

**Module 3E5 Human Resource Management: Guidance for marking**

**Question 1**

**‘Evidence suggests that there is extensive use of individual elements of HRM in Britain, but these elements do not seem to be linked together into a meaningful strategic whole’. Discuss this statement in the light of the findings from the Workplace Employment Relations Surveys (WERS) of 1998 and 2004.**

A good answer would involve an understanding of the various definitions of HRM and in particular, the ‘hard’ and the ‘soft’ version. In addition, the different individual elements of HRM should be set out eg. performance appraisal, performance-related pay, psychometric tests for recruitment, mutuality, trust etc. A good answer would link these and other elements into a strategic whole and HRM should be linked to company business strategy. Familiarity with the findings of WERS 1998 and 2004 is essential to ascertain whether such HRM elements have an empirical basis.

**Question 2**

**Critically discuss the view that Equal Opportunities and Treatment have had a far-reaching impact on the rights of British women at work.**

This is a very straightforward question requiring knowledge of British Equal Pay and Treatment legislation and the influence of European Union law. A good answer would mention the shortcomings of the British legislation in the 1970s, (Equal Pay Act and Sex Discrimination Act) and how European law found them inadequate. The European law part of the question required knowledge of improved maternity rights and leave as a result of the Pregnancy at Work Directive, and important cases such as *Barber* and rulings on pensions & part time pro rate rights.

**Question 3**

**‘Women are not a class, but being a woman has class consequences’. Discuss this view in the light of the effects of technological change on women at work.**

This question can be dealt with in several ways. A good answer would centre on discussing gender, employment and information technology whereby womens’ work could be analysed by considering the key factors of the size of firm or organisation, the sector, and the spatial location of the workplace. Each of these factors would determine whether or not women are at a disadvantage in skill formation and utilisation. Knowledge of gender segregation in occupations is necessary. Reference to Juliet Webster’s work would be useful.

#### **Question 4**

**Discuss the view that whilst globalisation might be responsible for the convergence of manufacturing and management practices, it does not necessarily promote convergence in skills, wages or wealth.**

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.

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