
HRM304 · SESSION 11 OF 11

Preparing for the exam

How do you turn a whole module into exam answers?

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Today, in three parts

The toolkit

Key learnings from the module, and how you might apply them.

Section A

Approaching multiple-choice, then five questions to work through together.

Section B

How a strong scenario answer is built, with discussion of some examples.

The exam at a glance

When

Tuesday 23 June, two hours.
You may bring one A4 sheet of
your own notes.

Section A

Twenty multiple-choice
questions. 40 marks, ~40
minutes.

Section B

Three scenario answers, chosen
from five. 60 marks, about 25
minutes each.

PART 1

The module as a toolkit

Every session gave you some tools (frameworks, theories, examples, skills). The exam asks you to pick the right one and use it well.

Your toolkit, in six groups

Frameworks

Hofstede and GLOBE as comparison tools, not a foundation for stereotypes.

Communication

Direct and indirect feedback; formal rules versus informal channels; high/low context.

Leadership & staffing

Negotiation styles, expatriates, and returnees.

Talent & change

Remote teams, global talent, cross-border M&A.

Performance & reward

What appraisals really measure; what they should; what motivates.

Institutions & ethics

Works councils, tight and loose norms, home-versus-host, AI.

TASK

For each situation, name key concepts from the module that apply. What action might they suggest?

SITUATIONS

- ① A new manager copies the head-office leadership style abroad, and motivation on the team falls.
- ② Feedback that felt normal to the manager lands as harsh and personal to the team.
- ③ A firm weighs sending an expatriate against promoting a capable local manager.
- ④ One identical conduct rule is enforced the same way in every country.

PART 2

Section A: multiple choice

Twenty questions, one best answer each. How they are built, and how to work them.

How the questions work

One best answer. The others typically match a common mistake.

Predict first. Answer the question in your head before you read the options.

Then rule out. Name the mistake each wrong option is built on.

No penalty for a wrong answer: never leave one blank.

A (reasoned) guess can still score.

GROUP TASK

小组任务

12:00 · 4 per group

TASK

Work through the five practice questions together. For each, agree your best answer and a reason to reject every other option.

WHAT TO DO

- ① On a laptop, open **swufe-cchrn.pages.dev/practice**.
- ② Discuss and agree before you reveal the answer.
- ③ Remember any question where the group disagreed.

What each question was testing

Manager in Germany

Reducing a clash over voice and codetermination to a translation problem.

Collectivist hire

Using a country average to predict one person: the ecological fallacy.

Two acquirers

Believing one depth of integration is always right.

Home or host

Treating local custom as a full excuse. A minimum is only a floor.

AI interview scorer

Assuming one model for everyone must be fair.

The same habit wins both sections

Diagnose the mechanism. Ask what is actually going wrong, and at what level.

Keep going past the label. “That is their culture” is where weak answers stop.

PART 3

Section B: the scenarios

Three answers from five, about 25 minutes each.

Most of your marks are here.

Practice scenario 1

READ

The India playbook

A Chengdu software company opens its first overseas research centre in Bangalore, India. Before the launch, headquarters hands the new site director a one-page “India playbook” built from Hofstede and GLOBE scores: Indian staff expect top-down direction, respect seniority, and prefer managers to decide rather than discuss. The director follows it closely. Senior engineers set the tasks, junior staff are rarely asked for input, and promotions track years of service.

Within eight months, 30% of the team has left. Most who leave are in their late twenties; many hold master’s degrees from abroad, and several join local startups that “let us own the work.” One team lead writes that the playbook “describes my parents’ workplace, not mine.” The Bangalore HR manager notes that the local engineering market is young, mobile, and fiercely competitive.

Diagnose what has gone wrong, and advise headquarters on how to use cultural frameworks here.

What I look for when marking

Diagnosis

Name what is going wrong, at the right level. Often more than one thing at once.

Concept use

Use course ideas as tools that do work in the argument, not as labels you drop in.

Recommendation

Specific, aimed at the right target, and workable under the constraints you are given.

Criticality

Weigh power, incentives, and variation within a country. Show the limits of the framework.

How to structure 25 minutes

Diagnose

Take two or three minutes to decide what is really wrong.

Build the case

Lead with the diagnosis; add key concepts where they earn their place.

Recommend

Specific changes to the form, policy, or behaviour. Say who should act.

Stay critical

Note within-country variation, power and incentives, framework limits.

Concise and structured — not an essay, not bullet points.

Plan first; rewrite freely — cross out what I should not mark.

Six ways answers lose marks

Blaming national culture. That explains little and fixes nothing.

Labels, not tools. Naming a framework without making it do any work.

Vague recommendations. Advice no one could actually act on.

Cutting the hard part. Dropping a hard but valuable option with nothing to replace it.

Ignoring power and variation. Missing incentives and within-country difference.

Answering part of the question. Leaving out what the prompt asks for.

Scenario 1, worked together

Diagnosis

The playbook turns a country average into a personality for every hire, and ignores the local talent market.

Recommendation

Use the scores to raise questions, not to set the design. Ask each team what it needs; let the site adapt.

Concepts as tools

Ecological fallacy; within-country variation; returnees trained in other ways of working.

Criticality

The key context is a mobile, competitive market and a young, foreign-educated workforce, not “Indian culture”.

Practice scenario 2

READ

The bilingual steering committee

A Chinese appliance maker acquires a mid-sized German engineering firm and runs it as a semi-independent unit. To keep collaboration fair, the joint steering meetings are formally bilingual: every agenda, slide, and decision is recorded in both Chinese and English, with interpreters present.

In practice, the Chinese managers hold a short call in Chinese the evening before each steering meeting. By the time the formal meeting opens, the main decisions are already aligned among them. The German engineers notice that their questions rarely change the outcome; the meeting confirms a position rather than forming one. Over a year, three senior German staff leave, and a survey shows the acquired unit feels “consulted, not involved.”

The headquarters project lead is puzzled: the language rule is balanced, the interpreters are good, and nothing is hidden.

Diagnose why a fair, bilingual rule still produces exclusion, and recommend how to redesign where decisions are actually made.

GROUP TASK

小组任务

10:00 · 4 per group

TASK

Diagnose this case, then agree one specific change and a strategic trade-off you want to highlight.

WHAT TO DO

- ① Think alone for two minutes: why does a fair, balanced rule still leave people out?
- ② In your group, agree a diagnosis and one specific change.
- ③ Discuss the trade-offs and justify your approach.

REPORT-BACK

反馈

one voice per group

THE QUESTION

What is your diagnosis, your key recommendation, and the trade-off you discussed?

Practice scenario 3

READ

The AI summaries

A multinational rolls out an AI tool that writes and translates summaries of every cross-site meeting, so teams in different countries can follow decisions made elsewhere. Headquarters likes it: the summaries are fast, and a check confirms they are factually accurate.

Two complaints arrive. A summary of a China meeting is read at the German head office. In the meeting, a manager had said the timeline “might be worth looking at again” — a careful way of saying it would not work. The summary is accurate on the facts, but records only that the team discussed the timeline and raised no objection. The soft refusal is gone, and Berlin plans on a commitment that was never made.

A blunt German review of the Chengdu team’s prototype is then summarised and sent to Chengdu. In Germany the review was routine; everyone left content. Rendered into plain Chinese, the same words read as a personal attack, and Chengdu concludes the decision has gone against them.

Diagnose why accurate summaries fail in opposite directions, and recommend where human review must stay.

Scenario 3: answer elements

What it keeps. The facts and the literal meaning.
Accuracy is not the problem.

What it strips. Hedging, softening, the relationship around the words, and the relationships.

Why both directions fail. Lost context can hide a real “no”, or turn normal challenge into an attack.

Where review stays. E.g., a local check before any translated summary is recorded.

Strong answers might discuss which version should be authoritative. (Checked) common language summaries? Or faithful local-language notes?

Before the exam

Your A4 sheet

Consider including structure and key signposting vocabulary. Add tools and key concepts. Applied examples beat definitions.

Practice MCQ

A full practice paper at swufe-cchrn.pages.dev/practice. Test yourself before checking answers.

On the day

Answer every multiple-choice question. In part B, 3 answers, diagnose before you write.

Questions

Anything about format, timing, or what counts as a strong Section B answer.

Any concept from the module you want to revisit before the exam.

Good luck with the exam.

And THANK YOU for your participation throughout.