

# IB Business Management - Topic 2.1 Introduction to Human Resource Management

## Worksheet 5 (Version E)

Focus: Immigration, labour mobility and the gig economy as influences on HR planning; ethics and performance

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|-----------------------|---|
| <b>Suggested time</b> | 60 minutes  |
| <b>Total marks</b>    | 50  |
| <b>Instructions</b>   | Answer all questions. For multiple choice, select the best answer (A-D). For written responses, show clear business reasoning and use terminology accurately. |

**Command terms reminder:** define (give the meaning), explain (give reasons or causes), analyse (break down with cause-effect), discuss/evaluate (consider different viewpoints and reach a justified conclusion).

## Section A: Multiple choice

Choose the best answer for each question. **[10 marks]**

1. A major way immigration can affect HR planning is by: **[1]**

- A. reducing the supply of labour available to employers
- B. increasing the potential labour supply, often with many working-age people
- C. making recruitment illegal
- D. eliminating the need for training

2. If immigration significantly increases labour supply, a likely effect on wages (all else equal) is that they may: **[1]**

- A. rise sharply because labour becomes scarcer
- B. fall or rise more slowly because labour becomes less scarce
- C. become irrelevant because wages are fixed by law everywhere
- D. automatically double due to competition

3. For many businesses, a key issue when recruiting immigrants is: **[1]**

- A. whether they can speak the local language or customers' languages
- B. whether they are allowed to use technology at work
- C. whether they are forbidden from training
- D. whether they must always work part-time

4. Geographic mobility of labour refers to the ability and willingness of workers to: **[1]**

- A. change occupations without barriers
- B. move to jobs in different locations/areas
- C. work fewer hours each week
- D. avoid all training

5. Occupational mobility of labour refers to the ability and willingness of workers to: **[1]**

- A. move to other regions for the same job
- B. switch to different occupations with few barriers
- C. retire early
- D. work only from home

6. A likely advantage of using a high proportion of immigrants to staff new retail shops is that it can: **[1]**

- A. guarantee zero staff turnover
- B. help overcome labour shortages and bring diverse skills/languages
- C. eliminate the need for HR planning
- D. always reduce training needs to zero

7. In the gig economy, workers typically: **[1]**

- A. receive guaranteed hours and full employee benefits
- B. are employees with lifetime contracts
- C. are contractors with no guaranteed hours, often linked to customers through online platforms
- D. are unpaid volunteers

8. An ethical HR system is most likely to include: **[1]**

- A. hidden pay rules and unclear expectations
- B. fair recruitment, transparent pay, and respect for employee rights
- C. punishment for employees who ask questions
- D. no training to reduce costs

9. A key aim of strategic HRM is to: **[1]**

- A. treat people management as unrelated tasks
- B. align recruitment, training and rewards with organisational objectives
- C. avoid change in working practices
- D. remove line managers from people management

10. Which pair of terms is correctly matched? [1]

- A. Redundancy = moving an employee to another role; Redeployment = dismissal because a job no longer exists
- B. Redundancy = dismissal because a job no longer exists; Redeployment = offering suitable alternative employment within the same business
- C. Redundancy = flexible start/finish times; Redeployment = working from home
- D. Redundancy = hiring immigrants; Redeployment = hiring gig workers

### Section B: Short answer

Answer all questions in this section. [12 marks]

1. Define the term human resource plan (human resources plan). [2]

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2. Explain two ways in which immigration can affect a business’s human resource planning. [4]

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3. Distinguish between geographic mobility of labour and occupational mobility of labour, using one example of each. [4]

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4. State one advantage and one disadvantage of using gig workers to meet variable demand. [2]

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### Section C: Data response / case study

Read the case study and answer the questions that follow. [18 marks]

#### Case study: GreenMart Retail (expansion, immigration and gig work)

GreenMart is an ethical grocery retailer planning to open several new shops across the country. Its corporate objectives include growing quickly while protecting its ethical brand reputation and maintaining high customer service. GreenMart operates in a tight labour market and is considering recruiting a high proportion of immigrants for its new shops. For home deliveries, it is considering using gig-economy couriers so that staffing can rise and fall with demand.

GreenMart tested this model in two pilot stores for three months. Results are shown below.

| Workforce indicator (pilot stores, 3 months) | Permanent store staff | Gig delivery couriers |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Average training hours per person            | 7                     | 1                     |
| Staff turnover over 3 months                 | 6%                    | 25%                   |
| Customer satisfaction score (out of 10)      | 8.6                   | 7.3                   |
| Delivery errors (late/missing items)         | n/a                   | 9% of orders          |



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## Answer key and marking guidance (teacher copy)

Use this section for marking. Student responses may vary; award marks for accurate business knowledge, application to the scenario, and logical reasoning.

| Question type         | How to award marks  |
|-----------------------|---|
| [2] Define            | 1 mark for an accurate definition; +1 mark for clear wording and/or a relevant example.   |
| [4] Explain two       | Typically 2 marks per point: 1 for identification, 1 for explanation linked to the question/context.                                |
| [6] Analyse           | Reward cause-effect chains, depth, and application. Often 3 marks per developed point (identification + development + application). |
| [10] Evaluate/Discuss | Use the level descriptors provided. Look for balance, application, evaluation of trade-offs, and a justified conclusion.            |

### Section A answers: Multiple choice

| Q  | Answer | Rationale (brief)  |
|----|--------|--|
| 1  | B      | Immigration can increase labour supply and may ease skill shortages depending on migrants' skills.               |
| 2  | B      | Greater labour supply can reduce upward pressure on wages, though effects depend on skills and demand.           |
| 3  | A      | Language skills can affect customer service, training needs and productivity.                                    |
| 4  | B      | Geographic mobility is movement between areas; occupational mobility is movement between occupations.            |
| 5  | B      | Occupational mobility relates to switching occupations.  |
| 6  | B      | Immigrants can increase labour supply and may add language/cultural skills, though training may still be needed. |
| 7  | C      | Gig workers are usually contractors paid for tasks/time and may not receive employee benefits.                   |
| 8  | B      | Ethical HR systems focus on fairness, transparency and respect, supporting trust and performance.                |
| 9  | B      | Strategic HRM integrates activities to support corporate objectives.   |
| 10 | B      | Redundancy occurs when a job no longer exists; redeployment is moving an employee within the firm.               |

### Section B markscheme: Short answer

#### 1. Define the term human resource plan (human resources plan). [2]

**Indicative answer:** A human resource plan assesses the current and future capacity of a business's workforce and sets out the actions needed to meet future labour needs (e.g., recruitment, training, redeployment, redundancy).

**Marking guidance:** 1 mark for assessment/forecasting; 1 mark for actions to meet needs.

#### 2. Explain two ways in which immigration can affect a business's human resource planning. [4]

**Indicative answer:** Immigration can (i) increase labour supply (often working-age), helping fill vacancies and skill shortages; (ii) affect wage levels and recruitment choices; it may also require extra training (e.g., language/customer service) and can add diversity that helps serve new markets.

**Marking guidance:** 2 marks per explained way, max 4.

#### 3. Distinguish between geographic mobility of labour and occupational mobility of labour, using one example of each. [4]

**Indicative answer:** Geographic mobility is moving to a different area for work (e.g., a shop assistant relocates to another city to work in a new GreenMart store). Occupational mobility is moving to a different occupation (e.g., a

cashier retrains to become a digital stock-control technician).

**Marking guidance:** Award up to 4 for clear distinction plus appropriate examples.

**4. State one advantage and one disadvantage of using gig workers to meet variable demand. [2]**

**Indicative answer:** Advantage: staffing can increase or decrease quickly with demand, reducing fixed labour costs.

Disadvantage: lower loyalty/high turnover or weaker quality control due to limited training.

**Marking guidance:** 1 mark for each, max 2.

## Section C markscheme: Case study

### Case study: GreenMart Retail (expansion, immigration and gig work)

**1. Using the data, identify one HR problem related to labour turnover and suggest one likely cause. [4]**

**[4]**

**Indicative answer:** HR problem: very high turnover among gig delivery couriers (25% in just 3 months). Likely cause: insecure work (no guaranteed hours), weaker onboarding/training (only 1 hour), or pay uncertainty leading to low loyalty.

**Marking guidance:** Up to 2 marks for identifying a data-based problem + up to 2 marks for a plausible explained cause (max 4).

**2. Recommend two actions GreenMart could include in its HR plan to support growth while protecting its ethical brand. Explain how each would improve performance. [6]**

**Indicative answer:** Action 1: strengthen selection, onboarding and training for couriers (service standards, navigation, problem-solving) to reduce errors (9%) and improve delivery satisfaction (7.3/10). Action 2: improve retention and ethics - e.g., minimum-hours offers for top couriers, fair pay and transparent rules, or a mix of permanent and gig delivery roles. Alternatively, recruit bilingual supervisors and redeploy experienced staff to new stores to protect service quality and ethical brand values.

**Marking guidance:** Up to 3 marks per explained action with clear links to growth, ethics and performance indicators (max 6).

**3. Analyse how reliance on immigrants and gig workers could influence wages and employee motivation at GreenMart. [4]**

**Indicative answer:** Immigration can expand the supply of labour, potentially reducing wage pressure for store roles, but GreenMart may still need competitive wages to attract skilled staff in a tight market. Fair treatment and career development can raise motivation among immigrant staff. Gig work can lower fixed costs and keep prices competitive, but may reduce motivation/loyalty because work is insecure; this can contribute to high turnover and weaker service unless supported by training and fair incentives.

**Marking guidance:** Up to 4 for applied analysis (wages + motivation) with balanced points.

**4. Analyse one possible source of resistance to this staffing model from existing permanent staff and propose one strategy to reduce it. [4]**

**Indicative answer:** Existing permanent staff may resist because of self-interest (fear that immigrants/gig work will reduce overtime, wages or job security) or concern that service quality will fall and harm the ethical brand. A suitable strategy is participation and communication: involve staff in setting service standards and training new recruits, explain the business rationale, and provide support/training so they can succeed in expanded roles.

**Marking guidance:** Up to 4 for a clear resistance source plus matched strategy linked to the case.

## Section D markscheme: Extended response

**Question:** Discuss the view that ethical and sustainable HR systems may positively affect employee performance. Use GreenMart as an example and include a justified conclusion. **[10]**

### 10-mark extended response (evaluation) - marking guidance

Award marks using a best-fit approach.

**0:** No relevant content.

**1-2:** Very limited knowledge; largely descriptive; little/no reference to the case; no judgement.

**3-4:** Some relevant knowledge; limited application to the bank; limited analysis; judgement is asserted rather than justified.

**5-6:** Clear knowledge and some application; some analysis of advantages/limitations; a conclusion is present but may be unbalanced or weakly supported.

**7-8:** Very good knowledge and strong application; balanced analysis including resistance to change; conclusion is well

supported and context-based.

**9-10:** Excellent, integrated response; strong, precise application; perceptive evaluation (including trade-offs/ethics) and a fully justified conclusion.

**Indicative content:** Ethical and sustainable HRM can improve performance through higher trust, motivation and loyalty; lower turnover; better customer service; and reduced conflict. For GreenMart this could include fair recruitment and pay for immigrants, safe and respectful working conditions, transparent performance expectations, and adequate training/support for both store staff and couriers. However, ethics may increase short-term costs (training, higher pay) and gig work can create ethical risks (insecurity, weak protections) that may harm performance if unmanaged. A strong answer evaluates trade-offs and ends with a justified conclusion.

**Marking guidance:** Use the 10-mark level descriptors provided.