

Risk Assessment and Management

Module Code	RAM	NQF level:	5
Credit Value	15	Study duration:	9 weeks

This module aims to:

Examine a range of definitions of risk

- Explore the importance of assessment and communication in risk management
- Consider some of the principal assessment tools used to identify risk in the criminal justice setting
- Explore some of the ways that risks are managed in the criminal justice setting
- Identify potential problems related to risk decisions and how they may be managed
- Review key components of risk policies
- Examine what is meant by risk management
- Consider the growing problems caused by a risk-averse society
- Examine relevant criminal justice case histories for their application of risk assessment and management principles

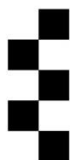
Learning outcomes

On completion of this module, students will be able to:

- Articulate what is meant by risk from a number of perspectives
- Evaluate a number of key assessment tools used to assess risk
- Understand the legal concepts relevant to risk
- Appreciate some of the legal and professional standards applicable to risk decision-makers
- Identify key issues related to risk decision and policy-making
- Assess the social and economic consequences of crime policies based on risk aversion

Syllabus

- The Language of Risk
 - Introduce the concept of 'a working definition of risk'
 - Consider our own perception of risk as it relates to professional risk-taking
 - Explore the idea of hazard, harm likelihood, uncertainty in relation to risk
 - Consider the various dimensions and elements of risk
 - Examine the limitations of an outcome-related approach to risk decision-making
 - Review what is meant by risk assessment, judgement and management
 - Introduce the issue of risk-taking in the criminal justice setting
- Mapping Risk
 - Review the process of risk assessment and management
 - Analyse the interrelationships between the parts of the risk-taking 'map'
 - Consider the five-level model of risk-taking
 - Introduce you to actuarial and clinical factors used to predict risk
 - Examine how law, policy and professional standards impact the risk decision-making process
 - Consider how approaches to risk assessment differ in professional social work contexts such as community care, criminal justice and child protection
 - Review the levels of risk management in Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and Probation Circular 39/2005 and the National Policing Improvement Agency guidance on protecting the public and managing the risks posed by Potentially Dangerous Persons (PDPs)
- Assessing Risk
 - Examine approaches to risk assessment
 - Consider how potential outcomes can be assessed
 - Review the role of causation and its relation to outcomes
 - Explore the importance of assigning value to outcomes
- Risk Assessment Tools
 - Consider the role of professional judgement in risk decisions
 - Explore the dynamic and static risk factors that form part of the Risk-of-Harm Assessment
 - Examine the risk assessment tools used by the Police, Probation and Prison services in England, Wales and Scotland
- Managing Risk
 - Examine the relationship between risk assessment and management
 - Review how risk management interventions might affect risk



Risk Assessment and Management

Syllabus continued

- Assess some risk management interventions for serious violent, sexual, and youth offenders
- Consider some of the resources required to manage risks
- Communicating Risk
 - Explore the way value is subjectively ascribed to words used in risk assessment and management
 - Consider the usefulness of numerical values in describing risk and preventing misinterpretation
 - Review some of the problems associated with poor communication and miscommunication and how they can affect outcomes
 - Examine some strategies to communicate and rate outcome likelihood
 - Consider the importance of articulating values
- Avoiding Problems in Risk Procedures and Decision-making
 - Examine the issue of 'decision complexity' and how it can impact risk management
 - Assess the potential for misuse of risk factors including double-counting, limited relevance to risk management, a tendency to emphasise harm rather than benefit, and the question of assigning importance
 - Consider how detail does not necessarily relate to quality when it comes to risk factor analysis
 - Evaluate Carson and Bain's idea of the 'risk factor filter funnel' and its potential usefulness in risk decision-making
 - Examine how protective factors are used to assist in risk decision-making in the criminal justice setting, especially in relation to youth offending
- Risk Policies and Cooperative Strategies
 - Examine the cooperative practices of risk assessment and management in the criminal justice sector including MAPPA and MARAC
 - Consider the role of the professional risk-taker and decision maker in the context of 'the system'
 - Review levels of risk-taking and responsibilities of the individual, the decision-maker, the decision-supporter and system controller
 - Explore the fundamentals of the risk policy in a multidisciplinary context and consider the role of professionals in the process

Syllabus continued

- Legal Considerations for Risk Decision-makers
 - Review the potential for civil and criminal liability in relation to professional risk decision-making
 - Consider the way that professional standards of care are established and form the basis for standard of care evaluations in the criminal justice sector (Youth Justice Services, for example)
 - Analyse the legal requirements and tests for recklessness, negligence and consent in the context of professional risk decision-making
 - Examine the facts related to the Independent Police Commission inquiry into the fatal shooting of Jean-Charles de Menezes
- Human Rights, the Offender and Risk Decision-making
 - Review the legal protections in place for offenders post-release
 - Consider how EU and UK human rights legislation prohibiting inhuman or degrading treatment factors into risk decision-making in sex offender cases
 - Examine the risk assessment decision and human rights issues involved in the case of Osman v United Kingdom (23452/94)
 - Compare the ways that the US and the UK approach sex offender risk management

Learning and teaching methods

The Learning and Teaching Methods for the module follow the intended online delivery strategy for the programme as a whole. The module will be delivered through the provision of specified reading materials on the virtual learning platform, which shall be supported by specified discussion forums and lecturecasts, and Tutor support will be available to students via phone, email, and a fortnightly synchronous question and answer (Q&A) session.

Students will be provided with indicative guidance on, and encouraged to look at, relevant websites which are appropriate to the module, and to identify and share appropriate web-based resources as learning support references with their fellow students and as indicators of their individual learning contexts with their tutors. The lecturecasts will include referenced use of selected case studies which will be drawn from the reading materials/web based module learning resources and the practice-based and professional/educational contexts and experience of the Tutors.

Description of unit of assessment	Length/Duration	Submission Date	Weighting
Discussion contributions	Fortnight	Unit 2 and Unit 3	10%
Mid-module assignment	2000 words	Unit 6	40%
Journal entry	500 words (each)	Unit 4 and Unit 8	10%
End of module project	2000 words	Unit 9	40%