

ILLUSTRATIVE EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BRIEF

DecisivIQ Higher Education Strategy Consultation

FICTIONAL DECISION-SUPPORT EXCERPT · NOT CLIENT WORK · EXECUTIVE STRATEGY

DecisivIQ Higher Education Strategy Consultation ### Illustrative Sample: Choosing a Defensible First Wave of Academic Program Review **Illustrative-sample notice.** This fictional DecisivIQ brief shows a possible advisory deliverable. North Valley University, its people, figures, and circumstances are hypothetical. It is decision support based on assumed client-supplied material, not verified facts or a finding about a real institution.

Executive premise

[A university does not improve its academic portfolio by treating every low-enrollment program as a problem to solve. Leadership must decide where a constrained review creates value without putting academic legitimacy, student continuity, and confidence at risk.]
[In this illustration, North Valley University is considering academic program review after uneven enrollment, rising instructional costs, and a strategic commitment to completion. The choice is whether to authorize an evidence-led review of four programs, with clear decision rights and a plan for current students.]
[The recommended path is a limited first wave. It tests the institution’s review discipline before the process extends across the portfolio. That is slower than reviewing everything at once, but it improves credibility, faculty participation, and the likelihood that the operating model will hold.]

Illustrative decision situation

[Hypothetical context: The provost needs a decision within 30 days on whether to begin review. The candidates include two programs with sustained enrollment decline, one small program central to regional identity, and one with promising outcomes but unclear delivery costs. A faculty governance committee seeks assurance that academic judgment will not become a financial screen. The board’s academic affairs committee expects an institutional rationale, student protections, and a view of later approvals.]
[For this sample, five client-provided files totaling fewer than 50 pages are assumed: a strategic plan excerpt, program dashboard, cost summary, faculty committee brief, and academic affairs calendar. Leaders lack a common contribution view, a reliable estimate of capacity for student completion paths, and agreed criteria for separating mission-critical programs from merely longstanding ones.]
[A 75-minute executive working consultation would focus on review purpose, authority, decision thresholds, and work required before a public or student-facing commitment. It would sharpen choices, not conduct interviews, collect data, select systems, or manage implementation.]

Decision-quality observations

- 01 This is a screening list, not a decision list.

Enrollment trend is a reason to look closer, not a conclusion. Programs need common strategic, student, operating, and mission criteria before leaders characterize a result as supportable.
- 02 Governance design is part of the strategy.

The provost’s office can sponsor the review and consolidate evidence. Academic leaders and faculty governance need a defined role in academic judgment. The governing committee should receive decision gates and institutional implications, not arbitrate operating detail.
- 03 Student continuity is the binding execution constraint.

A strategically sound change can still fail if advising, course availability, faculty workload, and completion paths are unresolved. No program should advance until leadership can see consequences for current students.
- 04 Use staged evidence thresholds.

Waiting for perfect data protects the status quo. Acting on incomplete information without naming gaps damages confidence. Each unknown needs an owner, due date, and validation step.

DECISIVIQ / STRATEGY INTO OPERATING DISCIPLINE

Choose with clarity. Execute with control.

Options and material tradeoffs

Strategic option

· Option · Strategic value · Material tradeoffs and conditions · — · — · — · — · Review all eight candidate programs at once · Signals urgency and creates a broad portfolio view. · It creates a heavy evidence, consultation, and student-planning load. Inconsistent judgments become more likely. · Launch a first wave of four, then review the model · Tests criteria, governance gates, and student-continuity planning at a manageable scale. · It defers decisions on the remaining programs and may be criticized as insufficiently bold. Selection logic must be explicit. · Defer until a complete portfolio analysis is available · Could deliver a fuller comparative picture. · It postpones learning and leaves known pressure points unmanaged. It also assumes the institution can build the analysis promptly. ·

Strategic option

The second option is preferable. Select two programs with enrollment pressure, one mission-sensitive program, and one with uncertain delivery economics. This is a test set, not an attempt to answer every portfolio question. Review is not a predetermined closure, consolidation, or expansion decision.

Recommended action architecture

01 Authorize a four-program first wave and name the decision owner.

Within 10 business days, the provost should issue a decision frame: purpose, selected programs, criteria, accountable executive, governance touchpoints, and dates. The first gate confirms that criteria are understood before option work begins.

02 Build a minimum viable evidence pack for each program.

Assign a small cross-functional team to assemble comparable information on demand, progression, academic contribution, delivery requirements, cost drivers, and feasible continuity paths. Label each item as evidence, management assumption, or unresolved question. This is not a financial model or independent validation exercise.

03 Use two gates before a formal recommendation.

At day 30, decide whether evidence is adequate to develop options. At day 60, review the preferred option, dependencies, continuity implications, required approvals, and communications readiness. A program that fails the threshold remains in analysis.

Executive questions to test

- 01 What institutional outcome would make the first wave successful even if no program is immediately changed?
- 02 Which criteria are genuinely decision-making criteria, and which should remain contextual information?
- 03 What must be true about student continuity, academic quality, and governance process before an option reaches authorized decision makers?

Professional boundary

This is strategic planning and decision-support work only. It relies on client-supplied information and does not provide legal, tax, accounting, investment, regulatory, procurement, compliance, audit, certification, or government-representation advice. It does not make accreditation determinations, conduct compliance assessments, draft binding policies, contracts, bylaws, or other legal instruments, submit filings, or guarantee any external or organizational outcome. Governance materials are planning aids requiring review by appropriate counsel and authorized decision makers before reliance or action.

Engagement snapshot

Offer: Higher Education Strategy Consultation for Institutional Priorities **Fixed price:** \$ 495 **Timeline:** 4 business days from receipt of the required inputs and confirmation of the consultation time. The scope frames **one** priority area in institutional effectiveness, governance, academic program review, student success, or integrated-system priorities; reviews up to five client-provided files totaling no more than 50 pages; and includes one 75-minute virtual executive working consultation for up to four participants. Deliverables are an Institutional Decision Frame, Executive Working Consultation, Priority and Tradeoff Matrix, and Leadership Action Memo with a practical 30/60/90-day outline. One consolidated written revision is included if requested within seven calendar days. New priority areas, added source material beyond the limit, stakeholder research, and a second consultation are outside scope.

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