BREAK IT DOWN.

Assessment Criteria and Sample Assessment Activity
CIPD 5RST

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Introduction to Resourcing and Talent Planning

Important Note
The CIPD operates what is known as an ‘Assessment Bank’, which includes a number of different versions of the same assessment. This guide is written using assessment briefs for ICS, which is also used by a number of other learning providers. It is important to know that whilst the questions may be different, the Assessment Criteria will always be the same.

Disclaimer
All guides in my ‘Break it Down’ series are intended to be advice and guidance only; you will not pass the course solely by reading the guides. You will be required to complete a number of hours’ independent study and write up each assignment according to your learning provider’s guidelines.

I am not an employee of CIPD or any learning provider. I am a former level 5 student who has completed the Diploma in Human Resources Management in 2017.
I cannot recommend the website: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat highly enough. Eurostat contains a frankly disturbing amount of data on citizens of the EU. You could compare our close neighbours in Ireland or look further afield. For mine, I found a lot of data on Romania. I also looked at (shock, horror) the Wikipedia entry on Romania’s economy, mainly to see if I could link up stories elsewhere. Sadly, some of the better newspapers that cover international economies are subscription only, but you will be able to find decent evidence using Google.

There are two key terms you need to keep in mind when answering this question:

1. Discuss
2. Compare

To pass this question, you need to discuss the labour market conditions in the UK and discuss similar with your chosen country. In the middle of this, you should be comparing.

The main focus of this question is to look at tight and loose labour market conditions and levels of employment and unemployment. Remember that this module covers resourcing and planning for new employees. When the market is tight, the employer needs a proactive strategy in order to attract the right candidate. The employer should focus on its branding (making it more attractive to candidates), recruitment initiatives to attract a good pool of candidates, long-term resource planning and retention strategies to tackle ways of stopping people from leaving the business (Taylor and Woodhams, 2012).

Other topics you should discuss in your answer are as follows:

- The inequalities in wage levels (both internally and in comparison, to the UK). Romania has a very low minimum wage, but also a very low cost of living in comparison.
- The differences between the public and private sector in your chosen country and the UK. This is why Eurostat and Google research are so good. If you decided to
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choose Venezuela or North Korea for example, you might have great difficulty answering this question!

- The types of employment contract and any trade union involvement in employee relations. France is a minefield of information for this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1 Checklist</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have discussed <strong>tight</strong> and <strong>loose</strong> labour market conditions in the UK and in my chosen country</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have compared <strong>tight</strong> and <strong>loose</strong> labour market conditions in the UK and my chosen country</td>
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<td>I have discussed <strong>levels of employment / unemployment</strong> in the UK job market and my chosen country</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have compared <strong>levels of employment / unemployment</strong> in the UK job market and my chosen country</td>
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<td>I have discussed <strong>inequalities in wage levels</strong> in the UK and my chosen country</td>
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<td>I have compared <strong>inequalities in wage levels</strong> in the UK and my chosen country</td>
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<td>I have discussed <strong>differences between the public and private sectors</strong> in the UK and my chosen country</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have compared <strong>differences between the public and private sectors</strong> in the UK and my chosen country</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have written an analysis of the <strong>different types of employment contract</strong> in each country</td>
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Learning Outcome
1 Understand key contemporary labour market trends and their significance for workforce planning.

What the Assessment Activity says:
Give a brief description of the role of government, employers and trade unions in ensuring future skills needs are met.

What the Assessment Criteria says:
1.4 Describe the role of government, employers and trade unions in ensuring future skills needs are met.

Break it Down:
Quite a simple question to answer, although the level of material available in your books and module materials may make it difficult to answer. This is reflected in the word count.

You are required to briefly outline the role of the following bodies in ensuring that future skills are met:

1. **Government** (think of funding for apprenticeships, EU Social Funding for level 2 training in skills and employment). In a 2013 report, the Department for BIS highlighted that there was a need to improve the levels of basic skills and higher-level specialist, technical and professional skills. This strategy helped bind together the government’s approach to apprenticeships, pre-job training and further education.

2. **Employers**. Your module materials may talk about ‘employer of choice’. If not, look it up. This is what a forward-thinking employer should be aiming for. The role of employers is to ensure that a thorough job analysis and talent planning are carried out. This will help determine the training requirements required, identify the professional standards required to complete the role and the value of the role i.e. salary and benefits. Employers and Chartered Bodies (including CIPD) have recently been leading the way in developing ‘trailblazer’ apprenticeships, which ensure that the qualification matches their professional standards.

3. **Trade unions**. What contribution do unions and their learning representatives make? The role of the trade union is to promote training and development through sites such as www.unionlearn.org.uk and at a local level via ‘union learning representatives’ (ULRs).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 2 Checklist</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have described the role of government in ensuring future skills needs are met</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have described the role of employers in ensuring future skills needs are met</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have described the role of trade unions in ensuring future skills needs are met</td>
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Learning Outcome

2 Be able to undertake talent planning and recruitment activities

What the Assessment Activity says:

2.1 Briefly describe the main principles of effective workforce planning and give some examples of any tools that may be used for this.

What the Assessment Activity says:

2.1 Describe the principles of effective workforce planning and the tools used in the process.

Break it Down:

Workforce planning is an integral part of HR strategy and should be used by employers to raise standards and make them the ‘employer of choice’. According to CIPD, the key principles of effective workforce planning include setting strategy, key stakeholder involvement, determining key skills and competencies required, gap analysis, building human capacity.

Workforce planning can be broken down into two categories: ‘hard’ and ‘soft’. Briefly discuss these definitions. Then look at the tools that are available, giving a brief overview of each tool. Tools include workforce strategy maps, scenario planning, span and gap analysis, organisational benchmarking, role fit to name but a few. I wrote about three.

<table>
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<th>Question 3 Checklist</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have described the main principles of effective workforce planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have discussed setting the strategy, stakeholder involvement, gap analysis, building human capacity</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have highlighted the need for needs analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have described Hard and Soft workforce planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have described at least THREE tools that cover workforce planning</td>
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Learning Outcome
2 Be able to undertake talent planning and recruitment activities

What the Assessment Activity says:
2.2, 2.3, 2.4
Give a brief account of HR’s role in each of the following:
- developing basic succession and career development plans
- contributing to plans for downsizing an organisation
- contributing to the development of job descriptions, person specifications and competency frameworks.

What the Assessment Criteria says:
2.2 Develop basic succession and career development plans.
2.3 Contribute to plans for downsizing an organisation.
2.4 Contribute to the development of job descriptions, person specifications and competency frameworks.

Break it Down:
There’s a lot to cover here.

HR is heavily involved in the gathering of the appropriate data by managing HR metrics systems that can gather information on employees. You should talk about HR’s role in developing basic succession planning, such as:

- Identifying positions for which succession is required.
- Identifying future job requirements.
- Identifying possible successors – this can be done either informally, when an employee will chat with their manager, or formally by performance review or appraisal.
- Helping build and develop competencies – this can be done by offering career and training advice and guidance.
- Assessing the progress of an individual on the succession plan.

Advising on career development plans. Describe the following:

- Job enrichment
- Coaching and mentoring
- Training assessment,
- Rotation of roles around various employees.

Contributing to downsizing plans:
During downsizing, it could look like HR was breaking the ‘psychological contract’ (look it up!) by taking away the stability and reward of a job. Therefore, you should discuss the following:

- Communicate the opportunities for employees.
- Educating employees on the need for change and how this is an integral part of the business strategy.
- Providing Leadership in times of uncertainty and keeping the staff morale high.
- Ensuring equality and fairness.
- Maintaining a managed approach by tying downsizing into the HR strategy.
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When writing about contributing to the development of job descriptions, person specifications and competency frameworks, briefly discuss the following:

- Advising and supporting managers on how to write the job descriptions and person specifications.
- Interviewing existing staff or leavers to see what the job actually entails, not what we ‘think’ it entails!
- Ensuring compliance with the law and good practice – think Equality Act 2010, among others. This also means what you cannot include in a job description etc, as well as what you should.
- Providing appropriate frameworks and templates.

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<th>Question 4 Checklist</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have described developing basic succession planning process</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have advised on career development options e.g. job enrichment, coaching and mentoring, training assignment, rotation</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have written about the contribution to downsizing</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have written about the contribution to job descriptions, person specs and competency frameworks</td>
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Learning Outcome
2 Be able to undertake talent planning and recruitment activities
3 Understand how to maximise employee retention

What the Assessment Activity says:
2.5, 2.6, 3.1, 3.2
Explain some of the main legal requirements in relation to recruitment and selection and briefly assess the strengths and weaknesses of at least two different methods of recruitment and selection. Go on to explain briefly why people leave or remain with organisations and provide a brief summary of some of the costs associated with dysfunctional employee turnover. Provide a brief assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of at least two different approaches to retaining talent.

What the Assessment Criteria says:
2.5 Explain the main legal requirements in relation to recruitment and selection.
2.6 Assess the strengths and weaknesses of different methods of recruitment and selection.
3.1 Explain why people choose to leave or remain employed by organisations and the costs associated with dysfunctional employee turnover.
3.2 Assess the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to the retention of talent.

Break it Down:
2.5
Discuss the main points of the Equality Act 2010, the Data Protection Act 1998, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Employment Rights Act 1996. GDPR may not be included in your learning materials, given that it is fairly new, but it is worth discussing it, even if just a line or so.

2.6
When answering this point, think about methods. You can compare the merits of advertising in the local rag as opposed to using an agency or LinkedIn. You can also compare the merits of assessment centres (hate these!) versus individual interviews. Ensure you stick to recruitment and selection methods here. Other examples include the JobcentrePlus, Trade publications and trade fairs etc.

3.1, 3.2
I’d personally answer these together.

3.1
People can choose to leave for a number of reasons. Although the opportunity to work somewhere different is a possibility, it is more likely that there will be negative factors relating to their current employer as to why they want to leave. These could include dissatisfaction in their current job or a lack of training, development, rewards or opportunities in their current role. Discuss your theories here. Then you should summarise the adverse costs related to recruiting replacements. These can include:

• Advertising costs
• Selection costs
• Productivity costs
• Negative publicity costs (think Glassdoor reviews etc)
3.2
There are a number of different approaches to retaining talent. Discuss AT LEAST TWO of the following: flexible working, job enrichment, reward packages. Discuss the financial costs and benefits of these approaches.

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<th>Question 5 Checklist</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have discussed the term ‘dysfunctional employee turnover’</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have identified a number of negative reasons as to why people leave</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have argued for methods in retaining talent, including discussing costs</td>
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Learning Outcome
4 Know how to manage dismissal, redundancy and retirement effectively and lawfully.

What the Assessment Activity says:
4.1 Provide a brief summary of the advice you would provide to your organisation on good and lawful practice for managing dismissal, retirement and redundancies.

What the Assessment Criteria says:
4.1 Advise organisations on good practice in the management of dismissals, retirements and redundancies that complies with current legislation.

Break it Down:
When looking at managing dismissals, redundancies and retirement, it is worth noting that strict legal compliance may not equate to good practice. Alternatives should always be looked at to see if there is a way around these three topics that cover involuntary turnover.

Write a header for each. Look at ‘good’ and legal practice and indicate that strict legal compliance may not equate to good practice. This is where your Strategic HR hat gets put on.

- Dismissal – discuss the law, equality legislation, ACAS Codes of Practice here. Discuss the costs of going to tribunal. Identify alternatives
- Retirement – remember the law here! Look at alternatives, such as changing the contract from full-time to part time, extended time off, reducing hours gradually.
- Redundancy - Best practice would include trying to find alternatives to compulsory redundancy, for example a role within the workforce if the business is only laying off part of its workforce. Keeping people within the workforce keeps skills within the business and can help with expansion plans in the future. Look at pay freezes. The Caterpillar organisation opted for this strategy and it worked out really well for them at the time https://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/27/business/economy/27layoffs.html

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<th>Question 6 Checklist</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have written about good practice in Retirement</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have written about good practice in Dismissal</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have written about good practice in Redundancy</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have included examples of where strict legal compliance doesn’t necessarily mean good practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have added in relevant legislation and Codes of Practice</td>
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