

Designation: - Option Module – **Advanced Decision Making** (4263) - Research, Analysis and Academic Reading

Grade	Research, Analysis and Academic Reading
DISTINCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The candidate undertakes theoretical study and research from a range of books, extracts and managerial journals concerning the processes that lead to various decisions being made in corporate organisations by individuals, groups as well as at whole organisational levels• Research is undertaken that leads to an understanding by the candidate of the various types of decisions that may have to be made, their legitimacy and their associated time constraints as well as any attendant risks associated with each 'type' of decision• Research also leads the candidate to recognise the range of decisions that are necessary within a complex organisation and that reaching such decisions can be a complex as well as iterative process• The candidate shows a thorough understanding of the various approaches to decision-making and how they should be applied, as well as the consequences if certain processes are ignored, and in particular the dangers of 'group think' and seeking total consensus• The candidate shows an understanding of who should be involved in specific types of decision making processes, as well as the consequences of not involving the appropriate people, or of the decision being make at an inappropriate organisational level• The candidate's research extends to associated strengths and weaknesses of the various approaches and models of decision making at sub-group and whole organisational level• Through research the candidate develops a clear understanding of the processes that lead to 'improved' decisions making processes and how risk may be assessed within a range of situations

Grade	Research, Analysis and Academic Reading
MERIT/PASS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The candidate undertakes theoretical study and research from books and/or extracts and/or managerial journals concerning processes that lead to decisions being made in corporate organisations by individuals, groups as well as at whole organisational levels • Research leads the candidate to understand why the various types of decisions have to be made, by whom, and in what circumstances, but such research may omit one or two situations, for instance at Board level; crisis decisions and/or the culture of decision making as exemplified by custom and practice in the sector in which the organisation operates • Research also leads the candidate to recognise that reaching such decisions can be a complex and iterative process, and that if such processes are not followed, it may be difficult to implement the decisions that are taken • Research leads the candidate to understand when various approaches should be applied and the consequences if decision making processes are ignored • The candidate’s research leads to their understanding concerning who should be involved in specific types of decision making processes as well as the consequences or not involving them and/or the decision being make at an inappropriate organisational level • The candidate’s research leads to an understanding of the strengths and weakness of the various approaches and models of decision making at various organisational levels • Through research the candidate develops an understanding of the processes that leads to ‘better’ decisions being made and how associated risks may be assessed

Grade	Research, Analysis and Academic Reading
FAIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The candidate undertakes theoretical study and research but this is hampered by reference to limited resources and some of those used may be at an inappropriate level as well as being dated • The candidate does not appear to understand why various types of decisions have to be made, by whom, and in what circumstances. There are serious omissions in the analysis of the range of decisions that have to be made across the entire organisation • Current practice of decision making within the industrial/commercial/NFP sector is not researched/mentioned and only very general decision making processes are addressed • Research fails to enable the candidate to recognise that reaching decisions can be a complex as well as iterative process, and that if such processes are not followed, implementing decisions may be a later challenge/difficulty • The candidate fails to analyse when different approaches to decision-making should be applied and the consequences if they are ignored • Research does not lead to an understanding concerning who should be involved in specific types of decision making processes, as well as the consequences of not involving the appropriate people, and/or the decision making being at an inappropriate organisational level • The candidate’s research fails to lead to an understanding of the strengths and weakness of the various approaches and models of decision making at a range of organisational levels • The research does not lead to the candidate to better understand the processes that lead to ‘improved ’ decisions and how associated risks may be assessed

Grade	Application of Theory to Practice
DISTINCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The candidate assesses current organisational practice with which they are familiar against the findings of their research concerning the processes that lead to various decisions being made in corporate organisations by individuals, groups, as well as at the whole organisational level • The candidate demonstrates their understanding of a whole range of decision making processes and describes how by changing/modifying current organisational decision making practice and risk assessment the organisation may function more effectively and efficiently • The suggested/proposed changes are accompanied by a description of the challenge of implementing such changes and should also include a description of the consequences of not changing • The proposed/suggested changes are set within a realistic time-frame and are prioritised in such a manner that clearly indicates the candidate's understanding of the challenges associated with changing long-standing practices that are congruent with the existing organisational culture • The candidate demonstrates their understanding of the nature and type of decisions that have to be made within the organisation, the relative strengths and weaknesses associate with these decisions as well as the importance of colleagues' involvement, iteration and risk assessment • The candidate illustrates the various steps in the organisation's current decision-making processes and this is matched to theoretical models by way of examples • The candidate shows their understanding concerning who should be involved in specific types of decision making processes as well as the consequences or not involving them or decisions being make at an inappropriate organisational level • Aspects of this module should be linked with other Diploma modules components, for instance HR, Finance and Information Systems Management

Grade	Application of Theory to Practice
MERIT/PASS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The candidate critically assesses the organisation’s strengths and weaknesses in relation to its current practice, against the findings of their research into the various decisions being made throughout the organisation. In doing this they may focus on one or two aspects of decision making or only include one or two sub-organisational units • The candidate demonstrates their understanding of these decision making processes and describes any changes that they would recommend • The recommendations should demonstrate the candidates' understanding of the challenge of changing decision making processes, as well as include some form of risk assessment that indicates an understanding of the weaknesses as well as strengths of the proposals • The proposed/suggested changes are set within a time-frame that indicates an understanding of the reality of corporate management, as well as indicating the need for prioritisation in order for the changes to be realistic • The candidate demonstrates their understanding of the nature and type of decisions that have to be made within the organisation, the relative strengths and weaknesses associated with these decisions as well as the importance of colleagues’ involvement, iteration and risk assessment. They do this by using examples to illustrate their point. However, at this grade the candidate may limit their examples to only a few of the processes, techniques and range of decisions • The candidate illustrates by example the personnel who should ideally be involved in different decision-making processes • Some aspects from other Diploma modules are referred to by the candidate to illustrate effectively their understanding of the need for holistic management in the decision-making processes at whole organisational level. Such modules may include HR, Finance and Management Information Systems

Grade	Application of Theory to Practice
FAIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The candidate attempts a critique of the organisation’s strengths and weaknesses concerning its decision-making approaches against the findings of their research, but it lacks sufficient detail to be of real value to the organisation or the individual manager.• The candidate demonstrates a lack of understanding of the decision making processes and fails to describe in detail any changes that they would recommend• The recommendations made do not adequately demonstrate an understanding of the challenge of changing the decision making processes and fails to including some sound form of risk assessment that relates to associated weaknesses and strengths of the proposals• Any proposed/suggested changes are free standing and are not set within a suitable time-frame; they also lack prioritisation to the extent that the proposed changes are unrealistic and would be extremely difficult to either implement or monitor• The candidate demonstrates no real in-depth understanding of the nature and type of decisions that have to be made within the organisation and the importance of colleagues’ involvement and iteration.• The candidate fails to use examples to illustrate sound, or poor practices, that show their understanding or knowledge concerning the practical application of theory to practice• No reference is made to components of the other Diploma in Management modules

Grade	Overall Quality of the Report
DISTINCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report describes a wide range of decision-making drawn from different situations and at different organisational levels that are soundly illustrated by drawing examples from the work place • The strengths and weakness of current organisational decision-making practices are highlighted and where appropriate the consequences for existing stability or change are identified along with a suitable risk analysis • A range of examples of the steps taken in the decision making processes are described and assessed against identified best practice as well as the inclusion of the challenge associated with implementing any proposed changes • The candidate’s assessment should refer to the levels at which decisions are made, the approaches used in reaching and communicating (or not communicating) these decisions, the situations in which different decision processes are made; for example in a financial crises, outsourcing certain processes, formulating top down/bottom up budgets etc. • The report should also include the dangers/strengths of single person decision and group decisions, as well as illustrate the position of their own organisation in the range of effective/ineffective decision-making processes • The findings should lead a range of prioritised, realistic and sensible recommendations that should have a detailed accompanying time-scale for implementation. These recommendations should be accompanied by some realistic <i>Cost:Benefit</i> analysis in terms of emotional, cultural, financial and opportunity costs • A report at this levels will use a wide range of presentation/communication techniques as well as show selectivity when using illustrations to exemplify current or future preferred practice

Grade	Overall Quality of the Report
MERIT/PASS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report describes a range of decision-making drawn from different situations and at different organisational levels and is illustrated by drawing examples from the work place • The strengths and weakness of current organisational decision-making practices are highlighted and where appropriate the consequences for existing stability or change are identified along with a suitable risk analysis • The steps in the decision making process are described and compared with identified practice, as well as assess the challenge associated with implementing the proposed changes • The assignment should refer to the levels at which decisions are usually made, the approaches used in reaching them and how they are communicated (or not), the situations in which different decision processes might be made; for example in a financial crises, in outsourcing specific processes, budgeting formulation etc. • The report should include the dangers/strengths of single person and group decisions, as well as illustrate the effectiveness of their own organisation's decision making processes • The findings should lead to prioritised realistic recommendations that should have some reference to an accompanying implementation time-scale. These recommendations should be accompanied by some realistic Cost:Benefit analysis • A report at this levels should include a wide range of presentation/communication techniques

Designation: - Option Module – **Advanced Decision Making** (4263) - Overall Quality of the Report

Grade	Overall Quality of the Report
FAIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report makes reference to the decision making process but draws from a narrow range of situations and perhaps only one organisational level in illustrating such processes in the work place • The strengths and weakness of current organisational decision making practices are not effectively highlighted and the consequences for existing stability or change are not identified and there is no suitable risk analysis • The steps in the decision making process are inadequately described and what is presented is not compared with accepted practice • The challenge associated with implementing the proposed changes is not adequately covered • The assignment does not refer to the levels at which decisions are usually made, neither does it cover the approaches used in reaching them and inadequately describes how they are communicated (or not) • The report does not include an assessment of the dangers/strengths of single person or group decisions, and does not illustrate any of these in any depth, so that the impact of the decision-making processes on organisation effectiveness is not assessed • The findings do not lead to realistic recommendations that are prioritised and poor reference is made to an appropriate time scale • Recommendations are not accompanied by a Cost:Benefit analysis • The report does not utilise a range of presentation/communication techniques

