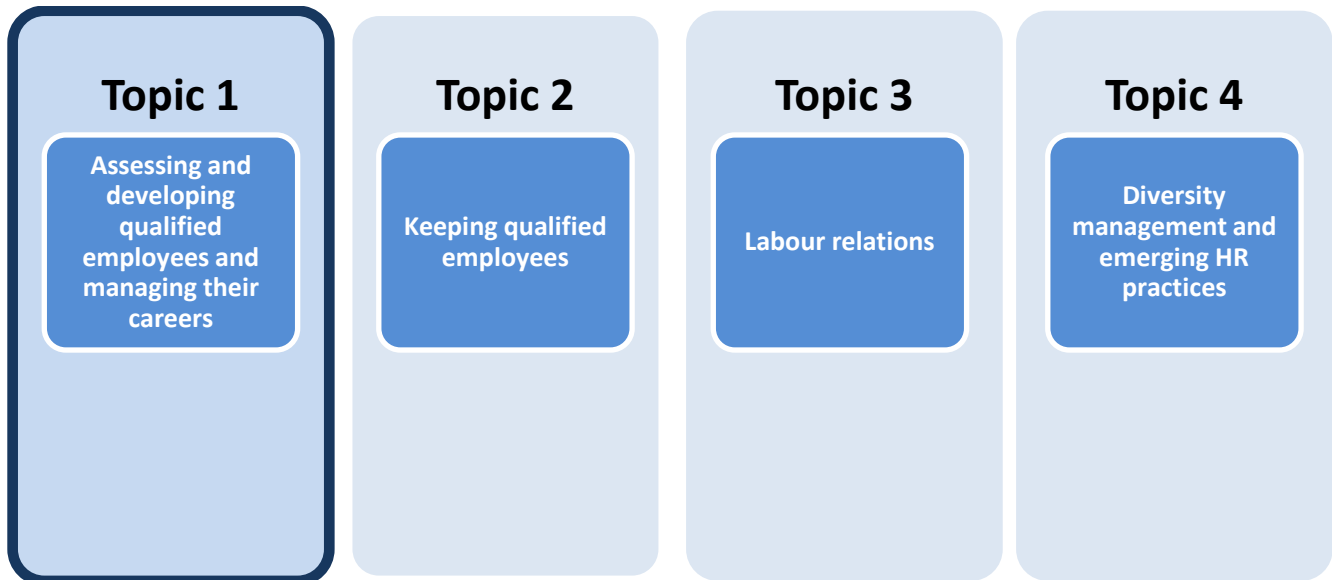# TOPIC 1

Assessing and developing qualified employees and managing their careers

Now that you are familiar with Workbook 00 and the module site, you are ready to start topic 1, which comprises workbooks 1 to 3.

To enable you to monitor your progress and obtain a holistic picture of the study material, you will see the following diagram at the beginning of each topic. We will indicate where the tutorial matter in question fits in and in this way you will be able to monitor your progress. We will now investigate the first topic of this module – as highlighted – namely assessing and developing qualified employees and managing their careers.

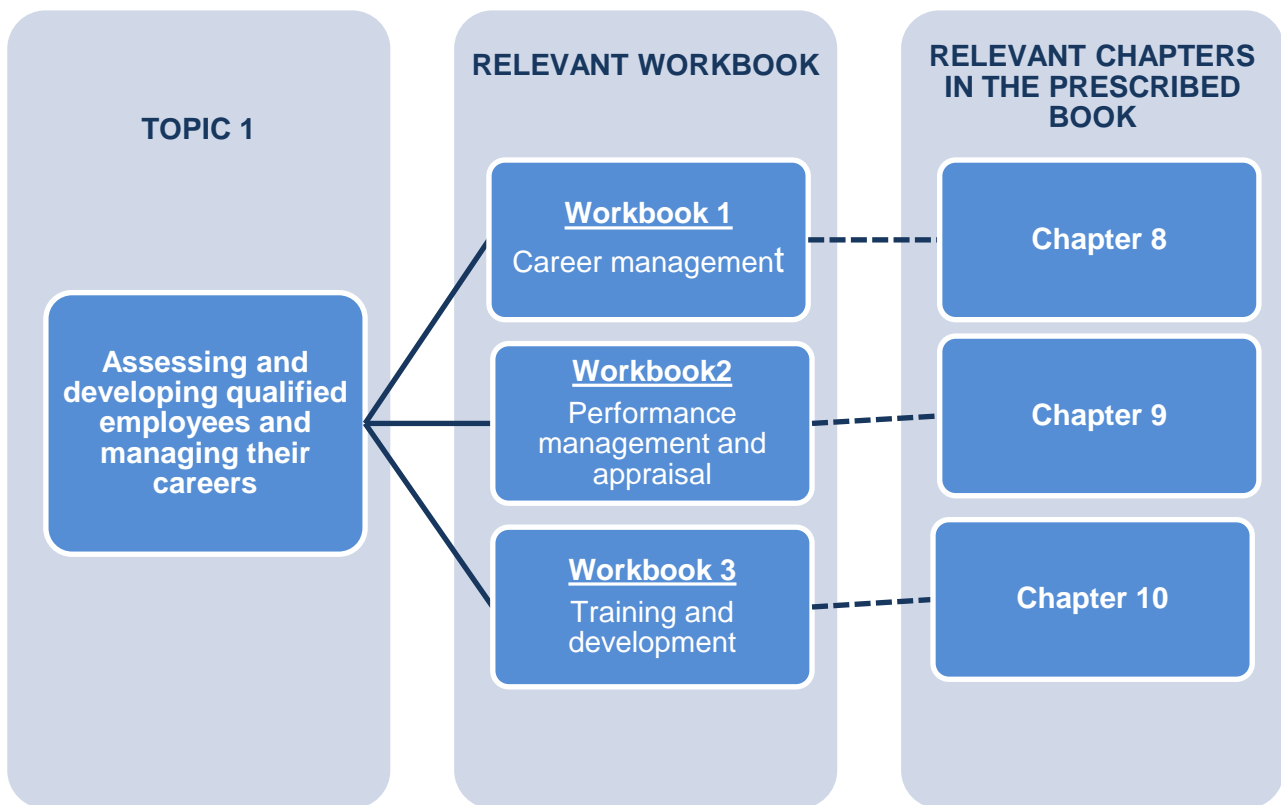| Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4
Assessing and developing qualified employees and managing their careers	**Keeping qualified employees**	**Labour relations**	**Diversity management and emerging HR practices**

TOPIC AIM

The aim of this topic is to orientate you to the environment within which human resource (HR) managers have to work. Organisational decisions, policies and changes impact on the HR policies and practices of an organisation. Therefore, an HR manager should always be aware of the environment of the organisation.

Learning outcomes for topic 1

After completing this topic, you should be able to

- explain how career management contributes to the achievement of the strategic goals of the organisation (**workbook 1 and chapter 8 of your prescribed book**)
- describe the contribution of performance management and appraisal to the strategic goal achievement of the organisation (**workbook 2 and chapter 9 of your prescribed book**)
- decide how to utilise training and development in the strategic management of human resources (**workbook 3 and chapter 10 of your prescribed book**)

To make your learning easier, here is a schematic representation of this topic:

TOPIC 1	RELEVANT WORKBOOK	RELEVANT CHAPTERS IN THE PRESCRIBED BOOK
Assessing and developing qualified employees and managing their careers	**Workbook 1** Career management	**Chapter 8**
	Workbook2 Performance management and appraisal	**Chapter 9**
	Workbook 3 Training and development	**Chapter 10**

Now work through each of these workbooks.

WORKBOOK 01

Career management

Contents		Pages

Have you found your way around the HRM2602 module site on myUnisa? Have you also have read through Workbook 00, which gives you an orientation and introduction to this module, as well as Tutorial Letters **HRM2602/101/0/2015** and **HRMALL6** available on the **Official Study Material** link on the module site? You can discuss the activities with fellow students on the **General Discussion forums**. You can also access the **study plan** in **Tutorial Letter 101** and use it as a guideline to study this workbook.

In workbook 01, which is also available in an electronic version on the module site, we will start to look at the content of this module.

1.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

Read through the outcomes before you continue. This will give you an overall picture of what we will discuss in this workbook.

After studying this workbook, you should be able to

- define career management
- discuss the changing face of career management and the importance of employability
- discuss the benefits of career management to the organisation
- describe the elements of a successful career management function
- examine the problems that confront employees wanting to advance their careers
- describe the impact of the ineffective management of a plateaued employee
- describe the career stages that employees go through during their careers
- critically discuss the personal and organisational problems that dual-career couples face

1.2 KEY CONCEPTS

A number of key concepts are listed at the end of chapter 8 of your prescribed book. Please read through them before you continue. Then you will be familiar with the different concepts that we will refer to in this workbook.

Some of the important key concepts in this workbook are:

- Career
- Individual career planning
- Organisational career planning
- Dual-career partnership
- Career plateau
- Career ladder
- Employability

1.3   INTRODUCTION

People work for different reasons. Some people want good salaries, benefits and challenges in the workplace, while others prefer a healthy balance between life and work. Wärnich, Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield (2015:275) confirm this: On a continuum of career interest, work may be viewed as just a job at one end and as a career at the other. In the past organisations and line managers felt that employees should take responsibility for their own careers and career development. Today organisations and line management realise that they need to assist and support employees in making informed career decisions that will benefit both the organisation and the employee.

As explained in the diagram that illustrates topic 1 at the beginning of this workbook, this workbook is the first of three. It focuses on *assessing and developing qualified employees and managing their careers.* In this workbook we will deal with the following aspects of career management in organisations:

- benefits of effective career management
- the changing face of career management
- successful career management
- the plateaued employee
- dual-career couples

Before we start discussing the benefits of career management, reflect on your knowledge and expectations of career management by doing activity 1.2. Share your thoughts online with your fellow students on the module site for HRM2602 by going to the **Discussion Forums** link and participating in Forum 3: Workbook 01 Activities… OR… Share your thoughts online with your fellow students on the module site for HRM2602 by going to the Blogs and creating your own Blog with the heading "Activity 1.2: Reflecting on career management".

1.4   THE BENEFITS OF CAREER MANAGEMENT

Once employees can do their jobs properly, it doesn't mean that they will be satisfied doing the same job year in and year out. Most people would expect to be promoted (or at least transferred) once in a while. This upward or sideways movement of employees needs to be planned and coordinated carefully in accordance with individual and organisational goals. In this section we discuss how well-planned and executed career programmes will benefit both the organisation and employee.

Study section 8.8 in chapter 8 of the prescribed book and do activity 1.3.

Activity 1.1

List and describe at least four benefits of effective career management for your organisation or for an organisation where a friend or family member works. You need to include examples from this organisation.

Feedback

You could have referred to any of the benefits in section 8.8.1 in the prescribed book and related them to your organisation. For example:

Mining

Engineering is a scarce and critical skill in my organisation. We have lost a number of talented engineers to the overseas market and national competitors. **Staffing inventories** will help my organisation to forecast, coordinate and manage the number of engineers we will need in the next five to ten years.

1.5   THE CHANGING FACE OF CAREER MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY

Organisations all over the world are rapidly changing their structure, workforce composition, reward systems and service contracts. These are the result of political developments as well as production and services based on knowledge-intensive activities that contribute to an accelerated pace of technical and scientific advances, as well as rapid obsolescence in the global knowledge economy (Powell & Snellman 2004:199). Therefore, a new reality has emerged, and employees are now required to maintain employability by taking ownership of their careers, studying market trends and continually developing and expanding their skills and knowledge (Schreuder & Coetzee 2011:26, 49).

We can pose the following critical questions that you should keep in mind when studying this section:

- What are the implications of this "new reality" for my organisation?
- How can this impact on my personal career plans?
- Do I have the employability attributes to compete in the knowledge economy?
- What is the responsibility of the HR team to respond to these changes?
- What is the role of the line manager in addressing these changes?

Study sections 8.8 and 8.9 in chapter 8 of the prescribed book.

After working through the sections, you should be able to explain

- the differences between the old/traditional and the new career
- the employability attributes appropriate for staying employable
- HR's role in career management
- the balance between organisational and individual needs in terms of career management

Activity 1.2

a. Which of the employability attributes do you think you have or need to acquire?
b. What is HR's role in career management?
c. Which role players need to create a balance in the career management process?

Feedback

Your internal (subjective) career experiences are important in an uncertain and unstable work environment. In the context of the 21st century, people are considered as competency traders. Their employability lies within their knowledge, transferable skills, experience, unique attributes and accomplishments (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs 2007:47). Therefore employability is a composite set of traits and skills that permit a person to gain access to, adjust to and be productive in the workplace (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs 2007:47; Herr, Cramer & Niles 2004:115). Employability attributes include

✓ career self-management
✓ entrepreneurial orientation
✓ sociability
✓ self-efficacy
✓ culture competence
✓ emotional literacy or intelligence
✓ career resilience
✓ proactive behaviour

HR managers should have a thorough understanding of the skills and perspectives embodied in the term "employability". This includes challenges and employability skills for employees at the beginning of their work life and at various points along their career stages and throughout the career life cycle. As seen in figure 8.2 in your prescribed book, HR's role in career management entails the following:

➢ the goal: matching individual and organisational needs
➢ identifying career opportunities and requirements
➢ gauging employee potential and instituting career development initiatives

As shown in figure 8.3, organisational and individual needs should create a balance in a way that joins personal effectiveness and satisfaction of employees with the achievement of the organisation's strategic objectives.

Activity 1.3

a. Refer to the old and new career realities outlined in table 8.5 in the prescribed book. In the table that follows, list at least eight realities relevant to your organisation or an organisation where a friend or family member works. Explain your views with practical examples.

Reality	Examples

b. Are there enough conversations between line managers and their team members to ensure that there is a balance between organisational and individual needs?

Feedback

As you would have noted, the concept of a series of positions to an ultimate top position has been replaced by the individual's ability to continuously develop and expand their skills and knowledge and to deal creatively with the new reality of work in order to manage change at the next level of responsibility (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs 2007:3). Table 8.5 lists some changes in the concept of a career between the traditional and the new approach to career management. In this context, career management means building up the knowledge and skills capital of the business through continuous education and training to meet the future requirements that enable the individual to stay employable. However, there has to be frequent conversation between the line managers and their team members to ensure that organisational needs are linked with individual career needs in a way that leads to personal effectiveness, satisfaction of employees and achievement of organisational strategic goals.

This brings us to what determines successful career management.

1.6 WHAT DOES SUCCESSFUL CAREER MANAGEMENT ENTAIL?

Now that you are aware of some of the important issues regarding the old and new career, it's time to discover what a successful career management entails. Career management is a process that is planned; a haphazard attempt to manage careers will fail.

Study the whole of section 8.10 and *HR in practice* and *Tips for effective career management* in chapter 8 of the prescribed book before you do activity 1.6.

In this section you should have learnt more about the following aspects:

- factors that should be considered to ensure successful career management strategies and plans
- the integration between HR planning (see workbook 1 in HRM2601 available on the **Additional Resources** link) and career management
- the role of the organisation in individual career planning
- the elements of implementing career management programmes as a long-term process

Activity 1.4

a. Use this table to list and describe at least five elements that will assist your organisation in implementing effective career management programmes. You can also refer to HR in practice for effective career management. If you aren't employed yet, ask a friend or family member about the organisation where they work.

#	Element	Description
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

b. Refer to the career stages and describe the career stage where you find yourself currently. Give reasons for and examples of your viewpoint.

It is the employees' responsibility to manage their own career in order to remain employable. However, it is the employer's responsibility to provide employees with resources and opportunities to enhance their skills. For example, the employee has to identify areas for knowledge or skills development, plans and career goals, and the employer creates an environment for continuous learning by supporting and rewarding employee development.

Employees generally progress through career life stages and each stage represents unique opportunities and challenges for career development. Consider Tom who is young and is in the establishment stage starting an accounting internship at an organisation. He will need a supportive and caring supervisor to guide him to become a productive employee.

Career management programmes are organised around the organisation's strategic goal. For example, an engineering company will focus on formal mentoring, assignments and work shadowing to develop their new engineering graduates.

Career management programmes must overcome several obstacles before they become effective. Some of the obstacles can be lack of supervisory participation and employee expectations that the organisation should bear the major responsibility for career development. Another problem is the impatience and frustration employees feel when advancement opportunities are limited. Let's look at this problem in more detail.

1.7   THE PLATEAUED EMPLOYEE AND DUAL-CAREER COUPLES

Study sections 8.11 and 8.12 in chapter 8 of the prescribed book.

In this section you learn about the concept of a plateaued employee and the impact of dual-career couples on organisations. Here are some key pointers that should inform your understanding of these aspects:

There are various obstacles that career management programmes must overcome before they become effective. Examples are lack of supervisory participation and expectations that the organisation is responsible for employee career development.

An effective career management strategy or programme can provide the employee with opportunities to progress within the organisation. However, employees are not always realistic and aware of challenges the organisation has to manage because of factors beyond its control. Think of the organisation's structure. In a department, there might only be one line manager until this position becomes vacant. Factors such as this example can limit opportunities for promotion, leading to a demotivated and disengaged employee, who sees no future prospect of being promoted within the organisation. Employees reaching this stage are referred to as plateaued employees.

One of the challenges in career management is to manage work and family responsibilities. Both couples and organisations should be aware of the number of personal and organisational problems that could impact either positively or negatively on the employees and the organisation, depending on how they are managed. Research indicates that dual-career couples now comprise 45% of the workforce (Cascio 2006:379). The role of the employee as a family member must be considered, especially if this role conflicts with work activities.

Activity 1.5

a.   Read this scenario and then answer the questions that follow.

Peter, who is aged 43 and has high levels of knowledge and skills, works for a large organisation. He has always expected that he would be able to work his way up the organisation until he reaches the top. So far, he has been promoted frequently, has made steady progress up the corporate ladder and has been rewarded for his efforts with money, fringe benefits and job titles. He has always firmly believed that he is destined for the very top.

Then one day a promotion he expects to receive is given to one of his colleagues. Surprised and disappointed, he consults his supervisors, only to be told that his work performance is perfectly satisfactory. He continues his work as before, but the next time promotions are announced, he is once again not among them.

   i.   Put yourself in Peter's shoes and describe how the average person will respond to the second disappointment.
   ii.   List three risks for Peter and his organisation if his career situation is not managed effectively.

b.   Read this scenario and then answer the questions that follow.

Sam is married and has an 8-year-old son. His wife is a junior medical doctor working long hours in a public hospital. Sam has been working as a lecturer in the HR department at a university for the past four years. He has always dreamt of qualifying as a professor and is working towards this goal.

As his wife works long hours, Sam has to drop off and pick up his son from school, do homework with him and attend most of his son's cricket matches. Sam enrolled for his PhD, but after two years he has not progressed. Recently, his line manager called him to his office to discuss his progress.

   i.   In a short paragraph explain to the line manager how to deal with this discussion.
   ii.   Make three recommendations to the line manager on how to assist and support Sam in managing his career goals and plans.
   iii. Critically discuss the following statement: "The organisation is responsible for assisting Sam in dealing with his career-related challenges."

Feedback

A career plateau happens at a point where an employee has reached the highest position level they can possibly obtain within an organisation and has no future prospects of being promoted because of a lack of skills, company restructuring, downsizing or other factors such as employment equity. Promotions at all levels in organisations do not go on forever. Most organisations only have one chief executive officer or one director. However, to retain Peter's knowledge and skills, the HR department can create opportunities for lateral assignments within the organisation or increase job enrichment. This was discussed in HRM2601, chapter 5 available on the **myUnisa** link in additional study material.

Sam is experiencing family versus work pressures. He will need assistance from the organisation to learn to deal with these career-related challenges. You could have referred to any of the various programmes mentioned in chapter 8 in the prescribed book and related them to your organisation. Sam could be advised to attend a time management workshop that enables him to deal with these challenges and develop relevant career goals.

In this last section of the unit make sure you can recognise, relate and apply your new knowledge and skills in and at your workplace. The final activity will help you in this.

Activity 1.6

Read the Take-A-Break case study at the end of chapter 8 of the prescribed book and answer the questions that follow:

a. Critically discuss the effectiveness of career management at Take-A-Break.
b. List the parties who are responsible for career management at Take-A-Break.
c. Indicate whether you think Take-A-Break's career management process is based on old/traditional or new career realities. Give examples and reasons for your response.
d. Identify the career stage that Karabo is at. Substantiate your answer.
e. Critically discuss the risks for Take-A-Break if dual-career couples are not managed proactively and well.

Feedback

In career planning, people gain knowledge about themselves and the working environment. They try to match their own preferences to an occupation, job or working environment in which they think they will feel comfortable and will be able to function optimally. When individuals manage their career (career management), they gather information about themselves and the work environment, they know what their own abilities, talents and preferences are, as well as what occupations and jobs are available in different organisations, they develop realistic career goals based on the knowledge about themselves and the working world, they develop and implement a strategy to achieve these goals and receive feedback on the effectiveness of the strategy and the significance of the goals.

The employee and the organisation should negotiate mutually acceptable career management as indicated in section 8.10 in the prescribed book. Career management must be planned, as disorganised attempts to manage careers will fail. It appears that the Take-A-Break Lodge career management process is based on the old traditional realities because they focus on regular promotion.

Management should support career management such as promotion from within and development of employee skills through training and development. Karabo is in the establishment career stage and it would benefit Take-A-Break Lodge to provide him with a supportive and caring supervisor to assist him in becoming a productive employee. You could have referred to any of the personal and organisational problems that dual-career couples face in the prescribed book. Various programmes as indicated in the prescribed book can be implemented at Take-A-Break Lodge to help couples manage their careers.

1.8 SUMMARY

In this workbook we reviewed your knowledge and understanding of career management, which plays an important role in achieving employee objectives. Although employees are responsible for their own career management, the organisation can help them to make better career decisions. HR plays a critical role in facilitating and providing the necessary support for employees wishing to develop their own careers.

1.9   SELF-ASSESSMENT

The self-assessment questions consist of multiple-choice and written questions. To access the multiple-choice questions, visit the self-assessment workbook 01 tab on **myUnisa** and begin your assessment.

Question 1

Critically discuss the following statement: "Career management is a long-term process and not an event."

Question 2

Write an essay on career management in your organisation or the organisation where a friend or family member works. In your essay you need to cover the following aspects:

- Pose the following question to at least three colleagues to determine who they think should take responsibility for career management.
- Write a paragraph to summarise your findings.
- Make three recommendations to the HR team of your organisation on how they should implement an effective career management programme.

Question 3

Draw a diagram to illustrate the different stages an employee can go through during their career.

Feedback

Question 1

The answer to this question can be found in "Career management" in the prescribed book and in section 1.4 in this workbook.

You will agree that your graduation day will be an event where you will get your certificate, have photos taken and celebrate with family. There is an end. But remember, this was part of your career management; you gathered information about yourself (talents, interests, values, preferred lifestyle, occupation, jobs and organisations) and developed a realistic career goal based on this information (a human resource officer). You then developed and implemented a strategy to achieve this goal (enrolled to study at Unisa) and obtained feedback through successfully completing the required module and ultimately your degree or diploma. The process continues as you work at your chosen organisation, develop new goals, take advantage of training and development and promotion opportunities and obtain relevant feedback regarding the effectiveness of your strategy and goal. That is why career management is a process and not an event.

Question 2

The answer to this question can be found in "Successful career management" in the prescribed book and in section 1.6 in this workbook. Here you needed to clearly indicate whether you think an individual should take responsibility for their own career, and you should have provided reasons for your answer. For career management activities to be effective, there has to be a workable balance between the organisation's HR needs and the individual employee's career goals. You could have referred to any recommendations in the section "Tips for effective career management programmes" and section 8.10.4

in the prescribed book.

Question 3

The diagram that you drew should include the career stages discussed in the prescribed book. These stages are establishment when the employee begins a career, followed by advancement, then maintenance and finally withdrawal during which the employee begins to retire or move on to a new career. You could be wondering how an employee can retire or move to a new career. Take, for example, a lecturer who retires from his/her career and starts a new career of painting art.

REFLECTION ACTIVITY

Reflect on your learning while working through this unit. Complete the following self-assessment checklist to determine your understanding of this unit and whether you have mastered the learning outcomes:
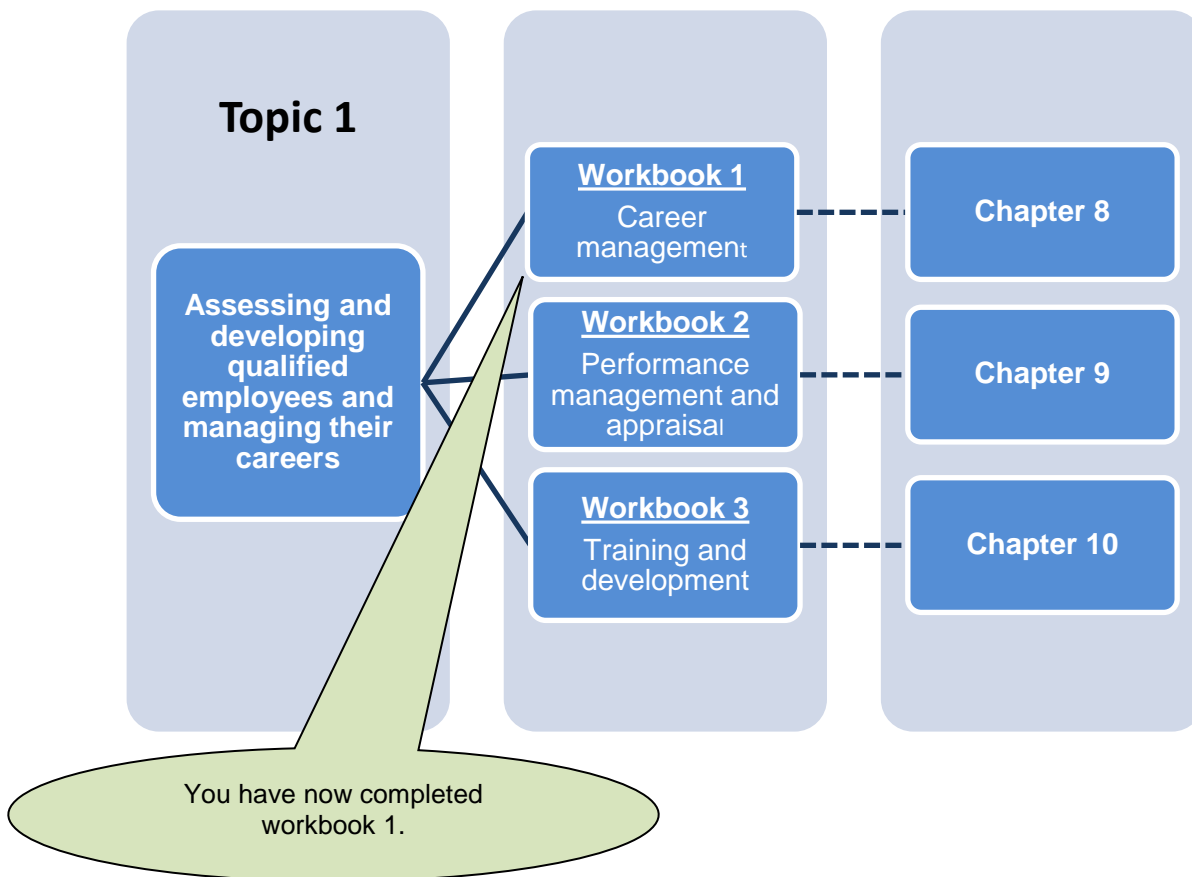
Learning outcomes	Yes	No
Can I define career management?		
Am I able to discuss the changing face of career management and the importance of employability?		
Am I able to discuss the benefits of career management to the organisation?		
Will I be able to describe the elements of a successful career management function?		
Can I examine the problems that confront employees wanting to advance their careers?		
Am I able to describe the impact of ineffective management of a plateaued employee?		
Can I describe the career stages that employees go through during their careers?		
Am I able to critically discuss the personal and organisational problems that dual-career couples face?		

GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING THE REFLECTION ACTIVITY

- If you answered yes to all of the questions in the checklist, you are ready to move on to the next workbook.
- If you answered no to any of the questions in the checklist, work through the specific sections again.

It is very important that you achieve all the learning outcomes of this module as they guide your learning process in this module and will ensure that you can pass the examination at the end of this semester.

Topic 1

Assessing and developing qualified employees and managing their careers

Workbook 1
Career management

Workbook 2
Performance management and appraisal

Workbook 3
Training and development

Chapter 8

Chapter 9

Chapter 10

You have now completed workbook 1.

Now that you have successfully completed workbook 01 and all the activities, you can go on to workbook 02.

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