

# UNIVERSITY OF Chichester

**Business and Management Programme**

## **BAM124 Thinking, Knowing and Arguing**

**Module Handbook 2007-08**

“People generally quarrel because they cannot argue.”

– GK Chesterton

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"Decisions of the kind the executive has to make are not made well by acclamation . . . They are made well only if based on the clash of conflicting views . . . The first rule in decision-making is that one does not make a decision unless there is disagreement."

– Peter Drucker (1966) *The Effective Executive*

"I may be wrong and you may be right, and by an effort, we may get nearer to the truth."

– Karl Popper

"The aim of argument, or of discussion, should not be victory, but progress."

– Joseph Joubert



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What do you see here?  
Do you see the word "LIFT",  
or a bunch of black splotches?

## **Welcome** to BAM124 Thinking, Knowing and Arguing!

In BAM122 students developed their skills in addressing a group. One of the things that was clear by the end of that module is that everyone who took it is a skilled and effective communicator – when they have something to say. When we were talking about something we really knew about and wanted to communicate about, some of us were even perhaps on the way to being charismatic!

How crucial it is to have something worth saying!

How can we be more interesting? How can we have something worth hearing to say about more things – even things we are asked to talk about as part of our degree course, such as Maslow's hierarchy or the law of tort? I suggest the answer is to think more and to think better – to improve our thinking skills.

Many people think that presenting to others is something that some people are good at and some others just are not. BAM122, I think, showed that this is not the case, and we can ALL improve our presenting skills and be impressively effective speakers. Similarly, many people think that thinking is something some people are simply better at than others. It may never have occurred to many people that thinking is a skill at all. In BAM124 I hope we will all come to realise that these beliefs are not true – that thinking is, in fact, a skill and we can all improve our thinking, no matter how good or bad at thinking we are.

How often have you received feedback on academic work that said: “needs more analysis/greater depth/to be more critical”, or something similar? My guess is that most students will have received such feedback, perhaps quite often. Do you know what is meant by such feedback? What would you do to make your work more analytical or critical? The way we will develop our

thinking skills in BAM124 should help us to produce better academic work so that we receive less of this kind of feedback.

However, the skills that BAM124 addresses are not just of use in academic work. They are also crucial in business. One manager might claim that outsourcing her business's call centres to India will reduce costs and increase profits. Her management colleagues might not all agree. How is a decision to be made? The managers could vote; but the majority could be wrong. The managers could ask the chairman of the board of directors to decide the issue; but what is his expertise? Might he not be wrong too? Good thinking is needed at all levels in business.

The situation I have just described illustrates that we often think in groups; and we don't only think in groups at work. For example, most people buy houses with their partners, and buying a house certainly needs thought! How good are you at thinking in a group? You have probably already done some group work on your degree course, eg in Management and Organisations. How did it go? In BAM124 we will practise using a technique for thinking collaboratively with others that could have a quick pay-off in terms of better group work results and less stress.

I hope you will approach the module with an attitude of openness to the possibility of improving your thinking skills. However, there are a couple of other things that it's important we be open-minded about.

People often think there are some things they know to be true – things they know to be facts. This belief can hinder our thinking and lead to situations of deadlock with other people who disagree with us. So it will be helpful in general if we are open to the possibility that we **might** be wrong about **everything**. (I believe this to be true – everything you learn this semester *could* be wrong!). I should like us to adopt the following motto for BAM124.

“I may be wrong and you may be right, and by an effort, we may get nearer to the truth.” (Karl Popper)

The effort that philosopher Karl Popper had in mind includes engaging in argument. For many people the word argument has negative connotations and too many arguments are unproductive and sapping of energy. However, I should like us to be open to the idea that argument is a vitally important and positively useful tool. A second motto for BAM124 might be:

“The aim of argument, or of discussion, should not be victory, but progress.” (Joseph Joubert)

I hope that during BAM124 we will all contribute much effort and enjoy more productive arguments that might help us all to get closer to the truth. And I hope that the Popper motto in particular might be something that you will find helpful to remember on many occasions throughout your professional and personal life.

### **Summary of module aims**

BAM124 aims to help students to develop their:

- skills in knowledge management;
- skills in critical thinking;
- skills in presenting their own arguments;
- skills in creative thinking and techniques for problem-solving;
- understanding of knowledge, argument, and academic practice.

We might sum this up by saying that BAM124 aims to help students to become better thinkers and users of knowledge.

### **Practicalities**

There will be five classroom sessions. (The BAM124 sessions alternate with BAM123 so in the weeks we don't meet there will be a BAM123 session instead.) The sessions are timetabled for 2½ hours. We will always take at least one break; we may take more. You should feel free to suggest taking a break if you feel there is a reason to do so at a particular point. For example, you may feel the room is becoming stuffy, or you may feel some of the group are tiring. But if your suggestion of a break is taken up, be prepared to be asked to do something other than just take five minutes for coffee or anything else individual groups members may feel like doing – if the room is stuffy the group might be asked to go outside and walk twice round the building clockwise!

The sessions may vary in format. It is important to remember that people learn in a variety of ways. There are always many opportunities to learn every day. Make sure you try to take advantage of every opportunity in the BAM124 sessions, remembering that sometimes you may learn more from your fellow students than from the academic staff or from books and other resources. It is intended that students should be active in the sessions, not passive. Look out for opportunities to practise skills worked on in BAM122 last semester – when we are working in plenary there will be opportunities for you to present to the whole class. (A plenary session is one involving all of the members of a group who are entitled to be present.)

There will be inter-session tasks to be undertaken outside of the weekly sessions. Please ensure you undertake these tasks by the deadline given.

There is a module website that will be used to provide important information. Please check it regularly. You can access the site from the My Courses area on Portia – follow the link to Chris Downs’s home page and click on the button labelled “Module pages”. You may want to bookmark the BAM124 main page so you can get to it directly, quickly and easily.

## **Privacy**

Some of the things we will do might be designed to make you think by surprising you – making you think about something you had previously taken for granted perhaps. For this reason, please DO NOT discuss what you do in BAM124 sessions with people outside of your group before 4.30pm on the day of your session. This is important because there are two groups taking BAM124 on Wednesdays.

Please ensure you respect your colleagues’ privacy. Please be sensitive to the feelings of others at all times. Recall that the University’s Commitment Charter states that students are expected to “respect the rights of, and to treat with dignity, all fellow students and other members of the University” (University of Chichester, 2006, p8).

## **Summary of basic rules of classroom conduct**

1. Take seriously your share in the whole class’s responsibility for ensuring a productive and respectful working environment.
2. All classroom time is working time unless it’s a break.
3. Working time is mobile-free time - no mobile phones are to be used for any purpose during working time.
4. Only the class tutor can designate any time as break time, though all class members can request a break.
5. Keep focused on work conversations - do not engage in conversation with a sub-set of the class while the class is working in plenary. (A plenary session is one involving all of the members of a group who are entitled to be present.)
6. The issue of a yellow card to a student by the class tutor is a warning that that student’s conduct is deemed to have contravened the rules or

otherwise to have breached good classroom etiquette. A red card may be issued for a second offence.

7. The issue of a red card to a student by the class tutor will require that the student concerned leave the session immediately. At the class tutor's discretion, the student may be permitted to return later in the session or may be marked as absent in the attendance register. (See p10 regarding student absence.)

## Schedule

Session number	Week beginning	Activity
1	21 January 2008	Parallel thinking and the six thinking hats
2	4 February 2008	Library databases Argument
Reading week	18 February 2008	Active reading!
3	25 February 2008	Argument analysis
<b>Hand in essay</b>	<b>Tuesday 26 February 2008</b>	
4	10 March 2008	Creative thinking
5	24 March 2008	More thinking and arguing
<b>Hand in exercise</b>	<b>Thursday 3 April 2008</b>	

The schedule is subject to change.

## Module assessment

BAM124 is an 8 credit module. The modules you will take in the first level of the degree course carry a total credit of 120.

The assessed work for this module comprises an essay (counting for 65% of the module mark) and an exercise (counting for 35% of the module mark). Details of both follow.

### Essay

You are required to write a short essay in which you report on your use of the six thinking hats to think about how one of the modules you took in semester 1

could be improved. You should consider what seems likely to be regarded as an improvement by most stakeholders. Other students, academic staff, future employers, and society at large may all be considered to be stakeholders. The aim is to use the six thinking hats to produce one or more acceptable and achievable proposals for change.

The essay should be no more than 1,000 words and so you will probably not be able to describe proposals for large-scale change. It will be probably be better to focus on something relatively small, eg an assessment task, or one particular classroom activity.

Bear in mind also that we don't have to start a search for improvements by looking for faults or weaknesses. Indeed, de Bono would suggest always doing some yellow hat thinking before we use the black hat, and doing this might lead us to identify an existing strength/benefit that could be enhanced.

You should describe the way you reached your proposal. For example, you might start with the blue hat to plan your thinking. The planned thinking might proceed by doing some red hat thinking about the modules you took. This might lead you to decide on one module in particular that you wish to focus on. You might then do some white hat thinking about that module to remind yourself of what you did during it. You might then go back the red hat to think about how you feel about the activities you undertook. Again, this might lead you to decide on one or two particular activities to think about further. Then you could do some yellow hat thinking on each of these one or two things in turn, followed by some black hat thinking. And so on...

Be prepared to change your plan by going back to the blue hat if you feel your thinking is not making good progress. But if you do this then you should also report this in your essay. It will demonstrate your thoughtful and competent use of the six hats tool.

You are encouraged to trust the tool. It may feel like a strange and unfamiliar way of working, but this should not be a surprise. New tools will often feel strange and unfamiliar – have you ever switched from a manual to an electric toothbrush, for example? Persevere, and try to use the six hats in a disciplined way. As with any new tool, you may need to read the instructions – see de Bono's book, *Six Thinking Hats*. (De Bono's instructions are such that the six thinking hats is a very a flexible tool – so don't try too hard to follow my (incomplete) example above.) I hope you may be surprised with the quality of the output from your thinking.

Please hand your work in to Lesley-Anne Holder (BAM Programme Administrator) in room G14 (ICT Building) before 1pm on the hand-in date.

The hand-in date for the essay is Tuesday 26 February. Failure to submit work on time will result in a fail mark for the module.

### **Assessment criteria**

Your essay will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. Quality of presentation (accuracy of English; structure; layout on page; ease of use by reader). Any errors that should have been identified by using a spell checker will result in a zero mark for this criterion.
2. Quality of six hat thinking.

The first criterion will carry a one third weighting. This means that you need to take seriously the issue of presentation quality and there is a heavy penalty for errors that are judged to be errors that the use of a word processor's spell checking tool would have identified.

The second criterion will carry a two thirds weighting.

Please refer to the grading criteria in the table below. You are welcome to talk to Chris Downs about the assessment but you also need to exercise your own judgement. We endeavour to set assessment tasks that are appropriate to higher education and require students to use their discretion rather than simply follow instructions. So although there are always instructions to follow, there should always be room for individual initiative as well.

Grade	Criteria	
	1 Presentation	2 Quality of thinking
85+	The work is extremely attractive and user-friendly; there are only one or two typographical, spelling or grammatical errors.	It is clear throughout how the six thinking hats have been used and they have been used correctly and effectively. The thinking is well focused and the results potentially useful.
70-84	The work is attractive and user-friendly; there are only one or two typographical, spelling or grammatical errors.	It is clear throughout how the six thinking hats have been used and they have been used mainly correctly and effectively. The thinking is well focused and the results potentially useful.
60-69	The work is quite attractive and user-friendly; there are very few typographical, spelling or grammatical errors.	It is mostly clear how the six thinking hats have been used and they have been used mainly correctly. The thinking is well focused and the results are credible.
50-59	The work shows evidence that thought has been given to presentation and ease of use; there are sufficient typographical, spelling or grammatical errors to distract the reader.	There is insufficient description of how the six thinking hats have been used but there appears to have been some correct use. The thinking is quite well focused and has produced a result.
40-49	The work is not presented so as to make its use by readers easy; the English is sufficiently poor to make reading difficult in places.	There is insufficient description of how the six thinking hats have been used and there appears to have been little correct use.
< 40	The work is not presented so as to make its use by readers easy; the English is sufficiently poor to make reading difficult in large parts of the work.	There is insufficient description of how the six thinking hats have been used and there appears to have been almost no correct use.

### Penalties

If you exceed the word limit by more than 10% your mark will be reduced by 10 percentage points. Appendices, lists of references etc are not to be included within the word count. You must state the number of words clearly in your assignment (at the beginning or end). If you fail to do so your mark will be reduced by 10 percentage points.

Failure to submit work on time will result in a zero grade being awarded.

Failure to submit a readable electronic version (on disk or CD) will result in a zero grade being awarded.

### **Exercise**

The second assessment task is the following exercise. It must be submitted to Lesley-Anne Holder (BAM Programme Administrator) in room G14 (ICT/BAM Centre) before 1pm on the hand-in date. The hand-in date for the exercise is Thursday 3 April. Failure to submit work on time will result in a fail mark for the module. The word limit is 500 words.

You are required to do some lateral thinking to generate some new ideas. We want some interesting new ideas, not just the most obvious ones and this is why lateral thinking is required. Do this lateral thinking by applying at least two of de Bono's techniques for setting up a provocation, and at least two of his techniques for getting movement from a provocation. It does not matter how practical the resulting ideas seem to be. We are more interested at this stage in the way in which the techniques are used, rather than the results, so you should submit a careful (and succinct) description of the process you go through and not just the results.

You have a choice of problems to work on, listed below. It is suggested you try more than one and then write up and submit the one to which you feel you have been best able to apply the de Bono techniques. If you wish, you could submit work on two different problems.

- i. Shop-lifting.
- ii. Plastic carrier bags given to shoppers by supermarkets.
- iii. A gym has a low retention rate for customers who join just after Christmas.
- iv. Ageist attitudes among staff in a business.
- v. Reckless driving by staff when using company vehicles.
- vi. City centre traffic congestion.
- vii. A restaurant's passing (pedestrian and vehicular) traffic is greatly reduced by long-term road works.
- viii. Almost all a call centre's staff wish to take breaks at the same time.
- ix. Obesity.
- x. Global warming.

The grading criteria are presented in the table below.

Grade	
85+	At least two po techniques have been used and the provocations produced are likely to be successful in shifting thinking away from usual patterns. At least two movement techniques have been used and movement away from the initial provocation has been achieved by both of them.
70-84	At least two po techniques have been used and the provocations produced are likely to be successful in shifting thinking away from usual patterns. At least two movement techniques have been used and movement away from the initial provocation has been achieved by at least one of them.
60-69	At least two po techniques have been used and at least one of the provocations produced is likely to be successful in shifting thinking away from usual patterns. At least two movement techniques have been used and movement away from the initial provocation has been achieved by at least one of them.
50-59	At least one po technique has been used and is likely to be successful in shifting thinking away from usual patterns, or at least two have been tried with a less promising outcome. At least one movement technique has been used.
40-49	At least one po technique has been used and at least one movement technique, or at least two po techniques have been used.
< 40	No po technique has been correctly used.

### Penalties

If you exceed the word limit by more than 10% your mark will be reduced by 10 percentage points. Appendices, lists of references etc are not to be included within the word count. You must state the number of words clearly in your assignment (at the beginning or end). If you fail to do so your mark will be reduced by 10 percentage points.

Failure to submit work on time will result in a zero grade being awarded.

Failure to submit a readable electronic version (on disk or CD) will result in a zero grade being awarded.

### Stationery

Please submit your work for assessment in a suitable folder. A suitable folder will hold your work securely but allow the reader to remove and replace it

easily without tearing it. It will also not be too bulky and so will be easy to carry around. The following are recommended.

- Clippy file – available from Print-In Office Supplies in Bognor at £1.49 each.
- Swingclip file – available from WH Smiths in Bognor at £3.99 for five (and on offer at £1.99 at the time of writing: 29/8/06) – or the similar project file from WH Smiths at 99p each.

Whatever you do, do not place individual pages in plastic wallets as markers may wish to annotate your work.

## **Cheating, Plagiarism and Collusion**

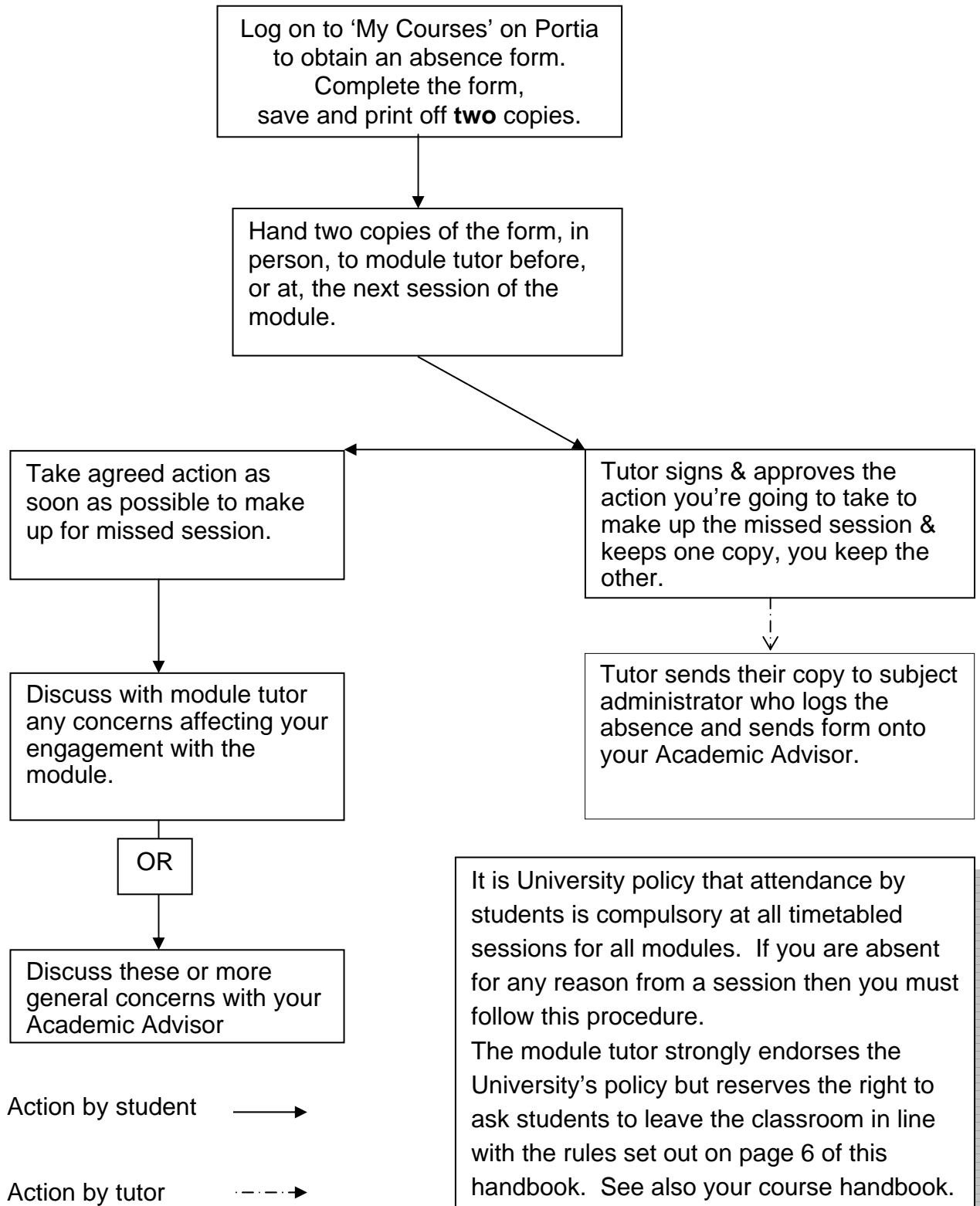
In light of the increasing incidence of academic malpractice, Chichester has joined other universities and colleges in using electronic plagiarism detection services. You are therefore required to submit an electronic version (on disk or CD-ROM) alongside a hard copy of your written work. Failure to submit an electronic version (on disk) will result in a zero grade being awarded. (This does not apply to work prepared under exam room conditions.)

## **Reading advice**

The reading list is on the BAM124 website.

## Student absence

What to do when you've been absent from a module session.



## Appendix

### Module descriptor

Please note this is an official document used by the university for academic purposes. It is primarily intended to be used by academic staff and others involved in curriculum design and course quality assurance. Students are given a copy of this document for background information only. In particular, *you should refer to the reading list available on the BAM124 website for up-to-date reading advice, and you should not rely on the information on reading in the module descriptor.*

<b>Module Title:</b>	Thinking, Knowing and Arguing
<b>Module Code:</b>	BAM124
<b>Credits:</b>	8
<b>Level:</b>	1 (semester 2)
<b>Home School and Subject Area:</b>	Social Studies (Business and Management)
<b>Programme to which the module contributes:</b>	BA (Hons) Business Studies, BA (Hons) Tourism Management, BA (Hons) Information Technology Management for Business.
<b>Module Co-ordinator:</b>	Chris Downs
<b>Entry Requirements:</b>	No pre-requisites or co-requisites

#### Aims:

This module aims to contribute to students' induction into higher education, and to enable students to develop their skills of critical thinking and knowledge management. The module aims to promote the use by students of argument analysis and other specific thinking techniques, with a view to improving the quality of all their academic work, including their writing. It also aims to raise students' awareness of the problematic nature of knowledge and to encourage reflection on their epistemological beliefs.

It is hoped that students will gain in confidence that they can successfully find, manage and evaluate knowledge, and communicate their views according to academic conventions. In so doing students will become progressively more independent learners.

#### Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this module students will have developed their:

- skills in knowledge management;
- skills in critical thinking;
- skills in presenting their own arguments;
- skills in creative thinking and techniques for problem-solving;
- understanding of knowledge, argument, and academic practice.

**Indicative Curriculum Content:**

- Critical thinking, eg argument analysis.
- Elements of Edward de Bono's thinking techniques.
- Brainstorming.
- Mind-mapping.
- Information/knowledge management, eg use of academic databases such as Business Source Elite, and Procite.
- The nature of knowledge and learning.

**Learning Strategy:**

The module will comprise a series of workshops wherein students will work sometimes together and sometimes individually. The emphasis will be placed on learning by doing and reflecting on the experience of doing. Students will be encouraged to participate fully in a supportive atmosphere.

Directed tasks will be used to enable students to pursue further work done in class and to practise techniques introduced.

The module will be supported by a website.

**Mode of Assessment:**

**Formative:** - There will be much in-class discussion, with opportunities for students to reflect, share experience, and to receive feedback from each other and from staff. The assessed essay will be submitted during the semester and students will receive feedback on this.

**Summative:** Assignment of 1500 words equivalent

**Assessment Criteria:**

- Quality of presentation (accuracy of English; structure; layout on page; ease of use by reader).
- Level of detail of argument analysis (ie number of reasons, implicit assumptions, intermediate conclusions identified).
- Use of evidence and reasoning to support conclusions reached and judgments made.
- Quality of reflective thinking.

**Indicative Reading:**

Burns, T. and Sinfield, S. (2003) *Essential Study Skills: The complete guide to success @ university*. London: Sage

Buzan, T. (1995) *Use Your Head*. 4th. edn. London: BBC Books

Buzan, T. and Buzan, B. (2003) *The Mind Map Book*. London: BBC Worldwide

Cottrell, S. (2003) *Skills for Success: the personal development planning handbook*. Basingstoke: Palgrave

Cottrell, S. (2003) *The Study Skills Handbook*. 2nd. edn. Basingstoke: Palgrave

de Bono, E. (1982) *de Bono's Thinking Course*. London: BBC

de Bono, E. (2000) *Six Thinking Hats*. London: Penguin

Fisher, A. (2001) *Critical Thinking: an introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Marshall, L. and Rowland, F. (1998) *A Guide to Learning Independently*. 3rd. edn. Buckingham: Open University Press

McIlroy, D. (2003) *Studying @ University: how to be a successful student*. London: Sage

Race, P. (1999) *How to Get a Good Degree: making the most of your time at university*. Buckingham: Open Univeristy Press

Rose, J. (2001) *The Mature Student's Guide to Writing*. Basingstoke : Palgrave

Thomson, A. (2002) *Critical Reasoning: a practical introduction*. 2nd. edn. London: Routledge

van den Brink-Budgen, R. (2000) *Critical Thinking for Students*. 3rd. edn. Oxford: How To Books

Whyte, J. (2003) *Bad Thoughts: a guide to clear thinking*. London: Corvo

"Decisions of the kind the executive has to make are not made well by acclamation . . . They are made well only if based on the clash of conflicting views . . . The first rule in decision-making is that one does not make a decision unless there is disagreement." – Peter Drucker (1966) *The Effective Executive*

It is better to debate a question without settling it than to settle it without debate.  
- Joseph Joubert

"To have a great idea, have a lot of them."  
– Thomas Edison

The aim of argument, or of discussion, should not be victory, but progress. - Joseph Joubert

"A skillful teacher can use valid deductive arguments to force us to *re-examine* our beliefs by showing that and how our beliefs are contradictory. And he may help us, in this way, to recognize that we really do not know what we thought we knew. But he can do this only if we want to learn, only if we value truth and education, and only if we understand and respect the law of non-contradiction."  
- Notturmo (2000) p66

"... the most important tradition in an open society is the tradition of critical thinking."  
- Notturmo (2000) p51

"Production is not the application of tools to materials, but logic to work."  
– Peter Drucker

"Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited, whereas imagination embraces the entire world, stimulating progress, giving birth to evolution."  
– Albert Einstein

"Criticism, in an open society, is an attempt to find the contradictions in our beliefs and to choose between them instead of trying to cover them up."  
- Notturmo (2000) p66

"For criticism is not only one of our greatest signs of respect, it is also essential for learning. We run the risk, unless we engage ourselves in it and unless we take it seriously, of impeding not only our own learning, but also the learning of others."  
- Notturmo (2000) p54

*"The only good is knowledge, and the only evil is ignorance."*  
- Herodotus

"A teacher is one who makes himself progressively unnecessary."  
- Thomas Carruthers

"Logical arguments, contrary to popular belief, cannot force us to accept the truth of their conclusions. They can force us to choose but they cannot make the choice for us."  
- Notturmo (2000) p66