

Guidance for Marking: Paper 3E5 Human Resources

1. I would expect an answer that outlines the nature of Human Resource Management (HRM) both in theory and in practice in Britain. A recognition of the weaknesses of this approach which fails to take into account collective issues in the workplace should be illustrated with examples. Similarly, given the changes that have taken place in all western economies in the past two decades (eg new technology, changes in labour and product markets) a collectivist approach on its own would no longer work. Good students would be able to give examples of best practice, perhaps by drawing on the results of the 1998 WERS 'Britain at Work' survey.

2. Here, good answers would point to important EEC Directives on Equal Pay and Treatment, Transfer of Undertakings and Collective Redundancies and how they had a profound impact on member States in the 1990s after key ECJ decisions had been made during the 1980s and particularly in the 1990s. Good answers would also point to the influence of the Single Market, the Social Dialogue and the treaties of Maastricht and Amsterdam in the 1990s. A really good student would be aware that Equal Pay and Treatment is one the four 'pillars' of the current EU employment policy.

3. Generally, answers should be familiar with the economic, social and technological factors and the way they have affected occupations, work patterns, skills and labour markets in the past two decades. Students should show why women are particularly vulnerable and they could do this by showing how the manufacturing sector has declined, the growth of services and the increasing importance of 'atypical' workers with more women entering the labour market. Most go into jobs that are part-time, low paid, low-skilled and where career prospects are very limited (eg call centres). Good students would show that the prospects of women depend on factors such as the size of enterprise, spatial factors, and occupation. Women still tend to be concentrated in the same occupations they were 25 years ago and are largely excluded from computer-related, innovative skills which are largely occupied by men.

4. This is a very open question and I expect students to produce a large diversity of answers. All answers, however, should outline the factors that have led to increased globalisation and the way labour and product markets have changed on an international level. References to literature and informed sources would gain a lot of credit in the marking process.

Colin Gill, Monday, 10 February 2003