

01

Introduction

This textbook has been written to provide readers with an in-depth review of the human resource development field. It aligns with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Advanced Diploma content related to learning and development and is therefore relevant both for students and practitioners in this area. The ultimate aim of this textbook is to explore the various facets of the human resource development field, from strategy and policy development, to the design and delivery of learning events and various other debates in the field, such as how technology impacts learning and development. The book therefore provides a solid foundation for both those new to the area of human resource development, and those with some experience of the field already.

We have written this book with accessibility in mind, and we have sought to provide clarity in our descriptions and interpretations of the various concepts we cover. We adopt a critical perspective throughout, and present different perspectives and views within the given topic areas. We hope that this encourages readers to reflect on the various issues covered within this book, and to develop their own perspectives with regard to the multitude of debates and theories which we will introduce. In order to include a practical perspective within this textbook we have sought to incorporate examples and case studies wherever possible to illustrate how concepts and theories operate in real-world situations. These examples have been taken from diverse contexts in order to demonstrate how human resource development operates in different settings.

Table 1.1 provides an overview of the chapters presented within this textbook.

Our approach within this book is to provide an informative and practical resource which strikes a balance between engaging with complex debates on the one hand, whilst providing straightforward and clear explanations on the other. We hope that by adopting this approach readers find the book to be a useful companion whilst studying human resource development in its various facets. Each chapter has been designed to build a solid foundation of knowledge whilst encouraging readers to think deeply about the complexities of the debates being discussed. Our intent

Table 1.1 Chapter overview

Chapter	Title	Brief Synopsis
1	Introduction	Provides an overview of the textbook, its content and its key features.
2	Fundamentals: What is human resource development?	Defines key terms and concepts within the field, exploring the origins of HRD and differentiating it from HRM.
3	The context	Examines the environment external and internal to organisations in which HRD operates. Identifies key trends and considers their implications for learning.
4	Human resource development strategy and policy	Explores the development of HRD strategy and policy, considering what it means to take a 'strategic' approach to HRD and the importance of strategic 'alignment'.
5	Managing the human resource development function	Considers how HRD provision is structured in organisations, how stakeholder relationships are built and maintained, and the roles that HRD practitioners adopt.
6	How we learn: Learning theories and learning styles	Reviews the considerable theory base that has developed in relation to the subject of learning. Explores various theoretical constructs and their implications for how learning is designed and delivered.
7	Identifying learning needs	The first in a set of four chapters that explores the design, delivery and evaluation of learning. Chapter 7 discusses the various ways in which learning needs can be identified.
8	Designing human resource development interventions	This chapter considers the various choices that HRD practitioners have when it comes to the design of learning. Well-known models of learning design are discussed, and different learning methods are critiqued.
9	Delivering human resource development interventions	Explores the various methods and mechanisms through which HRD events can be delivered, with a focus on ensuring effective transfer of learning to the workplace.
10	Evaluating human resource development interventions	Discusses the various theoretical models that can be used to assess the outcomes of learning input. This chapter includes both long-standing research and more contemporary approaches to evaluation.

(continued)

Table 1.1 (Continued)

Chapter	Title	Brief Synopsis
11	Using technology in learning	Considers how technology can support the learning process and the management of the HRD function. Key themes and trends within this topic area, such as AI, are discussed.
12	Learning analytics	Takes a deep dive into how data and analytics can be used to support learning. Examines key subjects such as predictive analytics and data visualisation.
13	Leadership and management development	Examines how organisations can devise effective learning programmes to develop those new to, or currently in, leadership and management roles.
14	Knowledge management	Discusses the rise of the knowledge economy and seeks to identify the role of the HRD practitioner in managing information flows within organisations.
15	organisational learning	Considers learning as a collective phenomenon and explores how organisations can develop learning cultures.
16	Career management and continuing professional development	The penultimate chapter focuses on how notions of the career have changed over time and how organisations can support development over the course of an individual's career journey. Strategies to support continuous engagement with learning are also explored in some depth.
17	Future directions and contemporary challenges within human resource development	The final chapter speculates about how HRD may evolve in the future. Extrapolating from trends and discussions in the preceding chapters, it considers the purpose and shape of the HRD function, and the evolving role of the HRD practitioner.

through this approach is that learners can understand not only the core principles within the field, but are properly equipped to explore and, in the future, perhaps contribute to ongoing conversations within the territory.

In writing this textbook we have been mindful of both the CIPD's qualifications related to people management, and the latest research that has been published by the CIPD within the field of learning and development. During the course of the chapters within this book readers will see linkages to CIPD material, alongside contributions from prominent academics and well-known practitioners within the human resource development field. Full reference lists are provided within each chapter should readers wish to follow up any of the sources that we have used whilst writing this book. Building on this overview, the following section provides information from the CIPD's Advanced Diploma syllabus relevant to the area of learning and development.

The CIPD's Advanced Diploma syllabus

At level seven, the CIPD offers two qualifications: the Advanced Diploma in Strategic People Management and the Advanced Diploma in Strategic Learning and Development. Within both of these qualifications there is significant content related to human resource development, be it in core or optional units. The Advanced Diploma in Strategic Learning and Development is clearly more relevant for individuals who wish to specialise in the learning and development field. This textbook has been written to specifically map on to the generalist learning and development unit 7OS02 Learning and Development Practice. This unit seeks to provide an overview of the learning and development field, focusing on the role of the learning function within organisations and how learning and development events are designed and delivered. It seeks to unpack how the environment external and internal to the organisation impacts upon human resource development, the various stages involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of learning, theories connected with organisational learning and how technology is changing this field. Within this unit there are a number of different learning outcomes and assessment criteria, which are outlined here.

- 1 *Understand the external environment and internal organisational context for learning and development.*
 - 1.1 Analyse the impact of the external environment on the organisational strategy, including the importance of horizontal and vertical alignment.
 - 1.2 Critically evaluate the organisational strategy in relation to learning and development strategy and policy.
 - 1.3 Evaluate the influence of the internal environment on learning and development.
 - 1.4 Analyse how learning professionals may create effective business cases in order to gain investment in learning activity.
- 2 *Understand the design, delivery and impact of learning and development interventions.*
 - 2.1 Evaluate a variety of methods through which learning professionals may assess learning needs.
 - 2.2 Critically analyse the role of learning needs analysis within the design and delivery of learning.
 - 2.3 Critically evaluate the major stages in the design, delivery and impact measurement of learning, including how decisions are influenced by context.
 - 2.4 Evaluate the importance of individual and organisational commitment to continuing professional development.
- 3 *Understand major theories of organisational learning and the characteristics of the learning organisation.*
 - 3.1 Critically analyse the concept of organisational learning and its application within organisations.
 - 3.2 Evaluate the conceptual differences between organisational learning and the learning organisation.

- 3.3 Critically analyse a variety of factors that influence knowledge transfer processes.
- 3.4 Examine how organisations may develop learning cultures.
- 4 *Understand the role and application of technology within the design, delivery and impact measurement of learning.*
 - 4.1 Critically analyse factors influencing the advance of technology within learning.
 - 4.2 Assess the role of technology within the design, delivery and impact assessment of learning.
 - 4.3 Discuss the methods through which technology may facilitate collaborative approaches to learning.
 - 4.4 Analyse the importance of data security and protection within the learning function.

This textbook seeks to address these learning outcomes in a systematic way, whilst also exploring other relevant areas of the contemporary human resource development landscape. The first few chapters of the book, notably Chapters 2 to 5, are aimed at addressing the first learning outcome, ‘Understand the external environment and internal organisational context for learning and development’. The book addresses this learning outcome by first exploring the context, internal and external to organisations, for human resource development in Chapter 3 before considering how effective strategy and policy can be built in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 also contributes strongly to this learning outcome by discussing the structure and shape of the human resource development function, as well as the roles that learning professionals undertake in contemporary organisations. Learning outcome two, ‘Understand the design, delivery and impact of learning and development interventions’ is met through Chapters 6 to 10, where the design and delivery of human resource development is examined in significant depth. Chapter 6 begins by exploring underlying learning theory, before Chapters 7 to 10 explore each of the stages involved in designing and delivering effective learning events: identifying learning needs, designing learning interventions, delivering learning interventions and evaluating the outcomes of learning events.

Further into the textbook, the third learning outcome, ‘Understand major theories of organisational learning and the characteristics of the learning organisation’, is met through Chapters 14 and 15. Chapter 14 sets some important groundwork for this learning outcome by discussing the subject of knowledge management, including the rise of the knowledge economy and the various ways in which a culture set up to share knowledge can be created within organisations. Chapter 15 then builds on this by introducing theory related to organisational learning and the learning organisation, discussing how learning cultures can be developed and sustained and presenting important critical perspectives and discussion points related to this area of theory. The final learning outcome, ‘Understand the role and application of technology within the design, delivery and impact measurement of learning’, is met directly through Chapters 11 and 12, although the role of technology within learning is a subject that is discussed many times throughout other chapters as well. Chapter 11 considers a variety of ways in which technology can be used within learning whilst

also exploring developments related to artificial intelligence in considerable depth. Chapter 12 builds on this by introducing content related to learning analytics. This is particularly important for human resource development practitioners because the ability to work with data and to use information to identify trends and patterns in order to inform future decision-making is vital in the contemporary business environment. It is often highlighted that human resource practitioners lack skills related to the use of data and data analytics, and this chapter indicates how important it is that this identified learning gap is closed over time.

In addition to the content discussed above, this textbook also covers, in depth, the subjects of leadership development and career management in Chapters 13 and 16 respectively, before closing by considering the future directions of the human resource development function in Chapter 17. These topic areas are also central to the human resource development domain, and whilst they do not appear directly within this CIPD's Learning and Development Practice unit, we wanted to include them within this book so that readers do not overlook their importance within the broader human resource development field.

About the authors

This book has been written as a joint effort between Graham Perkins and Sian Robinson. A brief biography of the authors now follows so that readers can understand more about their background and perspective.

Graham Perkins

Graham is an Associate Professor in Human Resource Management and works at the University of Exeter's Business School. Graham has worked in higher education for twelve years and prior to his move into academia he held a number of positions with both private and public sector organisations within HRM. Graham holds both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in the human resource management field and has published research in a number of academic journals including *Human Resource Management Journal*, the *Journal of Small Business Management* and *Human Resource Development Quarterly* amongst others. Graham has also published a separate textbook through Kogan Page titled *Work and Employment in a Changing Business Environment* with Stephen Taylor. In addition to his work at the University of Exeter, Graham also works extensively with the CIPD as a Lead Moderator across their suite of qualifications at levels 3, 5 and 7.

Sian Robinson

Sian is a Lecturer in Human Resource Management at the University of Exeter's Business School. Sian has been teaching in higher education since 2020, following working in a range of roles in HRM, marketing and supporting start-up businesses. She teaches across a range of areas in HRM and business and management more generally, including employment relations, equality, diversity and inclusion, and

people management skills and behaviours. She is also a programme director and is passionate about improving the student experience, especially in relation to inclusivity, linked with her experiences of having attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and for widening participation, as a previous non-standard route entrant to higher education. She holds an undergraduate degree in business studies and two Masters degrees across HRM and management. Sian works with the CIPD as a Moderator for their qualifications at levels 3 and 5. She is also a non-executive director for SBA Community Interest Company, who support enterprise and business success through business support programmes and training and skills support.

Key features of this book

Within this textbook you will find a number of features to support your learning. In each chapter we have provided a number of *pause and reflect* points where we pose questions or ask you to undertake short exercises in order to consolidate your learning. These have been marked in boxes for you so that they are clear within the chapters. The text following the pause and reflect points will provide a steer regarding the response, or will pose additional questions or prompts to deepen your learning. It is not anticipated that these exercises will take significant amounts of time, although you may wish to use these as opportunities to reinforce your understanding of key ideas or content from the chapters. It is also not the case that there will always be a single clear answer to a pause and reflect point. As with many subject areas within human resource management, and indeed the social sciences more broadly, there are often many different, and equally plausible, responses to questions and discussion prompts. We therefore encourage you to think laterally and critically about the content covered and the questions or exercises that have been set. You may also find it beneficial to use some of the pause and reflect points as discussion prompts within study groups or communities of practice. The questions and exercises have been deliberately written so that they can be attempted either individually or as a group task. There is often significant value to be gained from sharing learning experiences with others, and therefore we encourage you to consider how you can build group discussions, whether in person or virtual, into your study schedule.

Alongside the pause and reflect points this chapter also contains a range of case studies within each chapter to illustrate how theories and concepts might operate. These examples vary in length, and some are followed by questions which can be attempted either individually or as group tasks. We have sought to draw cases and illustrations from a variety of contexts in order to incorporate an international perspective and to demonstrate the complexities of human resource development across a range of organisational forms. You will see examples drawn from the private, public and voluntary sectors, and from organisations that are both relatively small and very large. Our intent when constructing this textbook was to ensure that the diversity of organisational life was reflected in our content, and we hope that you find the illustrations we have included valuable.

Finally, we have included a range of tables, charts and figures within the chapters to depict various concepts, or to highlight how the processes associated with human resource development operate in a real-world context. These figures and

representations are our own constructions, but we reference original sources where relevant, or indicate where we have adapted or built on the work of others. We have sought not to overload the textbook with a plethora of models and images, but we have included tables, charts and figures where these are relevant and where they support the comprehension of the various concepts being discussed.

We now draw this introductory chapter to a close. Its purpose was to provide a short overview of the textbook, to indicate how it aligns with the CIPD's Advanced Diploma standards and to orient readers to the various features and content in the chapters to come. Readers may wish to use this chapter to guide their use of this textbook, returning to it in order to structure their learning journey. The first major content chapter, Chapter 2, focuses on fundamental theory and concepts within human resource development, including definitions of key terms, the history of the human resource development field and the importance of adopting a critical approach when studying and working within this area. Please read on when you are ready.

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