CEIUS Decision Architecture

CEIUS Decision Architecture

Framework and Component Architectures

Context | Evidence | Interpretation | Uncertainty | Synthesis

With Framework Scope, Empathy and Moral Impact Enhancements

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Contents

1. CEIUS Decision Architecture Framework
2. Framework Component Overview
3. Component Architecture: Context (Component C)
4. Component Architecture: Evidence (Component E)
5. Component Architecture: Interpretation (Component I)
6. Component Architecture: Uncertainty (Component U)
7. Component Architecture: Synthesis (Component S)
8. Integration Patterns
9. Glossary

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1. CEIUS Decision Architecture Framework

Introduction

The CEIUS Decision Architecture provides a framework of coordinated components for consideration in any situation where complex decisions need to be made with incomplete or ambiguous information. The framework assists in the management of the overall decision-making process, from initial context framing through to final synthesis and ongoing governance.

Each component within CEIUS has a dependency with other components. A single component cannot be implemented without implementing the supporting components, although a component could be deemed as implemented if the information supplied by that component is already known through other means.

The CEIUS framework provides for governance of implementation, where the actual work stream implementation of each component can be assessed against the structure set out in this document.

Basic Structure

The CEIUS framework provides a number of coordinated components that together provide a structured approach to decision-making. Once implemented, the framework will facilitate the management of complex decisions across an organisation or professional practice.

Each component within the CEIUS framework must be implemented within a work stream. It is the responsibility of the work stream to provide the final design and implementation of CEIUS as well as the toolsets required to fulfil the role of each component.

The five core components are:

Component	Code	Purpose
Context	C	Define decision frame, scope, authority, constraints and success criteria
Evidence	E	Collect and classify relevant artefacts, preserving contradictions

Component	Code	Purpose
Interpretation	I	Derive structured insights and competing narratives from evidence
Uncertainty	U	Identify gaps, assumptions and risks; govern what we do not know
Synthesis	S	Form, justify and record decision with re-entry conditions

Framework Flexibility

Not every decision requires every component. The CEIUS framework is comprehensive by design, but practical by application. The Context stage (specifically C7. Framework Scope) determines which components are relevant for a given decision based on its scale, complexity, and impact.

This approach ensures:

- Simple decisions are not burdened with unnecessary process
- Complex decisions receive appropriate rigour
- The decision to exclude components is itself documented and justified
- Domain-specific implementations can provide sensible defaults

C. Context

The objectives of the Context component are to establish the decision environment before any analysis begins. This includes defining intent, scope, authority, constraints and success criteria. Context also determines which CEIUS components are relevant for this specific decision. Without a stable context, evidence becomes unfocused, interpretation becomes subjective, and decisions become misaligned.

E. Evidence

The Evidence component has a single primary objective: to gather and classify all relevant artefacts and data, regardless of format, completeness, or consistency. CEIUS does not sanitise or pre-filter reality; contradictions and gaps are preserved as valuable information in their own right.

I. Interpretation

The Interpretation component transforms raw evidence into structured insight. It asks: Given what we have, what might this mean? This stage does not decide; it reveals possible readings of the situation. By allowing competing interpretations to coexist, premature commitment to a single narrative is prevented.

U. Uncertainty

The Uncertainty component governs everything we do not know, do not trust, or cannot yet reconcile. It ensures gaps, assumptions, and risks are explicit and managed, rather than buried in optimistic narratives. Certain uncertainties can block synthesis until resolved or explicitly accepted.

S. Synthesis

The Synthesis component forms the actual decision or recommendation. It consolidates options, weighs trade-offs, and records the outcome and its rationale in a way that can survive scrutiny and change. Re-entry conditions define when decisions must be revisited.

Key Points

The key points of the CEIUS Framework are:

- The framework requires support from stakeholders to engage and finance the required resources and tools to implement and manage the components accordingly
- The framework components relate to one another, therefore it will be difficult to exclude any specific components, but where the outputs of a component are already known it can be considered that this component can be used without the need for it to be designed again
- Where alternative components are already recognised and implemented that provide similar inputs and outputs, it is sensible to substitute the CEIUS components with the already implemented components
- Not every component is required for every decision; Context determines what is in scope for the framework itself

Governance

The CEIUS Framework and subsequent component architectures should be managed in the same manner as all other governance documentation. A designated governance function should be satisfied that the framework is being implemented correctly

across work streams and ultimately the organisation. Where there is an issue relating to adherence to this framework, the governance function will escalate this appropriately, where ultimately it is the responsibility of senior management to resolve.

Risk Management

Decision-making interacts very closely with risk management and assurance processes. Fundamentally, CEIUS is assessing the level of risk a decision is exposed to in terms of the quality and completeness of information available.

The CEIUS Framework is a number of components that interoperate to assure a decision. Each component contributes to managing potential risks surrounding the decision-making requirements.

As is often the case, decisions are made based on incomplete information. Typically a number of risks are identified for such scenarios:

- Can we be confident we have all the relevant information?
- Can we trust the sources of our evidence?
- Have we considered all reasonable interpretations?
- Have we identified and governed all significant uncertainties?

The CEIUS framework components have been identified to support the risk management aspects of any initiative in isolation as well as cooperating to provide a comprehensive risk management solution.

Engagement Model

The CEIUS Engagement Model requires input from the business for the following reasons:

- Decision requirements must be supplied to support the Context component
- Evidence sources and access must be arranged to support the Evidence component
- Subject matter expertise must be available to support the Interpretation component
- Risk appetite and governance thresholds must be defined to support the Uncertainty component
- Decision authority and approval paths must be established to support the Synthesis component

Effectively, the CEIUS Framework relies upon the organisation to drive the requirements not only from a decision quality perspective but to provide focus for components to prioritise the critical issues.

TIP: The engagement model is not just about getting sign-off. Active involvement from stakeholders throughout the CEIUS cycle dramatically improves decision quality and buy-in. Schedule regular touchpoints, not just milestone reviews.

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2. Framework Component Overview

C: Context - Decision Framing

The Context component provides the decision frame that anchors all downstream analysis.

Aspect	Description
Objectives	Establish clear decision boundaries, authority and success criteria before analysis begins
Approach	Systematic framing through structured flows covering intent, stakeholders, scope, constraints and criteria
Inputs	Business requirements, stakeholder identification, regulatory constraints, parameters
Outputs	Decision charter, stakeholder map, scope boundaries, success criteria, framework scope

Steps:

1. Define the decision intent and type
2. Identify stakeholders and decision authority
3. Establish scope boundaries (in and out)
4. Declare constraints and non-negotiables
5. Define success and failure criteria
6. Identify stakeholder impact scope (Empathy Enhancement)
7. Determine framework scope - which CEIUS components apply (Framework Scope)

TIP: Never skip the Context stage, even when you think the decision is obvious. The most common cause of poor decisions is not bad analysis but answering the wrong question. Investing time upfront to align on what we are actually deciding saves enormous effort downstream.

E: Evidence - Fact and Artefact Acquisition

The Evidence component provides the authoritative input layer for CEIUS.

Aspect	Description
Objectives	Gather and classify all relevant artefacts with metadata describing source, trust and verification status
Approach	Systematic collection preserving contradictions and gaps as valuable information
Inputs	Documents, data, statements, observations from all relevant sources
Outputs	Evidence register with trust assessments, conflict log, verification status tracking

Steps:

1. Identify the evidence sources relevant to the decision context
2. Collect artefacts systematically with provenance tracking
3. Classify each item by type, source and trust level
4. Document conflicts and contradictions explicitly
5. Assess verification status and relevance to context
6. Gather stakeholder sentiment evidence (if in scope per C7)

TIP: Resist the temptation to resolve contradictions too early. Conflicting evidence is itself information - it tells you something in the documentation or organisation is unresolved. Preserve the contradiction and let it surface in the Uncertainty stage.

I: Interpretation - Meaning Derivation

The Interpretation component transforms raw evidence into structured insight.

Aspect	Description
Objectives	Derive structured insights from evidence, allowing competing narratives to coexist
Approach	Systematic analysis mapping interpretations to evidence with confidence assessments
Inputs	Evidence register, context elements, subject matter expertise
Outputs	

Aspect	Description
	Interpretation matrix, confidence assessments, dependency maps, competing narratives

Steps:

1. Analyse evidence against context elements
2. Identify patterns, requirements and constraints
3. Document competing interpretations where evidence is weak or contradictory
4. Assess confidence levels with rationale
5. Map dependencies and tensions between interpretations
6. Derive impact interpretations from stakeholder evidence (if in scope per C7)

TIP: The Interpretation stage is about meaning-making, not decision-making. Keep these separate. When you find yourself wanting to jump to a conclusion, pause and ask: what other readings of this evidence are possible? Document them, even if you think one is more likely.

U: Uncertainty - Gap and Risk Governance

The Uncertainty component governs everything we do not know, do not trust, or cannot yet reconcile.

Aspect	Description
Objectives	Make gaps, assumptions and risks explicit and managed rather than hidden
Approach	Systematic identification, classification and governance of unknowns with blocking rules
Inputs	Interpretation outputs, evidence gaps, unverified claims, competing narratives
Outputs	Uncertainty register, assumption log, risk classification, blocking conditions

Steps:

1. Identify gaps in evidence and interpretation
2. Document assumptions with validation plans
3. Classify risks by impact, likelihood and time horizon
4. Define blocking rules for synthesis
5. Assign ownership and resolution paths
6. Maintain human risk register (if in scope per C7)

7. Conduct moral impact assessment (if in scope per C7)

TIP: Uncertainty is not a failure state - it is a normal part of decision-making. The goal is not to eliminate uncertainty but to make it visible and governable. A decision made with explicit, accepted uncertainty is far better than one made with hidden optimism.

S: Synthesis - Decision Formation

The Synthesis component forms the actual decision or recommendation.

Aspect	Description
Objectives	Consolidate options, weigh trade-offs, record outcome with full traceability
Approach	Structured option evaluation with documented rationale and re-entry conditions
Inputs	Interpretations, uncertainty register, constraints, stakeholder priorities
Outputs	Decision record, rationale, accepted risks, rejected alternatives, re-entry triggers

Steps:

1. Consolidate options from interpretations
2. Evaluate trade-offs explicitly (including human impact trade-offs if in scope)
3. Form decision with clear rationale
4. Document rejected alternatives and why
5. Define re-entry conditions and review dates
6. Create impact mitigation plan (if in scope per C7)

TIP: A CEIUS decision is not just a choice - it is a documented position with full traceability. When someone asks why this decision was made six months from now, the decision record should provide a complete answer without needing the original team.

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3. Component Architecture: Context (Component C)

Introduction

The Context Architecture provides the structure to support the high-level designs, detailed designs and implementation of the Context component as detailed within the CEIUS framework.

The Context Architecture builds upon CEIUS and the style in which this architecture is documented, providing a number of sub-components that once implemented will provide a mechanism for establishing clear decision frames before analysis begins.

Each sub-component within the Context Architecture has a dependency with other sub-components. A single sub-component cannot be implemented without implementing the supporting sub-components.

Overview

Context establishes the decision environment. It defines intent, scope, authority, constraints, and success criteria that anchor all downstream analysis. Context also determines which elements of the CEIUS framework are relevant for this particular decision. Without a stable context, evidence becomes unfocused, interpretation becomes subjective, and decisions become misaligned.

Context ensures everyone is answering the same question, under the same conditions, measured against the same outcomes. It is the root node of CEIUS traceability.

Basic Structure

The Context Architecture provides seven coordinated sub-components:

Sub-Component	Purpose
C1. Decision Intent	Define what decision is needed and why
C2. Stakeholder Authority	Identify who owns, influences and approves the decision
C3. Scope Boundaries	Define what is in and out of scope
C4. Constraints	Declare non-negotiable boundaries

Sub-Component	Purpose
C5. Success Criteria	Define how success and failure will be measured
C6. Stakeholder Impact Scope	Define who is affected and how (Empathy Enhancement)
C7. Framework Scope	Determine which CEIUS components apply to this decision

C1. Decision Intent

The Decision Intent sub-component defines the fundamental question being answered.

Objectives: Ensure clarity on what decision is needed, why it is needed now, and what triggered the need for the decision.

Approach: Work with stakeholders to articulate the decision in a single, clear statement. Avoid compound decisions - if there are multiple questions, they should be separated into distinct decision contexts.

Inputs: Business drivers, triggers, problem statements, opportunity descriptions

Outputs: Decision statement, decision type classification, trigger documentation

TIP: A well-formed decision intent answers three questions: What are we deciding? Why now? What triggered this? If you cannot answer all three clearly, the context is not yet stable enough to proceed.

C2. Stakeholder Authority

The Stakeholder Authority sub-component identifies decision ownership and influence.

Objectives: Ensure clarity on who can make the decision, who must be consulted, and who is impacted.

Approach: Map stakeholders using a RACI or similar model. Identify formal authority (who can sign off) and informal influence (who can derail). Ensure decision makers have appropriate expertise or access to it.

Inputs: Organisation charts, governance structures, charters, domain expertise requirements

Outputs: Stakeholder map, authority matrix, consultation requirements, approval path

TIP: Authority gaps are a common cause of delayed or reversed decisions. If no one has clear authority to decide, escalate this to governance before investing in analysis. Decisions made without proper authority often have to be remade.

C3. Scope Boundaries

The Scope Boundaries sub-component defines what is included and excluded.

Objectives: Ensure clarity on what is in scope, what is explicitly out of scope, and what interfaces exist with other decisions or workstreams.

Approach: Document inclusions and exclusions explicitly. Identify boundary conditions and interfaces. Be specific about what the decision will and will not address.

Inputs: Decision intent, stakeholder requirements, related decisions, organisational boundaries

Outputs: Scope statement, exclusion list, interface documentation, boundary conditions

TIP: Explicit exclusions are as important as inclusions. When something is out of scope, say so clearly. This prevents scope creep and sets appropriate expectations. If stakeholders expect the decision to address something you have excluded, surface that tension now.

C4. Constraints

The Constraints sub-component declares non-negotiable boundaries.

Objectives: Ensure clarity on what cannot change regardless of the analysis outcome.

Approach: Identify regulatory requirements, budget limits, timeline constraints, mandates, and organisational policies that bound the decision space. Distinguish between hard constraints (truly non-negotiable) and soft constraints (preferences that could be challenged).

Inputs: Regulatory requirements, budget allocations, timelines, policy documents, strategic mandates

Outputs: Constraint register, constraint classification (hard/soft), constraint rationale

TIP: Challenge constraints. Many constraints presented as absolute are actually preferences or historical decisions that have not been re-examined. Ask: What would happen if we did not have this constraint? The answer reveals whether it is truly non-negotiable.

C5. Success Criteria

The Success Criteria sub-component defines how outcomes will be measured.

Objectives: Ensure clarity on what good looks like, what is unacceptable, and how completion will be determined.

Approach: Define measurable success criteria where possible. Include both positive indicators (what success looks like) and negative indicators (what failure looks like). Agree thresholds and measurement methods.

Inputs: Business objectives, stakeholder expectations, performance requirements, risk appetite

Outputs: Success criteria matrix, measurement methods, thresholds, failure indicators

TIP: Success criteria should be defined before analysis, not after. If you wait until you have options to define success, there is a risk of fitting criteria to preferred options rather than evaluating options against genuine requirements.

C6. Stakeholder Impact Scope (Empathy Enhancement)

The Stakeholder Impact Scope sub-component defines which people and groups will be affected by the decision and how their perspectives will be gathered. This ensures human consequences are considered from the outset.

Objectives: Ensure clarity on who will be affected by the decision, the magnitude of impact on each group, and how their input will be gathered.

Approach: Map all affected groups systematically. Categorise by relationship to the decision (direct participants, indirect affected, potentially displaced). Assess change magnitude for each group. Define how consultation will occur.

Inputs: Organisation structure, process maps, role definitions, historical change responses

Outputs: Impact group inventory, change magnitude assessment per group, consultation approach

Impact Group Category	Description	Example
Direct Participants	People who will work with the new approach daily	Staff using new procedures, professionals adopting new methods
Indirect Affected	People whose work is changed but who are not direct participants	Managers receiving different reports, clients experiencing different service
Displaced Roles	People whose roles may be reduced or eliminated	Roles made redundant by process changes
Support Functions	People who must support or maintain the change	Training teams, supervisors, help desk
External Stakeholders	Clients, suppliers, partners, regulators affected	Clients experiencing service changes, suppliers with new requirements

Change Magnitude	Description	Support Required
Minor Adjustment	Small changes to existing processes	Brief communication, job aids
Significant Change	New skills or substantially	Training, practice time, support period

Change Magnitude	Description	Support Required
	different workflows	
Role Transformation	Fundamental change to job content or existence	Reskilling, redeployment support, counselling

TIP: Decisions that look optimal on paper often fail because they ignored how people would actually experience the change. Mapping who is affected and how severely is as important as mapping scope. A perfect solution that people refuse to adopt is not a solution.

C7. Framework Scope

The Framework Scope sub-component determines which CEIUS components are relevant for this specific decision. Not every decision requires every component - the framework is comprehensive by design but practical by application.

Objectives: Ensure appropriate rigour is applied to the decision without unnecessary process burden. Document which components are in scope and justify any exclusions.

Approach: Assess the decision against significance criteria. Select relevant components based on decision type, scale, and potential impact. Document exclusions with rationale. Domain defaults may guide but should not dictate.

Inputs: Decision intent, decision significance assessment, domain guidance, organisational standards

Outputs: Component inclusion list, exclusion rationale, framework configuration for this decision

Decision Significance Assessment

Factor	Minor Decision	Moderate Decision	Major Decision
Financial impact	Low value	Moderate value	High value or strategic
Reversibility	Easily reversed	Reversible with effort	Difficult or impossible to reverse
People affected	Few individuals	Team or department	Organisation-wide or external

Factor	Minor Decision	Moderate Decision	Major Decision
Time horizon	Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term or permanent
Regulatory exposure	None	Some compliance aspects	Significant regulatory implications
Reputational risk	Minimal	Moderate	Significant

Component Selection Guidance

Decision Type	Typically Required	Consider Adding	Often Excluded
Minor operational	C1-C5, E1-E5, I1-I4, U1-U5, S1-S5	-	C6, E6, I6, U6, U7, S6
Moderate with people impact	All C, E1-E6, I1-I6, U1-U6, S1-S6	U7	-
Major strategic	All components	-	-
Regulatory/ compliance	C1-C5, E1-E5, I1-I5, U1-U5, U7, S1-S5	C6, E6, I6, U6, S6	-
Restructuring/ redundancy	All components mandatory	-	None - full rigour required

Exclusion Documentation

When excluding components, document:

- Which component is excluded
- Rationale for exclusion
- What would trigger inclusion (re-entry condition)
- Who approved the exclusion

Excluded Component	Rationale	Trigger for Inclusion	Approved By
U7. Moral Impact	Routine procurement, no ethical dimensions	If supplier ethics concerns emerge	[Name]
C6/E6/I6/U6/S6 (Empathy set)	No people impact - purely	If implementation will affect staff	[Name]

Excluded Component	Rationale	Trigger for Inclusion	Approved By
	technical decision		

TIP: Be honest about why you are excluding components. “We do not have time” is not a good rationale for excluding Moral Impact Assessment from a redundancy decision. If the decision genuinely does not warrant a component, document why. If you are excluding it for convenience, reconsider.

Context and the CEIUS Components

Context provides the foundation that all other CEIUS components depend upon:

- Evidence collection is guided by context - we gather evidence relevant to the decision at hand
- Interpretation is anchored to context - meanings are derived relative to the decision requirements
- Uncertainty is assessed against context - gaps and risks are evaluated based on their impact on the specific decision
- Synthesis references context - the decision is formed by applying options against context criteria
- Framework scope determines which components are active for this decision

Changes to context trigger re-evaluation of downstream components. If the decision intent changes, if new constraints emerge, if stakeholder authority shifts - these are explicit triggers for revisiting evidence, interpretation, uncertainty and synthesis. Similarly, if the decision significance changes, the framework scope should be reassessed.

Key Points

- Context must be stable before significant effort is invested in evidence and interpretation
- Context changes are explicit triggers for CEIUS cycle re-entry
- All CEIUS outputs trace back to context elements
- Context quality directly impacts decision quality - invest appropriate time here
- Stakeholder impact scope ensures human consequences are considered from the start
- Framework scope ensures appropriate rigour without unnecessary burden

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4. Component Architecture: Evidence (Component E)

Introduction

The Evidence Architecture provides the structure to support the high-level designs, detailed designs and implementation of the Evidence component as detailed within the CEIUS framework.

The Evidence Architecture builds upon CEIUS and provides a number of sub-components that once implemented will provide a mechanism for systematic evidence collection, classification and management.

Overview

Evidence forms the authoritative input layer of CEIUS. It includes all artefacts relevant to the decision, regardless of format, completeness, or consistency. CEIUS does not sanitise or pre-filter reality; contradictions and gaps are preserved as valuable information.

Evidence is always recorded as-is, with metadata describing its source, trust level, verification status, and relevance to context. This creates an auditable foundation for all downstream reasoning.

Basic Structure

The Evidence Architecture provides six coordinated sub-components:

Sub-Component	Purpose
E1. Source Identification	Identify all relevant evidence sources
E2. Collection	Gather artefacts systematically with provenance
E3. Classification	Categorise evidence by type and trust level
E4. Conflict Handling	Preserve and document contradictions
E5. Evidence Register	Maintain structured evidence repository
E6. Stakeholder Sentiment	Gather evidence about how people feel and

Sub-Component	Purpose
	their readiness (Empathy)

Note: E6 is included when C7 Framework Scope determines that people impact is relevant to the decision.

E1. Source Identification

The Source Identification sub-component identifies all relevant evidence sources.

Objectives: Ensure comprehensive coverage of available evidence sources relevant to the decision context.

Approach: Map evidence sources systematically. Consider documents, data, people, processes, and observations. Identify both primary sources (direct evidence) and secondary sources (reports about evidence).

Inputs: Decision context, domain knowledge, stakeholder input, existing documentation maps

Outputs: Source inventory, access requirements, collection priorities

TIP: Cast a wide net initially. It is easier to discard irrelevant evidence than to discover late that important sources were missed. Ask stakeholders: What evidence would change your mind about this decision? That evidence is worth finding.

E2. Collection

The Collection sub-component gathers artefacts systematically.

Objectives: Obtain evidence from identified sources with clear provenance tracking.

Approach: Collect evidence with metadata: when obtained, from whom/where, in what form, any modifications or extractions. Preserve original formats where possible. Document collection method and any limitations.

Inputs: Source inventory, access permissions, collection tools, storage requirements

Outputs: Collected artefacts, provenance records, collection notes, access logs

TIP: Evidence degrades over time. Documents get updated, people forget details, circumstances change. Capture evidence with timestamps and version information. If the evidence might change, note when it was captured and consider re-verification later.

E3. Classification

The Classification sub-component categorises evidence by type and trust.

Objectives: Enable appropriate weighting of evidence in interpretation by classifying type, source reliability, and verification status.

Approach: Apply consistent classification schema to all evidence items. Assess source reliability (verified, trusted, provisional, untrusted), currency (current, recent, historical), and relevance to context (direct, indirect, peripheral).

Inputs: Collected artefacts, classification schema, domain expertise

Outputs: Classified evidence items, trust assessments, relevance ratings

Trust Level	Definition	Treatment
Verified	Independently confirmed through multiple reliable sources	Full weight in interpretation
Trusted	From reliable source, not independently verified	Significant weight, note single-source
Provisional	From source of unknown reliability	Consider with caution, seek verification
Untrusted	From unreliable source or contradicted by better evidence	Document but do not rely upon

TIP: Trust levels are about the evidence, not the source. A trusted colleague can provide provisional evidence if they are reporting hearsay. A professional report might be verified if independently confirmed. Assess each item, not each source.

E4. Conflict Handling

The Conflict Handling sub-component preserves and documents contradictions.

Objectives: Ensure conflicting evidence is not hidden or prematurely resolved but preserved for explicit handling in interpretation and uncertainty.

Approach: When evidence items contradict, document both items, the nature of the contradiction, and any information about which might be more reliable. Do not resolve the conflict - preserve it for downstream handling.

Inputs: Classified evidence items, contradiction detection, domain expertise

Outputs: Conflict log, contradiction descriptions, linked evidence items

TIP: Contradiction is itself evidence. It tells you that something in the documentation or organisation is unresolved. A conflict between two documents might indicate an outdated policy, a communication gap, or a genuine disagreement. Understanding why things conflict is often as valuable as resolving the conflict.

E5. Evidence Register

The Evidence Register sub-component maintains the structured evidence repository.

Objectives: Provide a single, searchable, traceable repository of all evidence supporting the decision.

Approach: Maintain evidence in a structured register with unique identifiers, classifications, provenance, and links to context elements. Enable traceability from evidence to interpretations and decisions.

Inputs: Classified evidence, conflicts, provenance records, context links

Outputs: Evidence register, search capability, traceability links, audit trail

E6. Stakeholder Sentiment (Empathy Enhancement)

The Stakeholder Sentiment sub-component gathers evidence about how affected people feel, what concerns they have, and their readiness for change. This is essential for understanding the human dimension of the decision.

When to include: Include E6 when C7 Framework Scope determines the decision has significant people impact. This is typically required for organisational change, process changes affecting staff, service changes affecting clients, or any decision where adoption by people is critical to success.

Objectives: Gather systematic evidence about stakeholder feelings, concerns, and readiness to inform realistic implementation planning.

Approach: Use multiple collection methods appropriate to the stakeholder groups. Capture both structured data (surveys, assessments) and unstructured data (interviews, observations, informal feedback). Preserve the voice of stakeholders rather than sanitising concerns.

Inputs: Impact group inventory from C6, access to stakeholders, collection tools (surveys, interview guides)

Outputs: Sentiment evidence register, concern inventory, readiness indicators

Sentiment Evidence Type	Collection Method	Example Output
Survey Data	Structured questionnaires	72% concerned about workload increase
Interview Notes	One-to-one or focus group discussions	Staff fear job losses despite reassurances
Observation	Watching current processes and behaviours	Workarounds suggest current process limitations
Historical Patterns	Previous change responses in organisation	Last major change had 40% adoption at 6 months
Informal Feedback	Corridor conversations, team meetings	Scepticism about timeline feasibility

Readiness Indicator	What It Measures	Warning Signs
Awareness	Do people know about the change?	Surprise when informed, rumour-based information
Understanding	Do people understand what will change for them?	Misconceptions, inability to describe impact
Acceptance	Do people believe the change is necessary?	Active resistance, cynicism about rationale
Capability	Do people have skills to operate in new way?	Skill gaps, lack of confidence
Commitment	Are people willing to make the change work?	Minimal engagement, passive compliance only

TIP: Sentiment evidence is often dismissed as “soft” but predicts implementation success better than technical assessments. A perfect solution that people refuse to use is not a solution. Gather this evidence systematically and treat it with the same rigour as other evidence.

Evidence Types

Evidence encompasses all inputs that inform the decision:

Category	Examples
Documentary	Contracts, policies, procedures, correspondence, meeting notes, legislation, case law
Data	Metrics, financial figures, performance data, statistics, audit results
Testimonial	Stakeholder statements, expert opinions, interview notes, witness accounts
Observational	Site visits, process observations, demonstrations
Analytical	Reports, assessments, models, projections, valuations
AI-Generated	

Category	Examples
	Summaries, analyses, recommendations (explicitly tagged)
Sentiment	Surveys, interviews, observations about how people feel (when in scope)

Key Points

- Evidence is recorded as-is - do not sanitise or pre-filter
- Contradictions are preserved, not resolved at this stage
- Trust levels enable appropriate weighting in interpretation
- Provenance tracking enables audit and challenge
- AI-generated content is explicitly tagged as such
- Stakeholder sentiment evidence is gathered when people impact is in scope

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5. Component Architecture: Interpretation (Component I)

Introduction

The Interpretation Architecture provides the structure to support the high-level designs, detailed designs and implementation of the Interpretation component as detailed within the CEIUS framework.

The Interpretation Architecture builds upon CEIUS and provides a number of sub-components that once implemented will provide a mechanism for deriving structured insights from evidence.

Overview

Interpretation transforms raw evidence into structured insight. It asks: Given what we have, what might this mean? It does not yet decide; it reveals possible readings of the situation.

This separation of meaning-making from decision-making is essential for transparency and challenge. It allows competing interpretations to coexist until synthesis, preventing premature commitment to a single narrative.

Basic Structure

The Interpretation Architecture provides six coordinated sub-components:

Sub-Component	Purpose
I1. Pattern Recognition	Identify patterns, requirements and constraints in evidence
I2. Narrative Construction	Build coherent interpretations from evidence
I3. Competing Views	Document alternative interpretations
I4. Confidence Assessment	Assess strength of each interpretation
I5. Dependency Mapping	Map relationships between interpretations
I6. Impact Interpretation	Derive meaning from stakeholder sentiment evidence (Empathy)

Note: I6 is included when C7 Framework Scope determines that people impact is relevant to the decision.

I1. Pattern Recognition

The Pattern Recognition sub-component identifies patterns in evidence.

Objectives: Identify meaningful patterns, requirements, constraints and themes emerging from the evidence.

Approach: Analyse evidence systematically, looking for recurring themes, dependencies, gaps, and anomalies. Use structured frameworks appropriate to the decision domain.

Inputs: Evidence register, context elements, domain frameworks

Outputs: Pattern inventory, requirement extractions, constraint identifications

TIP: Patterns can be both positive (things that work together) and negative (anti-patterns, things that create problems). Look for both. An absence of expected evidence is itself a pattern worth noting.

I2. Narrative Construction

The Narrative Construction sub-component builds coherent interpretations.

Objectives: Construct coherent narratives that explain the evidence in terms relevant to the decision.

Approach: Build interpretations by linking evidence to conclusions through explicit reasoning chains. Each interpretation should be traceable to specific evidence items and context elements.

Inputs: Pattern inventory, evidence register, context elements

Outputs: Interpretation statements, reasoning chains, evidence links

TIP: An interpretation is not a fact - it is a reading of the facts. Be explicit about the reasoning that connects evidence to interpretation. This makes interpretations challengeable, which is a feature, not a bug.

I3. Competing Views

The Competing Views sub-component documents alternative interpretations.

Objectives: Ensure that where evidence is weak, incomplete, or contradictory, multiple interpretations are documented rather than prematurely selecting one.

Approach: For each significant interpretation, ask: What other readings are possible? Document alternatives with their supporting evidence and conditions under which each would be preferred.

Inputs: Interpretation statements, evidence conflicts, domain expertise

Outputs: Alternative interpretations, preference conditions, evidence differentiators

TIP: Competing interpretations are not a sign of failure - they are a sign of intellectual honesty. Real situations are often genuinely ambiguous. Documenting competing views helps stakeholders understand the decision space and builds trust in the process.

I4. Confidence Assessment

The Confidence Assessment sub-component assesses interpretation strength.

Objectives: Provide clear indication of how strongly evidence supports each interpretation.

Approach: Assess confidence based on evidence quality, coverage, consistency, and expert consensus. Use a consistent scale with clear criteria for each level.

Inputs: Interpretation statements, evidence classifications, expert input

Outputs: Confidence ratings, confidence rationale, evidence strength assessments

Confidence	Criteria	Implication
High (80-100%)	Multiple verified sources, no contradictions, expert consensus	Safe to proceed; monitor for changes
Medium (50-79%)	Some verified evidence, minor contradictions, reasonable consensus	Proceed with caution; validate assumptions
Low (20-49%)	Limited evidence, significant contradictions, expert disagreement	Requires additional evidence before proceeding
Insufficient (<20%)	No reliable evidence, speculation only	Cannot proceed; blocking uncertainty

TIP: Confidence should be calibrated. Over time, check whether interpretations rated as high confidence turn out to be correct more often than those rated low. If everything is rated high confidence, the scale is not being used properly.

I5. Dependency Mapping

The Dependency Mapping sub-component maps relationships between interpretations.

Objectives: Identify dependencies, tensions and relationships between interpretations.

Approach: Map how interpretations relate to each other. Identify where interpretations depend on each other, where they create tension, and where they are independent.

Inputs: Interpretation statements, evidence links, domain knowledge

Outputs: Dependency map, tension register, interpretation relationships

I6. Impact Interpretation (Empathy Enhancement)

The Impact Interpretation sub-component derives meaning from stakeholder sentiment evidence. It asks: What do the concerns and readiness levels tell us about likely outcomes?

When to include: Include I6 when C7 Framework Scope determines the decision has significant people impact and E6 (Stakeholder Sentiment) evidence has been gathered.

Objectives: Transform raw sentiment evidence into actionable insights about adoption risk, support requirements, and likely implementation challenges.

Approach: Analyse sentiment evidence per stakeholder group. Identify root causes of concerns. Assess change readiness gaps. Build competing interpretations where evidence is ambiguous.

Inputs: Sentiment evidence register, concern inventory, readiness indicators, impact group definitions

Outputs: Impact narratives per group, adoption risk assessment, support requirement estimates, competing impact interpretations

Interpretation Area	Key Questions	Example Output
Root Cause Analysis	Why do people feel this way? What drives concerns?	Resistance stems from previous failed change, not this decision
Adoption Trajectory	How will uptake evolve? What barriers exist?	Expect 60% adoption at 3 months without additional support
Support Requirements	What will people need to succeed?	Extended training period needed for Group A; coaching for managers

Interpretation Area	Key Questions	Example Output
Competing Readings	What alternative explanations exist?	Concern may be fear of job loss OR genuine workload worry

TIP: Do not assume you know why people feel the way they do. The same objection can stem from different causes requiring different responses. Resistance labelled as “fear of change” might actually be valid concern about workload, timeline, or capability. Document alternative interpretations and seek evidence to distinguish between them.

Interpretation Categories

Interpretations are organised into structured categories:

Category	Description	Example
Requirements	What must the solution do or achieve?	Process must handle 500 cases per month
Constraints	What limits solution options?	Must comply with regulatory requirements
Patterns	What approaches fit the situation?	Phased implementation suits the risk profile
Anti-patterns	What approaches should be avoided?	Big bang approach will overwhelm the team
Impacts	What effects on quality or outcomes?	Faster processing improves service but increases error risk
Dependencies	What relies on what?	New process depends on staff training completion
Tensions	Where do interpretations conflict?	Cost reduction conflicts with service quality requirements
Human Impacts		Finance team workflow

Category	Description	Example
	How will people be affected? (when in scope)	changes significantly

Key Points

- Interpretation is about meaning-making, not decision-making - keep these separate
- Multiple interpretations can and should coexist where evidence is ambiguous
- Confidence assessments enable appropriate handling of different certainty levels
- All interpretations trace to specific evidence items and context elements
- Impact interpretations reveal likely human consequences and adoption challenges (when in scope)

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6. Component Architecture: Uncertainty (Component U)

Introduction

The Uncertainty Architecture provides the structure to support the high-level designs, detailed designs and implementation of the Uncertainty component as detailed within the CEIUS framework.

The Uncertainty Architecture builds upon CEIUS and provides a number of sub-components that once implemented will provide a mechanism for explicit governance of gaps, assumptions and risks.

Overview

Uncertainty governs everything we do not know, do not trust, or cannot yet reconcile. It ensures gaps, assumptions, and risks are explicit and managed, rather than buried in optimistic narratives or ignored until they cause problems.

Uncertainty is not a failure state; it is a normal part of decision-making. CEIUS makes it visible and governable rather than hidden and dangerous.

Basic Structure

The Uncertainty Architecture provides seven coordinated sub-components:

Sub-Component	Purpose
U1. Gap Identification	Identify missing information affecting decision quality
U2. Assumption Governance	Document and track assumptions with validation plans
U3. Risk Classification	Classify risks by impact, likelihood and horizon
U4. Blocking Rules	Define conditions that prevent synthesis
U5. Uncertainty Register	Maintain structured uncertainty repository
U6. Human Risk Register	Track people-related risks and mitigations (Empathy)
U7. Moral Impact Assessment	Evaluate ethical justification for the decision (Moral)

Note: U6 and U7 are included based on C7 Framework Scope determination.

U1. Gap Identification

The Gap Identification sub-component identifies missing information.

Objectives: Identify all gaps in evidence or interpretation that could affect decision quality.

Approach: Systematically review evidence and interpretations for missing information. Categorise gaps by type and assess impact on decision.

Inputs: Evidence register, interpretation matrix, context requirements

Outputs: Gap inventory, gap classifications, impact assessments

Gap Type	Description	Example
Evidence Gap		

Gap Type	Description	Example
	Required information does not exist or is unavailable	No data on historical case outcomes
Requirement Gap	Requirement is ambiguous, incomplete, or contradictory	Service level target not specified
Verification Gap	Evidence exists but cannot be validated	Third party claims benefits but provides no proof
Coverage Gap	Analysis does not address all relevant scenarios	Business continuity not considered
Authority Gap	Decision ownership or approval path is unclear	No designated owner for exceptions
Empathy Gap	Human impact not understood or stakeholder voice missing	No input gathered from frontline staff affected
Moral Gap	Ethical implications not assessed or values alignment unknown	No consideration of fairness across affected groups

TIP: Gaps are not always problems to solve - sometimes they are boundaries to accept. Not every gap needs to be filled; some can be accepted with appropriate risk acknowledgment. The key is that gaps are visible and explicitly handled.

U2. Assumption Governance

The Assumption Governance sub-component documents and tracks assumptions.

Objectives: Ensure assumptions are explicit, tracked, and have validation plans where feasible.

Approach: Document each assumption with its basis, classification, linked risks if invalidated, validation plan, owner, and deadline.

Inputs: Interpretation dependencies, evidence gaps, expert input

Outputs: Assumption register, validation plans, ownership assignments

Example assumption categories:

- **Operational:** The current process can handle increased volume
- **Commercial:** Supplier will maintain pricing for contract period
- **Organisational:** Team will be fully staffed by go-live
- **Behavioural:** Staff will adopt new procedures within 3 months
- **Support:** Training budget will be sufficient for all affected staff
- **Wellbeing:** Workload increase during transition is acceptable to staff
- **Moral:** Stakeholders will accept the fairness of the decision rationale

TIP: Every assumption is a risk in disguise. When you document an assumption, also document: What happens if this is wrong? Who owns validating it? When will we know? Assumptions without validation plans tend to become unpleasant surprises.

U3. Risk Classification

The Risk Classification sub-component classifies risks systematically.

Objectives: Provide consistent risk classification enabling appropriate governance and prioritisation.

Approach: Classify each risk by impact, likelihood, time horizon, mitigation path, residual risk, and acceptance authority. Use consistent scales across the decision.

Inputs: Gaps, assumptions, interpretation tensions, domain expertise

Outputs: Risk register, risk classifications, mitigation options

Dimension	Categories
Impact	Critical / High / Medium / Low
Likelihood	Almost Certain / Likely / Possible / Unlikely / Rare
Time Horizon	Immediate / Short-term / Medium-term / Long-term
Mitigation Path	Avoidable / Reducible / Transferable / Acceptable
Residual Risk	Eliminated / Reduced / Unchanged / Increased
Acceptance Authority	Operational / Management / Executive / Board

U4. Blocking Rules

The Blocking Rules sub-component defines conditions that prevent synthesis.

Objectives: Ensure certain uncertainties cannot be overlooked but must be resolved or explicitly accepted before proceeding.

Approach: Define blocking conditions calibrated to organisational risk appetite. Specify what resolution or acceptance is required to unblock.

Inputs: Risk classifications, governance thresholds, authority matrix

Outputs: Blocking conditions, resolution requirements, acceptance paths

Blocking Condition	Required Resolution
Critical risk without mitigation plan	Mitigation identified or executive acceptance
Unverified evidence for critical decision	Verification completed or assumption documented
Missing regulatory compliance evidence	Compliance confirmed or exception approved
Unresolved evidence conflict affecting outcome	Conflict resolved or both scenarios addressed
No decision authority identified	Owner assigned and confirmed
Major stakeholder group not consulted (when in scope)	Consultation completed or explicit waiver
Significant moral concern unaddressed (when in scope)	Ethical review completed or executive acceptance

TIP: Blocking rules should be calibrated. Too strict and nothing ever gets decided; too loose and important risks get overlooked. Review blocking rules periodically to ensure they match actual risk appetite.

U5. Uncertainty Register

The Uncertainty Register sub-component maintains the structured repository.

Objectives: Provide a single, traceable repository of all gaps, assumptions and risks with their status and ownership.

Approach: Maintain uncertainty items in a structured register with unique identifiers, classifications, ownership, status, and links to evidence and interpretations.

Inputs: Gaps, assumptions, risks, ownership assignments, status updates

Outputs: Uncertainty register, status dashboards, traceability links

U6. Human Risk Register (Empathy Enhancement)

The Human Risk Register sub-component explicitly tracks risks related to people - adoption failure, morale impact, skill gaps, change fatigue, and wellbeing concerns. These risks often determine implementation success or failure.

When to include: Include U6 when C7 Framework Scope determines the decision has significant people impact.

Objectives: Make people-related risks visible and governable with the same rigour as operational and commercial risks.

Approach: Identify human risks from impact interpretations. Classify by impact and likelihood. Define mitigation approaches. Set blocking conditions where appropriate.

Inputs: Impact interpretations, sentiment evidence, historical change outcomes, stakeholder feedback

Outputs: Human risk register, mitigation approaches, blocking conditions, monitoring indicators

Human Risk Category	Description	Example Mitigation
Adoption Failure	People do not use the new approach effectively	Extended training, champions network, staged rollout
Capability Gap	Staff lack skills to operate in new way	Skills assessment, training programme, temporary support
Morale Impact	Change causes disengagement or distress	Clear communication, involvement in design, recognition
Change Fatigue	Organisation exhausted by previous changes	Realistic timeline, reduced parallel initiatives

Human Risk Category	Description	Example Mitigation
Resistance	Active opposition to the change	Root cause analysis, concerns addressed, leadership visible
Retention Risk	Key staff leave due to change	Retention incentives, career path clarity, involvement

TIP: Human risks are often underweighted because they are harder to quantify than operational or financial risks. However, they frequently determine whether sound decisions actually deliver value. An approach that works perfectly but sits unused is not a success.

U7. Moral Impact Assessment (Moral Enhancement)

The Moral Impact Assessment sub-component explicitly evaluates whether the decision is ethically justified - not just feasible or commercially viable. This ensures that “should we do this?” is asked alongside “can we do this?”

When to include: Include U7 when C7 Framework Scope determines the decision has ethical dimensions. This is typically required for decisions affecting people’s livelihoods, decisions with fairness implications, decisions that could set problematic precedents, or decisions with regulatory/professional ethics dimensions.

Objectives: Ensure ethical implications are surfaced, evaluated, and governed with the same rigour as operational and commercial considerations. Identify moral concerns that could block or modify the decision.

Approach: Systematically evaluate the decision against ethical criteria. Consider fairness across stakeholder groups, alignment with organisational values, potential for harm, and precedent implications. Document moral concerns and determine whether they constitute blocking conditions.

Inputs: Impact interpretations, stakeholder analysis, organisational values statements, professional ethical guidelines, precedent decisions

Outputs: Ethical concern register, values alignment assessment, fairness analysis, moral blocking conditions

Key Questions for Moral Impact Assessment

Question	What It Reveals
Is this fair to all affected parties?	Whether burdens and benefits are equitably distributed
Does this align with our stated values and principles?	Consistency between what we say and what we do
Are vulnerable groups disproportionately affected?	Hidden costs borne by those with least power
Would we be comfortable if this decision were made public?	The “newspaper test” for ethical defensibility
Are there voices being excluded from the decision process?	Power imbalances in whose interests are represented
Does this create precedents we would not want to follow?	Long-term implications of normalising this approach
Is the decision being made for the right reasons?	Whether stated rationale matches actual motivation
What would happen if everyone made this decision?	Universalisability of the approach

Fairness Analysis

Fairness Dimension	Assessment Question	Example Concern
Distributive	Are benefits and burdens shared fairly?	Cost savings accrue to one group while another bears the disruption
Procedural	Was the process fair and inclusive?	Affected groups had no opportunity to influence the decision
Informational	Do people have the information they need?	Staff not told about implications until too late to respond

Fairness Dimension	Assessment Question	Example Concern
Interpersonal	Are people being treated with dignity?	Change communicated impersonally without consideration
Corrective	Is there recourse for those harmed?	No appeals process for those negatively affected

Values Alignment Assessment

Assessment Area	What to Evaluate
Stated Values	Does the decision align with published organisational values?
Implicit Expectations	Does it meet reasonable expectations of stakeholders?
Professional Standards	Does it comply with relevant professional or industry ethics?
Legal Requirements	Does it meet legal and regulatory obligations?
Societal Norms	Does it align with broader societal expectations?

Moral Blocking Conditions

Certain moral concerns should prevent a decision from proceeding until addressed:

Moral Blocking Condition	Required Resolution
Decision directly contradicts stated organisational values	Values exception approved at board level or decision modified
Vulnerable group bears disproportionate harm with no mitigation	Mitigation plan approved or decision modified
Affected stakeholders denied any voice in decision	Consultation completed or explicit executive waiver
Decision would create harmful precedent	Precedent implications documented and accepted at appropriate level
Legal or regulatory ethical requirements not met	Compliance confirmed

Moral Blocking Condition	Required Resolution
Decision fails the “newspaper test”	Rationale documented that would withstand public scrutiny
Professional ethical standards would be breached	Professional body guidance obtained or decision modified

Examples Across Domains

Domain	Decision	Moral Questions to Ask
Legal	Advising client on aggressive position	Is this within the spirit of the law? Would we be comfortable defending this publicly?
Finance	Restructuring that eliminates roles	Are affected staff being treated fairly? Is support adequate?
Healthcare	Resource allocation between patient groups	Are vulnerable patients disadvantaged? Is the rationale defensible?
Construction	Value engineering to reduce costs	Are safety margins being compromised? Who bears the risk?
HR	Redundancy selection criteria	Is the process fair? Are protected groups disadvantaged?
Procurement	Selecting lowest cost supplier	Are labour practices ethical? Is quality being sacrificed?

TIP: Moral impact assessment is not about being moralistic or blocking every difficult decision. It is about ensuring that ethical considerations are visible and explicitly addressed rather than ignored or assumed away. Many decisions involve genuine ethical trade-offs; the goal is to make these trade-offs conscious and defensible, not to pretend they do not exist.

Key Points

- Uncertainty is normal - the goal is visibility and governance, not elimination

- Blocking rules prevent premature synthesis with unacceptable uncertainty
- Every assumption should have an owner and validation plan
- Risk classification enables appropriate escalation and acceptance
- Human risks deserve equal governance rigour as operational and commercial risks (when in scope)
- Moral impact assessment ensures ethical implications are explicitly considered (when in scope)

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7. Component Architecture: Synthesis (Component S)

Introduction

The Synthesis Architecture provides the structure to support the high-level designs, detailed designs and implementation of the Synthesis component as detailed within the CEIUS framework.

The Synthesis Architecture builds upon CEIUS and provides a number of sub-components that once implemented will provide a mechanism for forming, documenting and governing decisions.

Overview

Synthesis is where CEIUS forms the actual decision or recommendation. It consolidates options, weighs trade-offs, and records the outcome and its rationale in a way that can survive scrutiny and change.

A CEIUS decision is not just a choice; it is a documented position with full traceability to context, evidence, interpretations, and managed uncertainty.

Basic Structure

The Synthesis Architecture provides six coordinated sub-components:

Sub-Component	Purpose
S1. Option Consolidation	Build options from interpretations and constraints
S2. Trade-off Evaluation	Explicitly surface and document trade-offs
S3. Decision Formation	

Sub-Component	Purpose
	Form and justify the decision
S4. Decision Recording	Document the decision with full traceability
S5. Re-entry Conditions	Define triggers for decision review
S6. Impact Mitigation Plan	Plan support for affected stakeholders (Empathy)

Note: S6 is included when C7 Framework Scope determines that people impact is relevant to the decision.

S1. Option Consolidation

The Option Consolidation sub-component builds decision options.

Objectives: Construct clear options from interpretations, constraints, and stakeholder input.

Approach: Build each option with a clear description, linked evidence, linked interpretations, risk/assumption profile, cost/effort/timeline implications, and quality impacts.

Inputs: Interpretation matrix, constraint register, uncertainty register, stakeholder input

Outputs: Option set, option descriptions, option profiles

TIP: Options should be genuine alternatives, not straw men. If one option is obviously correct, either the analysis is missing something or the decision did not need CEIUS. Good options represent real trade-offs between competing values.

S2. Trade-off Evaluation

The Trade-off Evaluation sub-component surfaces and documents trade-offs.

Objectives: Make trade-offs explicit rather than implied or hidden.

Approach: For each option, identify what is gained and what is given up. Compare options across consistent criteria. Document the trade-offs clearly for stakeholder review.

Inputs: Option set, success criteria, constraint register, stakeholder priorities

Outputs: Trade-off matrix, comparative analysis, stakeholder impact assessment

Trade-off	Typical Tension
Cost vs Quality	Better quality requires more investment
Time vs Completeness	Faster delivery means accepting reduced scope or quality
Risk vs Reward	Higher potential returns come with greater uncertainty
Control vs Flexibility	Tighter governance reduces agility
Short-term vs Long-term	Immediate gains may create future problems
Efficiency vs Disruption	Optimal approach may cause maximum human disruption (when in scope)
Speed vs Adoption	Faster delivery reduces time for change management (when in scope)
Cost vs Support	Lower budget means less training and transition support (when in scope)

TIP: Trade-offs should be presented neutrally. The role of Synthesis is to make trade-offs visible and enable informed choice, not to hide inconvenient truths. Stakeholders generally appreciate honesty about trade-offs more than optimistic presentations.

S3. Decision Formation

The Decision Formation sub-component forms and justifies the decision.

Objectives: Select an option with clear rationale tied to context, evidence and trade-off evaluation.

Approach: Review options against success criteria. Consider stakeholder priorities and risk appetite. Form the decision with explicit rationale. Ensure decision authority is appropriate.

Inputs: Option set, trade-off matrix, success criteria, authority matrix

Outputs: Decision statement, rationale, authority confirmation

TIP: The rationale should explain not just what was decided but why - including why alternatives were rejected. A future reader should be able to understand the decision logic without having been in the room.

S4. Decision Recording

The Decision Recording sub-component documents the decision completely.

Objectives: Create a decision record that can survive scrutiny, personnel changes, and time.

Approach: Document all elements of the decision with full traceability. The record should be self-contained - someone reading it in six months should understand the decision without additional context.

Inputs: Decision statement, rationale, option analysis, uncertainty register, context elements

Outputs: Decision record, traceability links, approval documentation

Element	Content
Decision ID	Unique identifier for tracking and reference
Decision Statement	Clear statement of what was decided
Context Reference	Link to decision context elements
Framework Scope	Which CEIUS components were applied and why
Chosen Option	Description of selected approach
Rejected Alternatives	Options considered but not selected, with reasons
Rationale	Reasoning that led to the decision
Evidence References	Links to supporting evidence items
Accepted Risks	Risks acknowledged and accepted
Assumptions	Assumptions the decision depends on
Moral Considerations	Ethical factors considered and how addressed (when in scope)
Decision Maker	Who made the decision
Approval	Who approved and when
Re-entry Conditions	Triggers for revisiting the decision
Impact Mitigation Plan	

Element	Content
	How affected stakeholders will be supported (when in scope)

S5. Re-entry Conditions

The Re-entry Conditions sub-component defines review triggers.

Objectives: Ensure decisions are revisited when circumstances change in ways that affect the decision basis.

Approach: Define specific conditions that would trigger re-entry into the CEIUS cycle. Include both scheduled reviews and event-driven triggers.

Inputs: Decision basis, assumption register, risk register, change forecasts

Outputs: Re-entry trigger list, review schedule, monitoring requirements

Common re-entry triggers:

- New evidence that contradicts the decision basis
- Context changes (scope, constraints, stakeholders, regulations)
- Assumption invalidation during implementation
- Risk materialisation requiring response
- Significant incidents or operational issues
- Scheduled review dates
- Adoption rates significantly below expectations (when in scope)
- Stakeholder sentiment deteriorates significantly (when in scope)
- Moral concerns emerge that were not previously identified (when in scope)

TIP: Re-entry conditions should be specific and monitorable. Vague conditions like “significant change” are hard to operationalise. Specific conditions like “regulatory guidance changes” or “adoption below 50% at 3 months” are actionable.

S6. Impact Mitigation Plan (Empathy Enhancement)

The Impact Mitigation Plan sub-component ensures the decision includes explicit plans for supporting affected people through the change. A decision without an impact mitigation plan is incomplete when people are significantly affected.

When to include: Include S6 when C7 Framework Scope determines the decision has significant people impact.

Objectives: Ensure that human consequences identified in earlier stages are addressed with concrete support plans.

Approach: For each impact group, define communication plans, training requirements, transition support, and success indicators that include human measures.

Inputs: Impact interpretations, human risk register, stakeholder sentiment, resource constraints

Outputs: Communication plan, training plan, transition timeline, success indicators, feedback mechanisms

Plan Element	Content	Example
Communication Plan	Who needs to know what, when, and how	Town hall week 1, team briefings week 2, FAQs ongoing
Training Plan	What skills are needed and how they will be built	2-day training for all staff, advanced sessions for specialists
Transition Support	How people will be supported during changeover	Buddies for first month, dedicated support line
Timeline	When each phase occurs with human considerations	Pilot with volunteers, then phased rollout by team
Success Indicators	How adoption and sentiment will be measured	Usage rates, satisfaction surveys, support query volume
Feedback Mechanisms	How concerns will be captured and addressed	Weekly drop-in sessions, anonymous feedback channel

TIP: “We will figure out change management later” is how sound decisions become organisational failures. The impact mitigation plan should be integral to the decision, not an afterthought. If the plan is unaffordable or infeasible, that information should influence option selection.

Key Points

- Options should be genuine alternatives representing real trade-offs
- Trade-offs are surfaced explicitly, not hidden
- Decision records are self-contained and traceable
- Re-entry conditions ensure decisions remain valid over time
- Impact mitigation plans ensure human consequences are addressed, not ignored (when in scope)
- Moral considerations are documented as part of the decision record (when in scope)

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8. Integration Patterns

CEIUS and Existing Governance Frameworks

CEIUS enhances existing governance frameworks by providing the decision-making logic underpinning each governance gate. Existing frameworks describe phases and deliverables; CEIUS describes how information is used to form traceable decisions.

Governance Phase	CEIUS Stage	Integration Point
Initiation	Context	Establish decision criteria and success measures
Discovery/Analysis	Evidence + Interpretation	Gather information, interpret findings
Options Development	Interpretation + Synthesis	Evaluate options, form recommendations
Approval	Synthesis	Document decision with rationale
Implementation	Uncertainty + Synthesis	Manage risks, govern decisions through delivery
Review	All stages	Trigger re-entry when circumstances change

CEIUS and Iterative Approaches

CEIUS integrates with iterative delivery approaches by providing structured decision-making for significant decisions while respecting the need for agility.

- **Operational decisions:** Lightweight CEIUS (C1-C5, E1-E5, I1-I4, U1-U5, S1-S5)
- **Strategic decisions:** Full CEIUS with all components

- **Major initiatives:** CEIUS for governance and assurance

TIP: Not every decision needs full CEIUS. Use C7 Framework Scope to determine the appropriate level of rigour. A decision that affects one week is different from one that affects the next two years.

CEIUS and Risk Management

CEIUS Uncertainty component integrates with enterprise risk management:

- Risks identified in CEIUS feed into organisational risk registers
- Organisational risk appetite informs CEIUS blocking rules
- Risk acceptance in CEIUS follows organisational governance
- CEIUS provides traceability from decisions to risks

CEIUS and Professional Standards

CEIUS supports compliance with professional standards across domains:

Domain	Standards Integration
Legal	Supports duty of care, client best interests, conflict identification
Finance	Supports fiduciary duty, due diligence, audit trail requirements
Healthcare	Supports clinical governance, patient safety, evidence-based practice
Construction	Supports health and safety, quality assurance, regulatory compliance
General Management	Supports good governance, accountability, transparent decision-making

CEIUS and Domain-Specific Implementation

CEIUS is designed as a core decision engine that can be adapted for specific domains:

- **CEIUS Core:** The generic framework components documented here
- **Domain Modules:** Domain-specific terminology, requirement types, templates, and guidance

Domain modules provide: - Custom requirement types appropriate to the domain - Domain-specific prompts and templates - Industry terminology mappings - Regulatory and compliance requirements for that sector - Default framework scope settings for common decision types

This enables the framework to be applied consistently across different professional contexts while respecting domain-specific needs.

AI-Supported Decision Making

CEIUS provides governance for AI-assisted decisions:

- AI can assist with evidence summarisation and draft interpretations
- AI outputs are always treated as evidence with explicit trust levels
- Humans remain accountable for Uncertainty governance and Synthesis
- AI-generated content is clearly tagged and subject to verification

TIP: AI is a powerful tool for the Evidence and Interpretation stages but should not make final decisions. Humans remain accountable. Use AI to accelerate analysis, not to bypass governance.

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9. Glossary

Term	Definition
Adoption Risk	The risk that a sound solution fails because people do not use it effectively
Assumption	A statement taken as true for the purpose of analysis, pending validation
Blocking Rule	A condition that prevents synthesis until resolved or explicitly accepted
Change Readiness	The degree to which affected people are prepared for and willing to accept change
Confidence Level	A qualitative indication of how strongly evidence supports an interpretation
Context	The decision frame that defines scope, intent, constraints, and success criteria
Decision Record	A documented synthesis outcome capturing the decision, rationale, and links

Term	Definition
Empathy Gap	Missing understanding of how a decision affects the people involved
Evidence	Any artefact, data, or statement used to inform interpretations
Evidence Conflict	A situation where two or more evidence items contradict each other
Fairness Analysis	Assessment of whether burdens and benefits are equitably distributed
Framework Scope	The determination of which CEIUS components apply to a specific decision
Gap	Missing information that affects decision quality
Impact Group	A set of stakeholders who will experience similar effects from a decision
Impact Mitigation Plan	Explicit plans for supporting affected people through a change
Interpretation	A reasoned reading of evidence, often one of several competing views
Moral Blocking Condition	An ethical concern serious enough to prevent decision proceeding
Moral Gap	Missing assessment of ethical implications
Moral Impact Assessment	Evaluation of whether a decision is ethically justified
Re-entry Condition	A trigger that requires a decision to be revisited through CEIUS
Risk	A potential negative outcome with assessed likelihood and impact
Sentiment Evidence	Data about how stakeholders feel, their concerns, and readiness for change
Synthesis	The act of forming and documenting the final decision
Traceability	The ability to follow a decision back to context, evidence, and reasoning
Trust Level	An assessment of evidence reliability and verification status
Uncertainty	The set of gaps, assumptions, and unknowns that affect decision reliability
Values Alignment	Consistency between a decision and stated organisational principles

Summary of Enhancements

This version of the CEIUS Framework includes three significant enhancements:

Framework Scope Enhancement

Added to ensure appropriate rigour without unnecessary process burden:

- **C7. Framework Scope** - Determines which components apply to this specific decision
- **Decision Significance Assessment** - Criteria for evaluating decision scale and impact
- **Component Selection Guidance** - Defaults for different decision types
- **Exclusion Documentation** - Required justification when components are not used
- **"When to include" guidance** - Added to each optional component

Empathy Enhancements

Added to ensure human consequences are systematically considered (when in scope):

- **C6. Stakeholder Impact Scope** - Identify who is affected and how severely
- **E6. Stakeholder Sentiment** - Gather evidence about how people feel
- **I6. Impact Interpretation** - Derive meaning from sentiment evidence
- **U6. Human Risk Register** - Track people-related risks
- **S6. Impact Mitigation Plan** - Plan support for affected people
- **Empathy Gap** - New gap type in U1
- **Behavioural/Support/Wellbeing assumptions** - New categories in U2
- **Human impact trade-offs** - Added to S2

Moral Impact Enhancements

Added to ensure ethical implications are explicitly addressed (when in scope):

- **U7. Moral Impact Assessment** - Evaluate ethical justification
- **Moral Gap** - New gap type in U1
- **Moral assumptions** - New category in U2
- **Moral blocking conditions** - Added to U4
- **Fairness Analysis** - Structured approach to assessing equity

- **Values Alignment Assessment** - Check against stated principles
- **Moral Considerations** - Added to decision record in S4
- **Moral re-entry triggers** - Added to S5
- **Domain Examples** - Illustrating moral questions across professional contexts

These enhancements ensure that CEIUS addresses not just “can we do this?” and “how do we do this?” but also “what will this mean for people?” and “should we do this?” - while allowing the framework to be scaled appropriately for the decision at hand.

CEIUS Decision Architecture

Framework and Component Architectures

With Framework Scope, Empathy and Moral Impact Enhancements

Bringing structure, clarity, and defensibility to complex decisions

Context -> Evidence -> Interpretation -> Uncertainty -> Synthesis

Contexta

contexta.uk

Structured reasoning from context to decision-ready outputs