

Personnel and Development Consulting

Purpose

Successful candidates on a personnel and development consulting programme will have achieved the PDS qualification or pursued an equivalent route to graduate membership of the CIPD.

The qualification is intended for:

- Chartered MCIPD or Chartered FCIPD personnel and development professionals operating as consultants – either internal consultants employed by the organisation to which they are providing services, or externally appointed under a contract for services
- senior managers of all disciplines contracting for the services of personnel and development consultants in a wide range of personnel disciplines.
- Chartered MCIPD or Chartered FCIPD interim personnel and development managers providing both generalist and specialist personnel services.

The personnel and development Advanced Practitioner Standards are intended to aid the improvement of performance, skills and knowledge in:

- strategic diagnosis and project planning of an organisation's need for personnel and development consultancy
- planning, managing and evaluating the consultancy business and the consultancy project
- information gathering techniques, diagnostic tools and consultancy interventions aimed at constructive changes in organisational effectiveness and efficiency
- corporate ethics, governance, values and conflict resolution.

The Standards can be used:

- as a stand alone qualification in its own right
- as part of a masters or equivalent level academic programme
- selectively as part of an organisation's management development programmes.

Performance indicators

1 Strategic diagnosis and project planning of an organisation's need for personnel and development consultancy diagnosis

Operational indicators

Practitioners must be able to:

- 1 Diagnose and assess the advice or services the business, organisation or individual needs for performance improvement in the context of CIPD Standards and codes of conduct – taking account of the added-value benefits for the client, value for money and the client's economic health.
- 2 Benchmark the client against other organisations' best practice and, where appropriate, against other countries or international organisations.

Knowledge indicators

Practitioners must be able to understand, explain and critically evaluate:

- 1 The political, economic, sociological and cultural factors that can affect an organisation's performance in the market place and why a personnel and development consultant needs to take these factors into account.
- 2 The roles and different accountabilities of in-house and external consultants and the different types of consultant, including expert, diagnoser/prescriber and process consultant.
- 3 The different types of consultancy organisation and an assessment of their strengths and limitations.
- 4 International and cross-cultural aspects of consulting, including differences in:
 - laws
 - behaviours
 - communications and decision-making processes
 - economic factors (including currency exchange).

Indicative content

- 1 The nature and implications of current influences and trends in business and organisations and the impact of personnel and development regulations, policies and practices from an international, national and organisational perspective as appropriate.
- 2 Holistic and heuristic models of organisation processes and systems.
- 3 The nature of organisation cultures and values.
- 4 The politics of power and influence within an organisation.
- 5 International dimensions – global aspects, international and national agencies as they impact on personnel and development within an organisation.
- 6 Practical examples, including comparisons of differences between organisations in the UK and worldwide where appropriate.

2 Planning, managing and evaluating the consultancy business and the consultancy project

Operational indicators

Practitioners must be able to:

- 1 Produce a marketing and sales plan for their personnel and development consultancy, having identified where the consultant can add value from their advice or services, and how other consultants use, market and manage projects.
- 2 Write proposals for the advice or service/s to be provided, setting out the:
 - range, any limitations and expected outcomes
 - legal aspects, professional liabilities and any special conditions
 - charges and payment terms, warranties and procedures for resolving difficulties and terms for engagement/disengagement.
- 3 Justify the nature, range and appropriateness of required advice or services against all reasonable alternatives, and specify and schedule the necessary resources to undertake the project, including human and technological resources.
- 4 Review the process and:
 - during the assignment, regularly confirm that the selected intervention is still appropriate and take any necessary action
 - at the end, evaluate the outcomes and process for oneself and the client, highlighting the value of the outcomes and any remaining areas for improvement.

Knowledge indicators

Practitioners must be able to understand, explain and critically evaluate:

- 1 The contractual aspects of consultancy services and the legal aspects and ethical issues, legal, moral, personal and professional (including the CIPD Code of Professional Conduct) that the consultant may encounter and have to take account of in different circumstances.
- 2 Planning, selecting and allocating support resources and:
 - how to budget and control costs during an assignment
 - assessing the client's capacity to pay, before starting work
 - credit control and how to deal with non-payment.

- 3 Methods of maintaining and managing the interface with the client, including regular updates and resolving problems or difficulties.
- 4 Estimating the risk and the probability of success, including statistical methods, limitations, elapsed time and resource impacts.
- 5 Concluding a contract or initiative in the specified time or, when appropriate, before the deadline.

Indicative content

- 1 The development of consulting.
- 2 The nature of consulting and different consulting roles.
- 3 Continuing professional development to maintain employability and competence.
- 4 The economics of consulting.
- 5 The interplay between time, scope and cost.
- 6 Estimating and costing work.
- 7 Project and budgetary control.
- 8 Implications of unrealistic estimates of time and cost.
- 9 Estimation of risk and probability of success, including:
 - statistical methods
 - limitations
 - elapsed time
 - resource impacts.
- 10 The management of risk.
- 11 Testing, proving/validating and laboratory techniques.
- 12 Customer satisfaction measurement.
- 13 Market research and identifying niche markets.
- 14 Matching the consultant's expertise to market needs.
- 15 Selling consultancy, and public sector tendering.
- 16 Maintaining a client base and records.
- 17 Identifying the need for consultancy intervention.
- 18 Agreeing with the commissioning client the nature of the problem, the scope of the project, the parameters the consultant will operate within, the roles of others, timing, resource allocations and costs.
- 19 Initial research, and the content of the proposal letter or contract.
- 20 Legal considerations and liability for client and consultant.
- 21 Break clauses and termination of a contract.

3 Information-gathering techniques, diagnostic tools and consultancy interventions aimed at constructive changes in organisational effectiveness and efficiency

Operational indicators

Practitioners must be able to:

- 1 Identify the primary and any secondary clients, advise on the risks and resolution of ambiguity or conflict between them and clarify any differences in their expectations or requirements, particularly where it could affect the outcome of the assignment.
- 2 Select and use appropriate diagnostic tools and gather, record and interpret information and data, from a scoping study or otherwise.
- 3 Influence those not yet in favour of a course of action, using written material, presentations, group and individual meetings as appropriate.
- 4 Offer alternative intervention processes – not single-solution consultancy – and select and apply the most appropriate in the circumstances.
- 5 Use political and interpersonal skills to increase the likelihood that the client will accept and implement the consultancy recommendations.
- 6 Deliver a high-quality consultancy project that meets the client's needs in the most efficient and effective way both for the client and for the consultant's own business.

Knowledge indicators

Practitioners must be able to understand, explain and critically evaluate:

- 1 The framework for stages of intervention and the necessary conditions for success at each stage, namely:
 - market niche research and planning
 - selling
 - ethics of advertising and publicity
 - initial contact
 - engagement
 - commencement
 - content stage review
 - disengagement.
- 2 Data-gathering and diagnostic methods appropriate to the range of advice and services on offer and:
 - their relative strengths and weaknesses
 - single and multiple methods.
- 3 The concept of intervention, the contingencies of effectiveness and approach and:
 - intervention processes and techniques, and why they are or are not appropriate in different circumstances
 - why and how to change from one role or process to another.
- 4 Different approaches to influencing, persuasion and overcoming resistance, and their use in different circumstances.

Indicative content

- 1 Qualitative and quantitative methods, including statistical sampling techniques and computer analysis. Avoiding bias, solution-centred approaches and summarising with:
 - run charts
 - histograms
 - shape/centre/spread
 - source and variation
 - glyph/radar chart.
- 2 Criteria for selecting appropriately from the wide variety of methodologies and techniques available, given the particular circumstance and the respective strengths and limitations. (Practical applications need to be demonstrated alongside theoretical knowledge).
- 3 Typical information-gathering techniques, including:
 - interviews
 - group discussions
 - observation
 - questionnaires
 - workshops
 - secondary research (existing data).
- 4 Techniques appropriate to particular circumstances such as:
 - brainstorming
 - checklists
 - computer support software
 - decision trees
 - Delphi techniques
 - flowcharts
 - force field analysis
 - mind-mapping
 - repertory grid methods
 - secondary analysis
 - SMART analysis
 - SWOT analysis
 - other new and well-tested methodologies, as appropriate.
- 5 Process approaches and methodologies. The theory, strengths, limitations and practical application of a variety of individual and group process tools and methodologies for assisting new thinking, commitment, conflict resolution and creative development, including:
 - action-centred leadership (Adair)
 - neuro-linguistic programming
 - thinking hats (De Bono)
 - synectics (Nolan)
 - intervention analysis (Heron)
 - process consultation (Schein)
 - other new and well-tested methodologies, as appropriate.
- 6 Influencing and communications
 - persuading, and influencing methodologies and the use of political and social skills to gain acceptance and/or implementation of consultancy interventions and proposals.
 - barriers to communication in different contexts, and their resolution.
 - communication audits
 - the design and development of appropriate solutions to communication problems.

4 Corporate ethics, governance, values and conflict resolution

Operational indicators

Practitioners must be able to:

- 1 Identify and resolve ethical conflicts between the organisation and professional codes (eg CIPD and other external codes) so the client gains insight into the issues in the organisation and with customers, and can begin to resolve ethical ambiguities and dilemmas for themselves.
- 2 Identify when a client's actions or behaviour falls short of acceptable standards of probity and corporate governance and to determine what action needs to be taken and wherein lies the responsibility of the consultant.

Knowledge indicators

Practitioners must be able to understand, explain and critically evaluate:

- 1 The importance of ethical issues in a consultant's work and the ways a consultant may assist a client to identify and deal with ethical problems and ambiguities within their organisation.
- 2 The need for confidentiality in all its contexts, the hazards and penalties for breach and the reasons a consultant should comply with CIPD and other confidentiality arrangements.
- 3 Ethical issues that must be considered in the management of a consultancy project.
- 4 The different roles and accountabilities of the adviser and diagnoser/prescriber, compared with line and specialist managers and directors; the potential tensions, conflicts of interest and values that may emerge and strategies and techniques for dealing with them.

Indicative content

- 1 CIPD codes, legal and probity requirements in the public sector, including codes for tendering.
- 2 Private industry regulatory bodies.
- 3 Dealing with ethical conflicts between the various codes.
- 4 Social, relativistic and transcendental values: differing cultural interpretations of ethicality and criteria for measuring ethical and non-ethical action.
- 5 The consultant's responsibility for ethical conduct, their own value set and the implications when working in an organisation with similar or differing ethical values.
- 6 Establishing the success of a project or outcome – ethical considerations of ends and means in a project.
- 7 Diversity versus equality.
- 8 Personnel and development problems, issues and conflict resolution, including an international context in multinational or multicultural organisations.
- 9 Human rights in a work context.
- 10 The rights of any secondary client.
- 11 The consultant's responsibility for dealing with infringements of rights, and techniques for doing so.
- 12 Selected case studies such as Enron, Shell, Equitable Life, Harold Shipman, Humberside Police and data protection, and other recent cases as appropriate.