



Certificate in Payroll Leadership



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Programme Overview

Our Certificate in Payroll Leadership is a 10 month programme focused on building your strategic skills and experience in managing and leading a payroll function, including employment law, technical knowledge and leadership skills.

Over the Certificate you will complete online learning modules with on the job assignments, case studies, quizzes and assessments. The programme also involves rating your achievement level from the start to the finish and mapping your skills and experience.

What will you finish with?

The Certificate in Payroll Leadership is different from tertiary study as you need to be working in a role where you can apply what you're learning, rather than just covering theory.

You'll work through case studies, exercises and real situations as well as reviewing your own workplace practices so that you get as much experience as you can, to deliver effectively in real life. Once you've completed your final assessment you will be awarded your certificate.



Elephant Certificates are now recognised globally, in New Zealand, Australia, the Pacific Islands, Singapore, Malaysia, Canada, the US and United Kingdom.

Who should attend?

You'll benefit most from the Certificate in Payroll Leadership if you are:

- Have completed technical training in payroll, but are looking to develop your strategic leadership skills
- Have practical payroll experience or in a role where you manage a payroll function but haven't completed a formal qualification in payroll

Programme Structure

The programme is structured over 10 months. You must complete 10 modules to complete the Certificate. The components of the Certificate include:

- A self-assessment of your knowledge and skills to map against when you finish.
- Recorded webinars to watch from work or home, on your computer or phone. You also get a set of handouts to make notes from the webinar.
- Suggested articles to read or other videos to watch.
- Assignments to complete which consist of questions based on case studies and your own processes. For more about these see the FAQ page.

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For the Certificate in Payroll Leadership, you must complete **10 modules**. Five of these are core modules which are compulsory and five can be chosen from our optional modules. If you have significant experience or training in areas covered by the core modules, you can swap out up to 3 of these for optional modules.

Core Modules

Payroll Employment Law

Managing a payroll function means having a comprehensive understanding and knowledge of payroll related employment law. This module focuses on an overview of the legislation, but with a focus on company compliance for more complex issues.

This module covers:

- The Employment Relations Act – areas where payroll issues can occur
- The Holidays Act recent changes
- Parental Leave updates and processes

Deductions, Overpayments & Final Pays

There are a number of deductions you may have to set up and make from employee's pays. Again there are some complexities with getting these right!

This module takes you through:

- The Wages Protection Act – understanding the key points of the legislation, overpayments and deductions
- Calculating a final wage or salary payment including holiday pay or annual leave
- Differences with redundancy payments and tax

Bonuses and Remuneration

As well as setting up employees when they start with their wages or salaries – Payroll are also involved when salary increases are enacted for individuals or through Collective Bargaining, and for paying bonuses and incentives. This module takes you through:

- Understanding different remuneration concepts and the legal issues around salaries and wages
- Incentives and bonuses – which impact on holiday pay/leave and which don't
- When RDP or AVP apply
- Applying pay increases

Allowances & Tax

There are a number of allowances that payroll may have to set up and pay to employees. You need to make sure you have set these up correctly and understand the tax issues, to mitigate any issues for your business. This module covers:

- The different types of taxable allowances and the impact on PAYE, tax and holiday pay
- Deductions from allowances
- How to deal with non taxable allowances
- Allowances and ACC
- Gross earnings calculations and PAYE
- Other types of tax that apply to pay

Effective Payroll Processes

Whether you are a sole charge Payroll professional or leading a team, there are a number of tools and techniques you can use to make your payroll processing effective, and some legislation around these. This module covers:

- The Privacy Act – what information you can and can't collect, and how to store and share this legally.
- Using Agile, Design Thinking and Six Sigma – different ways to benchmark your payroll processes and make them more effective
- Managing email and other enquiries effectively for yourself and your team

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Optional Modules

Five optional modules can be chosen from our ten choices or where you have significant training or experience in up to 3 areas of the core modules, you can choose 3 further optional modules (a total of up to 8 modules).

<h3>Clever Communication</h3> <p>To deliver effectively in payroll, you need to understand the different communication styles – both yours and others, and how to adapt to managers, employees and your team! This module takes you through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An easy to use model to recognise and understand the four main communication styles• Different ways to adapt your written and verbal communications to the different styles when sending out payroll communications or discussing payroll issues• Knowing the strengths your style brings and what challenges to watch out for when working with others	<h3>Writing Payroll Policies</h3> <p>There are several policies that you may have responsibility for developing or updating when working in payroll. This module covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The different payroll policies that can be useful to have• Making your policies engaging & adapting them to different communication styles• When you should and shouldn't introduce a new policy• Building your managers engagement and ownership of the policies so they're not just owned by payroll Use your policies effectively to address issues
<h3>Engaging your Managers</h3> <p>Whether during a change project, rolling out a new initiative or making changes to your payroll system or processes - your communications plan can make or break your message getting through and the success of managers taking on your message. This module covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The process of developing a communications strategy• Ideas for your comms. plan including multi channel messages• Building sales and marketing principles into your messaging to get buy in• Case studies of strategies that went well and where things didn't work	<h3>Performance Coaching</h3> <p>While this may not be a normal responsibility of payroll, understanding and using the principles and models of performance coaching can be very valuable to use if you are developing your payroll team. This module covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The different types of coaching and when to use them• Different coaching models to grow performance and solve issues• How you can develop your own personal performance coaching skills
<h3>Business Acumen</h3> <p>It can be useful for a Payroll leader to understand the financial, commercial and legal aspects of company operations to gain credibility and respect with their senior leaders, and to be able to partner with them effectively. This is especially important if you are part of the finance team. This module covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding financial concepts and revenue models• How to tie these into payroll areas and raise the right issues• Knowing legal requirements around company structure, Directors and Boards	

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Optional Modules continued

Offering Employment

In some payroll roles, you can be responsible for managing the operational processes around offering employment to candidates and then setting them up in the payroll system.

This module takes you through:

- The legislative requirements around employment agreements. You might not be preparing the clauses, but you should know what to look out for.
- The challenges that can occur with employment agreements being signed.
- Effective administration and filing of personal information.

Leading Change

This module takes you through using specific change tools with a payroll system change case study so that you are fully prepared to drive change in your business. If you are going to be involved in a payroll change, this module is for you. You will finish the module with:

- An in depth understanding of different change models and how they work
- How you can own change and create engagement
- Techniques to take people through their change journey
- An understanding of different ways to develop and roll out a change plan
- Methods to measure change ROI

Payroll Metrics and Analytics

In recent years many HR teams have been asked to produce more analytics – and where do they turn? To payroll! However payroll teams can also now get asked to produce employee data. If this is an area you want to learn more about, this module covers:

- The different levels of data from metrics through to predictive analytics and how you can take your business on the right journey
- Ideas on different things that you should be measuring and what they can show you
- How to metrics and analytics to build credibility and add value to your business

Leading a Team

Whether you are a team leader, or Payroll Manager – if you have people reporting directly to you, or through a matrix reporting line (e.g. if someone in finance helps with payroll processing) this module will give you some ideas on how to manage your team effectively. This module covers:

- Understanding your own management style, the strengths you have and what to watch out for
- Systems for setting up team processes, delegating and measuring performance
- Different ways you can develop your payroll teams skills and experience
- Dealing with different personality styles in your team

Strategic Workforce Planning

Payroll leader can have a unique view of an organisation's work patterns and capabilities and can provide frameworks and strategies on workforce planning. This module covers:

- Different types of workforce planning
- Useful analytics to measure
- The steps to take to develop a workforce plan in different types of organisations
- Examples and case studies of how and when workforce planning worked well and how it added value to the business

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Frequently asked Questions

How do the assignments work?

For each topic you'll be sent an assignment. This consists of case studies with different questions to answer or asking you to review of your own processes. The pass mark is 70%. Our team will assess whether you have passed the paper and have demonstrated good thinking around each answer. If they feel there are areas that you need to provide more information, they will come back to you to provide you further time and some coaching to do this. You can then resubmit your assignment. The aim is to help you develop your skills in each area so you can deliver excellence in payroll to your business so you do get a second chance if your first try at the assignment isn't as well thought out as needed or you didn't get enough of the answers correct.

How long does each assignment take?

You have a month to complete each assignment and it will take you 2 – 3 hours to complete. Along with watching the webinar and reading any articles, you should be able to complete each module by putting aside an hour a week, or four hours a month.

What if I need more time?

While we schedule your Certificate over a 10 month period, you can ask for an extension on assignments if you have a busy workload, or are travelling or have any other issue that means you need more time. In total you can extend your Certificate up to 6 months, however you must finish within 16 months of beginning to be awarded the Certificate.

Can I fail the Certificate?

Yes if you don't complete your assignments, then you cannot pass the Certificate! If you complete an assignment but haven't demonstrated the knowledge to pass the topic, our team will provide you with feedback and coaching and give you a chance to review and resubmit your assignment.

How much does it cost?

The investment for the Certificate is NZ\$1,850 + GST.
There is a 10% discount if you work for a registered Charity.



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Testimonials

Still not convinced you'll get the best learning you've ever experienced? We've had hundreds of HR, Talent, Recruitment, OD, L&D and Payroll people complete our Certificates, with 100% rating them as having significantly increased their knowledge and confidence.

Here are some of the comments from people who have completed different Certificates:

This course has been amazingly beneficial and I look forward to doing another course in the near future. I was proud of each individual paper being completed as truly the best part of this study for me personally. Traditional academic study does not suit me, and this has taken the place of approx. 5+ years study.

Amy, HR Advisor, University

Each of the other assignments sharpened my knowledge on each subject, but the most valuable was applying it not only in the case studies but also in the workplace. This made it real and meaningful. Ongoing learning is one of the key learnings that I will take from this process.

I appreciated the constructive feedback and the additional information that was shared. This helped me to gain insight from another angle and challenged my broader thinking. The feedback was challenging and at times made me question my approach and understanding. There was clear direction on what was expected and especially in the beginning the feedback guided me as to what the panel was looking for and made me aware of "how" I was communicating in completing the assignments.

The detailed feedback also made me feel like a valued participant as I had comfort that there was a professional team assessing the assignments.

Jacqui, Recruitment Specialist, Healthcare Sector

I have found significant value in the OD certificate. The tools and knowledge from every module helped me to step back from day-to-day delivery and think differently about my and my team's work. It's been extremely valuable having frameworks and tools to broaden my thinking. I've also found some of the concepts have helped me grow personally as well as professionally i.e. mindful leadership (including above and below the line thinking), SCARF, positive psychology, neuroscience, vulnerability, psychological safety.

Also, my organisation has many initiatives that are driven from 'bright ideas' rather than based on data. This certificate has reinforced the method of using data and research to inform decisions. While I had mostly been working in this way, I wasn't sure it was right, given this wasn't been done widely. I've been able to influence the importance of this for the work of my team and have seen a shift in the way my team is operating and influencing data-based decisions and longer-term horizons, to truly make a difference for the organisation.

I'm also proud that I've seen significant personal and professional growth over the year. I've been able to incorporate the learning into my work and have seen the difference it's made. My manager and team have enjoyed my monthly learning updates about what I've done. I've been able to share concepts and improvement ideas with my manager, which have enhanced the way I, the team and the wider HR group works.

Emma, OD role, Government Agency

"The information provided was just so informative and then being able to actually apply that knowledge through the case studies is just fantastic and really helped to bed in the information. In addition, I have gone back to the information many times already to make sure I am on the right track.

The webinars, the printable slides from the webinars, the case studies, the feedback, the workshop – gosh these have been so thoroughly helpful for each and every topic!"

Melissa, HR Advisor, NZ University

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Testimonials continued

“I’m most proud of completing the assignments. I was very nervous “going back to school”. I felt quite exposed submitting assignments to be marked as I haven’t done this in a long time. I understand now that I was given an opportunity to fail in a safe environment without judgement.”

Nicole, HR Manager, Food Production Company

“Each assignment delivered an enormous learning for me. I believe my biggest learning was from the Recruitment Strategy and processes assignment. This is an area I’m currently participating more and more in and referenced a lot of information from my assignment”.

Helen, Learning and Development Officer, Travel Company

“I think the one thing that has had the widest and most visible effect is that HR policies can, and should, be written simply! After doing the Writing HR policies assignment, I went through our HR policies and they are all very complicated and use a whole bunch of words that just don’t need to be there. Keep it simple! I am now going through each of our policies and simplifying the language”.

Courtenay, HR Advisor, ITO

“I just want to pass on feedback that your material is easy to understand and the training you offer in my opinion is by the far the most relevant I’ve seen in a very long time”.

Rebecca, HR Advisor, Dairy Company

“I am already seeing the value of this course from the first assignment. Thank you so much for the coaching and feedback your team provided.”

Alvina, Junior HR Business Partner, Banking Sector

There has been a lot learnt in all of the topics but aside from that, the biggest take away for me that has helped me every day was the way that I present information and adapting it to make it clear to Managers. This includes being more to the point, using bullet points, tables etc and just totally changing the way I word emails. This has been very beneficial to me and has also been noticed by my Manager.

The feedback from assignments was helpful as even if my answer was great, they often gave other things to think about, or other approaches to take and suggestions. This really helped challenge my way of thinking. It helped me to look at things from different aspects, broaden my thinking and think more big picture.

Amanda, People and Culture Business Partner, Construction Company

