

Final Assessment Report

Human Resources Management

(Minor/Diploma)

October 2020

Executive Summary

External reviewers found that the Human Resources Management Minor and Diploma, delivered by the Department of Psychology, were in good standing.

“It is the opinion of the reviewers that UW’s HR Minor, housed in the department of Psychology, is an excellent program that deserves protection, nurture and investment. It is, in a word, a “gem.””

A total of eight recommendations were provided by the reviewers, regarding marketing and recruitment, staffing resources, and minor curriculum improvements. In response, the program created a plan outlining the specific actions proposed to address each recommendation as well as a timeline for implementation. The next cyclical review for this program is scheduled for 2025-2026.

Student Complement Over the Past Three Years

	Minor	Diploma
Fall 2019	245	21
Fall 2018	262	22
Fall 2017	249	25

*based on Active Students Extract pulled from Quest February 5, 2020

Background

In accordance with the University of Waterloo’s Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external evaluation and the internal response of the Minor and Diploma in Human Resources Management (HRM) delivered by the Department of Psychology. A self-study (Volume I, II, III) was submitted to the Associate Vice-President, Academic on October 19, 2018. The self-study (Volume I) presented the program descriptions and learning outcomes, an analytical assessment of the programs, including the data collected from a student survey, along with the standard data package prepared by the Office of Institutional Analysis & Planning (IAP). The CVs for each faculty member with a key role in the delivery of the program(s) were included in Volume II of the self-study.

From Volume III, two arm's-length internal reviewers were selected by the Associate Vice-President, Academic: Dr. Geoff Malleck, Continuing Lecturer, Department of Economics, and Dr. Mark Weber, Professor, Conrad School of Entrepreneurship and Business.

Reviewers appraised the self-study documentation and conducted a site visit to the University on March 27, 2019. The visit included interviews with the Associate Vice-President, Academic, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Chair of Psychology, HRM Program Director, faculty and lecturers, staff, alumni and current students.

Following the site visit, the external reviewers submitted a report on their findings, with recommendations. In response, the program responded to each recommendation and outlined a plan for implementation of the recommendations. The Dean of Arts provided endorsement and commentary on the program response and implementation plan on November 24, 2019.

This final assessment report is based on information extracted, in many cases verbatim, from the self-study, the external reviewers' report and the program response.

Program Characteristics

Human Resources Management (Minor): The HRM Minor is available to University of Waterloo students enrolled in degree studies in the Faculty of Arts, and other Faculties with some restrictions. The HRM Minor requires successful completion of a minimum of eight courses with a cumulative average of at least 70%. The HRM Minor includes courses required by the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA) towards the Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL) /Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) designations.

Human Resources Management (Diploma): The HRM Diploma is designed for individuals who are currently working in Human Resources who wish to expand and update their current skills, or those who desire to gain entry into this exciting field. The HRM Diploma requires successful completion of a minimum of eight courses with a cumulative average of at least 70% and can be completed on a full- or part-time basis. The HRM Diploma includes courses required by the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA) towards the Certified Human Resources Leader or Professional (CHRL/P) designations.

Summary of Strengths, Challenges and Weaknesses based on Self-Study

Strengths

- **Quality of HRM Lecturers:** Lecturers have a wide range of relevant experience in industry, and can engage students with real life examples of how the curriculum translates in the working world. These lecturers also act as mentors and coaches to HRM students regarding career development.

- **Quality of Courses:** Course content is updated regularly to reflect the core objectives of HR including required changes that address new legislation, changes in employment standards, and human rights considerations. Several of the HRM courses highlight current issues in the HR industry, and include practical, applied assignments.
- **Professional Designation:** The HRM program offers students (Minor and Diploma) the opportunity to complete all academic requirements (all 9 courses) to then write the national exam for certification as a Certified Human Resources Professional or Certified Human Resources Leader through the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA).
- **Student Satisfaction:** Approximately, 90% of alumni who responded to our survey felt that the HRM curriculum prepared them for work in the HR field. 100% of alumni felt that HRM courses prepared them for the CHRP/L exams.
- **HRM Student Club:** the HRM Society at UW is run by and for students and offers students diverse opportunities: resume writing workshops, guest speakers, panels with HRM Lecturers, networking events, and social events. The HRM club has built a sense of community which connects students with the same interests and career aspirations.

Challenges

- **HRM 200:** Although the addition of an online course option helped, the program is unable to keep up with the student enrolment demand in HRM 200. Still, close to 100 students per term are not able to get into the course. HRM 200 classes are also very large (400 students in the in-class section and 325 in the online section); therefore, we only have a few options in delivery design. Adding a smaller enrollment HRM 200 class that is tailored to students planning to take the HRM Minor/Diploma would help to address this challenge.
- **Director's Role:** Currently, the HR Director's contract states that 20% of time is to be spent on service, the remaining 80% on teaching. However, far more than 20% of time is currently allocated to service (e.g., creating connections in the community, linking students up with internships, etc.). There is a need to reassess the current time commitment as (20%) is not sufficient.
- **Internal competition:** There is some overlap with other minor programs in terms of course content (e.g., the Management Studies Minor). This may confuse students as to which program is the best match for their goals and career aspirations. Student enrollment from other programs has also declined as a result of curriculum changes in other departments.
- **External competition:** The HRM Minor program also faces competition from other institutions offering various HRM programs. To attract high quality students, we need to be marketing this program in the same fashion as is done by other Universities and Colleges.
- **Lecture format:** Many of the HRM courses are 3-hour lectures once a week. This is considered too long by some students, particularly since classes start at 6:30pm. On the

other hand, this evening 3-hour scheduling does accommodate contract Lecturers who are employed elsewhere. The schedule also benefits Diploma students who may be working full time during office hours.

Weaknesses

- Course scheduling: Some courses are only offered twice a year (PSYCH 238, PSYCH 340, PSYCH 339, and HRM 301.) and the program is unable to provide students with a defined schedule more than one term in advance. This could dissuade potential Diploma students from applying to our program because of the firm commitment that they receive from other institutions where they can complete the program in one year.
- HRM Management Committee: The committee was dissolved several years ago. Although the current HRM Director and the Chair of Psychology work closely together, it would be beneficial to re-establish the committee, and to expand the roles and responsibilities of the HR committee as the HR program grows.
- Compensation/commitment: The reviewers' report of the HRM Program dated February 28, 2012 recommended that Lecturers be given three year contracts with a per course compensation of \$12,000. Lecturers currently receive \$10,000 per course with a four-month contract (i.e., term by term). In the past, offers have been declined as a result of the compensation level for the work required and the commitment needed. The major concern is our ability to attract and retain high quality lecturers.

Summary of Key Findings from the External Reviewers

"It is the opinion of the reviewers that UW's HR Minor, housed in the department of Psychology, is an excellent program that deserves protection, nurture and investment. It is, in a word, a "gem." The program in its current form is intelligently designed, particularly for students with an interest in CHRP designations. Indeed, its novel capacity to meet the professional designation requirements is a noteworthy accomplishment and strength. [...] Students and alumni offer very favorable assessments of their courses and their experience. [...] As reviewers we see opportunities in program promotion, program expansion, and addressing issues of faculty and administrative stability."

Program Response to External Reviewers' Recommendations

1. Staffing: Throughout the report, we have highlighted some staffing challenges that, in our view, should be addressed. We are highly sensitive to the financial realities of UW and the Faculty of Arts at this time. Therefore, in making recommendations here, we are deliberate in avoiding "pie in the sky, optimal" solutions. What we propose feels prudent, responsible, and eminently do-able.

- 1.1 Hire an additional full-time lecturer. In our estimation, this is the single most important recommendation we are making. Well-selected, a new lecturer can help to address stability, the risk associated with the current “single point of failure” problem, and free up a little more of Vince’s time to devote to service in the interest of program development and prominence in the professional community. We would actually suggest hiring two such additional people would be appropriate and advisable, but we consider one to be necessary. Candidates considered for this role should be people who, themselves, have significant leadership capacity, both to support Mr. Di Ruzza and to act as a backup.
- 1.2 Multi-term sessional contracts. In order to provide stability and give the Director the capacity to attract great sessional lecturers, the Faculty should find a way to permit the Director to make multi-term offers to sessional lecturers. This has no cost, but the meaningful benefit of potentially freeing up some of the Director’s precious time.

Response

The reviewers recommend two major changes to the staffing of the HRM program (see Recommendations 1.1, 1.2).

First, they suggest that the program hire an additional full-time lecturer. The program agrees in full with this recommendation, as they recognize that the demands placed on the current Director are extraordinary. Of all the recommendations, this should be the program’s top priority. An additional dedicated lecturer will provide the person-power to both sustain and enhance the program in accord with several of the other reviewer recommendations (e.g., Recommendations 3, 4, 7). The program is well aware of the current financial realities of UW and the Faculty of Arts. The Chair of Psychology and the Dean of Arts discussed this and while both agreed it would certainly enhance the program, it was judged to be unaffordable at this time.

Second, the reviewers recommend multi-term sessional contracts. *It should be clearly noted that this was a key recommendation made by last set of program reviewers in 2011 yet this never came to fruition.* As such, the program feels that this is an issue that must be resolved. As is apparent in the self-study and the report of the reviewers, the HRM program is reliant upon a large number of professionals in the region who generously teach courses as sessional instructors. These instructors are highly committed to the program and most teach regularly. The current model of securing many recurring single-term contracts is not efficient for program administration, nor is it efficient for the instructors themselves. Thus, there is desire to provide multi-term contracts to most, if not all, of the established Instructors. The program is in support of this but have will pend until January 2021 until there is a better understanding of budget and course delivery methods. Pending until January 2021 will also allow the

program to investigate student enrollment numbers and appropriately review course offerings each term.

2. Accounting Course: We had triangulating feedback from students, alumni, and faculty, that the current required accounting course is problematic. Frequent comments suggest it is appropriate for those who have taken accounting in high school; however, it can be demoralizingly inappropriately matched to the capacities and preparation of a new HR minor student without that experience. (We note, it is our understanding that high school accounting is not, in fact, a required pre-requisite for AFM 123.) Further evidence suggests that students deliberately avoid taking the course early in their minor, because the likely grade may force them out of the program. This is clearly a concern that needs to be addressed. We do not pretend to know the best way to do so, but possible solutions might include a dedicated section of AFM 123 targeted at this audience or the development of a different course more appropriately targeted at this audience. This latter solution raises another valuable question, which is whether AFM 123 is in fact “the right course” for the program. Again, we are not equipped to offer a recommendation in that respect. We encourage new collaborative efforts with the content experts in SAF, and the involvement of SAF’s leadership in that process as appropriate.

Response

The reviewers note “triangulated” feedback that the current AFM 123 course is problematic for students in the HRM program for many reasons. The program agrees and proposes to partner with Finance and Accounting to seek a reasonable alternative to this course. Should a partnership with Accounting and Finance not be reached to address concerns by HRM students regarding AFM 123, proposal to build HRM finance and accounting course will be completed for September 2020 Implementation. Preliminary discussions were postponed and will be held in January 2021 once evaluations of the on-line course delivery has been received.

3. Expansion of the target audience / streaming: As noted, the program is very well designed and delivered for its current target audience – students who may wish to pursue formal HR accreditation with a professional body. It is our reflection that there may be many students who have passing-to-deep interest in HR-relevant material who are less interested in the accreditation than current students. In fact, one of the alumni we met fit this description. Our reflection, for the consideration of the program leadership, is that it may be worthwhile to add additional HR-relevant courses to the acceptable list that do not, necessarily, meet CHRL requirements. For example, there may be students in Peace and Conflict Studies who have two or three courses related to conflict management that could very legitimately be counted towards a minor in HR who, if they knew they could count two courses towards an HR minor, might consider doing the minor when they might not otherwise have done so. This could broaden the number of students who explore the possibility, and enrich the offering for

students who are less narrowly focused around the “profession” of HR. This requires no new courses and no new resources financial or otherwise.

Response

The reviewers noted that the HRM program is so well received that it should consider expanding the scope to encourage students across campus with a “passing-to-deep interest” in HR-relevant materials to pursue this minor even if they do not wish to seek formal professional accreditation. A non-professional accreditation stream would entail a more flexible set of courses (vs. the strict requirements for professional certification eligibility). The program planned to discuss this option in the Fall of 2019, but conversations were put on hold until January 2021.

In February 2020, the program was approached by Finance and Accounting to review a certificate program in HRM for Accounting and Finance students. The program is in support of this however is unable to move forward as per University requirements for certificate programs.

4. Continuity of HR Club: It was noted that the strength of the HR Club was variable from term to term, and that when strong, it was a significant positive contributor to the student experience and the program’s reputation in a number of ways. We simply note that the staffing recommendations made here may create capacity to better support the strength of this important club.

Response

The reviewers recommend that increased staffing of the HRM program would allow for greater continuity in the size and success of the HRM Club. The Department has very active undergraduate and graduate student groups, and is committed to providing a comparable experience for students in the HRM program.

6. HR Software: As noted earlier, students and alumni unanimously agreed that exposure to HR platforms (e.g., WorkDay, PeopleSoft, Cognos) would be advantageous to students, and significantly enhance their capacity to compete for jobs in the marketplace. We recommend that the program investigate ways to make this possible. Strategies could include incorporation into existing courses, the development of a new course, or collaboration with colleagues elsewhere on campus. In this last respect, we note that the Conrad School is in the process of developing a “technology platforms” course to be made available to students across campus. It is early in that development process, and engagement may allow some specialization of content that would facilitate HR students.

Response

The reviewers recommend developing a course that would introduce students to common HR platforms. The program's response to this suggestion will be subsumed under the discussions of Recommendations 2 (Accounting Course) and 3 (Expansion of Target Audience), as it could play a role in the redesign of the Accounting course and/or be included a part of a broader, more flexible non-accreditation stream curriculum. Once consideration is developed for the target audience under Section 5 of this report, the next step would be to review courses and course development. Currently, 8 courses are required for the minor and the program offers all 9 courses students require if they wish to pursue the CHRP/L designation.

7. Edge and Co-op: The Director noted the importance of enhancing the work integrated learning opportunities for HR minor students. He identified a desire for more attention from co-op, and a sense of hopefulness about the role that the new Edge program might play in addressing those needs. We simply recommend that the Director continue to pursue these strategies, and that his Department Chair and Dean offer what support they can to his efforts. We acknowledge that the active engagement of a Chair and/or Dean can sometimes be necessary to advance an agenda in a complicated landscape.

Response

The program is strongly committed to providing work integrated learning opportunities for HRM students. Given the number of students, though, this is an enormous task. The program requires dedicated support from the Edge and/or Co-op office to identify HR-specific placements in the community. This job is simply too much for the Director to take on in addition to his other responsibilities. The program is happy to discuss collaborative strategies with Edge/Co-op, especially if granted permission to hire a full-time lecturer to support the HRM program.

8. Marketing: Put simply, not enough people on this campus know about this fabulous program. Further, prospective students of the university may also be less aware than they should be. We encourage the program, the department, the faculty, and Marketing and Undergraduate Recruitment to invest effort and resources in addressing the "awareness deficit" that we perceive. (This might also be worth considering for all / most minors, especially where they are "profession relevant".)

Response

In the words of the reviewers "...not enough people on this campus know about this fabulous program." The program is proud to hear this sentiment and agrees! The program met with Arts Marketing staff in Fall 2019 to discuss strategies for raising student awareness of the program as part of initial recruitment efforts (i.e., presentations to high schools) and to

existing students who could complement their major with an HR minor. The program continues to market this program whatever possible, realizing that there are limitations to the marketing of this program given it is only a minor and not a major.

Recommendations Not Selected for Implementation

5. If new financial resources are required: If it is determined that some of the recommendations here, or other future directions of value, require additional financial resources, we have a suggestion for how to raise them. Specifically, program leadership could investigate slightly fewer offerings of some classes with slightly larger class sizes. When students were asked whether classes of 40-45 would still be sufficiently intimate to achieve objectives (vs. 30-ish currently), their response was “generally yes”. They did, however, note that this was truer for some classes than others.

Response

The reviewers were highly sensitive to the financial realities currently faced at UW. As such, they noted that by increasing the enrollment caps on some HRM courses, the program could, in essence, generate funds to support the need for more staffing. The enrollment cap for all HRM 300 level courses has been set at 80 students. We will continue to monitor our enrollment caps carefully and always provide overrides to HRM students who require a specific 300 level HRM course. No HRM student will be denied enrollment if the cap of 80 is reached.

Dean's Response

The Faculty of Arts is currently facing financial challenges, and there is a hiring freeze in effect. Departments are being encouraged to review their curriculum in order to identify ways to make course offerings more flexible and degree programs more accessible. Growing course offerings rather than shrinking them is not very viable at the moment, and all Departments should be thinking about strategic use of their existing resources. It may mean doing things differently as we move forward; we need to pay close attention to student interests and design curriculum that is meaningful to them. The extremely positive reviewers' report on the HRM Minor suggests that this program is indeed meaningful to our students, and I applaud the idea of expanding the program's audience.

With respect to the staffing concerns raised by the reviewers and the Department, I note the following:

1. The reviewers recommend, and the Department agrees, that an additional "full-time lecturer" be hired. I take this to mean a continuing lecturer, rather than a definite-term lecturer. Hiring processes at UW do not allow for the immediate hire of a continuing lecturer; individuals must generally serve in a couple of definite-term positions before they can be converted to a continuing lecturer. Unfortunately, as mentioned above, the Faculty is currently in a hiring freeze and I cannot add an incremental position to the HRM program. Nevertheless, I will be keeping this request in mind as I move forward with complement planning.
2. Another recommendation is to issue "multi-term sessional contracts". I take this to mean hiring definite-term lecturers to cover a suite of courses over the period of a year or two, rather than issuing single-course contracts. Definite-term lecturers do represent an additional cost to the Faculty (sessional labour is less costly on a course per course basis). If the recommendation is instead that a sessional instructor who is engaged to teach a course in September should at the same time be issued a contract to teach in January, there is no reason why that could not be done.



24 November 2019

Implementation Plan

	Recommendations	Proposed Actions	Responsibility for Leading and Resourcing (if applicable) the Actions	Timeline for addressing Recommendations
1.	<p><i>Staffing.</i></p> <p>1. <i>Hire an additional full-time lecturer.</i> In our estimation, this is the single most important recommendation we are making.</p> <p>2. <i>Multi-term sessional contracts.</i> In order to provide stability and give the Director the capacity to attract great sessional lecturers, the Faculty should find a way to permit the Director to make multi-term offers to sessional lecturers.</p>	<p>September 30, 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct meeting to determine role and responsibilities of proposed new position plus budget options and financial implications. <p>September 30, 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determine if multi term contracts can be provided to several Lecturers. <p>To consider for full time Lecturer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Courses - Relationship with I/O - Other responsibilities 	<p>Heather Henderson Vince Di Ruzza Janice da Silva</p> <p>Janice da Silva Vince Di Ruzza</p>	<p>December 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If approval provided, implementation plan will be put in place for 2020 hire. <p>December 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If approved, January 2020 contracts will be multi term. <p>May 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Full time lecturer cannot be supported at this time. Sessional contracts will be reviewed again in Jan 2021. Goal was to implement September 2020 but will be postponed until campus re-opens and demand for courses is established.
2.	<p><i>Accounting Course.</i> We had triangulating feedback from students, alumni, and faculty, that the current required accounting course is problematic. We do not pretend to know the best way to do so, but possible solutions might include a dedicated section of AFM 123 targeted at this audience or the development of a different course more appropriately targeted at this audience. This latter solution raises another valuable question, which is whether AFM 123 is in fact “the right course” for the program. Again, we are not equipped to offer a recommendation in that respect. We encourage new collaborative efforts with the content</p>	<p>October 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will conduct meeting with partners in Finance and Accounting to discuss course, and current problems. - Will determine if partnership/changes will be considered. 	<p>Vince Di Ruzza</p>	<p>April 2020</p> <p>Should partnership with Accounting and Finance faculty not be reached to address concerns by HRM students regarding AFM 123, proposal to build HRM finance and accounting course will be completed for September 2020 Implementation.</p> <p>Jan 2021</p> <p>Talks will resume with AFM.</p>

	experts in SAF, and the involvement of SAF's leadership in that process as appropriate.			
3.	<i>Expansion of the target audience / streaming.</i> As noted, the program is very well designed and delivered for its current target audience – students who may wish to pursue formal HR accreditation with a professional body. Our reflection, for the consideration of the program leadership, is that it may be worthwhile to add additional HR-relevant courses to the acceptable list that do not, necessarily, meet CHRL requirements.	November 2019 - Meeting to be held to discuss implementation of HRM program separate from CHRP designation.	Vince DiRuzza Heather Henderson Richard Eibach HR Program/Student advisor	March 2020 If decision in November is to move forward with minor that is not geared towards CHRP designation core design of courses will be completed. Jan 2021 – committee will be established to review next steps and process.
4.	<i>Continuity of HR Club.</i> It was noted that the strength of the HR Club was variable from term to term, and that when strong, it was a significant positive contributor to the student experience and the program's reputation in a number of ways. We simply note that the staffing recommendations made here may create capacity to better support the strength of this important club.	September 30, 2019 - Once new term begins, meeting will be planned for October with HR Society executive.	Vince Di Ruzza Plus HR Program/Student Advisor	Ongoing support and guidance will be provided to the HR Society. Full support will be provided by all HRM Lecturers. Winter 2020 – meeting held with newly established Club executive. All plans for end of March cancelled. Plans to re-establish once campus opens up.
6.	<i>HR Software.</i> As noted earlier, students and alumni unanimously agreed that exposure to HR platforms (e.g., WorkDay, PeopleSoft, Cognos) would be advantageous to students, and significantly enhance their capacity to compete for jobs in the marketplace. We recommend that the program investigate ways to make this possible.	Ongoing Fall term 2019 Will be considered once we determine action plans for item 2, 3. Special note: students pursuing CHRP qualifications require 9 courses. The minor requires 8 therefore all courses for these students are pre-determined. If we move forward with item 3 we could change the design of course content for students interested only in an HRM minor and not to pursue CHRP.	Vince Di Ruzza Changes to Minor Committee (Proposed): Vince Di Ruzza Richard Eibach Tammy Neil HR Program Co-ordinator/Student Advisor	January 2021

7.	<p><i>Edge and Co-op.</i> The Director noted the importance of enhancing the work integrated learning opportunities for HR minor students. He identified a desire for more attention from co-op, and a sense of hopefulness about the role that the new Edge program might play in addressing those needs. We simply recommend that the Director continue to pursue these strategies, and that his Department Chair and Dean offer what support they can to his efforts. We acknowledge that the active engagement of a Chair and/or Dean can sometimes be necessary to advance an agenda in a complicated landscape.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting to be planned with Edge. - Meeting to be planned with Co-op. <p>Purpose: Partnership building. Implementation of strategies to support the challenges faced by HRM minor students.</p>	<p>Vince Di Ruzza Program Co-ordinator To be determined.</p>	<p>Jan 2021 - Discussion will commence</p>
8.	<p><i>Marketing.</i> Put simply, not enough people on this campus know about this fabulous program. Further, prospective students of the university may also be less aware than they should be. We encourage the program, the department, the faculty, and Marketing and Undergraduate Recruitment to invest effort and resources in addressing the “awareness deficit” that we perceive.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - September 2019 – hold meeting with Arts Marketing staff. 	<p>Vince Di Ruzza</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

The Department Chair/Director, in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty shall be responsible for the Implementation Plan.

Date of next program review _____ **2025-2026**
Date

Signatures of Approval

Heather Henderson _____ 09/08/2021
Chair/Director Date

AFIW Administrative Dean/Head (*For AFIW programs only*) _____ Date

Sheila Ager _____ 24/06/2021
Faculty Dean Date

Note: AFIW programs fall under the Faculty of ARTS; however, the Dean does not have fiscal control nor authority over staffing and administration of the program.

Dan De Vidi _____ March 26, 2020
Associate Vice-President, Academic Date
(For undergraduate and augmented programs)

Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs _____ Date
(For graduate and augmented programs)