INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF EAST AFRICA
'Learning to Succeed'

FACULTY OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

END OF SEMESTER EXAMINATIONS - AUGUST 2025

PROGRAMME: BPA
YEAR/SEM: YEAR 1/SEMESTER 2
COURSE CODE: PAD 1202
NAME: PUBLIC PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

DATE:
TIME:

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

SECTION A

Read the case scenario carefully. Drawing from the scenario and your understanding of public personnel administration, particularly in the area of compensation and benefits, answer all five essay questions that follow. Your responses should demonstrate critical analysis, application of course concepts (such as equity, motivation, pay structures, and public service reform), and practical recommendations. Support your arguments with relevant examples from Uganda's public sector or comparable contexts. This section is compulsory and accounts for 40% of the total exam marks.

Question 1:

Case Scenario: The National Urban Planning Authority (NUPA)

The National Urban Planning Authority (NUPA) is a newly established public agency in Uganda, created to address the growing challenges of urbanization across major towns. As it begins staffing key positions, NUPA faces internal disagreements regarding the most appropriate compensation model. The agency's interim Human Resources (HR) committee is torn between adopting Uganda's standard civil service pay structure or implementing a new performance-based system that aims to reward innovation and efficiency.

Many employees recruited from other government institutions express concern about abandoning standardized pay scales, fearing that performance-based pay could introduce favoritism or inequality. Others, particularly younger professionals, argue that the current civil service system does not adequately reward excellence or reflect rising living costs. The HR Director, Ms. Atieno, also points out the risk of staff turnover if employees are not motivated through both monetary and non-monetary benefits.

Additionally, NUPA has a mandate to ensure regional representation and gender equity in its workforce. However, disparities are already emerging. A recent audit revealed that staff from rural regions and female employees are often assigned lower pay grades due to historical qualifications and perceived experience gaps. This has prompted discussions about internal equity and external competitiveness, particularly as NUPA competes with private firms for urban planning talent. In response, NUPA's board-initiated consultations with the Ministry of Public Service to align its compensation policies with national reforms. The goal is to ensure transparency and guard against nepotism and corruption. While some reforms have been enacted—such as training-based promotions and harmonization of job grades—there is still resistance from senior staff who benefited under the old system. The board now seeks a sustainable, fair, and motivating compensation and benefits model that suits the agency's evolving mission. As part of a stakeholder engagement process, the HR team invites internal and external experts to design a compensation plan that addresses employee concerns, reflects Uganda's fiscal realities, and maintains a motivated public service ethos.

Questions One

1) Drawing from the NUPA case, what is the primary purpose of a compensation system in the public sector, and how can it influence both employee motivation and institutional performance? **[8 Marks]**

2) Compare and contrast the standardized civil service pay system with a performance-based pay system. Using the NUPA scenario, evaluate the feasibility and risks of implementing a performance-based model in a new public agency. **[8 Marks]**

3) Analyze how gender and regional disparities at NUPA reflect broader issues of internal equity and external competitiveness. What measures should be taken to promote fairness in public sector compensation? **[8 Marks]**

4) Identify at least three non-monetary incentives that could help NUPA improve job satisfaction among its employees. In what ways can these complement or compensate for monetary limitations? **[8 Marks]**

5) Imagine you are the HR Director at NUPA. Propose a compensation and benefits plan that ensures fairness, motivates staff, and aligns with Uganda’s public service reforms. Justify your choices using evidence from the case. **[8 Marks]**

Question 2:

Case Scenario: The District Health Innovation Office (DHIO)

The District Health Innovation Office (DHIO) was created in 2023 to drive digital health solutions in Uganda's decentralized health system. Tasked with improving data collection, digitizing patient records, and streamlining referral systems, DHIO attracted a mix of IT specialists, data managers, and health officers. While the mission is clear and ambitious, the agency faces mounting challenges in retaining staff due to dissatisfaction with its compensation and benefits structure.

At its inception, DHIO adopted the national government’s civil service pay scale, arguing that harmonization would ensure equity across districts and allow easier integration with the Ministry of Health. However, within a year, skilled staff began resigning, citing uncompetitive salaries compared to similar roles in NGOs and private tech firms. Several district IT officers noted that despite high workloads and critical responsibilities, their compensation remained stagnant, without performance bonuses or allowances for overtime or fieldwork.

The internal environment became strained when a small team of project officers on donor-funded contracts received substantially higher salaries and additional travel allowances. This dual-pay system created tension among staff, especially those hired under government terms. Complaints about unfairness and lack of transparency grew, with some employees raising concerns about nepotism in how donor-funded roles were awarded. Morale dropped, and collaboration across units declined.

In an attempt to restore confidence, the Director of DHIO proposed a hybrid compensation model, combining base pay with variable performance incentives, including team-based bonuses, professional development awards, and regional hardship allowances. She also recommended introducing non-monetary benefits such as flexible working hours, staff recognition awards, and subsidized internet access for remote work. However, implementation stalled due to lack of approval from the Public Service Commission, which questioned the sustainability and equity of the proposed plan.

Further complicating matters, a gender audit revealed that male staff were more likely to be promoted and assigned to donor-funded roles. Women, despite comparable qualifications, were often placed in administrative positions with limited upward mobility. The findings prompted public backlash, leading to pressure from advocacy groups and the Ministry of Gender to revise DHIO’s HR policies. The agency now faces a crossroads—reform its compensation and benefit systems comprehensively or risk further attrition and reputational damage.

As DHIO prepares its annual strategic review, the leadership has opened a public consultation process to gather feedback from staff, civil service regulators, and policy experts. The key question remains: how can a district-level public agency balance fairness, motivation, and fiscal responsibility in its compensation strategy—especially in a context where donor partnerships, equity demands, and national pay regulations intersect?

Question One

1) Using the DHIO case, explain how compensation structures influence employee retention in public institutions. What strategies could DHIO use to retain highly skilled professionals without deviating from national pay regulations? **[8 Marks]**

2) Critically assess the implications of a dual-pay system (donor-funded vs. civil service terms) on organizational morale and internal equity. What reforms should DHIO pursue to ensure fairness in remuneration? **[8 Marks]**

3) Evaluate the feasibility of implementing a hybrid compensation model at DHIO. In what ways might performance-based pay conflict with Uganda's standardized civil service pay system, and how can these conflicts be mitigated? **[8 Marks]**

4) Discuss the role of gender audits in identifying structural inequality in compensation and promotion practices. Based on DHIO's situation, propose specific policy measures that could promote gender equity in staffing and career progression.

[8 Marks]

5) Imagine you are a consultant for DHIO during the strategic review. What recommendations would you give to balance stakeholder interests (staff, donors, ministries) while ensuring that the compensation and benefits system is transparent, equitable, and fiscally sustainable?

[8 Marks]

SECTION B

This section contains a set of thematic essay questions based on key topics covered in the course, including compensation systems, non-monetary incentives, equity and fairness, and policy reforms in public service. You are required to answer any three (3) questions of your choice. Each question carries 20 marks, making a total of 60 marks for this section. Your responses should be well-structured, demonstrate a clear understanding of the subject matter, and reflect both theoretical insight and practical application in the Ugandan public sector context or other relevant environments.

Question 1:

Discuss the role of e-Government and digital innovations in transforming Human Resource Management (HRM) in the public sector. How can ICT tools be effectively integrated into recruitment, performance appraisal, and service delivery in Uganda? **[20 Marks]**

Question 2:

Critically analyze the importance of ethics and integrity in public personnel administration. What mechanisms should be established to prevent ethical violations and promote a culture of accountability in public service institutions? [20 Marks]

Question 3:

Critically assess the state of gender equity and representation in public personnel systems. What policies and practices can be adopted to promote inclusiveness and eliminate institutional discrimination? **[20 Marks]**

Question 4:

Critically examine the scope and significance of Public Personnel Administration in the context of modern governance. How has its evolution impacted service delivery and administrative efficiency in developing countries like Uganda? **[20 Marks]**

Question 5:

Compare and contrast traditional and modern models of personnel administration. How do these models influence policy formulation and employee management in contemporary public institutions? **[20Marks]**

Question 6:

Discuss the importance of strategic human resource planning in the public sector. Using

relevant examples, explain how workforce planning tools can address skills gaps and promote effective public service delivery **[20 Marks]**

Question 7:

Analyze the recruitment and selection processes in Uganda’s public service. What are the major challenges faced, and what reforms would you recommend enhancing meritocracy and transparency? **[20 Marks]**

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Analyze the recruitment and selection processes in Uganda’s public service. What are the major challenges faced, and what reforms would you recommend enhancing meritocracy and transparency? [**20 Marks]**

Question 9:

Discuss the principles and challenges of fair promotion in public service. Propose a career development strategy that aligns with public sector values of equity, competence, and integrity. [**20 Marks]**

Question 10:

Critically evaluate the effectiveness of current performance appraisal systems in public institutions. What innovations or reforms would enhance objectivity, feedback, and staff motivation? [**20 Marks]**

Question 11:

Analyze the impact of compensation and benefits on employee motivation and retention in the public sector. How can public agencies balance equity, fiscal responsibility, and competitiveness in their compensation systems? **[20 Marks]**

Question 12:

Evaluate the successes and setbacks of civil service reforms in Africa over the last two decades. Use Uganda or another African country as a case study to support your analysis. [**20 Marks]**