### SESSION PLAN

**COURSE:** ABE Level 4 Principles of HR

**ELEMENT:** Element 4 – Employment models and contracts

## **LEARNING OUTCOME 4**

**Define different employment models and the essential features of the contract of employment (Weighting 25%)**

4.1 Discuss the strengths and limitations of different employment models

4.2 Recommend the best use of the organisation’s people, to meet budget and business delivery challenges

**NUMBER OF SESSIONS:** Three - approximately 18 hours in total

**SESSION TOPICS:** Session 1: Flexible working methods and flexible employment models  
Session 2: The impact of flexibility for the management of people and the HR function  
Session 3: The best use of the organisation’s people, to meet budget and business delivery challenges

**Note to tutors: This is the recommended session plan for Learning Outcome 4 of Element 4 of the ABE L4 Principles of HR unit. You should follow the plan, using the resources (referenced as ‘slides’ here) and activities provided. It is important to enhance all sessions with local examples and case studies, involving the learners ACTIVELY wherever possible.**

### SESSION 1: Flexible working methods and flexible employment models (4-5 hours)

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| **Topic** | **Tutor Activity** | **Slides** | **Learner Activity** | **Formative Assessment** |
| Introduction to session and learning outcomes | Use file: **RESOURCE Element 4 LO4 Define different employment models and the essential features of the contract of employment.pptx**  Learning outcome 4  Assessment criteria 4.1 | 1-4 |  |  |
| The traditional model of employment | Outline the traditional employment model.  Explain that the technological, economic and social conditions that shape workplaces and workforces are changing rapidly and profoundly. For a business organisation to survive and grow, work must be organised more flexibly and effectively than before. | 5 | Students to listen, take notes and participate in class discussions throughout, as appropriate. |  |
| Set group activity to identify drivers for flexibility.  Go through the likely factors:   * Need to be competitive * Need to be adaptive * Impacts of new technologies * Development of new organisational structures * Demand for better work-life balance | 6 | In groups, identify the driving forces for the move away from the traditional model of employment. | Activity 1 – Element 4 LO4 AC4.1 – Drivers of flexibility |
| Work-life balance | Question for general class discussion: what is meant by ‘work-life’ balance? |  | Participate in class discussion, sharing their ideas about what is mean by ‘work-life balance. |  |
| Introduce a definition, and ask for comments.  *‘Work-life balance is about people having a measure of control over when, where and how they work. It is achieved when an individual's right to a fulfilled life inside and outside paid work is accepted and respected as the norm, to the mutual benefit of the individual, business and society.’* | 7 | Students to listen, take notes and participate in class discussions throughout, as appropriate. |  |
| Set pairs activity to explore the potential benefits and drawbacks of ‘work-life balance’ for the employee and the employer.  Benefits for employee   * flexibility to meet family needs, personal obligations, and life responsibilities conveniently * reduced consumption of employee commuting time and fuel costs * increased feeling of personal control over schedule and work environment * reduces employee burnout due to overload * allows people to work when they accomplish most, feel freshest, and enjoy working * depending on the flexible work schedule chosen, may decrease external childcare hours and costs   Drawbacks for employee   * employees may thrive in an office environment and feel isolated from colleagues * there is no clear delineation between work and home * lack of communication and interaction   Benefits for employer   * react to changing market conditions more effectively and meet customer demands - for example, shift work, part-time work and flexitime can help organisation to open longer without making employees work longer hours * meet seasonal peaks and troughs in business * boost your competitiveness * become recognised as a business that people want to work for * increased productivity * lower absenteeism * a happier, less stressed workforce * improvements in employee health and well-being * a more positive perception of you as an employer * greater employee loyalty, commitment and motivation * a reduction in staff turnover and recruitment costs   Drawbacks for employer   * will require more planning * flexible working without a supervisor being present may cause difficulties for some employees who may be unable to take the initiative or need direction with their duties * communication and team working may be affected * some people take advantage of the flexibility * compressed work weeks can make client handovers complicated |  | In pairs, identify the potential benefits and drawbacks of ‘work-life balance’ for the employee and the employer | Activity 2 – Element 4 LO4 AC4.1 – Benefits and drawbacks of work-life balance |
| Set individual activity to read journal article and note key learning points. |  | Individually, read the journal article ‘Work-life balance can benefit business during financial  crisis and austerity Human resources (HR) must convince management of the need for a flexible approach’, Human Resource Management International Digest, Vol. 23 Issue 5 pp. 25-28.  (This article will be available in your online student resources.)  Make a note of your key learning points from this article. | Activity 3 – Element 4 LO4 AC4.1 – the benefits of work-life balance for business |
| Flexible working methods | Question for general class discussion: what methods can be used to allow an employee to work in a flexible way? | 8 | Participate in class discussion, sharing their examples of flexible working methods and exploring the potential benefits and drawbacks of each method for the employee and the employer. |  |
| Make a list and then compare with slide.  During the discussion encourage learners to explore the potential benefits and drawbacks of each method for the employee and the employer. |  |  |  |
| Set Activity 2 from Chapter 4 of the Study Guide as a classroom activity. |  | In groups, complete Activity 2 in the Study Guide. |  |
| Flexible employment models | Explain what is mean by flexibility.  Explain that different types of flexibility can be used by organisations to enable them to meet business objectives.  Explain the four types of flexibility:   * Numerical * Temporal * Functional * Financial   Explain the concept of the ‘flexible firm’. | 9-11 | Students to listen, take notes and participate in class discussions throughout, as appropriate. |  |
| Set Activity 3 from Chapter 4 of the Study Guide as a classroom activity.  Explain the concept of the ‘shamrock’ organisation. | 12 | In pairs, complete Activity 3 from Chapter 4 of the Study Guide. |  |
| Summarise the advantages and disadvantages of the different forms of flexibility for the organisation and the employees. | 13-14 | Students to listen, take notes and participate in class discussions throughout, as appropriate. |  |
| Review of session and learning outcomes | Set individual revision activity. |  | Individually, answer quiz questions; mark answers in class | Activity 4 – Element 4 LO4 AC4.1 – revision |

### SESSION 2: The impact of flexibility for the management of people and the HR function (4-5 hours)

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| **Topic** | **Tutor Activity** | **Slides** | **Learner Activity** | **Formative assessment** |
| Introduction to session and learning outcomes | Use file: **RESOURCE Element 4 LO4 Define different employment models and the essential features of the contract of employment.pptx**  Learning outcome 4  Assessment criteria 4.1 |  |  |  |
| Barriers to flexibility | Explain that in the last session we looked at the some of the advantages and disadvantages of different types of flexible working.  Explain that for any organisation wanting to implement flexibility, then there are likely to barriers to doing so. | 15 | Students to listen, take notes and participate in class discussions throughout, as appropriate |  |
| Question for general class discussion: what are the potential barriers to flexibility?  Make a list and compare with slide.  Explain that management resistance is an important consideration, and that the views of the leaders of the organisation will have much influence.  Example: The CEO of Yahoo!, Marissa Myer, banned working from home and relocated home-based staff to offices. Reasons she gave in memo to staff included:   * For a good workplace, communication and collaboration are important, which means the employees should be working side-by-side. * The best decisions come from the discussions in the hallway and cafeterias of the office and by meeting new people. * Speed and quality of work are “compromised” when working from home. * Being in the company does not relate only to your day to day job but to your interactions and experiences which can only be possible once people work from offices. | 16 | Participate in class discussion, sharing ideas about the potential barriers to flexibility. |  |
| Question for general class discussion: do you agree with Marissa Myer’s views on homeworking? What could be done to overcome these potential issues? |  | Participate in class discussion, sharing ideas how to overcome barriers to flexibility. |  |
| Impact of flexibility for the management of people | Set group activity to explore the impact of flexibility for the management of people  Possible actions that managers can take:  The relationship between the manager and the employee working flexibly is key to the success of any flexible working arrangement  Go through slide detailing potential actions that managers can take:   * Recognising that everyone should benefit, or at least not suffer any detriment * Set mutual clear and realistic expectations. * Performance management based on measurable goals, targets and outputs – not on “face time” in the workplace * Work out how flexible workers will communicate with each other and their manager * Ensure employees are asked for their comments and thoughts about how the flexible pattern is   working | 17 | Working in two groups, explore how flexibility impacts on the management of people. What do managers need to do to ensure that, as far as possible, flexibility doesn’t have a negative impact on employees and the organisation?  Each group to prepare and deliver a short presentation outlining its conclusions. | Activity 5 – Element 4 LO4 AC4.1 – Impact of flexibility on the management of people |
| Impact of flexibility for the HR function | Set group activity to explore the impact for the HR function  Possible actions that the HR Function can take:   * Raise awareness of flexible working amongst * Work actively with line managers, particularly if they view flexible working patterns negatively. If there are no valid barriers to allowing flexible working, HR may need to help educate senior members of staff on the benefits for the business and how it could improve performance. * Ensure flexible working complies with legislation, including equality and discrimination legislation. conflicting requests or accusations of bias. * Assess how supportive organisational processes are of flexible working, for example, performance measurement and management, recruitment and job design * Assess how conducive the organisation culture is to flexible working – and take action accordingly * Make use of pilots when introducing new initiatives, and trial periods for individual flexible working arrangements to highlight potential problems * Build in opportunities and mechanisms to monitor and evaluate progress with flexible working * Advertise job vacancies as being open to flexible working - many highly skilled individuals are looking for flexibility in working hours. |  | Working in two groups, read the following journal articles which will be available from your online student resources:  ‘Pitfalls in planning flexibility; Knowledge deficit threat to work-life-balance’ Human Resource Management International Digest, Vol. 24 Issue 1 pp. 7 – 9  ‘The ban on working from home makes sense for Yahoo. It needs the innovation and speed of delivery that come from office-based employees ", Human Resource Management International Digest, Vol. 23 Issue 3 pp. 12 - 14  What does the HR function need to do to ensure that, as far as possible, flexibility doesn’t have a negative impact on employees and the organisation?  Each group should prepare and deliver a short presentation outlining its conclusions. | Activity 6 – Element 4 LO4 AC4.1 – Impact of flexibility on the HR function |
| Review of session and learning outcomes | Question for general class discussion: what are your key learning points from today? |  | Participate in class discussion, sharing learning points. |  |

### SESSION 3: The best use of the organisation’s people, to meet budget and business delivery challenges (7-8 hours)

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| **Topic** | **Tutor Activity** | **Slides** | **Learner Activity** | **Formative assessment** |
| Introduction to session and learning outcomes | Use file: **RESOURCE Element 4 LO4 Define different employment models and the essential features of the contract of employment.pptx**  Learning outcome 4  Assessment criteria 4.2 | 18 |  |  |
| The contribution of workforce and talent planning activities to organisational success | Explain definition of workforce planning, and the 4 stages of the cycle | 19-20 | Students to listen, take notes and participate in class discussions throughout, as appropriate. |  |
| Class discussion – from your knowledge of HR strategy and policies, what sort of plans might need to be made to meet the skills gap? |  | Participate in class discussion - from your knowledge of HR strategy and policies, what sort of plans might need to be made to meet the skills gap? |  |
| Group Activity (2-3 people): a workforce plan for a local college who is opening an additional college 15 kilometres away. |  | Group activity: you are the HR Manager for a local college. The college has decided to expand, and open up a new campus in a town 15 kilometres away. Using the workforce planning cycle as your guide, produce a workforce plan, with actions, to present to your manager, that will ensure that when the college opens its doors, all the required teaching and administrative staff are there, ready to work. | Activity 7 – Element 4 LO4 AC4.2 – Workforce planning |
| Succession Planning | Explain the terms succession planning and talent management | 21 | Students to listen, take notes and participate in class discussions throughout, as appropriate. |  |
| Competences | Explain the term competence | 22 | Students to listen, take notes and participate in class discussions throughout, as appropriate. |  |
| Pairs Activity 4 of Chapter 4 in the Study Guide |  | Pairs activity – Activity 4 of Chapter 4 in the Study Guide |  |
| Group activity (3-4 people). Construct a Management development programme. |  | Group activity. As an HR Manager at a local hospital, you have been asked to construct a 3-day Management Training programme. The programme is designed for line managers, to prepare them for possible senior manager roles in the future. Using your answers to the previous activity as a guide, as well as anything else covered in the course, prepare a training plan that shows what will be covered on each day. You will need to be able to justify your training plan, and show how it will assist the line managers to be able to take on more senior roles  How will you identify the line managers with the potential to move to senior management, and therefore attend this course? | Activity 8 – Element 4 LO4 AC4.2 – Succession planning |
| Talent Pools | Explain the term talent pools.  Class discussion – how useful is this as a concept? Do you think they would work in practice? | 23 | Students to listen, take notes and participate in class discussions throughout, as appropriate.  Participate in class discussion on the effectiveness of talent pools |  |
| Review of session and learning outcomes | Students to describe key terms in their own words, and justify how each contributes to the best use of the organisation’s people, to meet budget and business delivery challenges.  Mark students’ revision test answers |  | Students to participate and take part in class test – define the key terms in your own words and justify how each contributes to the best use of the organisation’s people, to meet budget and business delivery challenges. | Activity 9 – Element 4 LO4 AC4.2 – revision (class test) |