

Assessment brief (Non-attending students)

Individual Essay (100%)

Task: Essay 2500 words (+/- 10%) about the application of a normative ethical theory to a business case. You should write an individual essay about a company's ethical problem that you can freely select. The ethical problem selected for the presentation should be real and a contemporary issue faced normally by companies. Although you can use a fictional company, if you want, you need to use examples from the business world to support your discussion. You are a manager designated from the CEO to report about this current ethical issue and this is your final report. You should present the ethical problem in details and main actors with their interests. Then using one normative ethical theory (utilitarianism, deontology or virtue ethics), you should give some suggestions and indicate the most proper conduct(s) for the company. You should reflect upon this suggestion(s) and clearly explain how the ethical theory prescribes certain conduct(s).

Essay structure and content: there is no mandatory structure or a mandatory format for the essay. Your essay follows the structure of a report (so with heading), but also needs to be referenced (Harvard style referencing). This report is your final work to be presented to a board meeting that will support the discussion of the issue and the solution proposed, so be precise and convincing!

This is a suggestion about the necessary content of the essay:

- Ethical issue/dilemma. You need to focus on a contemporary ethical dilemma faced by a real company (e.g. Mc Donald's; Roma football club; H&M) or a fictional one for which you need to define the characteristics (e.g. the competitive sector, products, and operations). In the first case (real company) you need talk about the current situation of the company, with concrete facts and maybe policies adopted; in the second case (fictional company) you need to bring concrete examples of other companies that are dealing with the same or very similar issues. In both case a good analysis of the ethical problem also includes actors involved and potential consequences for them.
- Solution(s): after the discussion of the ethical dilemma, you need to suggest/propose a solution for the problem. Usually, ethical issues are complex and thus the solution could be composed by a set of policies, strategies, and actions to be performed. The more specific and actionable your suggestions are the better, i.e. avoid general solutions without a clear development plan.
- Reflection about the solution(s). This final content should receive a predominant attention and be discussed thoroughly! To strengthen your suggestion(s), your claims must also be reasonable from an ethical perspective; you need to show how and why the solution(s) you are proposing is correct according to ONE ethical theory we studied during the module, thus, i.e. either utilitarianism, deontology, or virtue ethics. Especially for this content, the material of *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* is crucial to be analyzed. You can access this material through the links indicated in the syllabus. Use a reflective writing (to know more about this type of writing you may refer to Moon, J. (2001). *Reflection in higher education learning. Working Paper 4*. York, UK.: The Higher Education Academy.
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/4229/a98df79718ce77853256d4343ccf6e6510e9.pdf>).