Bachelor of Arts in Human Resource Management

Comprehensive Exam Study Guide

The Bachelor of Arts in Human Resources Management degree program uses the Peregrine Business Administration Common Professional Component (CPC) comprehensive exam to assess student knowledge. The exam includes topics covered throughout the degree program, which are aligned to the topics required for accreditation.

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Table of Contents

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Common Professional Component (CPC)
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The Bachelor of Arts in Human Resources Management degree program uses the Peregrine Business Administration Common Professional Component (CPC) comprehensive exam to assess student knowledge. The exam includes topics covered throughout the degree program, which are aligned with learning outcomes and the program curriculum and to the topics required for accreditation. Preparation for this exam comes from the academic coursework you will have completed. Topics frequently overlap throughout required courses in the program and are covered in course guidance, required and recommended readings, multi-media, course discussions, assignments, and exercises.

All BAHRM students will complete the comprehensive exam in MGT 490 Strategic Human Resources Planning. The exam is administered in Week Four of the course and takes approximately one (1) to two (2) hours to complete. The exam may be completed only once.

Comprehensive Exam Design

The exam consists of approximately 90-120 questions; 10 questions from each topic are selected at random from a test bank. The topic areas included in the Bachelor of Arts in Human Resources Management comprehensive exam match the design of the BAHRM curriculum. The following topics are assessed:

1. Accounting
2. Business Ethics
3. Business Finance
4. Business Integration and Strategic Management
5. Advanced Human Resource Management II
6. Advanced Human Resource Management IV
7. Information Management Systems
8. Legal Environment of Business
9. Management
    a. Human Resource Management
    b. Operations/Production Management
    c. Organizational Behavior
10. Marketing

Comprehensive Exam Subjects

Topic: Accounting
Subjects
- Accounting Data Analysis (Questions related to liquidity, use of analysis ratios, and the operating cycle)
- Balance Sheet Analysis (Questions related to common-size balance sheet, credit balances, and debit balances)
- Compliance in Accounting (Questions related to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, annual reports, and quarterly reports)
- Dividends, Stocks, and Bonds (Questions related to stockholders' equity, common stock, and dividend payments)
- Financial Statement Analysis (Questions related to valuation, revenues, and income statements)
- Interest, Income, and Debt (Questions related to leverage, asset turnover, and liabilities)
- Journal Entries (Questions related to posting transactions, accounts receivable, and accounts payable)
- Management of Accounting (Questions related to analysis of risk and return, profitability, liquidity, and use of financial statements)

Topic: Business Ethics
Subjects
- Conflict of Interest (Questions related to the relationship between personal interests and organizational interests)
- Corporate Ethics and Climate (Questions related to ethical training, leadership roles in ethical climate, and ethical communications)
- Discrimination (Questions related to the Civil Rights Act, retaliation, and Equal Employment Opportunity)
- Ethical Climate (Questions related to types of power, ethics programs, and ethics officers)
- Ethical Decision-Making (Questions related to values, norms, and whistleblowing)
- Ethical Issues (Questions related to fraudulent activities, groupthink, and defining an ethical issue)
- Ethical Standards (Questions related to ethical formalism, codes of conduct, and legal vs. ethical issues)

Business Finance
Subjects
- Asset Valuation and Inventory (Questions related to retained earnings and inventory)
- Balance Sheets and Financial Statements (Questions related to income statements, operating margins, and reporting)
- Business Analysis Ratios and Calculations (Questions related to Current Ratio, Free Cash Flow, and use of ratios in financial decision-making/analysis)
- Interest and Dividends (Questions related to dividends, interest, and capital gains)
- Profit, Loss, Cash Flow, and Margins (Questions related to profit margins, positive/negative cash flows, and reporting losses)
- Stocks and Bonds (Questions related to bond yields, municipal bonds, and stock pricing)
- Tax Rates, Taxes, and Tax Codes (Questions related to alternative minimum tax, marginal tax rates, and corporate tax rates)

Topic: Business Integration and Strategic Management
Subjects
- Business-Level Strategy (Questions related to cost, differentiation, and customer analysis)
- Competition (Questions related to multipoint competition, competitive advantages, and global competition)
- Corporate Mission, Vision, and Values (Questions related to mission statements, organizational culture, and vision statements)
- Corporate Strategies (Questions related to integration, differentiation, & industry analysis)
- Corporate Structure and Governance (Questions related to analysis of activity & antitrust)
- Diversification (Questions related to acquisitions, incentives, and levels of diversification)
- Stakeholders and Shareholders (Questions related to organizational stakeholders, market stakeholders, and return on investment)
- Strategic Planning and Decision-Making (Questions related to the strategic management process, total quality management, and strategic mission)

Topic: Advanced Human Resource Management II
Subjects
- Conducting Performance Management (Questions related to advantages of behaviorally anchored rating scores, management by objectives, understanding stereotyping, using results-based formats, and behavioral observation scales)
- Employee Selection (Questions related to involving employees in the selection process, the process for measuring employees appropriateness, synthesizing information from applicant-job matching process, understanding discrimination issues, and employee competencies)
- Employee Separation and Retention (Questions related to the stages of alternative dispute resolution, understanding job withdrawal, and the impact of negative affectivity)
- Job Analysis, Employee Involvement, and Flexible Work Schedules (Questions related to employee involvement, employee feedback, job analysis, and psychological states of employees)
- Recruitment Careers (Questions related to specific job descriptions, career plateaus, determining promotions, career development programs, and types of recruitment)
- Staffing (Questions related to pre-employment screenings, the importance of job analysis, activities involved in staffing process, job fairs, and advantages to various hiring methods)
- Using Job Analysis and Competency Modeling (Questions related to modern work environments, ergonomic analysis, comprehensive job analysis, and behavioral inventories)

Topic: Advanced Human Resource Management IV
Subjects
- Diversity Training (Questions related to the FMLA, goals of diversity training, Title VII, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, sexual harassment, and quid pro quo)
- Ensuring Fair Treatment and Legal Compliance (Questions related to termination of employees, codes of ethics, prevention of harassment, and grievance procedures)
- Equal Employment Opportunity (Questions related to fair employment practice laws, Glass Ceiling Act, reverse discrimination, EEOC, and forms of discrimination)
- Promoting Workplace Safety and Health (Questions related to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, workplace safety and health, and workplace accidents)
- Risk Management and Employee Relations (Questions related to OSHA, material safety data sheets, and preventing work-related injuries and accidents)

Topic: Information Management Systems
Subjects
- Artificial Intelligence (Questions related to defining AI)
- Data and Information (Questions related to facts vs. assumptions, MIS systems, and the types of information systems)
- Executive and Decision-Support Systems (Questions related to the use of DSS, Forecasting, and types of DSS)
- Expert Systems (Questions related to use of expert systems, types of expert systems, developing an expert system)
- Information Management Processes and Procedures (Questions related to MIS activities, MIS systems, and MIS subsystems)
- Internal and External Networks (Questions related to e-commerce, internal vs. external networks, and uses of external networks)
- Simulation Analysis (Questions related to optimization, satisficing modules, and simulation environments)
- Software and Hardware (Questions related to types of hardware, firewalls, databases, and networks)
- Telecommunications (Questions related to virtual networks and teleconferencing)

Topic: Legal Environment of Business
Subjects
- Antitrust (Questions related to interstate commerce, defining antitrust, and monopolies)
- Civil and Criminal Processes (Questions related to a subpoena, an administrative agency, and judicial review)
- Consumer Protection (Questions related to consumer protection laws and regulatory agencies)
- Equal Employment Opportunity (Questions related to contract employees, severance pay, employment agreements)
- Financial Regulation (Questions related to corporate income, capital, and the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC))
- Government Regulation of Businesses (Questions related to administrative agencies, legislative rules, federal agencies, and interested parties)
- Legal Agreements and Documents (Questions related to incorporation, trademarks, shareholder agreements, and contracts)
- Liability (Questions related to limited and personal liability)
- Types of Business Organizations (Questions related to partnerships, sole proprietorships, Limited Liability Companies , and corporations)

Topic: Management
Sub-Topic: Human Resource Management
Subjects
- HR Manager Roles and Responsibilities (Questions related to cultural audits, internal analysis, and HR Manager activities)
- HR Planning (Questions related to Mission/Vision/Values and trend analysis)
- Recruiting and Retention of Employees (Questions related to core knowledge, succession planning, and organizational structure)
- Staffing Decisions (Questions related to contract labor, the Delphi Technique, and forecasting)

Sub-Topic: Operations/Production Management
Subjects
- Continuous Improvement (Questions related to Zero Defects, TQM, and Six Sigma)
- Cost Control (Questions related to machine down time, cost of quality, and recall/warranty claims)
- Data Analysis Tools (Questions related to Pareto diagram, GAP Models, and Cause-and-Effect diagrams)
- Quality Management (Questions related to SERVQUAL, ISO 9000, Six Sigma/TQM)

Sub-Topic: Organizational Behavior
Subjects
- Corporate Culture and Climate (Questions related to drivers of change, corporate management, and norms/ethics)
- Individual and Group Dynamics (Questions related to workforce diversification, skill development, employee interactions)
- Organizational Charts and Structure (Questions related to formal/informal organizational charts, change, and organizational levels)
- Organizational Mission, Vision, and Values (Questions related to role of values in corporate culture, mission/vision statements, and behaviors)

Topic: Marketing
Subjects
- Marketing Research, Planning, and Strategy (Questions related to developing a marketing plan, marketing strategies, and defining the market)
- People (Questions related to defining the customers, buyers, and consumers)
- Place (Questions related to positioning strategies, demand for goods and services, and perceptual maps)
- Price (Questions related to retailers, price elasticity, and competition)
- Product (Questions related to product life cycle, packaging, and product portfolios)
- Promotion (Questions related to product differentiation, demand curves, and market advantage)

Sample Questions

Sample Question 1
The process of setting major organization objectives and developing plans to achieve them is called:
    A. strategic planning
    B. HR planning
    C. job analysis
    D. environmental scanning

Correct Response: A

Sample Question 2
One way human resource planning links to strategic planning is by providing a set of inputs into the:
    A. strategy formulation process
    B. strategy implementation process
    C. strategic analysis process
    D. source of competitive advantage

Correct Response: A

Sample Question 3
A questioning, probing attitude is at the core of:
    A. job performance
    B. organizational reality
    C. critical thinking
    D. subjective knowledge

Correct Response: C

Sample Question 4
All of the following are considered extrinsic motivators in Herzberg's two-factor theory EXCEPT:
    A. company policies
    B. benefits
    C. work itself
    D. working conditions

Correct Response: C

Sample Question 5
Which of the following is NOT one of the process motivation theories?
    A. goal-setting theory
    B. equity theory
    C. expectancy theory
    D. acquired needs theory

Correct Response: D

Sample Question 6

A large commercial cleaning service in the Southwest requires all Hispanic applicants for supervisory positions to have a high school diploma from a U.S. high school, rather than a school in another country, such as Mexico. This is an example of _____.

       A. disparate treatment

       B. a bona fide occupational requirement

       C. disparate impact

       D. a business necessity

Correct Response: A

Sample Question 7

According to the Uniform Guidelines, a rule of thumb that identifies selection practices that favor a disproportionate number of non-protected class members is the _____.

       A. two-thirds rule

       B. acid-test rule

       C. ration rule

       D. four-fifths rule

Correct Response: D

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: Why is this exam required?
Each business program requires each student to take a comprehensive exam at the end of the program. The purpose of this exam is to allow Ashford University the ability to assess the quality of its academic programs, to improve programs and provide the best possible educational experience for all students.

Q: How should I prepare for the exam?
The comprehensive exam includes topics covered throughout your degree program, which are aligned to the topics required for accreditation. Your preparation for this exam comes from the academic coursework you have already completed.

Q: Does this exam affect my final course grade?
Yes. You are awarded a grade based on exam completion. Please refer to your course syllabus for the points and grading scale. The exam is graded on a curve relative to the national norms.

Q: How many questions are on the exam?
There are approximately 90-120 multiple choice and True/False questions on the exam.

Q: How much time do I have to take the exam?
Typically, the exam takes approximately 50-190 minutes. You have 48 hours to complete the exam once the exam has been started. The clock starts as soon as you begin the exam, not from when you purchased the exam.

Q: How much time is allowed to answer each question?
You are allowed 5 minutes to answer each question. You will see the time remaining on the screen for each question during the exam.

Q: Can I "back track" or skip questions during the exam?
No, you will not be able to go back to a question if you decide to skip it. Do your best to answer each question within the allotted time. Unanswered questions will be graded as 0 points. Unanswered questions are weighted the same as questions answered incorrectly.

Q: How do I purchase and access the exam?
You will need a computer with Internet access. No other plug-ins are required. The exam cost is $36.48 and must be purchased from the University Bookstore Ed Map. This link is located in the course. Please contact Ed Map to address any problems with the purchase of the exam: http://www.edmap.com/ContactUs.aspx.

To access the exam, please click on the exam link within the course assignment area through your Ashford course website. The hyperlink directs your Web browser to the appropriate exam site and auto-fills the registration information. It will also send your results back to the Gradebook automatically upon completion of the exam.

Q: Who do I contact if I purchased the wrong exam?
Before completing the exam, contact the University Bookstore Ed Map if you purchased the wrong exam and need to exchange the registration for the correct exam. All financial transactions are between you and Ed Map, not Peregrine Academic Services from which the exam is administered. The Ed Map system will not allow you to purchase the same exam twice.

Therefore, you must work with Ed Map regarding any exchanges or refunds. Once you have purchased the correct exam, contact Peregrine Academic Services at Support@PeregrineAcademics.com to identify the correct exam and which one to delete.

Q: What if I have purchased the exam with a different e-mail than in my Student Profile?
First, try to access the exam through the course website. If you receive an error message, follow the instructions on screen to change your email address. If that does not resolve the issue, please contact PAS technical support at: www.PeregrineAcademics.com/Support E-mail: Support@PeregrineAcademics.com.

Q: What do I do if the exam did not start? Trouble Shooting Tips
If the exam does not start, double check your pop-up blocker and/or personal firewall settings. The exam opens in a new window. Turn the pop-up blocker off. Add this site to your "safe sites" list within your personal firewall settings. Another option will be to select the link provided to launch the exam in another window. If you receive an error message when attempting to access the exam, follow the instructions on your screen to address the issue. If that does not resolve the issue, contact PAS technical support at: www.PeregrineAcademics.com/Support
E-mail: Support@PeregrineAcademics.com

Q: Can I take breaks during the exam?
Yes, two 15-minute breaks are allowed for the entire exam, which is not based on the number of log-in attempts. You are allowed to stop during an exam and restart at a later time. However, you only have 3 log-in attempts within the 48 hours. Also, when you re-start an exam, you will resume on the next question in the exam, not the one you left. After 48 hours or more than 3 log-in attempts, the exam site is inaccessible and a grade will be generated, assigning 0 points to unanswered questions. These restrictions are necessary to preserve the academic integrity of the exam process.

Q: When will my exam grade post?
If your grade is not posted within an hour, it will generally post at the end of the day.

Exam Validity and Reliability

Peregrine Academic Services provides nationally normed, summative assessment services for Business Administration academic programs that are used for internal and external programmatic evaluation. Peregrine places a high priority on ensuring colleges and universities are provided with valid and reliable assessment instruments that can be incorporated into their academic programs to measure learning outcomes in order to serve accreditation, accountability and continuous improvement needs. Practices to ensure exam quality begin at the concept stage and continue through beta-testing, and with ongoing regularly scheduled quality reviews.

Reliability refers to the extent to which the exam results are repeatable.
Validity refers to the extent to which results are relevant and meaningful.

To ensure reliability the following measures are adopted:
- Peer review and sensitivity analysis was included as part of exam question development;
- Exam scoring is 100% objective using automated marking;
- Each exam is unique using a random selection of questions from the test bank in random topic order;
- Timed response periods for questions. When the user navigates away from the exam screen, the screen fades, a message appears informing the user that he/she has left the exam window and the questions are timed;
- Students are unable to copy/paste from the exam window;
- The exam services meet the security requirements for Management of Information Technology (MIS) and Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) compliant organizations;
- Reliability stability was confirmed during the initial beta-testing with no statistically significant difference in scores ($p<.05$); and
- Abandoned exams are excluded from summary reports.

To ensure exams are valid the following measures are adopted:
- Exam questions are written and reviewed by academic professionals within each discipline;
- Psychometric analysis was conducted to eliminate substandard questions following initial beta-testing and after use by institutions. Annual test bank reviews are conducted;
- Questions have a subject-level designation with 4-8 subjects per topic;
- Exam responses are either correct or incorrect with only one possible correct choice;
- Scores are determined by summarizing the percent correct: per subject, per topic, and by total score; and
- Many questions focus on application of concepts.