



# Module Guide:

## 1.5 Decision Making

Programme: BA (Hons) Professional Management

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## Module details

**Module title:** Decision Making  
**Module code:** 1.5  
**Module level:** 4  
**Credit value:** 20  
**Assessment:** Assignment, reflective review, portfolio evidence  
**Learning duration:** 7 weeks

## Introduction

Welcome to this module on Decision Making. This is your reference guide to the content and assessment of this module.

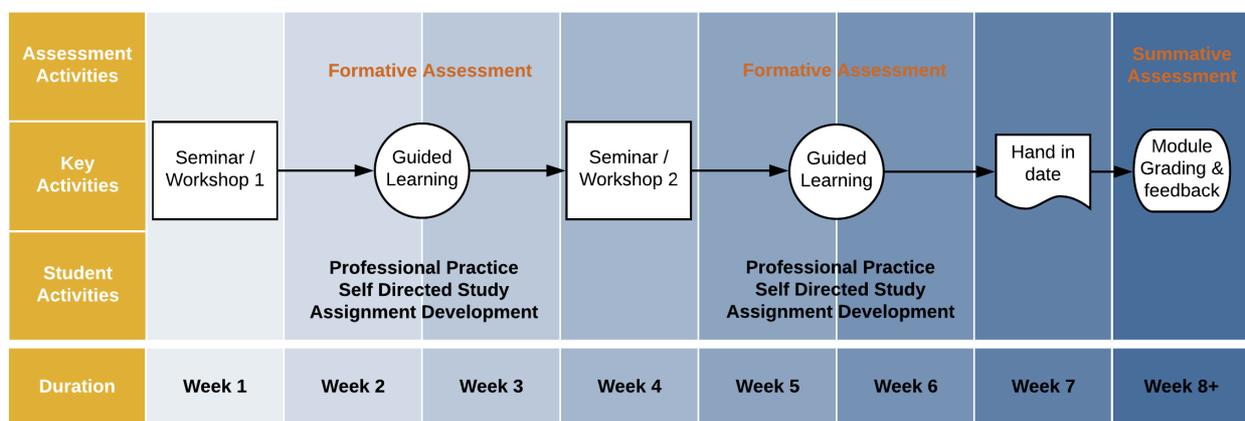
By successfully completing this module, you will be able to:

- 1.5(1) Evaluate problem solving and decision making models and techniques
- 1.5(2) Assess complex data to draw conclusions
- 1.5(3) Evaluate the values, governance and ethics within your own organisation relating to decision making
- 1.5(4) Demonstrate ethical approaches to problem solving and decision making

In order to achieve these learning outcomes, you will need to demonstrate your knowledge and experience as a manager or leader and provide evidence of reflection. Your tutor is there to guide and support you throughout this module, offering advice and guidance where applicable.

## Learning strategy

The learning outcomes will be achieved through a combination of seminars, workshops, tutorials, self-directed study, professional practice and reflective review. The learning journey for this module is illustrated below:



## Module guidance

In order to complete this module, you will be required to provide the following:

1. An assignment of up to 1500 words on evaluating problem solving and decision making models and analyse complex data from which to draw conclusions.
2. Two reflective reviews of your personal practice as a manager or leader using different problem solving and decision making techniques and ethical principles within your own organisation
3. Portfolio evidence consisting of:
  - Peer feedback and personal reflection on decisions you have made and carried out
  - Work product evidence based on decision making within your organisation

## Assessment guidance

This module will be assessed through an assignment (report) that will analyse complex data and draw conclusions from this. You will also carry out self-reflection on the use of different problem solving and decision making techniques in line with the values, governance and ethical principles of your own organisation. Finally, you will compile further evidence for your portfolio demonstrating the use of critical analysis tools and evidence based tools that you have used in order to solve problems.

The table below provides an overview of the assessments and how they will be used towards your overall module grade.

Components	Assessment method	Learning outcome	Overview of activity	Marking scheme
Assessment 1	1. Assignment (report)	1.5 (1) 1.5 (2)	Complete a report of no more than 1500 words on evaluating problem solving and decision making models.	Marked and graded (40% pass mark)
Assessment 2	1. Reflective review 1 2. Reflective review 2	1.5 (3)	Two reflection activities, one on your own decision making and the other on how your decisions relate to your organisation's ethics.	Threshold (A pass must be achieved)
Assessment 3	Portfolio evidence 1. Peer feedback 2. Work product evidence	1.5 (4)	Compile evidence for your portfolio in order to demonstrate your approach to decision making.	Threshold (A pass must be achieved)

You will be required to complete all 3 components and achieve a pass for each in order to successfully complete this module.

## Before you start....

What is expected of you:

- Read through and make sure you understand the requirements of the module. Please feel free to ask your tutor any questions if you are not sure or require further clarification. This can be done in person, by email or telephone.
- Ensure that you are aware of hand in dates for your work. If you feel you will not be able to meet these deadlines, please discuss with your tutor who may be able to arrange for an extension. It is essential that you allow time for this and not leave it until the last moment unless of extenuating circumstances.
- Always keep a soft or hard copy of your work.
- Ensure you have completed your individual self-reflections.
- Ensure you have completed all tasks within the allocated timescale. It is highly recommended that you attend the tutorial sessions and keep in touch with your tutor who will support you through your module. If we are not aware of problems you may be having, we will not be able to help you.
- Throughout this module, there will be a need for both group working activities and individual work

## Assessment 1

- Assessment type:** Assignment (report)
- Learning outcome:** 1.5 (1) Evaluate problem solving and decision making models and techniques  
1.5 (2) Assess complex data to draw conclusions
- Overview:** Complete a written report which analyses different problem solving and decision making models.
- Marking scheme:** Marked and graded

## Task

You are required to complete a report of no more than 1500 words that evaluates different problem solving and decision making models and assesses the need for integrity, fairness and consistency in managerial decision making. This should be presented electronically in Microsoft Word format, and include:

- Referencing in the Harvard style
- A full reference list
- A demonstration of research you have carried out

**Your report should provide a response to the following instructions in relation to decision making within your organisation:**

1. Evaluate different problem solving and decision making models. (500 words)
2. Assess the need for integrity, fairness and consistency in managerial decision making. (500 words)
3. Discuss and evaluate when you may need to make difficult or unpopular decisions to support the organisations purpose, values or vision and how you would approach these, with specific examples. (500 words)

## Marking and grading

Your assignment will be marked and graded in line with UCQ's marking and grading guidelines which are in your student handbook. Specific to this task, you will be scored on the task elements detailed above, and summarised as follows:

1. Report structure and inclusion of the specified elements (word count, spelling and grammar, referencing and bibliography).
2. Identification and evaluation of problem solving and decision making models.
3. Clear assessment of the need for integrity, fairness and consistency in decision making.
4. Evaluation of difficult decision making in line with your organisation's governance and ethics.

In order to be awarded the credits for this assessment, you will need to achieve a minimum pass of 40%. A summary of the specific criteria that will be used to grade your work is shown in the table on the next page.

Grade type	Grade criteria	% band
Excellent pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent structure of the report including all required elements to a very high standard with little or no errors.</li> <li>• Identification of a wide and varied number of problem solving and decision making models and an in-depth evaluation of each.</li> <li>• An excellent assessment of integrity, fairness and consistency in decision making with a fully explored study of their impact.</li> <li>• Excellent discussion of a number of types of difficult decisions with relevant examples and a first-rate evaluation.</li> </ul>	70%+
Very good pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very good structure of the report including all of the specified elements to a high standard with only a few minor errors.</li> <li>• Identification of a number of problem solving and decision making models and a sound evaluation of each.</li> <li>• A very good assessment of integrity, fairness and consistency in decision making with a sound study of their impact.</li> <li>• Very good discussion of a few types of difficult decisions with relevant examples and a good evaluation.</li> </ul>	60%-69%
Good pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good structure of the report including most of the specified elements to a good standard, but with some minor errors.</li> <li>• Identification of a few problem solving and decision making models and a good attempt at evaluating them.</li> <li>• A good assessment of integrity, fairness and consistency in decision making with a good attempt at describing their impact.</li> <li>• Good discussion of more than one type of difficult decisions with some examples and a reasonable attempt at an evaluation.</li> </ul>	50%-59%
Pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfactory structure of the report but a failure to include some of the specified elements with a number of errors present.</li> <li>• Identification of a limited number of problem solving and decision making models and a satisfactory, but limited attempt at an evaluation.</li> <li>• A limited assessment of integrity, fairness and consistency in decision making with an adequate attempt at describing their impact.</li> <li>• Satisfactory discussion of a single type of difficult decision with an example, but only a basic attempt at an evaluation.</li> </ul>	40%-49%
Fail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor structure of the report with a failure to include most of the specified elements with errors present throughout.</li> <li>• Identification of only one, or no attempt at identifying problem solving and decision making models with an unsatisfactory attempt at an evaluation.</li> <li>• A poor or non-existent assessment of integrity, fairness and consistency in decision making with little or no evidence at an attempt at describing their impact.</li> <li>• An un-satisfactory discussion of difficult decisions with a poor or non-existent use of examples. No real attempt at an evaluation.</li> </ul>	0%-39%

## Assessment 2

- Assessment type:** Reflective review
- Learning outcome:** 1.5 (3) Evaluate the values, governance and ethics within your own organisation relating to decision making.
- Overview:** Two reflection activities, one on your own decision making and the other on how your decisions relate to your organisation's ethics.
- Marking scheme:** Threshold (A pass must be achieved)

### Task

You are required to complete two separate reflective reviews that demonstrate your practice as a manager, reflecting on your practice and what you would do differently if you could have the same experience again. A template will be provided for this asking you to discuss an experience, reflect on this experience, learn from the experience and then plan and try out what you have learned. There is no formal word count for this task, but as a guide, 500 words for each review would be appropriate.

1. Reflect on your practice as a manager or leader in relation to decisions you may have had to make and how you communicated these decisions.
2. Reflect on how a decision you have made relates to your own organisation's values, governance and ethics.

### Marking and grading

Your reflective reviews are required to be passed. All of the criteria stated in the table below must be met in order to achieve a pass.

Component	Criteria
Presentation of your reflective review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use of a clear structure</li> <li>▪ Accurate spelling and grammar</li> <li>▪ Visually appealing presentation</li> </ul>
Summary of new learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Personal account that is informed from reading/theory</li> <li>▪ Accurately referenced</li> </ul>
Reflective review content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appropriate to module</li> <li>▪ Your own personal experience</li> <li>▪ Reflecting on the situation and discussing it</li> </ul>
Personal action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clear structure</li> <li>▪ Accurate spelling and grammar</li> <li>▪ SMART objectives for personal action plan</li> <li>▪ Review period for action plan</li> <li>▪ Linked to ongoing personal development</li> </ul>

## Assessment 3

- Assessment type:** Portfolio evidence  
**Learning outcome:** 1.5 (4) Demonstrate ethical approaches to problem solving and decision making.  
**Overview:** Compile evidence for your portfolio in order to demonstrate your ethical approach to problem solving and decisions you have made.  
**Marking scheme:** Threshold (A pass must be achieved)

### Task

You are required to complete portfolio tasks and collect evidence to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of the subject area. Each of the individual tasks are detailed below.

#### 1. Peer Feedback

Your peer feedback is part of your portfolio evidence and should demonstrate your ability in tasks and undertakings that you carry out as part of your role as a manager and leader.

You are required to obtain feedback from your peers in relation to problem solving and decision making that you have been directly involved with. Ideally this will be a member of your organisation that have been directly affected by a decision that you have made.

A sheet of questions and guidance will be provided and you should give this to a peer who should complete it, providing constructive feedback about you.

Following receipt of the feedback, you should analyse the responses and then reflect on it. Finally, you will be required to draw up an action plan on how you intend to develop any areas that have been identified as learning opportunities. A template for your action plan will be provided in order to guide your personal development.

#### Marking and grading

This element is required to be passed. All of the criteria stated in the table below must be met in order to achieve a pass.

Component	Criteria
Peer feedback	Peer feedback carried out and given back to you
Peer feedback synopsis	Analysis of feedback from source in a structured and logical manner
Personal action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear structure</li> <li>• Accurate spelling and grammar</li> <li>• SMART objectives for personal action plan</li> <li>• Review period for action plan</li> <li>• Linked to ongoing personal development</li> </ul>

## 2. Work product evidence

You will be asked to gather a range of evidence that has naturally occurred in the workplace as a result of day to day activities taking place, specifically related to problem solving and decision making.

The purpose of gathering this evidence is so that you can demonstrate a range of ethical approaches, use critical analysis and evidence based tools that you have used when making decisions and/or solving problems.

The evidence you chose to gather is at your discretion, but typically evidence may include:

- Minutes from meetings
- Email communications
- Appraisals or staff reviews
- Data analysis (database, spreadsheet)
- Risk assessments
- Visual management systems (brainstorming, flow charts)
- Documentation and reports

In all instances, the evidence must show your own individual contribution and how you have used a range of ethical approaches. Against each item of evidence, you should provide a brief description and a justification of why you have included it to demonstrate your skills.

### Marking and grading

This element is required to be passed. All of the criteria stated in the table below must be met in order to achieve a pass.

Component	Criteria
Gathering of evidence	At least 3 separate pieces of evidence have been gathered and described.
Justification	Each piece of evidence has had its inclusion justified in terms of how it demonstrates communication skills.

## Module reading list

Boddy, D. (2014) *Management: An introduction, by David Boddy - with MyManagementLab*. 6th edn. Harlow: Pearson Education 6 January.

Brockman, J. (ed.) (2013) *Thinking: The new science of decision-making, problem-solving, and prediction*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers 29 October.

Drummond, H. (2012) *The economist guide to decision-making: Getting it more right than wrong*. London, United Kingdom: Economist Books 26 July.

Huczynski, A.A., Buchanan, D.A. and Cranfield (2013) *Organizational behaviour*. 8th edn. Harlow, United Kingdom: Pearson Education 25 July.

Jones, D. (2014) *Decision making for dummies(R)*. United States: John Wiley & Sons 24 October.

Keeney, R.L. (1996) *Value-focused thinking*. Harvard University Press 1 February.

Krogerus, M. *et al.* (2010) *The decision book: Fifty models for strategic thinking*. London: Profile Books 30 October.