

# WELF 4008 PROFESSIONAL DECISION MAKING IN SOCIAL WORK

**Credit Points** 10

**Legacy Code** 102352

**Coordinator** Sera Harris ([https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Sera Harris/](https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Sera%20Harris/))

**Description** This subject uses a problem-based learning approach to develop students' critical and practical reasoning abilities in professional decision making. Students will compare several models of decision making used at the interface of organisational and individual/family work contexts, and evaluate the usefulness of evidence based inquiry as a decision aid. Through case studies, students will discern the unique characteristics of a situation requiring professional judgement, explore their own habits or preferences in decision making, and develop reasoning skills that produce sound and ethical responses to the situation at hand.

**School** Social Sciences

**Discipline** Social Work

**Student Contribution Band** HECS Band 4 10cp

Check your fees via the Fees ([https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/currentstudents/current\\_students/fees/](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/currentstudents/current_students/fees/)) page.

**Level** Undergraduate Level 4 subject

**Pre-requisite(s)** WELF 3020 OR WELF 2005

**Equivalent Subjects** WELF 4004 - Critical Social Work Practice Indirect

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this subject, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a capacity to search for, analyse and present best practice evidence in relation to a social work intervention.
2. Critically evaluate evidence based inquiry as a decision making aid in social work practice.
3. Demonstrate understanding of assumptions underpinning several formal and informal (discretionary) decision making models; also, of how decision making models in social work are affected by organisational culture and political context.
4. Demonstrate understanding of how a worker's values, purpose/goals, reasoning and relationship skills impact on decision making.

## Subject Content

- Models and principles of decision making in professional social work practice
- Research skills to undertake evidence-based practice (EBP) inquiry; understanding how evidence is produced and how social workers interpret and apply evidence in practice
- skills in Critical thinking, negotiated decision making, and practical reasoning.

## Assessment

The following table summarises the standard assessment tasks for this subject. Please note this is a guide only. Assessment tasks are

regularly updated, where there is a difference your Learning Guide takes precedence.

| Type                   | Length      | Percent | Threshold | Individual/<br>Group Task | Mandatory |
|------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|
| Annotated Bibliography | 1,000 words | 40      | N         | Individual                | Y         |
| Report                 | 2,000 words | 60      | N         | Individual                | Y         |

Teaching Periods

## Autumn (2025)

### Liverpool

#### On-site

**Subject Contact** Sera Harris ([https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Sera Harris/](https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Sera%20Harris/))

View timetable ([https://classregistration.westernsydney.edu.au/odd/timetable/?subject\\_code=WELF4008\\_25-AUT\\_LP\\_1#subjects](https://classregistration.westernsydney.edu.au/odd/timetable/?subject_code=WELF4008_25-AUT_LP_1#subjects))

### Parramatta - Victoria Rd

#### On-site

**Subject Contact** Sera Harris ([https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Sera Harris/](https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Sera%20Harris/))

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