

Qualification: CIPD Diploma in Applied Human Resources

Module Name: Developing Professional Practice in Human Resources

Title: Activity 6 – Reflection

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Student Name: Rachel Thomas

Student Number: 1201576

CIPD Membership Number: 55478540

By signing below, I confirm that the work/evidence presented is my own, unaided work. I understand the regulations pertaining to candidate malpractice and the action that may be taken as a result.

Signed: RMThomas

Date: 24/05/2021

Development plan

NAME:	Rachel Thomas	MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:	55478540
COVERING THE PERIOD FROM:	01 February 2020	TO:	30 April 2021

Planned outcome

Where do I want to be by the end of this period? What do I want to be doing? (This may be evolutionary or “more of the same”.)

What do I want/need to learn?	What will I do to achieve this?	What resources or support will I need?	What will my success criteria be?	Target dates for review and completion	Evidence of Achievement and Reflection
Broaden my knowledge of the HR functions within the organisation	Arrange to sit with fellow colleagues on a weekly basis for one-on-one training, learning more about the work my colleagues carry out, and how my work impact theirs.	Process maps Assistance from other colleagues Approval from line manager	Keeping a log of the meeting and the processes required Knowledge gained.	~~Monthly basis – sit down and review what has been said and how this can be used.~~ Review when Government guidance	Due to the coronavirus pandemic and the need to utilise remote working as of March 2020, I have been unable to sit with a HR Advisor to gain further understanding of their roles. The pandemic has resulted in an increase in workload throughout the Service, so will look to re-arrange such meetings, when Government guidance changes, and workloads decrease.

				changes / workload decreases.	I have however, been able to sit on the 'Planning & Performance' and 'DMT' meetings to gain further understanding of what is happening within the department, and how changes within the wider organisation will impact the department, and the requirements of this. I have also read numerous textbooks on this topic, which I felt were beneficial and have broadened my knowledge. Having purchased these textbooks, this will continue to be a point of reference should I need any further support.
What duties the other members of my team carry out daily	Assess the current processes of 3 tasks carried out within the Service Support Team, suggesting opportunity for improvement moving forward.	Process maps Assistance from other colleagues Approval from line manager	Keeping a log of the meeting and the processes required Ability to provide opportunities for change.	February – June 2020 – Sit with colleagues to discuss current processes July – October 2020 – Look for alternate processes and systems November – January 2021 – Liaise with colleagues to discuss new processes	The HR Support Team meet on a fortnightly basis whereby we discuss our roles and responsibilities for different tasks. By looking at each of our job descriptions, we have been able to differentiate the level of responsibility for a Grade 2, Grade 3, Grade 5, and Grade 6 position. As a result, I am now confident in what my role should be within the team. As of January 2021, we have been required to assist in the implementation of a new HR system, assisting with the input of data and examining what the system can do and whether it meets our needs. Unfortunately, there are elements that we are struggling with, for example, input of sickness

				February – April 2021 – Action ideas, receiving feedback along the way and making necessary changes	absence, and will therefore need to continue to look at alternative options.
Understand my influencing style	Take an 'Influencing Styles' questionnaire	A reliable and credible questionnaire	View the results of the questionnaire and its meaning. How this can be used moving forward.	Completed questionnaire by March 2020 – Look at ways to change my influencing style Personal changes – ongoing	Questionnaire completed. In discussions with management, I realised that I am lacking confidence in my responses and would not challenge or question their opinions or answers. I need to be confident in myself that I know my job role and such requirements and be confident with the information I am providing.
Assess the current recruitment processes used, suggesting opportunity for improvement moving forward.	Assess the current processes carried out. Liaise with other organisations to understand their recruitment process.	Process maps Approval from line manager	Information gained Keeping a log of the meeting and the processes required	~~February – August 2020~~ Ongoing - Contact other organisations to gain further knowledge of their processes	Due to the coronavirus pandemic, workloads have increased and as a result I am yet to speak with other public sector organisations to understand their recruitment processes. I am particularly interested to liaise with a representative from Dyfed Powys Police, as I believe the recruitment of Police Officers may be like that of Operational Firefighters.

How other organisations' recruitment processes compare to the Fire and Rescue Service	Provide suggestions based on the information gathered.	Points of contact within other organisations Procedural documentation (Fire Service and other organisations)	Ability to provide opportunities for change.	October – November 2020 – Review information gathered December – January 2021 – Outline differences and opportunities for improvement February – April 2021 - Action ideas, receiving feedback along the way and making necessary changes	The pandemic has already resulted in changes to the recruitment process, whereby elements have been delegated out to County Commands to complete. This is a result of increased workload in HR. At first, I was a bit sceptical to the changes, as I was unsure how County Command Officers would react. However, as the decision was made through Senior Management, it appears to be working fine. This is something I do wish to revisit at a later date, when things ease.
Understand how to develop a job description. Understand the process of job evaluation.	Arrange meetings with Head of HR to go through the process of writing a job description, and the process of job evaluation.	Allocated time	Ability to support the organisation in creating and updating job descriptions	Personal development – no deadline	As my role is primarily focused on the recruitment of On-Call Firefighters to the organisation, I wanted to understand who created such documentation, and how it became a public facing document. I was hoping to work with the Head of HR to go through this. I was unable to meet with him in this regard, however I did meet on a one-to-one basis with HR Advisor, Lizzie Gudgeon who gave me a better understanding of how to write a job

					description and to agree at what pay band this should be. I have since been able to draft a few job descriptions for different department, which have been used as a basis for further development. To further support my development in this area, I would like to attend formal job evaluation training.
Further understand the requirements of Covid-19 How to manage my role through the pandemic	Research Government guidance into pandemic Attend CIT webinar to understand Service's approach to working effectively during a pandemic. Liaise with CIT to understand how recruitment will continue during the pandemic/ will it pause	Access to Government website Access to information from Public Health Wales Allocated time to attend meetings	Ability to support the organisation in continuing to provide administrative support during such time	23 March 2020	The information found on the Government website was very informative into the pandemic, especially relating to how easy the virus can be spread. As a result, arrangements were made with the Stores team for cleaning supplies to be brought to the office for cleaning to be carried out when individuals attend the office. The Service agreed that remote working would be the best course of action for Support staff employees, so was required to liaise with ICT to ensure that all the necessary software and equipment was available to me. The CIT webinar gave a good insight as to how the Service would continue to operate during the pandemic, with the creation of six cells to deal with different aspects of the Service. As a result of this, I was asked to become a member of the People Cell

					group, looking at how to protect and manage our employees during such times. At first, I was very anxious about becoming a member of this group as it is made up of around 50 representatives from various departments / ranks. The decision to pause recruitment for a period of 6 months was made, and I was therefore delegated work from the HR Advisors to complete in the meantime. Again, I was anxious that when recruitment was to pick back up, that there would be a backlog to deal with.
Understand ways to increase employee engagement levels in the organisation. Look at ways to measure employee engagement within the organisation.	Research best practice in terms of employee engagement. Examine how this can be implemented within the Fire Service. Research ways to record and measure employee	Textbooks relating to the topic of 'Employee Engagement'. CIPD resources Access to current Fire and Rescue Service processes Service procedures	Ability to provide and reference best practice examples of employee engagement. Ability to identify and implement new ways of engaging employees in the organisation. Provide methods of recording and	~~March 2020 – July 2020~~ Ongoing	After attending People Cell meetings, it was highlighted that employees may feel less engaged because of the pandemic. As such, I thought it would be beneficial to look at how to motivate our employees during such time. It was agreed that several wellbeing webinars would be arranged that looked at different topics, to include: • Well-being and Health Living • Digital wellbeing • Boosting your Immune System

	engagement within an organisation. Look at how this information could be used within the organisation to improve performance.	Assistance from Line Manager	measuring employee engagement in the organisation and what this means.		The webinars proved to be a success, and I thoroughly enjoyed and learned a lot, that can be considered moving forward. It was identified that the HR department currently use KPI's as a method of recording, which appear effective. This is something I will continue to look at.
Understand the need for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion within the Organisation	Research ED&I initiatives to be implemented within the organisation. Arrange a meeting with ED&I Officer Attend training on ED&I in the workplace	Access to information on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Allocated time with ED&I Officer Allocated time to attend training Line manager approval to attend training	Ability to support the recruitment of underrepresented groups into the organisation. Ability to support the ED&I Officer in the role out of awareness days for underrepresented groups	In line with Wholetime recruitment ~~(September 2020)~~ January 2021 September 2021	As a result of the pandemic, the Service made the decision to pause recruitment, and postpone any awareness days for the underrepresented in society. As such, this will be picked up in line with the next recruitment campaign. As of 19 December 2020, Wales went back into lockdown and therefore the decision was made to postpone all recruitment activities. Previous awareness days have contributed to an increase in applicants from such groups, so I am looking forward to helping organise more sessions in the lead up to September 2021 recruitment campaign. I attended a training session on 10 February 2021 on Equality and Diversity in the workplace.

Increases knowledge on Employment Law	Research employment law and the impacts this has on organisational activities Attend employment law updates/events Read employment law articles to keep up to date	Access to information on employment law, in particular, its impacts on organisation decision-making and operations Utilise information available on ACAS, CIPD and XpertHR Schedule events using CIPD event page, Morgan La Roche HR updates	Record information found (website/book) Log all events planned and attended. Log all articles read	~~Review monthly.~~ Ongoing for CPD	After studying employment law as part of my studies, it is something I wish to continue looking at for my own personal development. I enjoy being able to understand the reasons why the organisation is making such decisions. I have made a list of several articles which I have read, along with where I have found this information should I need to reference. Because of the pandemic, a lot of events have been postponed, which I was disappointed about, however I look forward to attending when they continue.
Time Management	Look at ways to effectively plan and manage time effectively, including determining what should be priority	Mentor Allocated time with Mentor	Time management techniques Delegation Priority setting	Personal development – no deadline	As of yet, I have been unable to arrange for a mentoring partnership to be created. Will look to arrange in the near future.

Complete a self-assessment using the CIPD Profession Map	Complete the self-assessment on the CIPD website	Access to CIPD website	Completion of self-assessment Record any further development outcomes in development plan	Upon completion of final Level 5 module – April 2021	Following submission of my final assignment, I carried out a self-assessment using the CIPD profession map as I was curious to find out if I had met my developmental needs. I was quite happy with the results as I have improved in certain areas, however there are still areas for improvement to meet the requirements of my role.

Development record

NAME:	Rachel Thomas	MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:	55478540
COVERING THE PERIOD FROM:	01 February 2020	TO:	30 April 2021

This record sheet is for your guidance only – you may present your development record in any other format.

Key dates	What did you do?	Why?	What did you learn from this?	How have/will you use this? Any further action?
20 February 2020	Attend meeting with Service's Occupation Health provider, Insync Corporate Healthcare Ltd.	Discussions held around the introduction of a new sickness management system.	Presentation given by Insync in relation to the Probase sickness management system. Handouts also given.	Service has agreed to implement. Will allow access to medical information instantaneously, instead of waiting for emails (admin errors have arisen previously). Information received, enabled me to provide training to those within the Support Team on how to use the system and its benefits to us as a team.

03 March 2020	Attend meeting with Occupational Health Assistant & Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Officer to discuss the processes of Maternity & Paternity	As part of a departmental restructure, this will become part of my job role.	Further understanding of the legal requirements to Maternity & Paternity leave. Understand the processes of how to apply for such leave, the required documentation, and the process of returning to work.	This information is used as a basis to all received Maternity & Paternity applications received. As and when further information is required, I seek guidance from the Senior Payroll Officer and Occupational Health.
11 & 12 March 2020	Assist the People and Organisational Development department with ADC (Assessment Development Centre) assessments.	Due to sickness absence and annual leave, shortage of admin assistance.	I gained a further understanding of the promotion process for Operational employees, and the ADC process. I was also able to meet representatives from North Wales Fire and Rescue Service & South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.	Having assisted with this type of assessment, I am now available to assist as and when needed.
27 March 2020	Attend meeting with the Finance department to understand the Agresso system, and how to raise purchase orders.	Currently, there is only one member of the HR team that can raise purchase orders, which has caused some issued when on annual leave.	I now understand how to use the Agresso system, how to raise purchase orders, and how to 'book-in' orders once received.	As a department, we no longer must rely on one individual to raise orders for the department, which often caused delays.
21 April 2020	Attend meeting to discuss the process of	As part of a departmental restructure, this will become part of my job role.	Having not seen or understood the different types of sickness paperwork, I now	This will become part of my job role and will be shared with a colleague. We both must understand what to do with such

	Occupational Health mailbox.		understand what a P11W/ P11Y & P12A document is. I also understand the process of filing such paperwork and distributing to the necessary correspondence.	documentation and ensure that we are both following the same processes.
13 May 2020	Attend 'Absence Case Review' meeting.	Due to absences within the department, required to attend to take minutes.	This is not normally part of my job role, so attending this meeting gave me an insight into how the Service deals with long-term sickness absence cases, and how decisions are made in terms of referring to Insync.	This information is 'good to know' should any instances crop up in the future.
14 May 2020	Attend 'Inclusive Workforce Group' meeting alongside the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Officer.	Due to absences within the department, required to attend to take minutes.	This is not normally part of my job role, so attending this meeting gave me an insight into how the Service deals with the inclusion of under-represented groups and those with disabilities.	This information is 'good to know' should any instances crop up in the future.
02 June 2020	Attend 'Grievance Appeal' meeting	Due to absences within the department, required to attend to assist with recording devices.	This is not normally part of my job role, however due to the pandemic, will be required to assist due to limited numbers of staff in the office.	This information is 'good to know' should any instances crop up in the future.

			Was able to gain an insight into how the grievance appeal process is run.	
01 July 2020	Attend Wellbeing Webinar – Boosting your Immune System	Service is trying to encourage and boost wellbeing within the organisation.	The webinar provided information on how what you eat, how to you sleep, and exercise, helps to contribute to boosting your immune system. Due to pandemic, Service is trying to focus of the wellbeing of its employees, and how it can assist in doing this.	As a member of People Cell, I helped to actively encourage employees within the Service to attend such sessions. Handouts received from webinar, uploaded onto People Cell Teams channel, and HR Department Teams channel for future use.
01 September 2020	As part of CIPD Level 5 course, analysed performance management tools within the organisation	To satisfy the course requirements, and to increase my understanding of how the organisation carries out performance management and make recommendations based on the findings.	I learned how the organisation how a variety of performance management mechanisms in place, and how this plays a part in ensuring employees meet their contractual requirements.	I was able to use the methods learned in my studies to analyse and make recommendations to management on changes to performance management mechanisms within the organisation. As such, we have been able to introduce a more fluid approach to discussion with Senior Managers, to break down the rigid hierarchical structure.
11 September 2020	Attend 'Grievance Appeal' meeting	Due to absences within the department, required to attend to assist with recording devices.	This is not normally part of my job role, however due to the pandemic, will be required to assist due to limited numbers of staff in the office.	This information is 'good to know' should any instances crop up in the future.

			Was able to gain an insight into how the grievance appeal process is run.	
24 September 2020	Attend meeting with the Finance department to go through 'Click Travel' system	Introduction of new system to book hotels and car travel.	The system was broken down step-by-step and shown how to book accommodation for departmental employees.	Service had agreed to the implementation of a new system. Process maps will need to be developed to reflect how to use the system and who's responsibility it is to use the system. Information received, enabled me to provide training to those within the Support Team on how to use the system and its benefits to us as a team.
30 September 2020	Attend meeting with the Corporate Communications and Business Development department to discuss Service Recognition & Reward.	Due to pandemic, Service will not be holding its annual Celebrating Success event. Discussions held around how to present Long Service and Good Conduct medals, along with Meritorious medals to those who are eligible.	It was agreed that in the absence of a Celebrating Success event, all medals will be issued to County Commanders to distribute/present to eligible employees.	A list of eligible employees needed to be developed, along with all medals to be distributed, and issued to the CCBD department. Medals for 2019 & 2020 issued. I was responsible for creating a 'receipt' which would be completed by the individual and returned to the HR department as evidence that they had received their medals.

02 November 2020	Attend 'IOSH Working Safely' training session	Service Executive Leadership Team have agreed that all employees needed to carry out this training to ensure safe working practices within the organisation. Arrangements made by Corporate Risk department.	I now understand how to carry out risk assessments within the organisations, and the requirements and impacts of working safely.	Working in partnership with the HR Co-ordinator, risk assessments have been drawn up for the department and stored on DMS for all to access. Copies have been sent to the Corporate Risk department for their records also. Such qualification will need to be completed in 3 years.
10 November 2020	Attend Service CIT webinar.	To understand Service position within the coronavirus pandemic	CIT was developed as part of the pandemic, whereby Corporate Heads would make decisions for the organisation based on government guidance and best practice. Such information is then transpired through the webinar to all employees.	This information is 'good to know' should any instances crop up in the future.
19 November 2020	Attend Corporate Plan 2021 webinar	To understand the Service's Corporate aims and objectives for the period 2020 – 2025.	The Service has developed four strategic aims for the next five years, as well as wellbeing and improvement objectives for 2021. Such information provides an understanding of how the Service will function over the next five years, and how the	This information was shared with the HR Support Team for information. We predict that in coming months the departments objectives will change in line with the objectives from the Corporate Plan. In the meantime, I have signposted the team to the relevant information should they need to refer to it later.

			departmental objectives may change to correspond.	
10 December 2020	Attend 'Digital Wellbeing' webinar	With an increase in working remotely due to the pandemic, the Service is trying to encourage and boost digital wellbeing within the organisation.	I did not realise that the amount of time spent in front of the laptop or computer could impact on my wellbeing. It was addressed how the increase in use of technology has impacted on communication skills, and the increase in digital fatigue. People tend to be spending longer at their laptops or computers, and they no longer must commute to the workplace.	I will continue to remember that I should not spend too much time at my laptop without sufficient rest periods. This will not only help my wellbeing, but also my eyesight. I must also remember to drink plenty of fluids, and this will contribute to my wellbeing. Information from the handouts given, have been uploaded onto the HR department Teams channel for use by all.
14 December 2020	Attend 'PeopleDoc' meeting	The current contract with 'Alchemy' has expired. Looking for an alternative documentation sharing and accessibility system.	We were explained the full functionality of the PeopleDoc system and how it may benefit the department for use. We were also explained the cost of the system, and how improvements and adaptations could be made to better suit the needs of the Service.	Unfortunately, the PeopleDoc system does not meet the needs of the department. We require a system that we can upload and view files for each employee in the Service, instead this was a replacement for DMS.
10 February 2021	Attend 'Equality and Diversity in the Workplace' training	To further understand the requirements of equality and diversity in the workplace.	Typical situations where discrimination occurs, and the	Reviewed the application forms currently used within the Service, to develop the

			best practice in resolving issues	'Equal Opportunities' section to meet the needs of Stonewall.
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Reflective Statement

The CPD Certificate Service (2020) describe Continuous Professional Development as “the learning activities professionals engage in to develop and enhance their abilities. It enables learning to become conscious and proactive, rather than passive and reactive”. This type of development allows individuals, like me, to reflect on our own learning, linking development activities with practical outcomes.

Reflective practice refers to a method of self-improvement, whereby one assesses their own thoughts and actions, for the purpose of personal learning and development (BusinessBalls, 2021). For this reason, I utilised Gibbs Reflective Cycle which could be used to make sense of situations, and understand what went well, and what could be improved for the future, whilst paying attention to the feelings and emotions such experiences brought about.

At the start of this course, I devised a development plan, whereby I outlined my professional development needs based on the outcomes of a self-assessment against a selection of the professional areas and behaviours identified on the CIPD Profession Map (CIPD, 2015). By using this, I was able to monitor and keep track of my progress and add new development needs as they arose.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic and the need to work remotely, I was unable to fulfil a lot of the development activities identified, such as meeting with and shadowing colleagues to gain further understanding of elements of the office. However, I was able to attend various virtual meetings in a secretarial capacity, whereby I was able to gain an alternative perspective on decision making and Service processes. Due the increase in workload the pandemic brought about, I was unable to meet with, and discuss the recruitment process and procedures within other public sector organisations, and consequently, have not been able to identify any developmental opportunities within the organisation.

As a result of a departmental restructure and transformation, I am now responsible for a small group of colleagues, and therefore by carrying out an ‘influencing style’ questionnaire, I learned that I needed to be more confident in myself and the knowledge that I was passing onto my colleagues, and not be afraid to challenge or question the opinions of others.

Even though I have been unable to complete many of the developmental needs identified as part of my plan, I was able to attend numerous virtual meetings, training sessions and webinars to further my knowledge in other areas which I did not highlight, and therefore devised a development ‘record’ to keep track of this. For example, I attended an IOSH Working Safely course to further my understanding of Health & Safety practices within the organisation, and I also attended a ‘Equality and Diversity in the Workplace’ training sessions, whereby it was highlighted to me the importance of encouraging the participation and cooperation of underrepresented groups.

I have identified a future need to improve on my time management skills. Whilst working in full-time employment and carrying out this course, I have struggled to ensure that all necessary assignments have been completed by the deadlines, which has also impacted on my day-to-day work, subsequently, much of my work has been rushed and not to my full potential.

Reference List

BusinessBalls (2021) *Reflective Practice – What is Reflective Practice?* Available at: <https://www.businessballs.com/self-awareness/reflective-practice/> (Accessed: 23 May 2021)

CIPD (2015) *'The CIPD HR Profession Map'*. Available at: <https://www.cipd.co.uk/cipd-hr-profession/cipd-hr-profession-map/default.html> (Accessed: 08 January 2020)

The CPD Certificate Service (2020) *'CPD Explained'*. Available at: <https://cpduk.co.uk/explained> (Accessed: 08 January 2020)