

# International Personnel and Development

## Purpose

Business is increasingly global, and very few organisations can ignore the international context.

A few organisations are truly transnational, owing their character to an amalgam and synergy of influence from all the countries in which they operate.

Many organisations have international dimensions and either:

- have international customers, or
- are in foreign ownership, partnership or strategic alliance, or
- own foreign businesses themselves.

Some organisations apparently have few international dimensions, but in an increasingly global arena they may still:

- seek to draw understanding, information and knowledge from abroad
- recruit employees from other countries
- benefit from a greater background understanding of the international context.

All these different aspects can influence the character, culture and ways of organising and managing people, and these influences are not always automatically and immediately helpful for an organisation pursuing its objectives. The personnel and development professional is in a position to make a real and valuable contribution to the organisation's current and future success, by helping the organisation and its managers understand and apply the knowledge and skills needed for success in an international context.

This Standard is intended for personnel and development professionals who aim to contribute to aspects of people management and development in an international context, whether as generalist or specialist practitioners.

This includes, for example:

- professional managers of expatriate staff
- personnel and development practitioners in UK or Irish companies under international ownership
- personnel and development practitioners who operate internationally.

## Performance indicators

### 1 Human resource plans and organisational context

#### Operational indicators

Practitioners must be able to:

- 1 Help formulate and communicate human resources strategy and practices for organisations operating across national boundaries, including the European Union (EU) and its member states, the contiguous USA, Japan and south-east Asia.
  - 2 Provide informed up-to-date comment on the implications of local/regional issues for international business management.
  - 3 Develop and maintain an up-to-date awareness of the sensitivities of cross-national organisational interfaces and:
    - establish/maintain rapport and avoid alienation though ignorance
    - identify what should/might and can be done, and what should not, and give attention to the positive priorities.
  - 4 Assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of HR support resources and mechanisms in a subsidiary/ associated companies and gain acceptance for making appropriate constructive adjustments.
  - 5 Operate with appropriate sensitivity and responsiveness in cross-cultural situations; assert viewpoints in a culturally sensitive way, avoiding offence or misunderstanding, and exercising influence and persuasion in situations where communications are difficult.
- 2 Organisational impacts of international economic/ business factors and:
    - international labour economics
    - competition and trade
    - social and political influences
    - regulations and barriers
    - the role of the state in employment matters in the EU and its member states, the contiguous USA, Japan and south-east Asia.
  - 3 The contributors to and different aspects of national culture, the implications for organisations and:
    - issues in cross-cultural communication
    - operating under different cultural models
    - acknowledging and assimilating differences using appropriate communication media.
  - 4 Workplace organisation and employment relations processes in the EU and its member states, the contiguous USA, Japan and south-east Asia.
  - 5 Structures and roles of personnel and development functions in different countries.
  - 6 The impact on personal economic, social and domestic lives of expatriate appointments, for oneself and others.

#### Indicative content

- 1 Global economic, social and political trends and:
  - their impact on international businesses and local labour markets
  - the role of international institutions and agencies.
- 2 The elements of an international human resources strategy and its flexible implementation in different local contexts and cultures.
- 3 The constituents of national and organisational 'culture'.
- 4 The management of cultural differences and behavioural expectations in an international context.

#### Knowledge indicators

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

- 1 Different aspects of national culture, their sources and implications for international organisations.

## 2 Recruitment and selection

### Operational indicators

Practitioners must be able to:

- 1 Locate and organise people resources to meet local/regional/international human resource management needs, including permanent, consultancy, support and temporary staff.
- 2 Organise recruitment and selection procedures for different countries.

### Knowledge indicators

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

- 1 Methodologies of expatriation practice; selection, decision-making, preparation, adjustment, repatriation; reasons for failure.
- 2 Selection procedures and the appropriateness and acceptability of various selection methods in different national contexts.

### Indicative content

- 1 Employee resourcing in an international context and:
  - societal norms and values
  - legal constraints and obligations
  - attitudes towards work
  - careers and the employment relationship.
- 2 Recruiting across national frontiers and expatriate, local/national and consultant/contract/temporary staff.

## 3 Training and development

### Operational indicators

Practitioners must be able to:

- 1 Diagnose learning needs, install learning programmes for staff entering international/cross-cultural situations, (including experiential learning and off-the-job learning initiatives) and monitor their effectiveness.
- 2 Diagnose needs and plan for effective learning, generally, in different cultures, and specifically cross-cultural awareness learning for specific cultures programmes for the development of effective binational and multinational teamworking.
- 3 Recognise the limitations of one's own international/intercultural knowledge and capabilities, and where/how to tackle those limitations.

### Knowledge indicators

Practitioners must be able to understand, explain critically evaluate:

- 1 Structured means of cross-cultural collaboration, including techniques and processes for creating effective bicultural and multicultural teams.

### Indicative content

- 1 Employee development in an international context and developing:
  - the competencies of the 'international manager'
  - cross-cultural awareness.
- 2 Selecting, building and developing international/multicultural teams at staff, project and board levels.

## 4 Performance management and employee relations

### Operational indicators

Practitioners must be able to:

- 1 Monitor and assess how changes in employee management and development in one country might impact on operations in others.
- 2 Install appropriate communications/information and monitoring systems for local/regional/international, relating to internal/external purposes.
- 3 Plan and implement change in different organisational/cultural contexts.
- 4 Handle discipline and grievance issues in unfamiliar situations.
- 5 Manage or professionally influence local payment and benefit systems, including transnational and expatriate management reward systems.
- 6 Manage the people-related ambiguities arising in international contexts.

### Knowledge indicators

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

- 1 Special needs in relation to health in different environments and geographical climates, and stress management in 'hostile' environments.
- 2 Employment and other laws and practices in other countries and:
  - historical and other sources of differing methods of HR operation
  - management structures and processes in different countries.
- 3 Means and reasons for different individual and collective representation, communications, co-ordination and negotiation in different countries.
- 4 The role and effects on organisations of international bodies such as the EU and its component parts, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), General Agreements on Tariffs and Trades (World Trade Organisation) and the United Nations (UN).

- 5 Different social security and pay and benefit systems in different countries.
- 6 Concepts of transnational co-ordination and control, and centralised, decentralised, regional and local control models.

### Indicative content

- 1 International and local payment systems, employee benefits and expatriate rewards.
- 2 Institutional arrangements, processes and practices of national employee relations systems, with particular emphasis on EU member states, the USA and Asia – Pacific countries.
- 3 Trends and comparisons in national employment law systems, with particular focus on EU member states, the USA and Asia – Pacific countries.
- 4 The relevance and appropriateness of various approaches to employee communications and:
  - involvement and decision-taking in different international contexts
  - works council and other systems
  - 'task'-related participation.
- 5 Information systems in international human resources planning and career management.
- 6 The particular pressures of an international job and the impact of stress, conflict and ambiguity on physical and mental well-being and the range of preventative and coping strategies.