

Human resources manager

Job description

Human resource (HR) managers are involved with recruitment, training, career development, compensation and benefits, employee relations, industrial relations, employment law, compliance, disciplinary and grievance issues, redundancies etc. The job involves keeping up to date with areas such as employment law, which change often.

Generalist HR roles are usually found in small and medium sized companies, where the HR manager will deal with the whole range of HR activities. In large multinationals you will often find specialists, for example in learning and development, recruitment or employee relations.

Work activities

- Developing HR planning strategies with line managers by considering immediate and long-term staff requirements
- Recruiting staff by preparing job descriptions and job adverts; deciding on how best to advertise
- Shortlisting applicants for interview using a variety of selection techniques including psychometric testing
- Interviewing shortlisted candidates
- Advising on pay and other issues, including promotion and benefits; administer payroll and maintain staff records
- Interpreting and advising on employment legislation; develop and implement policies on a variety of workplace issues eg disciplinary procedures, absence management, working conditions, performance management and equal opportunities
- Listening to grievances and implementing disciplinary procedures
- Analysing training needs in conjunction with line managers; planning and delivering training, including staff inductions.

Work conditions

Travel: not a normal part of the working day but attendance at off-site meetings possible.

Working hours: mainly office hours, with occasional extra hours. Location: opportunities exist mainly in towns or cities throughout the country.

Opportunities for self-employment: unlikely (unless a specialist in training).

Typical employers

Any large organisation including banks, insurance companies, hospital, universities, institutes of technology, etc.

Career development

Progression will very much depend on the size of the organisation. Relocation may be necessary. It is possible to move from generalist HR roles into specialist areas such as industrial relations, employment law, organisational development or training and development.

Salaries

Salary levels for HR officers vary considerably across sector. Salaries in large private companies tend to be higher than those for workers in local authorities. Republic of Ireland: Graduate entrants can start at €25,000. This can rise to €40,000 per year with experience. Senior personnel officers, especially in large organisations, can earn considerably more: some in excess of €100,000. Dublin-based jobs tend to pay higher. Northern Ireland: Graduate entrants can expect £12,000–£15,000 with HR Directors earning anything from £50,000–£80,000.

Entry requirements and training

There are two main entry routes.

Graduate training programmes: while some HR graduate training programmes are available, they are rare in Ireland.

(continued overleaf)

Human resources manager (continued)

Entry-level jobs: graduates can gain an entry-level role as a HR administrator, where they will have responsibility for matters such as updating files, contracts, scheduling interviews, preparing statistics etc.

Specific degree subjects required

While a HR degree is not necessary it is an advantage, as is the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development (CIPD) qualification. A list of CIPD accredited programmes in Ireland is available on the CIPD website. Some degree courses (usually business studies) and postgraduate courses may provide exemption from CIPD Professional Qualifications.

Other relevant degree subjects

- Business
- Economics
- Law
- Management
- Psychology
- Public administration
- Social studies.

Postgraduate study

A pre-entry postgraduate qualification is not a requirement but a range of courses at postgraduate certificate, diploma and masters level are available, some of which combine business studies with HR.

Specific entry requirements

Although membership of the CIPD is not an absolute requirement for entry into this career, employers generally look on membership as an asset.

Training

A few graduate training schemes are available.

Tips for applications

Develop appropriate skills while at college: get involved with student groups and organisations; in particular take on positions of responsibility, whether in a voluntary or paid capacity.

Talk to staff working in HR, gain experience in a HR department and read relevant journals.

Skills and qualities

- Good communication skills
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Business awareness and commercial focus
- Leadership and strong management skills
- Technically competent
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Ability to analyse, interpret and explain the legal framework regulating employment
- Influencing and negotiating skills
- Personally credible
- Integrity and approachability.

Don't miss out!

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