IHRIM Certification Program

Professional of Human Resources Information
Examination Blueprint

Introduction
This is an examination blueprint, also referred to as a specification, for IHRIM’s Professional of Human Resources Information certification examination. The specification defines the test framework, examination content coverage and relevant background and experience needed to be certified.

Exam Purpose
The certification exam is designed to assess the knowledge and competencies of professionals in the HR technology field. Passing the exam indicates a demonstrated comprehensive understanding and proficiency of the defined body of knowledge in HR information management.

Audience for Examination
The audience for this examination is a professional currently working in the HR technology area as a practitioner residing in HR or in an IT organization or consultant/vendor who's primary focus is HR-related systems.

Background and Experience
The professional is expected to have at least 5 years of experience in HR technology solutions or HR information management.

Education
A bachelor's degree from an accredited university preferred, however professional experience in the field bears greater weight.

Prerequisite Criteria for Certification
To be determined
**Candidate Qualification Description**

The description below outlines the key competencies describing a candidate's primary job responsibilities and relevant knowledge content areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Candidate</th>
<th>Description of Candidate</th>
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</table>
| Clearly Qualified 5 plus years of experience | • Can analyze, understand and contribute to the development of an HR Technology Strategy.  
• Has developed a business case for implementations or enhancements.  
• Can translate business requirements into technology specifications.  
• Has a broad understanding of HR functions including HR Benefits, Payroll and Talent Management.  
• Has participated in a systems assessment or evaluation, assisted with the recommendations for systems solution and development of an implementation plan.  
• Can evaluate, analyze, design, and maintain company Human Resources Management Systems (HRMS).  
• Understands vendor and contract management.  
• Understands and has participated in all phases of HRMS implementation or enhancement including selection, analysis, design, testing, training and support.  
• Able to identify new HR needs and the technology solutions to fulfill these needs based on business strategy and needs.  
• Familiar with HR policies and procedures – both internal and external that impact data management (e.g., compliance issues).  
• Has served in a project lead role and demonstrated project management skills.  
• Possesses strong familiarity with HR technology trends. |
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| Borderline Qualified 3 to 5 years experience | • Understands how a HRMS business case is formed and has been a contributor to creating one for an implementation or enhancements.  
• Can translate user needs and requirements into system specifications and requirements.  
• Supports the evaluation, design and ongoing operations of company Human Resources Management Systems (HRMS) with direction from a more senior team member.  
• Can assist in identifying new HR needs and the technology solutions to fulfill these needs.  
• Understands the key features needed to implement a Human Resources Management Systems (HRMS).  
• Understands and has participated in several phases of HRMS implementation including selection, analysis, design, testing, training and support.  
• Has a broad understanding of most HR functions including HR Benefits, Payroll, and Talent Management.  
• Has some proven project management skills and has been a systems project team member.  
• Understands the principles of project management with moderate project experience.  
• Familiar with HR technology and business trends.                                                                                                                                  |
| Informed but Clearly Not Qualified Less than 3 years experience                                                                                                                          | • Knows concepts needed to develop a business case.  
• Recognizes features and benefits of a Human Resource Management System.  
• Supports the ongoing operation of a company Human Resources Management Systems (HRMS) with close supervision.  
• Has a general understanding of HR technology solutions.  
• Has a general understanding of project management, but project experience limited.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

**Relevant Knowledge**

The candidate should be familiar with the following topics which are not explicitly tested:

• Presentation skills / Facilitation skills  
• Business process flow analysis  
• Interviewing skills  
• Resource scheduling  
• Financial principles  
• Communication skills (written and oral)  
• Problem solving  
• Vendor and Contract Management  
• Software Testing Methodologies  
• Analytical skills
Examination Structure

The examination structure includes domains and objectives. The domains are based on the main knowledge areas of an IHRIM Professional of Human Resources Information. The objectives represent the skills and proficiencies associated with a domain.

The table below lists the high level domains measured by this examination and the extent to which they are represented in the examination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>% of Examination</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0 Technology Strategy and Solutions Assessment</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0 HR Technology and Business Processes</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0 Systems Selection, Implementations and Upgrades</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0 HR Systems Operations</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Response Limits

The examinee selects, from four (4) or more response options, the option(s) that best completes the statement or answers the question. Distracters or wrong answers are response options that examinees with incomplete knowledge or skill would likely choose, but are generally plausible responses fitting into the content area defined by the test objective.

Test item formats used in this examination are:

**Multiple-choice:** The examinee selects one option that best answers the question or completes a statement.

**Multiple-response:** The examinee selects more than one option that best answers the question or completes a statement. The question will state how many options are correct, i.e. – (Choose two).

**Sample Directions:** Read the statement or question and from the response options, select only the option(s) that represent the most correct or best answer(s) given the information provided.
Domain 1 - Technology Strategy and Solutions Assessment

Content covered in this domain focuses on the knowledge and skills needed to determine business needs when creating strategic plans for the design and deployment of Human Resource technology and service delivery models for the enterprise.

1.1 Recognize the components of business case development for new HR systems and technology based on business requirements and decision drivers.

- Business case analysis essentials
  - Current business process identification
  - Business priority identification
  - Current technology
  - Gap analysis between business priority, process and technology
  - Understand the overall business goal / need
  - Determine financial drivers Including project costs, ongoing maintenance expenses and estimated returns on investments
  - Consider alternative scenarios
  - Understand the corporate culture
  - Determine nonfinancial pros/cons
  - Include collateral costs
    - Includes training and change management for the new technologies and processes, other systems or process that require change/customization

- Risk assessment
  - Business factors (money and people)
  - Current systems relevance (old release, vendor viability)
  - Risk Identification -business and generic
  - Risk Quantification – able to analyze risks using tools (probability/impact and magnitude)
  - Risk Response
  - Risk Monitoring and Control

- Key business decision drivers and requirements
  - Understand preceding "vision, mission, goals" of the organization
  - Based on the business case information identified, what key measurable outcomes do you anticipate your strategy to achieve
  - Key metrics and analytics, target values and time frames to the specific delivery system outcomes that the investment in questions is intended to achieve

- Return on Investment (ROI) development, components and methods to be considered
  - Soft versus hard dollar benefits (Technology/Infrastructure and People)
  - Business case financials
    - Capital vs expense
    - Amortization
  - Various methods for calculating ROI

- Identify solutions that positively impact business results
- Identify business problems and opportunities to achieve organizational goals
1.2 Recognize the methods for delivery of technology applications and how they best fit the needs and objectives of your strategy. Understand the differences between the delivery methods; and pros/cons of each one.

- Based on the business case and strategy, which method of technology delivery will best enable achievement of desired benefits
- Delivery methods to consider:
  - Custom built applications
  - Vendor supplied or hosted applications including:
    - SOA
    - Web 2.0
    - HRO, BPO
    - ASP
    - Saas
    - On Demand, On Premise

1.3 Understand the role of the business needs analysis when creating your strategy, including the identification of the steps that are typically performed in a needs analysis, and the deliverables from this work effort.

- Determine business requirements
  - High level process identification
  - Key requirement outcomes for each process. Examples:
    - “To automate the onboarding process”
    - “To have a global database of job and employment information”
- Gap list creation
  - Anticipated changes required from current systems (to meet those requirements)
  - Evaluation of new systems (as a way to resolve a gap)
  - Strategy of how to resolve the gap
- Executive presentation which supports the business case
  - What belongs in this presentation
  - Does it support the business case
  - High level plan for execution of the strategy

Scenario Example:

ABC's Company has a custom-built, legacy system to manage the company's pension plan, retirement projections, and payments to retirees called Pension4U. The system is costly to maintain and the IT personnel who support the system have very specialized knowledge that is not easily found in the market. ABC company would like to offer employee self service to plan for retirement projections to reduce workload on the Pension support staff. The VP of HR and the CIO would like to understand what alternatives exist on the market to either buy, build or outsource, including all costs and benefits.

Thought for this section is that based on scenarios like this, the test taker can identify high level business case drivers, vendor offered solutions, etc. Section 3 scenarios would involve evaluating the targeted vendors, implementing the solution, etc.
Domain 2 - HR Technology and Business Processes

Content covered in this domain focuses on the technologies and HR processes which support HR service delivery; the use and advantages of technology and systems throughout the HR function.

2.1 Understand the interrelationships/interfaces among HR systems and other functional areas, 3rd party vendors, etc.

- Enterprise data warehouse
- System data integration
- Reporting methods and tools
- Budgeting
- Security systems
- Finance and Accounting systems
  - General Ledger
  - Retirees
  - Employee Loans
  - Asset Management
  - Accounts Payable
    - Expense reimbursement
    - Allowances
- 3rd party Payroll-related providers (workers compensation, tax reporting, W2, etc)
- 3rd party Benefits-related providers (health, dental, vision, 401(k), pension, life, EAP, COBRA, etc)
- ERP systems (Finance and Supply Chain processes)
- Risk Management – Workplace Accident and incident tracking

2.2 Understand key features and functions and the benefits of HR business applications that in support of the HR disciplines and processes.

- Self Service
  - Employee
  - Manager
- Core Human Capital Management Processes
  - Benefits
  - Compensation
  - Personnel Administration (action based)
  - Employee Relations/ Labor Relations
  - Payroll
  - Contingent Workforce Management
- Talent Management and Acquisition Systems
  - Recruitment and Onboarding
  - Learning Management
- Performance Management
- Succession Planning
- Competency Management

- Occupational Health and Workers Compensation
- COBRA
- Time and Labor
  - Scheduling
  - Tracking Attendance
  - Absence Management & FMLA
- Risk Management
  - Accident & Incident Tracking
  - Employee Health Software
- Workflows
- Dashboards
- Analytics
- Portals
- Knowledge Management

**Domain 3 – Systems Selection, Implementations and Upgrades**

Content covered in this domain focuses on systems selection, implementation and upgrade methodologies; best practices to keep HR systems plans on track and improve chances for success.

**3.1 Identify detailed business user requirements and creation of business requirement document to be used in determination of solution.**

- Business process owner and subject matter expert identification for gathering requirements
- Determine and clarify requirements
- Prioritize needs
- Determine system features/functions that are required
- Identify current state business processes
  - Identify immediate opportunities for process improvement. (What to stop and start doing before the new software is in place.)
- Identify key elements of the business requirements document

**Using my previous Scenario example:**

ABC’s Company has a custom-built, legacy system to manage the company's pension plan, retirement projections, and payments to retirees called Pension4U. The system is costly to maintain and the IT personnel who support the system have very specialized knowledge that is not easily found in the market.

ABC company would like to offer employee self service to plan for retirement projections to reduce workload on the Pension support staff. The VP of HR and the CIO would like to understand what alternatives exist to on the market to either buy, build or outsource, including all costs and benefits.
I would build upon this to scenario to test in this section. For example: A review of the current state processes revealed the following opportunities:

(1) To set up a retiree pension payment with retiree medical, data entry must be done separately in 4 different systems.

(2) All pension documentation is housed in the corporate office building with no offsite backup. Obtaining documents takes xx number of hours per week for xx inquiries.

(3) The pension staff spend xx% of their time doing pension estimates for employees who are 15+ years away from retirement.

(4) ABC company xx% of retirees are internet savvy.

I think we ask questions about how you prioritize these. How do you document these? What are short-term opportunities, what are longer-term opportunities, etc.

3.2 Recognize key factors to be considered in managing vendor evaluation and selection.

- Establish decision criteria
- Business process and application needs
- Vendor offerings relative to business needs
- Establish evaluation criteria / matrix
- Contracts and service level agreements (Working with legal and procurement, ensure the service levels and deliverables meet the overall objectives and requirements of the business.)

3.3 Determine the components that go into creating an RFP/RFI and the factors to look for while reviewing the proposals.

- Given list of business needs, identify requirements to be used in vendor selection and differentiation
- RFP/RFI – major components of:
  - Overview and business background
  - Functional requirements
  - Technical requirements
  - Support requirements (SLAs)
- Vendor demonstration script creation
- Identify decision criteria, decision drivers, priorities, etc.
- Review and differentiation between vendor bids and proposals – knowing what to look for
- Creation of business case for vendor evaluation/selection
- Compare cost models
  - Build versus buy
  - Implementation cost including all internal and external resources
  - Reduction or Increase of internal resources (i.e., will this eliminate jobs)
  - On-going cost over 3 – 5 years
  - Return on investment relative to costs
3.4 Recognize the important functions and phases of Project Management.

- Managing a project and key deliverables in each project phase (based on a methodology) containing the following phases:
  - Initiation
  - Planning
  - Executing
  - Monitoring & Controls
  - Completion/Closeout
- The people side of project management and understanding the various roles that must be filled to create an effective project organization
  - Defining project roles & responsibilities
    - Project Sponsor
    - Steering Committee
    - Project Manager
    - Project Team
    - Stakeholders
  - Negotiation
  - Relationship building
  - Conflict management
  - Resource planning
- Project definition, including:
  - Cost-benefit analyses, identifying time, personnel, and equipment costs
  - Establishing timelines and milestones
  - Work breakdown structure
- Critical success factors had how the 3 pillars of project management work (Cost, Time, Resources)
- Addressing issues and how they impact project delivery
  - New requirements / scope change
  - Resource (people) availability
  - Resource (money) availability
  - Application bugs
  - Testing issues
  - Company reorganizations/changes
  - Mergers & Acquisitions
3.5 Recognize the components of a Change Management program for HR technology implementations and when they are used in the project management life cycle.

- Building the bridge between silos and eliminating resistance to change
  - Team building in terms of overcoming resistance, recognition
  - Methods to encourage user buy-in to process change
- Change readiness
  - Evaluation of the readiness of the organization for the new systems/processes
- Methods to facilitate change
- Identify business process change and potential impact
- Communication to stakeholders, team members
  - Identify changes, benefits, impacts
  - Engender user commitment/buy-in
  - Engage team members
- Training on new systems and processes
- Global implementation factors
- Tools to support users

3.6 Understand the tasks to be performed during the execution phase of the project.

- Software and hardware set up and installation
- Functional and Technical Requirements definition
- Interface development
- Data conversion
  - Data rationalization
  - Data validation
  - Data loading
- Report creation (based on identified reports in the requirements gathering)
  - Specifications
  - Report writing/coding
  - Some examples of types of reports to include are Headcount reports; Turnover reports; compliance reports.
- Security
  - Roles establishment & Creation
  - Single Sign On integration with Portals
- Testing
  - Test scripts
  - Unit testing
  - User acceptance test
  - Integration testing (including 3rd party vendors)
Domain 4 - HR Systems Operations

Content covered in this domain focuses on the ongoing processes involved in HR systems management, maintenance and operational considerations.

4.1 Recognize the capabilities and role of the appropriate analytic reporting methods to provide information in support of business operations.

- Identify how to structure reports and queries to derive information
- Understand the difference between types of reports; Static lists vs. online cubes that can be manipulated and changed
  - When they are used
  - Benefits of each
- Understanding of HR data repositories, reporting tools and dashboards
  - Data Warehousing
  - Third party tools (e.g., Business Objects, Brio)
- Identify how to format data to present results to the business; best use and purpose of each for the types of reporting you wish to perform
  - On Line
  - Excel spreadsheet
  - Printed
- Identify of the role of metrics and analytics in reporting
  - Metrics - How are they used, developed & maintained
  - Analytics – Who should use them, how and when
- Application of business intelligence data for problem solving or improving performance.

4.2 Identify the components of user procedures, guidelines and documentation of systems and HR processes.

- Contextual Diagrams
  - Purpose and use of contextual diagrams
  - How to create a contextual diagram
- Workflow Diagrams
  - Purpose and use of workflow diagrams
  - How to create a workflow diagram
- Contents of application documentation
  - Screen shots
  - Field definitions
  - Processing deadlines (payroll, benefit interfaces etc…)
- Support and Escalation
  - Tier 1, 2 and 3 support roles, SLA as and when to contact
  - Key third party contacts (for ASP/Hosting applications)
- Process versus technical documentation and procedures
• Methods for training/documentation
  - Newsletters
  - Webinars
  - Context Diagrams
  - CBT
  - ILT (instructor-led)
  - Quick reference guides
  - Online or hardcopy documentation

4.3 Understand the policies, practices and procedures for creating and managing a Data Management program.

• Types of data to be tracked
  - Reporting
  - Budgeting
  - Project accounting
  - Activities management
• How information is tracked
• Data integrity
• Data accuracy
• Global data privacy issues
• Data backup and storage

4.4 Understand the components and procedures of a Records Management and Retention program.

• Identify recommended record retention relating to specific types of document
  - Physical records
  - Electronic record
• Processes to ensure compliance
• Archiving vs. deletion
• Impacts of litigation and “holds” on employee records
• Impacts and legal ramifications of not complying with program

4.5 Identify the factors to consider when developing a business continuity plan and disaster recovery plan.

• The difference between a business continuity plan and a disaster recovery plan
• Resources that are required
• Components and key attributes that are needed
• How to rate criticality of recovery by process and how processes are interrelated and determine contingency plans accordingly.
Example Scenario:

Payroll may need to be up within 24 hours, but the recruiting system may not. The portal may be used as input to payroll, but the portal itself is not a level 1 critical system.

What contingency will be in place to make sure that payroll can be processed if the portal is not in place?

4.6 Recognize privacy and security issues in HR systems operations.

- Security policy setting, implementation and administration
  - Role based security
  - Application level security (What they can see) vs. Data level security (Who they can see)
  - Use of proxies in self service processes
  - Determination of use of “Correction” type changes for “super user” data administration
- System audits, and change log tracking
- Global privacy issues
  - Awareness of country data privacy laws
  - Database registration requirements
- Separation of duties
- Security levels
  - User authentication
  - Network encryption
  - Information authorization

4.7 Identify process improvement and provide ongoing assessment of HR systems operations.

- Evaluate environment to propose solutions
  - Awareness of business changes and how they impact the current system and processes
- Managing, planning and prioritization of system change requests
  - System change control
  - New development to existing applications
  - Configuration changes
- Versioning and release methodologies
- Upgrade strategies
  - Review of new software release functionality for process improvements
  - Understanding risk and impact to current operations
- Establishment and management of steering committees for prioritization of work requests