe company policy and standards common to most aviation organisations. This should include behaviour, health and safety and security. Specific examples linked to the employer used in P6 might be used to support evidence.

To achieve P8, learners must describe the procedures and systems used to maintain personnel standards, covering all items listed in the unit content. This assessment can be produced in conjunction with P7.

To achieve P9, learners must outline sources of information and advice available to HR departments. One example from each heading should be included.

To achieve M3, learners should explain how complying with company standards and legislation provides

protection for customers and staff. A minimum of two examples of each, relating to an aviation organisation, should be included.

To achieve D2, learners must design an audit system that an HR manager could use to ensure that both company standards and legislation are met. Based on the operations of an aviation organisation, the audit system should be a practical document with a full explanation of how it should be used.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, P2, M1	Assignment 1: Functions and Responsibilities of HR	Working for an airport or airline, produce a guide for new HR staff.	Information booklet
P3, P4, M2, D1	Assignment 2: The Recruitment Process	Working for an airport, airline or ground handling agent, recruit, interview and select staff.	Practical recruitment/ interview Reflective log
P5, P6	Assignment 3: Legislation	Working for an airport or airline, produce a guide for new HR staff.	Information booklet
P7, P8, P9, M3, D2	Assignment 4: Company Policy and Standards	Working for an airport or airline, produce an information leaflet for new employee representatives.	Information leaflet Discussion Audit document

Links to other BTEC units

This unit forms part of the BTEC aviation sector suite. This unit has particular links with the following unit titles in the aviation suite.

Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
n/a	Unit 8: Team Leadership Unit 13: Preparation for Employment in the Aviation Industry	n/a

Essential resources

Learners must have access to published resources and the internet.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

The use of guest speakers and relevant industry materials will be invaluable in enhancing delivery of this unit.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Bloisi W – *An Introduction to Human Resources Management* (McGraw-Hill, 2006) ISBN 978-0077109684

Torrington D, Taylor S, Hall L and Atkinson C – *Human Resource Management, 8th Edition* (Financial Times/ Prentice Hall, 2011) ISBN 978-0273756927

Journals

Aviation News – Key Publishing Ltd

Websites

www.aviationnews.net	*Aviation News* – monthly journal
www.dwp.gov.uk	Department for Work and Pensions
www.hrmguide.co.uk	Human resource management articles
www.humanresourcemanagement.co.uk	Human resource management

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
Creative thinkers	carrying out the selection process through assessment of the candidate, asking questions to gain further information, questioning own assumptions and making a decision regarding the offer of employment
Self-managers	preparing a recruitment programme for an aviation organisation including job description, advertisment, shortlising and interview preparation prior to assessing a candidate.

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	exploring the functions of HR, employment legislation and company policy
Reflective learners	carrying out recruitment as part of the HR team, reflecting on the success of the recruitment and selection processes employed and their own performance during each stage
Team workers	working within the HR team to discuss and shortlist applicants and making decisions regarding offers of employment
Self-managers	managing the workload of the assessment
Effective participators	discussing recruitment and selection methods, suitability of candidates, questioning own and others assumptions during the recruitment process.

Functional Skills — Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT — Use ICT systems	
Select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs	using a variety of systems to view recruitment documentation and create own recruitment programme
Use ICT to effectively plan work and evaluate the effectiveness of the ICT system they have used	planning and producing a recruitment programme to meet the needs of an aviation organisation
Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval	storing notes, research data and retrieving in order to complete unit assessment
Follow and understand the need for safety and security practices	using passwords to access systems and paying attention to confidentiality
Troubleshoot	as required
ICT — Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	using appropriate search criteria to source appropriate recruitment information in relation to aviation organisations
Access, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose	using reliable websites to inform own recruitment programme, paying attention to the assessment requirements
ICT — Develop, present and communicate information	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: • text and tables • images • numbers • records	creating appropriate recruitment documentation in the form of job description, advertisement, and shortlisting documentation independently using appropriate text and images
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	collating candidate applications and creating a shortlist to meet objectives of recruitment programme
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	presenting information clearly and logically to the HR team to inform decision making
Evaluate the selection and use of ICT tools and facilities used to present information	choosing the most appropriate ICT tools to produce authentic recruitment documentation
Select and use ICT to communicate and exchange information safely, responsibly and effectively including storage of messages and contact lists	safely storing and exchanging information about candidates with HR team paying strict attention to confidentiality issues

Skill	When learners are ...
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	carrying out the selection process by speaking to a candidate
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	reading candidate applications to gather information and produce a shortlist for candidates to be interviewed
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	producing recruitment documentation and an information leaflet on company policy and standards communicating information clearly and accurately.