Solutions

Business answers are marked by **level of response** against the assessment objectives: award **AO1** knowledge, **AO2** application, **AO3** analysis and **AO4** evaluation.

Each answer shows the steps, then the **result**.

2.1

- hard HRM treats staff as a resource to be used at lowest cost (tight control); soft HRM treats staff as a valuable asset to be developed and motivated (2 for a clear difference; 1 for a partial idea)

2.2

- an organised group of workers that speaks and negotiates for its members (2 for a clear definition; 1 for a partial idea)

2.3

- negotiation between a trade union and an employer over pay and conditions for a whole group of workers at once (2 for a clear definition; 1 for a partial idea)

3.1

- *[3]* **AO1** 1 — name a benefit (higher motivation; lower labour turnover; better skills). **AO2** up to 2 — develop it, e.g. training and involvement make staff feel valued
- they stay longer and work better
- lower recruitment costs and higher quality (2 developed / 1 limited)

3.2

- *[8]* For **each** of two reasons: **AO1** 1 + **AO2** 1 + **AO3** up to 2. Example chains — *right staff at the right time*: planning shows future skill gaps
- the firm trains or hires in good time
- no shortage that slows production. *Cost control*: planning avoids over-hiring
- wage costs stay efficient
- higher profit. Maximum 4 per reason, 8 total

3.3

- *[12]* **AO1** 2 / **AO2** 2 / **AO3** 2 / **AO4** up to 6. **Hard HRM:** lower wage costs and flexibility — but low motivation, high turnover and possible poor quality. **Soft HRM:** motivated, skilled, loyal staff and better quality — but higher training and pay costs. Judgement: soft HRM suits a firm relying on skilled, customer-facing staff, while hard HRM may suit low-skill, cost-driven work — the best approach depends on the type of work and the labour market