

CAREER VIEW

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Do you have excellent communication skills, the ability to manage relationships with diverse stakeholders, a commitment to helping people and organisations improve performance? Do you also have the ability to handle details and see the big picture? If so a career in human resource management and industrial relations could be for you.

The first port of call for many job applications is the human resources department of an organisation or a recruitment consultancy. Industrial relations experts are called in when employers and unions are in dispute about wages and conditions. But recruitment and bargaining are just two of many roles that human resource management and industrial relations (HRM & IR) professionals are involved in. Other roles include those of change management, strategic planning, training and development, and remuneration.

Human resource management is about managing people so that businesses are competitive and successful. To do this in a fast-changing global economy, HRM & IR professionals keep up with issues and trends that affect employment relationships - the labour market and economics, the product or service market, the political environment, environmental concerns, technological change, employment regulations, organisational psychology and social trends.

WHAT IS HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS?

The **human resource management** (HRM) function of an organisation manages the individual aspects of the employment relationship - from employee recruitment and selection to international employment relations, salaries and wages. HRM is a complex blend of science and art, creativity and common sense. At one level, HR practice draws on economics, psychology, sociology, anthropology, political studies, and strategic and systems thinking. At an operational level, success depends on interpersonal relationships. HR professionals are often the “go to” people in an organisation for advice and information. When things go wrong employees rely on the integrity and ability of HRM staff to manage and advise on issues without taking sides. They may also train and develop staff to ensure the business performs well, that it meets its goals and continually improves

within legislative frameworks. HRM practitioners also keep up-to-date with legislation and analyse contemporary employment issues.

Industrial relations is also a multidisciplinary field that studies the collective aspects of the employment relationship. It is increasingly being called employment relations (ER) because of the importance of non-industrial employment relationships. IR has a core concern with social justice through fair employment practices and decent work. People often think industrial relations is about labour relations and unionised employment situations, but it is more than that. Industrial relations covers issues of concern to managers and employees at the workplace, including workplace bargaining, management strategy, employee representation and participation, union-management co-operation, workplace reform, job design, new technology and skill development. An IR expert will more usually work for a trade union in order to represent employees' interests. However, they may work for an employer in an HRM department, or for an employers' association or consultancy, serving the employers' interests.

Major tasks of HRM and IR are: hiring staff, negotiation of employment contracts and conditions, performance management and reward systems, dispute resolution, disciplinary processes, ensuring health and safety of staff, employee motivation, design of work, team and organisation restructuring, and training and development.

HRM practitioners are responsible not only for the smooth running of processes but also at a senior level for the bigger picture planning, strategising and policy-making as they affect staff and employment relationships. Senior HRM

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Areas covered include how degrees and courses relate to employment opportunities, to life/work planning, graduate destination information and current issues or material relevant to the employment scene. Your comments and suggestions always welcomed.

practitioners can take a lead in advising on the where and the how of an organisation's direction - on the staffing, skills and training requirements to get there and on the communication or influencing processes needed to pave the way. For example, an organisation establishing online services will require a certain skill set to deliver this. The HR function will assess current staff capability, their training needs, and the options if some staff are unable to meet requirements.

Managers in a company may also fulfil many HRM functions. Smaller businesses may not employ HRM professionals. Instead they may use HRM consultants as needed, or do it themselves with variable success. A degree in Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations (HRM & IR) or a combination with another major/minor or degree such as law, psychology, management, marketing, economics, information technology, anthropology or sociology and others, will be useful in many lines of work.

WHAT DO HUMAN RESOURCE AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS PROFESSIONALS DO?

Being able to relate well to people at every level of an organisation is a vital aspect of HRM & IR roles. Employees are to some extent the customers of the HRM staff. HRM & IR staff must be available, trustworthy and give reliable advice. While they deal a lot with people in an organisation, the work of HRM & IR staff primarily supports the success of the business. Sometimes they have to make difficult decisions that affect not only the lives of other staff but their own. Restructuring for example may involve staff redundancies or re-deployment to jobs employees may not be happy with.

Depending on the organisation, graduates may start out as a coordinator or administrator, perhaps within an HR or administrative team. These entry-level roles give experience in the basic tasks that underpin the running of an organisation. A coordinator may assist an HR advisor to implement a range of processes. Examples are: screening CVs and job applications; organising interviews and helping with interview preparation; writing letters of appointment or employment agreements; helping with the induction of new staff; organising performance appraisals; administering health and safety regulations; coordinating training initiatives; and doing research. During the foundation years, graduates gain an understanding of the day-to-day work of HRM and identify any areas of special interest. Strong administration skills are essential; experience working with payroll systems can also be useful.

HRM practitioners need to be skilled in the use of computerised systems. HRM uses technology for data-management, for processes such as applicant tracking and recruiting, in-

tegrated payroll/human resource systems, learning management systems, and to carry out staff surveys, analysis and reporting. Technology allows HRM practitioners to focus more on supporting company objectives and to handle the people side of the business.

Human resource advisory roles are often generalist positions, although advisers may specialise in areas such as learning and development (L&D) or remuneration. Responsibilities vary according to experience, ability and areas of interest. HR advisers help to develop, advise on and implement policies to make effective use of the organisation's employees. In larger organisations HR advisers may work within an in-house recruitment team, implementing the process of attracting, screening and selecting qualified people for a job. Organisations may also outsource recruitment, in which case the HR adviser liaises with the recruiters. Job analysis, updating and writing accurate job descriptions are tasks HR advisers will do before advertising and interviewing for positions. Other processes managed by HR advisers include the induction of new staff, leave and sick pay, advising on employment legislation and compliance with health and safety regulations, keeping staff records up to date, planning and delivering staff training, research towards policy-making and much more. Knowledge of industrial relations or employment relations is very useful and can become an area of specialisation. The area of employment law demands a high degree of legislative knowledge, the ability to analyse employment contract issues and negotiate with unions and their members. Depending on the organisation, graduates with talent in specific areas may be part of a customised learning programme.

Human resource managers have an overview of the policies and processes within a team and an organisation. They can be influential in advising on how the organisation meets its business goals and improves employee performance. HR managers will look at the strategic alignment of an organisation, making sure the company is profitable. HR managers are involved with policy, strategy, advising managers, influencing and coaching staff, and developing organisational leadership. From a strategic point of view they will also deal with performance management and development, employment relations, recruitment and change management.

Human resource directors often form part of the senior management team and are primarily focused on the strategic needs of the organisation. They lead change in practices to respond to a changing market or, in the case of public organisations, changing political leadership.

Employment relations managers help management, staff and union members work co-operatively together. Responsibilities can include managing and negotiating employment agreements, investigating complaints about employment conditions and advising on employment legislation.

Union organisers also known as industrial relations advocates provide support to workers by helping to negotiate employment agreements and disputes, organising industrial action, liaising with the media and providing leadership for union members.

WHAT SKILLS DO HUMAN RESOURCE AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS GRADUATES DEVELOP?

During their course of study students develop a highly diverse and marketable set of skills. When writing a CV and preparing for an interview it pays to analyse course work and give specific examples as evidence of the skills and knowledge being offered to an employer.

Communication

The ability to communicate clearly and listen with respect and understanding is honed through course work that focuses on employment relationships. Undergraduate study of HRM & IR also enhances students' ability to read and write well, to understand and communicate complex ideas and information through written work and oral presentations. Being able to write clear, concise, logical prose within a business environment is a core skill in HRM work.

Critical thinking and conceptual skills

HRM & IR students study different theoretical models and frameworks and examine how they may be applied in practice. They learn to analyse, question, evaluate and compare the various frameworks they use in relation to real world situations. In writing an argument to support their views students also learn to critically evaluate and edit their own work.

Creativity

The ability to solve problems, make connections and arrive at insights is part of the creative process of HRIR work and studies. Through assignment, project and class work students learn to address the varied challenges of work in the HRM & IR world and generate innovative solutions.

Leadership

HRM is uniquely placed within an organisation. Practitioners have both a detailed and a big picture view of how employees are achieving or not achieving the goals of their organisation. HRM & IR can lead and influence in many ways, from identifying and managing the strengths and development needs of staff at all levels to giving informed advice on diverse issues such as strategic planning from an employment relations perspective. Graduates learn about a range of HRM & IR issues and may take leadership roles during course work.

Research

HRM & IR students do extensive research for assignments and projects. The process of asking questions, gathering information (facts and concepts) and evaluating material is a highly transferable skill sought by many employers. The ability to gather, understand and analyse data and apply theoretical models is part of the process of addressing employment issues and making HR related policy.

HRM & IR COMPETENCIES

HRIR Graduates are able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of, and the implications of, different perspectives of the employment relationship.
- Critically analyse and solve workplace issues.
- Apply HRM & IR competencies to contribute to organisational capability and employee wellbeing.
- Identify issues and interactions between local and global employment relations and work environments.

WHERE DO HUMAN RESOURCE AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS GRADUATES WORK?

HRM professionals work in large to medium sized public, not-for-profit or private sector organisations. Experienced practitioners may run their own business or act as consultants and often have additional qualifications in other related fields.

Public Sector

Central Government

The government is a significant employer of HRM & IR practitioners. Large entities such as the Department of Corrections and the Inland Revenue Department have thousands of employees to administer, some of which are located in the regions. Other large organisations in government are the Ministries of Social Development, Health and Education. The HR teams may support and advise managers to carry out operational tasks or do these themselves. They are also involved in strategy and organisational development, and participate in determining the vision and mission of an organisation. HR management facilitates ways for employees to achieve an organisation's goals as part of daily operations at all levels. They may do this through training and development, facilitating workshops and communicating organisational and managerial messages to staff.

The public sector is a complex area of work, often with tensions around the mix of politics, management and service delivery. There is a strong ethos of fair and equitable employment, and processes to support this. HRM works closely with unions over collective agreements and other is-

sues. Dependent on the availability of roles, graduates may be appointed to entry-level positions such as coordinator and administrator. In government most organisations tend to recruit HRM generalists with a broad skill base. Within a team it is possible to become a specialist and some HRM people develop a preference; for example, those who have done a degree with a legal or IR focus may enjoy the tension of negotiation and collective bargaining with unions. Others may prefer developing strategies and policies, training and development, or specialise in remuneration.

The Department of Labour (DOL), for example, considers graduates for administration, coordinator and assistant type roles. The DOL HR Group consists of the following teams: HR Operations, Capability, Career Centre, Safety, Wellbeing and Security, and HR Services (Payroll, Remuneration). Roles in these teams include: HR Advisors, Senior HR Advisors, Remuneration Analysts, Information Analysts and Principal Advisors. In some teams there are also administration and project/training coordinator roles. Entry-level roles provide opportunities to become a member of the HR team, gain skills and experience, and progress into Advisor roles. Some of the attributes sought for an HR Advisor Operations role are: experience in HR Policy and strategy development as well as the provision of operational support; knowledge of relevant employment legislation, in particular the Employment Relations Act, Holidays Act and Health and Safety in Employment Act; experience in at least three of the following areas: collective bargaining, performance management, job evaluation, health and safety, alternative dispute resolution. A tertiary qualification is also required, preferably in Human Resources, Industrial/Organisational Psychology, Business Studies or equivalent practical experience in staff management or workplace relations. Strong communication skills are essential, as is the ability to build and maintain strong relationships across the Department.

Local Government

Local government – councils and regional councils – manage a very wide range of services. Thus HRM work with local authorities is varied and interesting with scope for project work. Regional authorities differ in their HRM structures and in the areas they cover. The Greater Wellington Regional Council employs HR advisers with two years or more experience. Advisers “account manage” specific groups and provide advice and support on a wide range of HRM issues. For example the Utilities Group is comprised of employees in water supply, parks and forests, support services (accounts and office workers), and Emergency Management. Senior advisory roles may be more specialised such as Training and Development or Recruitment Strategy, and there is career progression possible within a team leader structure.

Hospitals/District Health Boards

These large entities are divided into directorates such as surgical and child health; women’s health wards and services. HRM functions are dedicated for each directorate and L&D is likely to be a separate arm. HR administrator roles are options for graduates. As hospitals are heavily unionised there are roles for experienced IR/ER staff who negotiate agreements with the unions.

Tertiary Education

Universities and polytechnics employ lecturers and tutors to teach in their HRM, IR or ER departments. Teaching at university level usually requires a PhD. Graduates can advance their research and teaching skills by undertaking a Master’s degree or PhD and may have the opportunity to tutor undergraduate students. Many students also go overseas to study. Other roles in tertiary institutions include academic advisors, career consultants, trainers or HR administrators.

Private Sector

Corporate and Large Organisations

Corporate and large organisations in the areas of law, accountancy, health and other specialist fields are likely to have a dedicated L&D function that ensures practitioners (lawyers, accountants, doctors, nurses, etc) meet their practicing certificate requirements through continual training. A large law firm is likely to have a four tiered HRM team comprising an HR director, HR manager, HR advisors, a coordinator and an L&D specialist. Graduates are considered for coordinator type roles and after two years may move into an HR advisory role.

Banks

Depending on the organisation an option for graduates is to start in entry-level positions in other areas of the bank such as call centres. Once they have an understanding of the business, the customers, and how the processes work for the organisation, they may be able to move into HR advisory roles.

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

SMEs are likely to have some administrative functions and may employ one HR adviser. Many will either outsource HR for specific tasks such as recruitment, or do it themselves. Those who are members of the Employer Manufacturer’s Association (EMA) are able to access assistance from the Association’s HR & IR specialists. The EMA employs teams of HRM & IR practitioners and will consider graduates.

Trade Unions

The larger trade unions and the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions (NZCTU) employ people with a variety of

GRADUATE PROFILES

degree majors to policy advice and analyst positions. Degrees with IR courses may be an advantage. For some roles, experience on the 'factory floor' and as a union member is required.

Consultancies

HRM consultancies may offer generalist skills across all HRM functions or specialise in specific areas such as organisational development, change management, recruitment, remuneration, training and development, employment relations and so on. Consultants have at least 10 years experience and a high degree of professional credibility. They are often employed to trouble-shoot specific projects e.g. a remuneration framework or a restructuring process if an organisation does not have the skills in-house or sensitivity is an issue. Consultancy is a career path graduates may set their sights on in the longer term. Large consultancy firms may employ graduates to entry-level positions.

Professional Associations

The Human Resources Institute of New Zealand (HRINZ) is the main professional association for HRM practitioners. For a small annual fee students can join HRINZ and attend the comprehensive programme of professional development seminars and networking events. Other relevant professional associations include the New Zealand Association of Training and Development (NZATD), The Remuneration Network (RemNet), and the New Zealand Employment Relations Society. The face-to-face opportunities to meet and discuss careers with industry practitioners are invaluable for learning and for opening doors to future employment.

Job titles

Wherever there are organisations there are work options for HRM professionals. Some roles in the selection below will require several years' experience. Employment opportunities also ebb and flow with the state of the economy.

Assistant HR Adviser • EEO Officer • Employee Relations Advisor/Manager • Executive Assistant to HR • Health and Safety Officer • HR Advisor • HR Analyst • HR Consultant • HR Coordinator • HR Manager • HR Officer • Industrial Relations Advisor/Advocate • Learning and Development Coordinator • Mediator • Lecturer • Payroll Officer • People and Culture Coordinator • People and Performance Advisor • Policy Analyst • Project Coordinator • Records and Information Advisor • Recruitment Coordinator • Recruitment Consultant • Remuneration Analyst • Supported Employment Consultant • Talent and Capability Advisor • Trade Union Information Officer • Trade Union Organiser • Training and Development Officer • Tutor • Union Field Officer •

Jacqui Mettam

*Human Resources Advisor
Chapman Tripp, Law firm*



Right from an early age I felt I had to go to university in order to succeed in my career. After leaving school I decided to work in an office environment to decide if business was something I should study. I'm a real people person and love helping and being surrounded by others, so it was an easy decision to choose the business majors of Human Resources and Marketing. Both have that human element and give the opportunity to be creative, which is something else I have a real passion for.

Like any degree, my studies for a Bachelor of Commerce and Administration, majoring in Human Resources and Industrial Relations and Marketing, taught me basic skills such as time management, communication and working as part of a team. All of these skills prove to be valuable in the real world. As I got further into my studies I started leaning more towards Human Resources than Marketing as I could see a real sense of worth in business. Let's face it, people are a business's biggest asset. I wanted to find out what makes people tick in employment and in turn what creates a successful business.

Human Resources in the real world is not always lovely and fluffy. Most of the time it is, but there are times you have to make some difficult decisions. You are dealing with people's lives, as their work is their income. There are times when you need to have tough conversations, whether it is about performance management or even the termination of employment.

My human resources career includes working in some rather varied organisations including NZ Police, Progressive Enterprises and now Chapman Tripp where I have been for the last few years.

The biggest piece of advice I could give to someone wanting to get into Human Resources is that you need to be resilient and to learn to not take things personally. You may also have to make decisions that staff don't agree with. At the end of the day you are often enforcing decisions that come from management, therefore you are the messenger but staff don't always see that. And, 'discretion' must be your middle name!

Courtenay Parkes

*Human Resource Advisor
New Zealand Police*



When I first started my Commerce degree, I was like many others, not sure which direction I wanted to go in, and I pretty much wanted an excuse to move away from Palmy. Marketing and Management seemed like a really interesting choice. I thought marketing would have the excitement of advertising, and running a business, in a very simplistic sense, gave me an interest in management. It wasn't until my second year at university when I realised what I wanted to do. I ended up completing my BCA in 2003 with majors in Human Resources/Industrial Relations, Economics, and Commercial Law. I found HR and Economics an interesting mix, and the courses were practical and challenging. I went on further to complete Honours in Management however the focus was very much on HR/IR. I particularly enjoyed the Honours year as I built some good friendships and was able to explore the areas I was passionate about. In addition to this, I was given the opportunity to be a tutor for the 200 level HR course.

My studies provided me with the skills to think logically and taught me the skills of research and analysis. I found the two research papers that I completed in my Honours year very useful. They provided me with practical skills that I use in my every day job, such as job evaluations. Upon completion of my Honours year, I applied for a graduate role in the HR Department at Police National Headquarters. I was successful, and spent time in several areas of HR including recruitment and health and safety. I was appointed to the position of HR Advisor, a position I still hold. Tasks include running disciplinary process and performance management, to providing general advice on staff welfare. I have had many opportunities including acting in the role of HR Manager. If I had any advice, it would be that it is important to distinguish yourself from other graduates. You can do this in a variety of ways. My Honours year and tutoring gave me an advantage over the other applicants. I also believe Economics separated me from those who had just Management and HR Management majors.

Jenna McIntyre-Royal

*Human Capital Coordinator
Aurecon*



Like many students, I started university with the intention of receiving a degree but I had no idea what I wanted to become. In my second year I completed a career aptitude test, which captured my interests, career aspirations, future goals and the subjects I was good at. The system threw up five career options and HR is the one I knew I'd enjoy.

I enjoyed the extensive courses I was exposed to during my study at university. In HR it is important to have knowledge in New Zealand business, accounting, economics, information systems, marketing and management. They all play a part in the daily operations of a business. Victoria will teach you that you can't change something without thinking about the consequences for another entity. Understanding causal effects is vital to implementing change successfully.

I also enjoyed the way Victoria changed my way of thinking. After three years of study I felt like I'd gained 10 years of commerce wisdom and I also learnt to interpret different legislation. It is important to understand how to roll out successful processes in the workplace, to speed up and improve daily operations. It is also vital to understand how certain processes and systems will only work in specific environments and how each can be thrown when the environment changes.

My studies led me into my HR career because my degree demonstrated to my previous employer that I had an understanding of general HR processes and I had the ability to learn. My current position requires that I hold a degree in HR because it is of a professional officer classification. Some companies will require that you hold a degree while others will want to see that you are motivated to learn.

Students contemplating this major should give the course HRIR 201 a go. This course will give you a general insight to the different functions within HR/IR. If you are interested in this course you could move on and complete points in HR/IR courses of your interest. Students who find that HR/IR is not for them shouldn't find they've wasted any time as basic people management skills can be developed from these courses. Experience is important to get your foot into an HR job; it should also help you do well in your study. If you haven't got any – try temp, casual or voluntary work.

Cain McLeod

**Human Resources Manager
New Zealand Rugby Union**



When I started my university studies I continued on with the science subjects I had studied at secondary school. After a year and a half I wanted a change so I saw an advisor at Vic Careers. We worked out that I was actually more interested in business and in dealing with people. My parents also owned a business and I was interested in how to find the right people to get a company to grow, as well as developing individuals through their work.

I decided to major in Human Resource Management and Management for a Bachelor of Commerce and Administration. I particularly enjoyed how practical it was. You could see how HRM was applied in real life. There was theory as well as practical examples so it was possible to see what I could be doing one day. Many of the lecturers were good at bringing business people into their classes and they gave us a sense of how things worked in practice, for example, remuneration and recruitment. I believe that stood me in good stead later on. I remember going into my first generalist HR role and being asked to do some work on the remuneration model. I understood the basics of the model without having worked on it before because of my studies.

Among the many skills you learn, such as research, critical analysis, problem solving, attention to detail and others, learning how to meet deadlines was very useful. In any type of work that can pretty much make or break you. Learning how to write in the business sense was also invaluable. In an HR environment there is a lot of report and proposal writing. In writing a proposal to seek endorsement of an initiative or idea you have to be able to present a good case - write logically and persuasively, articulate why it is a good idea and what the benefits will be for the organisation, and back that up with evidence.

Through contacts I gained my first position in a boutique recruitment company, which helped me gain confidence. Networking is crucial. I am in my current job, which I love, because I contacted NZRU while a student, and maintained those NZRU networks while I was a recruitment consultant. I didn't ask them for a job, that can sometimes be frustrating for organisations as a lot of people do this. However I did meet with someone and asked them what it was like to work at the NZRU, how they got there, and what I could be doing meanwhile to build towards working for them in the future.

I enjoy working with people and HR is very people focused. If you don't like dealing with people and people management issues then HR is unlikely to be for you. It is a much more specialist area now. While there are still many administrative processes as with most roles, HR work is really about being proactive, finding the right people, developing them, and keeping them engaged to grow the business.

Sharne Pulford

**People & Culture Business
Partner - Corporate, Wholesale,
ICT and LPG
Contact Energy**



When I enrolled at university for a Bachelor of Commerce and Administration I was initially attracted to Marketing because I thought it was all about advertising. During my first year I realised that was just a small part of what it is and was probably not what I wanted to do as a job. I decided to continue with my marketing major but also major in Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations. My interest in HR was sparked through my experiences with AIESEC at university - a club that has a focus on developing the business acumen and leadership skills of student members with the aim of adding value to students when they finish their degrees and look for employment. The activities you do as an AIESEC member are quite HR focused and made me realize I might like to work in that area longer term. The 100 level courses for the Bachelor of Commerce and Administration are quite broadly based and allow the flexibility to add an additional major without wasting any courses.

I think what I valued the most was what I learned from the lecturers who took the 300 level courses. In HRIR many of the lecturers at this level aren't full time academics and many run their own businesses. They gave a real, practical overlay to what we were studying; giving us insight into what it is really like out there. I also learned a lot of useful general skills at university - business writing, how to think in a structured way, argue a point and articulate my justification. Some assignments also focus on a specific HR skill such as job evaluation, which I use on a regular basis in the workforce to assess appropriate remuneration for roles.

My first HR job was a part time HR Coordinator role during my last year of university at the James Cook Hotel - this gave me good entry-level experience. I moved on to an HR advisor position, followed by my current role at Contact Energy where I provide day to day HR support for managers, advising them on a range of staff issues including employment relations, organisational change design and

management. My degree prepared me for work by giving me a good introductory grounding in the key skills of HRIR – the knowledge of employment related laws stood me in good stead to handle the strong legislative component in many HR roles. Other things I learnt at university which I have applied in the workplace include recruitment, how to attract, select and retain the right people, interviewing techniques, EEO and much more. I'm really enjoying being an HR generalist and I recommend that students choose a broad base of courses including those in employment legislation before deciding to specialise in specific areas of HRIR.

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT & INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AT VICTORIA

Human Resource Management & Industrial Relations is taught in the Victoria Management School (VMS). This school also teaches Management, Tourism Management, and Maori Business. All four discipline areas share complementary interests in the macro and micro influences on the management of organisations and people.

Human Resource Management & Industrial Relations offers an academically interesting and practically relevant programme of study at undergraduate, postgraduate and post experience levels.

At undergraduate level the BCA degree gives you a comprehensive grounding in HRM & IR as either your choice of major subject or as a minor specialty alongside another major subject. The programme structure includes:

- A broad business grounding in seven first-year courses which make up the BCA core subjects (accounting, economics, information systems, marketing, management, statistics, and government law and business). Good managers and HRM & IR practitioners understand the range of forces that shape organisations/behaviour in workplaces - these core courses of the BCA degree provide the foundation on which to build superior business knowledge.

- Second-year courses in the HRM & IR major feature the foundation course on managing human resources and industrial relations, and a course on organisational behaviour. These courses introduce an understanding of work, workplace cultures, behaviours and employment relationships.

- Third-year courses provide more in depth knowledge of specialist HRM & IR functions such as: strategic HRM; recruitment and selection; remuneration and performance management; managing employment agreements; international employment relations; human resource development; and workplace industrial relations.

The study of HRM & IR also blends well with studying complementary subjects such as: psychology, management, marketing, and law. Elements of all these subjects underpin HRM & IR and add to our understanding of work, workers and workplaces.

Students keen to advance their knowledge and skills further can, with good grades, continue on to an Honours degree in HRIR, and ultimately to Masters or PhD study.

The HRM & IR academic group at Victoria is also the home of the Industrial Relations Centre (IRC) which provides a forum for research into industrial relations, human resource management, labour markets and any area related to employment relations. The IRC stages an annual series of Employment Agreement Seminars around the country to report to practitioners (including HR Managers, advisors, consultants, employment lawyers, union officials, and researchers) on wages and conditions contained in the Centre's comprehensive database of collective employment contracts and agreements.

Studying HRM & IR at Victoria will connect you to academic staff actively researching workplace conditions in New Zealand and internationally; to government policy advisors who investigate and regulate employment conditions; to industry bodies (e.g. Business New Zealand; HRINZ; Industry Training Federation); and to practitioners (HRM managers, advisors and Union officials).

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