Level 7 Diploma in Strategic Management (Managing People)

Contents

Entry Requirements

These qualifications are designed for learners who are typically aged 19 and above.

The policy regarding access to our qualifications is that:
- they should be available to everyone who is capable of reaching the required standards
- they should be free from any barriers that restrict access and progression
- there should be equal opportunities for all those wishing to access the qualifications.

Introduction to the Level 7 Qualifications in Strategic Management

These qualifications in Strategic Management have been developed to conform to the requirements of the RQF, to meet the requirements of higher education and employers, to meet the needs of learners and to respond to the needs of our centres.

We provide a flexible route for learners who have already achieved management qualifications at a lower level and for learners who do not have business or management qualifications, but may have qualifications in other areas and/or prior management experience in the work place.

These qualifications are designed to provide:

- opportunities for learners to acquire knowledge and understanding and develop a range of skills, personal qualities and attitudes essential for successful performance in working life
- specialisms that are directly related to learners' current responsibilities or that meet a particular interest and support career development
- opportunities for learners who wish to undertake a full time course of study leading to an Extended Diploma
- learners with the opportunity to acquire a broader range of knowledge and understanding and to develop the skills they require to work in the field of management.

Progression

On successful completion of a Level 7 Qualification in Strategic Management there are a number of progression opportunities.

Learners may progress to:

- a larger qualification at the same level e.g. from a Diploma to an Extended Diploma
- an MBA programme and claim exemptions for some of the units completed
- employment if they are not already in employment.

Level 7 Diploma in Strategic Management

The Level 7 Diploma in Strategic Management is a 60 credit qualification. Learners must complete two of the five core units totalling 30 credits. Learner then select the unendorsed route or one of 4 pathways: Finance, Marketing and Communications, Managing People, International.

Level 7 Diploma in Strategic Management Unendorsed Route

Learners selecting the unendorsed route take at least two of the five core units and two further units from the list below or from the remaining core units.

Core Units

Unit Title	Level	GLH	Credit
Strategic Planning	7	60	15
Finance for Strategic Managers	7	60	15
Research for Strategic Development	7	60	15
Organisational Behaviour	7	60	15
Personal Development for Leadership and Strategic Management	7	60	15

Optional units

Unit Title	Level	GLH	Credit
Developing Organisational Vision and Strategic Direction	7	60	15
Strategic Human Resource Management	7	60	15
Managing Continuous Organisational Improvement	7	60	15

Unit Specifications

Unit Format
Each unit is presented in a standard format. This format provides guidance on the requirements of the unit for learners, tutors, assessors and external verifiers.

Each unit has the following sections:

Unit Title
The unit title reflects the content of the unit. The title of each unit completed will appear on a learner's statement of results.

Unit Aims
The unit aims section summarises the content of the unit.

Unit Code
Each unit is assigned a unit code that will appear on the qualification certificate

Level
All units and qualifications have a level assigned to them which represents the level of achievement. The level of each unit is informed by the level descriptors.

Credit Value
The credit value is the number of credits that may be awarded to a learner for the successful achievement of the learning outcomes of a unit.

Learning Outcomes
The learning outcomes set out what a learner is expected to know, understand or be able to do as the result of the learning process.

Assessment Criteria
The assessment criteria describe the requirements a learner is expected to meet in order to demonstrate that the learning outcome has been achieved. Command verbs reflect the level of the qualification e.g. at level 6 you would see words such as analyse, evaluate, synthesise.

Strategic Planning	
Unit aims	The aim of this unit is to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to develop an organisational strategic plan
Unit level	7
Unit code	M/615/2675
GLH	60
Credit value	15
Unit grading structure	Pass/Merit/Distinction
Assessment guidance	To achieve this unit, learners must achieve the learning outcomes and meet the standards specified by the assessment criteria for the unit. Additional assessment guidance is provided on the ATHE sample assignment brief. This unit cannot be approached from a theoretical perspective with information gathered solely from public sources. In order to achieve the Learning Outcomes for the unit, the learner work must relate their work to a specific organisation. This must be an organisation the learner knows well and ideally it should be an SME. Learners will require guidance in selecting a suitable organisation.

Learning outcomes. The learner will:	Assessment criteria. The learner can:		
	Pass	**Merit**	**Distinction**
1. Understand the foundations for developing organisational strategy	1.1 Explain the relationship between mission, vision, strategy and business plans 1.2 Analyse named organisations' mission and vision statements	1M1 Evaluate the impact of a named organisation's vision and mission on its strategy	
2. Understand the external environment affecting organisations	2.1 Explain how external factors affect organisations 2.2 Evaluate how stakeholder expectations influence organisations 2.3 Explain how changes in the external environment affect organisational strategy		2D1 Analyse how external influences affect organisational strategy in a named organisation
3. Be able to review an organisation's strategy and business plans	3.1 Explain the importance of review in the development of organisational strategy and business plans 3.2 Evaluate the tools which can be used to review organisational	3M1 Review the position of an organisation in its current market using appropriate tools	3D1 Analyse the competitive strengths and weaknesses of an organisation's current business strategy and business plans

	strategy and business plans		
4. Be able to develop strategy options for an organisation	4.1 Use modelling tools to develop strategy options for an organisation 4.2 Develop criteria for reviewing the potential strategy options	4M1 Apply the criteria and evaluate the options as the basis for delivering the strategic direction of the organisation	
5. Understand how to create a strategic plan to meet business objectives	5.1 Explain the structure of a plan needed to deliver a strategy 5.2 Explain how stakeholders are involved in the formulation of the plan 5.3 Produce a dissemination process to ensure stakeholders are informed and committed to the plan	5M1 Create monitoring systems to ensure the successful implementation of a strategic plan	5D1 Construct a strategic plan for a named organisation

Indicative Content

1. **Understand the foundations for developing organisational strategy**

    - Explanations of organisational vision, mission, strategy and business plans; the differences and the interface between them
    - Core organisational values e.g. ethical, environmental, client centred; cultural diversity; drivers e.g. business growth; profit; market share; workforce expectation
    - Objectives and measures: SMARTER (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-based, evaluate, re-evaluate) objectives; stakeholder involvement

2. **Understand the external environment affecting organisations**

    - External factors: needs and expectations of stakeholders e.g. customer groups, shareholders, suppliers and sub-contractors, the workforce and the community
    - The success and direction of competitors and changes in the market sector as a whole in the short and long term e.g. product design; political changes and developments; legal changes; trends and expectations; exchange rates; trading agreements
    - Use of external surveys and statistics; customer analysis and feedback; use of tools e.g. SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis, STEEP (social, technological, economic, environmental and political) analysis; market research including primary and secondary information; feasibility

3. **Be able to review an organisation's strategy and business plans**

    - The purpose of review and what this will entail; tools e.g. Value Chain analysis, SWOT analysis, Porter's Five Forces; internal surveys and statistics
    - Market position; market share analysis; life cycle analysis; Boston growth share BCG Matrix
    - SWOT analysis, resource analysis, competitive analysis, skills and competencies audit, benchmarking sustainable competitive advantage; pricing strategies; resource analysis; economies of scale and scope for this; market equilibrium

4. **Be able to develop strategy options for an organization**

    Strategic planning options:

    - Ansoff Matrix Strategies; corporate expansion; integration i.e. vertical, backwards and forwards; horizontal; differentiation; Porter's generic strategies
    - Diversification, control of resources, distribution channels; Mintzberg's strategies (deliberate, emergent)
    - Strategic alliance; merger, acquisition; competitive strategies
    - Value-based strategy; contingency strategy; maintaining/increasing market share, niche markets; market segmentation
    - Adding value; workforce competence development; product portfolio; reconfiguration; gap analysis; profitability; portfolio analysis; benchmarking
    - Criteria for judging options; feasibility studies; risk assessments

5. Understand how to create a strategic plan to meet business objectives

Structure:

- Mission statement /corporate vision, corporate values and principles, decisions from options; strategic goals / initiatives, strategy, roles, responsibilities, accountability; objectives and measures: SMARTER (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-based, evaluate, re-evaluate) objectives; execution plan, balanced scorecard, targets / interim targets / success metrics

Resource issues:

- Resources e.g. financial, human; skills and competencies; needed v in place;

availability. Stakeholder involvement and buy-in:

- When and at what stage in the process; how will this take place; who will be involved; communications with stakeholders; gaining general organisational agreement to the process; feedback
- Tie departmental plans into strategic plan, align performance management and reward systems to strategy implementation.

Dissemination:

- Communications with stakeholders how and when; dissemination and cascading processes; guidelines; timetable for implementation; Business Process Re-Engineering (BPR); action planning at departmental and operational levels

Monitoring:

- Monitoring and evaluation control systems; responsibilities at strategic and operational levels; performance appraisal; focus and realignment; contingency planning; smart objectives and success criteria at all levels in the organisation; establish nature of monitoring e.g. tracking system and monitoring points; review meetings; role of celebration.

Finance for Strategic Managers	
Unit aims	The learners will develop knowledge, understanding and skills that will enable them to analyse internal and publicly available financial information. This will help to inform strategic decision making.
Unit level	7
Unit code	A/615/2677
GLH	60
Credit value	15
Unit grading structure	Pass/Merit/Distinction
Assessment guidance	To achieve this unit, learners must achieve the learning outcomes and meet the standards specified by the assessment criteria for the unit. Additional assessment guidance is provided on the ATHE sample assignment brief. Learners will need to demonstrate their full understanding of the use of financial information in business decision making. Learners can use their own experience or provide examples of businesses from their research to exemplify the points which are made. Learners will need to access and interpret published business accounts.

Learning outcomes. The learner will:	Assessment criteria. The learner can:		
	Pass	Merit	Distinction
1. Understand the importance of financial data in formulating and delivering business strategy	1.1 Evaluate the sources of financial data which can be used to inform business strategy 1.2 Assess the need for financial data and information in relation to business strategy 1.3 Analyse the risks related to financial business decisions	1M1 Assess the impact of 'creative accounting' techniques when making strategic decisions	
2. Be able to analyse financial data for an organisation in order to inform strategic decision making purposes	2.1 Interpret financial statements to assess the viability of an organisation 2.2 Conduct comparative analysis of financial data using ratio analysis	2M1 Make recommendations to an organisation based on the analysis and interpretation of the financial information 2M2 Assess the limitations of ratio analysis as a tool for strategic decision making	2D1 Recommend, with justifications, methods and tools that allow businesses to analyse financial data for strategic decision making purposes
3. Be able to evaluate proposals for strategic decisions on capital expenditure in an organisation	3.1 Review methods for appraising strategic capital expenditure projects and strategic direction	3M1 Assess the importance of cash flow management when evaluating proposals for capital expenditure	3D1 Assess the impact of a business proposal on the strategic direction of a business organisation

	3.2 Evaluate business proposals for capital expenditure in an organisation using appropriate financial techniques.		

Indicative Content

1. **Understand the importance of financial data in formulating and delivering business strategy**

   • Sources of financial information: Internal (internal accounting systems, payroll etc.), External (suppliers, Companies House, the Budget etc.)

   • Financial information: Profitability, Cash flow, Business value, Financial stability, Cost projections.

   • Need for financial information: Assessing finance requirements, obtaining finance, reporting to owners, shareholders and stakeholders, Setting and meeting targets, Appraising new projects, Managing risk, Internal needs v External needs.

   • Business risks: Strategic, Market, Compliance, Operational, Risk modelling.

2. **Be able to analyse financial data for an organisation in order to inform strategic decision making purposes**

   • Published accounts: Purpose, Provide information to shareholders/stakeholders, Users – for example, shareholders, potential shareholders, managers, employees, lenders, creditors, suppliers, customers, community, competitors, Annual reports, including main financial statements (statements of financial position, income statements, sources and statements of cash flows), director's report, audit report, notes to accounts etc., Internal management accounts versus published financial accounts, Structure of financial statements – content and requirements, Limitations of published accounts.

   • Comparative analysis: Comparison between years, Comparison between businesses, Industry comparisons, Benchmarking.

   • Ratio analysis: Reasons for using ratios, advantages and limitations, Ratio categories, including profitability, liquidity, efficiency, capital and investor.

3. **Be able to evaluate proposals for strategic decisions on capital expenditure in an organisation**

   • Types of expenditure, difference between capital and revenue expenditure (definitions, decision making, treatment in financial statements)

   • Investment appraisal techniques: Payback, Accounting rate of return, Net present value, Internal rate of return, Discounted cash flow, Cost benefit analysis, Value for money.

   • Long term and short term finance: Definitions of long term and short term, Importance of matching finance to project.

   • Sources of finance: Range of sources, External and internal sources, Role of markets, Role of government, Long term and short term, Advantages and disadvantages of each source, Implications of each source, for example gearing.

- Cash flow management: Cash flow forecasts v Cash flow statements, Managing inventory, trade payables, trade receivables, etc., Budgetary control processes – budgets and variances.

Research for Strategic Development			
Unit aims	The aim of this unit is to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills required to carry out research to meet the needs of strategic business management.		
Unit level	7		
Unit code	F/615/2678		
GLH	60		
Credit value	15		
Unit grading structure	Pass/Merit/Distinction		
Assessment guidance	To achieve this unit, learners must achieve the learning outcomes and meet the standards specified by the assessment criteria for the unit. Additional assessment guidance is provided on the ATHE sample assignment brief. In order to achieve this unit, learners must carry out a comprehensive piece of research on a chosen area relating to strategic business development. Learners must ensure that the research undertaken provides sufficient evidence to meet the Learning Outcomes and the standards required.		
Learning outcomes. The learner will:	**Assessment criteria. The learner can:**		
	Pass	**Merit**	**Distinction**
1. Be able to formulate a research proposal relating to strategic business development	1.1 Identify a valid area for research to support the strategic development of a business area 1.2 Explain the aim, scope and objectives for a chosen area of research in strategic business development 1.3 Formulate a research proposal 1.4 Establish success criteria for the achievement of the research proposal 1.5 Prepare a project plan that identifies key milestones and critical pathways	1M1 Justify the research area chosen in order to achieve strategic business development	
2. Be able to use different research methodologies to gather sufficient and valid data	2.1 Review different literature sources to find those most appropriate for the chosen area of research 2.2 Use appropriate research methodologies to gather sufficient	2M1 Justify the research methodologies chosen	

	information from primary and secondary sources to make valid conclusions		
3. Be able to present research findings in an appropriate format for a target audience	3.1 Prepare a report that provides a comprehensive explanation of the purpose, methodologies, findings and recommendations 3.2 Reference all sources using a recognised system 3.3 Use the information collected to justify conclusions and recommendations	3M1 Respond orally to questions on research findings	3D1 Analyse how the findings of the research can be used in an actual strategic business context
4. Be able to evaluate own skills while undertaking research	4.1 Review own skills linked to own research using personal reflection and feedback 4.2 Make recommendations on ways to improve own skills while undertaking research	4M1 Produce a plan to improve own research skills	4D1 Implement the plan and assess the impact on own personal progress

Indicative Content

1. **Be able to formulate a research proposal relating to strategic business development**

   Research proposal:

   - Possible questions or hypothesis; different formats for research proposals; aims of research; scoping research projects; SMART objectives; terms of reference; rationale for selection; ethical issues

   Information for strategic development of business area:

   - Examples may include analysis of organisation; structure, culture; planned growth strategy, marketing, operational issues; SWOT analysis, PEST analysis, analysis of customers and key stakeholders, competitor analysis

   Success criteria:

   - Linked to purpose, objectives and outcome, SMART

   Project planning:

   - Key milestones, resources, risk assessment and management, critical pathways, contingency, accessing relevant information, project goals, schedule, communication systems, sensitivity of information gathered e.g. intellectual property, data protection
   Link to Business Development:

   - Rationale for chosen research linked to stated business development needs

2. **Be able to use different research methodologies to gather sufficient and valid data**

   Research methodology:

   - Research methods e.g. survey, questionnaire including manual and electronic, observations; ways to test sufficiency, reliability and validity; definitions of data e.g. primary and secondary sources, qualitative and quantitative; literature search and review – its credibility, use and acceptance; ways to reference sources
   - Size and sufficiency of data, reliability and validity of information gathered

3. **Be able to present research findings in an appropriate format for a target audience**

   Research findings:

   - Report format e.g. title, acknowledgements, contents page, introduction, summary of literature review, research methods used, findings, recommendations, references, bibliography, appendices e.g. questionnaires, surveys
   - Referencing e.g. Harvard system

   Analysis of data and application of statistical methods:

   - Qualitative interpretation of records, feedback, processes, categories, trends and relationships.

- Quantitative e.g. mean, median, mode, variability e.g. range, standard deviation, application to business data, reliability of estimates from samples, trends and forecasting

Presentation of findings:

- Methods for statistical data e.g. graphs, charts, statistical tables; chosen audience e.g. colleagues, Board members, external stakeholders; use of language in report appropriate to the chosen audience; power point presentations

4. Be able to evaluate own skills while undertaking research

Methods of self-evaluation:

- Personal reflection, constructive feedback from range of sources, evaluation forms, use of electronic equipment e.g. recording interviews, SWOT analysis. Balanced judgements

Improving own research skills:

- Examples may include courses or qualifications, mentoring, coaching, conferences, secondments, application in future research
- Plan with specific actions, timescales, success criteria, resource implications, milestones. The plan is realistic but challenging and can be implemented. It addresses areas of weakness and builds on strengths

Organisational Behaviour	
Unit aims	The aim of this unit is to help learners develop an understanding of how organisational behaviour, structure, culture, motivation, creativity and leadership impact on an organisation's effectiveness and efficiency.
Unit level	7
Unit code	A/615/2680
GLH	60
Credit value	15
Unit grading structure	Pass/Merit/Distinction
Assessment guidance	To achieve this unit, learners must achieve the learning outcomes and meet the standards specified by the assessment criteria for the unit. Additional assessment guidance is provided on the ATHE sample assignment brief. The learner will need to demonstrate their understanding of complex theories and concepts to meet the standards required for this unit.

Learning outcomes. The learner will:	Assessment criteria. The learner can:		
	Pass	Merit	Distinction
1. Understand leadership behaviour theory and practice	1.1 Evaluate different leadership behaviour theories 1.2 Analyse theories relating to work relationships and interaction	1M1 Analyse how different leadership behaviours impact on organisations	
2. Understand how organisational structures and culture impact on the effectiveness of the organisation	2.1 Analyse characteristics of different organisational structures 2.2 Explain how the culture of an organisation can impact on the effectiveness of the organisation	2M1 Evaluate the relevance of organisational culture theory in developing organisational effectiveness	
3. Understand how organisations can improve employee effectiveness to respond to business opportunities	3.1 Assess the impact of learning on the effectiveness of employees 3.2 Evaluate how working in teams can improve employee effectiveness		3D1 Analyse the process and outcomes of change on the effectiveness of employees
4. Understand how organisations can motivate employees in order to improve	4.1 Analyse the benefits and issues with involving employees in organisational decision making	4M1 Analyse how motivational theory can inform employee motivation	4D1 Evaluate how a named organisation motivates its employees

their efficiency and effectiveness	4.2 Explain different ways to motivate employees		

Indicative Content

1. **Understand leadership behaviour theory and practice**

- Leadership versus management
- Leadership behaviour theory including: personal leadership traits, trait theories (e.g. Allport. Eysenck Cattell), 'great man' theory of leadership, contingency theories (e.g. Fiedler, cognitive resource theory), situational theories (e.g. Hersey and Blanchard, Vroom and Yetton), behavioural theories (e.g. role theory, managerial grid/leadership grid), participative theories (e.g. Lewin/Likert, transformational v transactional leadership, emotional intelligence).
  - Working relationships and interaction e.g. power, behavioural theories, social constructivism

2. **Understand how organisational structures and culture impact on the effectiveness of the organisation**

- Organisational structure: Bureaucracies, Stakeholders, re-engineered corporation, modular, hierarchical, matrix, liquid devolved decision making powers, networked and atomised organisations, virtual organisations, line, staff & functional structures, formal and informal organisations, designing organisation structure, centralisation, decentralisation.
- Organisational culture: Harrison - power, role, person, task cultures, Likert – autocratic, benevolent autocratic, consultative participative, Mintzberg – simple, machine bureaucracy, divisional, adhocracy, Pedlar et al – the learning organisation.
- How structure and culture impact on effectiveness
  - Leader as a change agent

3. **Understand how organisations can improve employee effectiveness to respond to business opportunities**

- Innovation and creativity
- Organisational culture: integration / interaction of disciplines and teams, attitude to risk, rewards.
- Organisational learning: The learning, learning culture, knowledge capture and management, technical knowledge versus experiential knowledge, technology.
- Measuring performance: Metrics, KPI, business scorecard, working in teams, group dynamics, teams versus groups, communications, collaboration and team decision making, motivation of groups.
  - Change processes and outcomes: Changes (reorganisation, restructuring, merger and acquisition, downsizing), involving stakeholders, communicating and managing change.

4. **Understand how organisations can motivate employees in order to improve their efficiency and effectiveness**

- Motivational theory including: Taylorism, Mayo, Maslow, Herzberg, McGregor, Broad theories (e.g. temporal motivation theory), cognitive theory.

Personal Development for Leadership and Strategic Management

Unit aims	This unit aims to help learners develop their own personal leadership and management skills in the context of the creation and achievement of organisational vision and strategic direction.
Unit level	7
Unit code	J/615/2682
GLH	60
Credit value	15
Unit grading structure	Pass
Assessment guidance	Learners must achieve the learning outcomes and meet the standards specified by the assessment criteria for the unit. Additional assessment guidance is provided on the ATHE sample assignment brief. To achieve the standards for this unit, learners will be required to understand the knowledge and skills needed by leaders and managers, create a plan to achieve these qualities and be able to know how progress with the plan can be reviewed.

Learning outcomes. The learner will:	Assessment criteria. The learner can:		
	Pass	**Merit**	**Distinction**
1. Understand how knowledge and skills in leadership and strategic management support the creation and achievement of organisational vision and strategy	1.1 Analyse the knowledge and skills in leadership and strategic management which are required to support the creation and achievement of organisational vision and strategy 1.2 Assess the contribution that factors other than knowledge and skills in leadership and strategic management make to the achievement of organisational vision and strategy	1M1 Justify a ranking order of the leadership and management knowledge and skills required to successfully create and achieve organisational strategy	1D1 Evaluate the leadership and management knowledge and skills required for the successful achievement of organisational operations versus the creation and achievement of organisational strategy
2. Understand how to develop and communicate organisational vision	2.1 Analyse the factors which impact on the creation of organisational vision 2.2 Assess the different approaches to developing vision 2.3 Evaluate the key factors which impact on the communication of vision to external stakeholders	2M1 Evaluate the key factors needed to gain the commitment of internal stakeholders when communicating the vision	

3. Be able to manage development of own personal knowledge and skills in leadership and strategic management to support achievement of personal and organisational vision and strategy	3.1 Review theories of leadership and management and assess the implications for your personal development 3.2 Carry out an audit of own personal leadership and management knowledge and skills which facilitate the creation and achievement of organisational vision and strategy 3.3 Set objectives to meet personal development needs in the context of strategic organisational needs 3.4 Prepare a personal development plan to develop own leadership and management skills and to support the creation of organisational vision and strategy	3M1 Justify how the objectives and the plan selected for personal development support achievement of organisational vision and strategy	3D1 Carry out appropriate personal development activities to develop knowledge and skills identified in the audit
4. Be able to reflect on the benefits of personal development in the achievement of personal growth and organisational vision and strategy	4.1 Assess the benefits of review and explain when this tool can be used in the achievement of personal and organisational strategy 4.2 Evaluate the sources of information needed to review progress with achieving personal development plans		4D1 Review progress and outcomes of the personal development plan against the objectives set

Indicative Content

1. **Understand how knowledge and skills in leadership and strategic management support the creation and achievement of organisational vision and strategy**

   - Meaning of vision and strategy and their interrelationship
   - Knowledge and skills required – visioning, describing possible futures with clarity, creating, giving direction, specificity, providing motivation, planning, communicating and listening at different levels, synthesizing, analysing, empathy, decision taker, link between vision and strategy, bringing about effective change, emotional intelligence, developing and leading high performance teams, consistency and reliability, delegation, dealing with conflict, gaining alignment.
   - Contribution to organisational vision and strategy. Leadership and management knowledge and skills can be insufficient. Other factors which come into play include – financial situation, political uncertainty, availability of human and physical resources, and instability in the market.
   - Ranking order produced from criteria leading to determination of high, medium and lesser importance.
   - Similarities, difference and importance of knowledge and skills needed by strategic managers compared to operational managers.

2. **Understand how to develop and communicate organisational vision**

   - Factors impacting on organisational vision - history of the organisation, external and internal business environment, capacity of the organisation, anticipating potential barriers, skills and ambition of leadership team
   - Approaches to developing vision - Two way, top down bottom up, timing, clarity, specificity, quality of information, presentation, dialogue, culture understanding and, feedback loops, involvement,
   - Factors which impact on the communication of vision to internal and external stakeholders - size of organisation, organisational development, culture and diversity, size, complexity and boldness of vision, communication systems, dissemination and cascading processes

3. **Be able to manage development of own personal knowledge and skills in leadership and strategic management to support achievement of personal and organisational vision and strategy**

   - Theories of leadership and management and their application - Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership, tri-dimensional leadership theory, charismatic leadership, situational leadership
   - Audit of personal skills and knowledge linked to creation and achievement of organisational vision and strategy
   - Objectives and personal development plan- specific, clear, challenging, achievable objectives linked to audit, directly related to plan with stated outcomes, tasks, time frames, deadlines, monitoring points. Plan could include formal learning leading to qualifications, training courses, work shadowing, and job rotation or mentoring. Plan could include informal learning e.g. reading texts, learning from successes and mistakes, using diagnostic tools e.g. Myers Briggs; development of emotional intelligence, ability to learn, systems thinking

4. **Be able to reflect on the benefits of personal development in the achievement of personal growth and organisational vision and strategy**

- Benefits of review - reviewing performance, learning from experience, repeating what is good, dealing with weaknesses, acknowledging success. Review can be used frequently in order to improve e.g. at key milestones, at the outset and conclusion of tasks, at the end of a meeting, after a difficult problem.
- Sources of information – appraisal outcomes, 360-degree feedback systems, client feedback, staff/colleague/superiors' feedback, personal observations, data, KPIs, business results.

Developing Organisational Vision and Strategic Direction	
Unit aims	To enable learners to improve their knowledge and understanding of how organisations develop vision and strategic direction. The unit may be of particular interest for learners aiming for leadership roles in either private or public sector organisations.
Unit level	7
Unit code	D/615/2686
GLH	60
Credit value	15
Unit grading structure	Pass/Merit/Distinction
Assessment guidance	To achieve this unit, learners must meet the learning outcomes at the standards specified by the assessment criteria for the unit. Additional assessment guidance is provided on the ATHE sample assignment brief. Learners need to show that they understand the importance of a vision for an organisation and how this impacts on the strategic direction. In their work learners should use their own experience in organisations and/or as consumers.

Learning outcomes. The learner will:	Assessment criteria. The learner can:		
	Pass	Merit	Distinction
1. Understand how to develop an organisational vision and strategic direction	1.1 Explain the processes involved in creating a shared vision for an organisation 1.2 Analyse factors that impact on organisations and their vision 1.3 Analyse the relationship between vision, strategic direction and strategic planning	1M1 Create a vision for a named organisation and explain the reasons behind your thinking	1D1 Determine and explain the strategic direction for a named organisation
2. Understand how to communicate the vision and strategic direction to stakeholders	2.1 Analyse methods of communicating an organisation's vision and strategic direction to stakeholders 2.2 Assess how to build support for the organisation's vision and strategic direction 2.3 Assess the challenges and pressures faced by organisations when communication		2D1 Produce a plan to communicate vision and strategic direction to internal and external stakeholders

	vision and strategic direction to stakeholders		
3. Understand how to implement organisational vision and strategic direction	3.1 Analyse how leadership behaviour promotes the achievement of organisational vision and strategic direction 3.2 Outline the process for implementing the vision and strategic direction for an organisation	3M1 Evaluate the ways in which an organisation might respond to negative factors affecting the implementation of the vision and strategic direction	3D1 Analyse how to embed organisational vision in an organisation

Indicative Content

1. **Understand how to develop an organisational vision and strategic direction**

   - Processes involved in creating a vision: Written vision and mission statements, Values and culture, Language, Purpose, Good practice.

   - Factors that impact on organisations and their vision: PESTLE – Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental, Government Policy, Legal Requirements, Regulatory and Accountability issues, Best practice and industry trends, Global factors, Data gathering.

   - Relationships between vision, strategic direction and strategic planning: Strategic goals, Evaluation of key factors, Criteria for analysis, Knowledge to set strategic direction, Strategic planning techniques.

2. **Understand how to communicate the vision and strategic direction to stakeholders**

   - Communication methods: Understanding audiences, Methods, for example, presentations, formats, media etc., Attitudes – enthusiasm, stressing importance, gaining agreement and acceptance, corporate style, etc. Communication systems, External support and expertise, Embedding vision,

   - Stakeholders: Identification of different organisations and their structure, Identification of key stakeholders, for example, employees, managers service users, customers, funding bodies, local and national Government, Stakeholder groups needs and wants, Stakeholder roles in organisations, Stakeholder mapping and methods of engaging stakeholders.

   - Communicating with external stakeholders: Promoting the vision, Benefits analysis and promotion, Format and language to promote, Feedback mechanisms, Cost / Benefit analysis.

   - Building support: Communicating clearly and effectively, Equality issues, challenging behaviours, Language, Attitudes that do not support organisational vision, Negotiation skills, Changing systems, Procedures, Models of change.

3. **Understand how to implement organisational vision and strategic direction**

   - Leadership behaviour; Leadership and management styles, Managing the change, acting as a role model to promote and embed the vision, challenging behaviours, attitudes, values etc. that do not support the vision, Importance of personal credibility and belief.

   - Embedding the vision; Models for approaching change in the organisation e.g. top down, bottom up, consultative styles etc. Identification of procedures, activities, values, language not consistent with vision and replacing them, Organisational culture.

   - Setting strategic direction; Links between vision and objectives, Strategic objectives – format, content, writing objectives, etc., Role of stakeholders.

     Strategic planning process; Format and contents of strategic plan, Development of strategic plan, Resource allocations, Targets, Criteria for success.

Strategic Human Resource Management	
Unit aims	The aim of this unit is to help learners acquire knowledge and understanding of human resource management strategy and its impact on the efficiency of an organisation.
Unit level	7
Unit code	F/615/2700
GLH	60
TQT	150
Credit value	15
Unit grading structure	Pass/Merit/Distinction
Assessment guidance	To achieve this unit, learners must achieve the learning outcomes and meet the standards specified by the assessment criteria for the unit. Additional assessment guidance is provided on the ATHE sample assignment brief. Learners will approach this unit from a theoretical and practical perspective using examples to demonstrate their understanding. This is particularly the case for assessment criteria where learners will need to relate their work to a particular organisation

Learning outcomes. The learner will:	Assessment criteria. The learner can:		
	Pass	Merit	Distinction
1. Understand the factors affecting human resource management strategies in organisations	1.1 Analyse the effect of organisational structure and culture on human resource management strategies in organisations 1.2 Assess the importance of financial resources in creating a human resource management strategy	1M1 Analyse the impact of government legislation on human resource management strategies	1D1 Evaluate the factors affecting human resource management in a named organisation
2. Understand how strategic human resource management contributes to the achievement of the strategic plans of organisations	2.1 Analyse different models of strategic human resource management 2.2 Explain how human resource management contributes to the achievement of strategic plans	2M1 Evaluate different models of preparing strategic human resource management plans for an organisation	
3. Understand how to prepare human resource management strategies for organisations	3.1 Assess factors to be considered when preparing human resource management strategies	3M1 Discuss how internal and external factors impact on the elements of human resource management strategies	3D1 Evaluate the model used by an organisation in the development of its human resource management strategy

	3.2 Evaluate key elements of a human resource management strategy		
4. Be able to develop a human resource management strategy for an organisation	4.1 Develop a human resource management strategy for an organisation 4.2 Explain how the proposed human resource management strategy will support achievement of business objectives		4D1 Assess the potential barriers to the implementation of a human resource management strategy

Indicative Content

1. **Understand the factors affecting human resource management strategies in organisations**

   • Organisational structure and culture; flexible working practices, seasonality, mission, leadership styles, size of the organisation, national, international, nature of the business function, hierarchical, flat, functional, centralised and de-centralised, product based, project, matrix, liquid, theories Handy, Mintzberg, Weber

   • Impact of financial resources; availability of labour, skills needs v shortages, cost of labour, productivity, minimum wage, nature of workforce, seasonality, nature of contracts, remuneration packages, reward systems

   • Government legislation affecting human resource management strategies such as rights for disabled workers, equal opportunities legislation, data protection laws, health and safety laws, contracts of employment, breaks and holiday entitlement, redundancy and dismissal, maternity arrangements, race relations, sex discrimination

   • Current organisational situation, competitive and financial environment, culture of the organisation, organisation strategy, need for human resources, human resource plans and policies e.g. recruitment and selection, learning and development, performance management, staffing adjustments, talent management

2. **Understand how strategic human resource management contributes to the achievement of the strategic plans of organisations**

   • HRM models e.g. best practice, contingency, Harvard Framework; Guest, Patterson, HRM and personnel management, HRM activities

   • Contribution to achievement of strategic plans- alignment of organisation and SHRM plans, human capital, SHRM and organisational performance e.g. growth of the business, reduction in business, change to business function, moving sites, impact of technology, labour market competition, increase in efficiency, reduction in overall budget

   • Factors to consider - government policies e.g. employment, education, training, industrial, regional; personnel requirements e.g. numbers, skill sets, training, experience; internal and external factors e.g. workforce profiles, skills availability, labour market competition, Outsourcing, forecasting, gap analysis

   • Planning: purpose of plan e.g. identifying need for new talent, re-skilling and up-skilling employees; resources required e.g. new equipment, software and associated training; criteria for success; financial implications; SMART targets; key milestones, contingency plans

   • Planning models e.g. human capital strategy, People Maturity Model, top down bottom up, goal based, issue based, alignment, scenario, organic, 5-P model

3. **Understand how to prepare human resource management strategies for organisations**

   • Factors to consider - government policies e.g. employment, education, training, industrial, regional; personnel requirements e.g. numbers, skill sets, training, experience; internal and external factors e.g. workforce profiles, skills availability, labour market competition, Outsourcing, forecasting, gap analysis

- Government legislation affecting human resource management strategies such as rights for disabled workers, equal opportunities legislation, data protection laws, health and safety laws, contracts of employment, breaks and holiday entitlement, redundancy and dismissal, maternity arrangements, race relations, sex discrimination

- Current organisational situation, competitive and financial environment, culture of the organisation, organisation strategy, need for human resources, human resource plans and policies e.g. recruitment and selection, learning and development, performance management, staffing adjustments, talent management

4. **Be able to develop a human resource management strategy for an organisation**

- Decision on the model which will be used, business factors e.g. location of operations, technology, productivity, competition, employee development, business growth, contraction, financial implications and skills requirements. Alignment of SHRM to strategic plan and business objective. External factors, demand and supply of labour, Government policy. Monitoring, performance indicators, quantitative and qualitative measures

- Barriers to implementation e.g. finance, trade union influence, skill availability, resistance to change, lack of alignment, communications, consultation process, timescales, works councils

Managing Continuous Organisational Improvement	
Unit aims	To enable learners to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills required to create a culture of continuous improvement in an organisation. The learners will have the opportunity to develop the skills required to plan organisational change.
Unit level	7
Unit code	L/615/2702
GLH	60
Credit value	15
Unit grading structure	Pass/Merit/Distinction
Assessment guidance	To achieve this unit, learners must meet the learning outcomes at the standards specified by the assessment criteria for the unit. Additional assessment guidance is provided on the ATHE sample assignment brief. In this unit learners can approach Learning Outcome 1 from a theoretical perspective, using examples to illustrate their work. For the remainder of the unit learners will be required to actually consider and plan change within an organisation. In order to meet the standards learners should use an organisation they know well; where they are employed, work in a voluntary capacity or where they are currently studying.

Learning outcomes. The learner will:	Assessment criteria. The learner can:		
	Pass	**Merit**	**Distinction**
1. Understand how organisations create a culture of continuous improvement and acceptance of change	1.1 Describe the features of organisational culture that encourage and allow for continuous improvement 1.2 Analyse approaches that facilitate the introduction and acceptance of organisational change 1.3 Evaluate different approaches to continuous quality improvement	1M1 Evaluate how leadership and management styles facilitate continuous improvement in organisations and the embedding of change	1D1 Assess the importance of continuous improvement in supporting organisational success
2. Be able to analyse opportunities for improvement to organisational activities	2.1 Analyse sources of information used by organisations which help to identify the improvements needed 2.2 Explain Big Data and evaluate its contribution to organisational	2M1 Review information to identify areas for improvement in a named organisation	2D1 Evaluate the potential benefits of the proposed changes to organisation activities in a named organisation

	improvement strategies		
3. Be able to plan change for organisational improvement	3.1 Evaluate the factors that create the need for change in a named organisation 3.2 Explain the changes required by a named organisation in order to achieve improvements 3.3 Prepare a plan for a named organisation to implement the proposed improvements	3M1 Analyse the monitoring processes which need to be in place to ensure changes lead to planned improvements	

Indicative Content

1. **Understand how organisations create a culture of continuous improvement and acceptance of change**

   - Organisational Features; Business culture, Business Structure, Input from employees, Communication structures (one and two-way communication), Communication with stakeholders, Role of Governance, Legal requirements, Research and Development.

   - Leadership and Management Styles; Consultative, democratic, autocratic, laissez faire, pioneer, driver, integrator, management styles, Supporting communication – team meetings, discussion groups, receiving suggestions etc., Acceptance of risk, Cross organisational and collaborative working, team working and learning, seeking feedback, Shared values, goals, beliefs, strategy, Learning incorporated into practice, encouragement of new ideas, information systems to support learning and knowledge management, investment in staff development.

   - Continuous Quality Improvement; Top down/bottom up, Kotter and Schlesinger – education and communication, participation and involvement, facilitation and support, negotiation and agreement, manipulation and co-option, implicit and explicit coercion, incremental and transformational change, Use of external standards e.g. ISO 14000 and ISO 9001.

   - Quality; Total Quality Management, Kaizen, PDCA, Continuous Quality Improvement, including six Sigma, Benchmarking, Quality Circles, 5Ss, SPC.

2. **Be able to analyse opportunities for improvement to organisational activities**

   - Sources of Information; Environmental audits – political, legal, economic, social, technological, environmental (PESTLE analysis), Organisational analysis – strengths and weaknesses in organisation, Internal management accounts/standard costing, monitoring of organisational activities and suggestion schemes, Benchmarking, External audits, Feedback from stakeholders including appraisals/PDR, Complaints.

   - Analysing Information; Reliability of the source of information, how widespread is a specific problem, Systemic errors versus one-off errors, Use of external consultants, Criteria to select areas for improvement.

   - Impact; Strategic fit, what will need to change within the organisation, for example, systems, people, procedures, resources etc., Timescales of change, Resources required implementing change and investment analysis.

   - Big Data; Four dimensions – volume, variety, velocity and veracity, Different types of data – text, machine generated, audio, twitter, video, internet, sensory techniques, Stages of analysis – checking, cleaning, sorting, modelling, mining, characteristics, analytics, Technological challenges, for example memory storage space, physical location, scope of data.

   - Evaluation; Stakeholders - who will the improvement/change affect? Achievement of business objectives, How will it affect stakeholders? Cost benefit analysis.

3. Be able to plan change for organisational improvement

- Organisational changes required: Resources, Leadership and management abilities, Job roles and responsibilities, Equipment, Procedures, Activities, Culture.

- Agree changes; Identifying stakeholders – those involved in change and those affected by change, Communication with stakeholders – appropriate format, feedback processes, negotiation, PR, Gaining agreement – negotiation skills, formal agreement requirements.

- Plan; Project planning, Project management techniques including PRINCE2, Documentation, Communication, setting criteria to monitor and measure improvement, Timescales.

- Systems design management; Resources, Documentation, Communication, Policies and procedures.

Process Review; Importance of monitoring, Using feedback, Performance measurement.