

One room, different needs

Read the case | Choose a four-week trial policy

A shared study/work room has **20 seats**, one board and two volunteers. People work alone, make short calls and work together. There is **no budget for more rooms, equipment or staff**. Keep all 20 seats available. Explain how users will understand your policy.

Fictional feedback: 12 of the 20 regular users replied. Eight mentioned distracting noise, seven wanted somewhere for short calls and six said talking helps them work together. People could mention several issues.
We do not know the other eight users' views, how often problems occur or which answers overlap.

Option	A possible policy
A. Quiet all day	Calls move outside. People working together in the room use written notes.
B. Two zones	12 quiet seats; 8 seats for low-voice conversation and calls. Mark the boundary on the board.
C. Quiet hours	Quiet from 9-11 am and 2-4 pm. At other times, allow low-voice calls and conversation. Calls in quiet hours move outside.

1. Check what we know

- Why can we not add $8 + 7 + 6$ to count different people?
- What else would you want to know before choosing?
- What do A and C assume about taking calls outside?

2. Make these claims more accurate

- Everyone wants a quieter room.
 - Two zones will solve the problem.
- Compare your versions with a partner. Explain what you changed.

- _____
- _____

3. Prepare your first view

Choose an option. Prepare a benefit, a drawback and a question for someone who prefers another option. Use keywords or prepare aloud. You may adapt or combine options within the limits.

Discuss, decide and reconsider

Use page 1 | Aim for a workable plan, not a winning argument

1. Notice how the reply changes the plan

Jo: I'd choose quiet hours, with calls allowed between them.

Sam: Although quiet hours protect concentration, callers may need to make calls during those hours. What are we assuming about outside?

Jo: That people can make calls there. We haven't checked that.

Sam: Could we combine quiet hours with a low-voice zone?

Jo: I could support that, provided that users know when calls are allowed. Sound might still travel. Let's ask users after four weeks.

- What concern does Sam accept before raising a problem?
- What must be true for Jo to support the new plan?
- What does "might" tell us about sound travelling?

2. Talk and make a first plan

Choose one person to start and another to summarise. Share your starting views. Ask about a drawback or assumption, and respond to another view. You can disagree at the end. Write keywords or prepare your report aloud.

Our policy and a reason from the case: _____

A drawback and how we will manage it: _____

How users will know / what we will check after four weeks: _____

3. Hear the update, then reconsider

Your teacher will give you new information. Explain what changes in your reasoning. Adapt your plan or explain why it still works. Give a one-minute recommendation. Each listener asks a question.

Accept a point: I take your point about noise, although ...

Question: What are we assuming about ...?

Set a condition: I could support that, provided that ...

Show uncertainty: That might help, but we cannot yet tell whether ...

Compromise / review: Could we combine ... with ...? After four weeks, we could check whether ...

After feedback, try a new decision on a separate sheet. Plain, precise language is welcome; you do not need to use every phrase.

Who gets a place?

A new decision | Try with less help; ask for support if needed

A creative club has **24 members and 12 seats** for each weekly session. Two volunteers run it. There is no extra room, staff or budget. People cannot wait inside once all seats are taken. Choose a booking policy for the next **four sessions**.

New fictional feedback: 14 members replied. Nine wanted to book ahead, eight wanted to drop in without booking and six wanted printed activity instructions. People could mention several needs. We do not know the other ten members' views. Both policies can offer printed instructions from the club's existing supply.

Option	What happens
A. Book every seat	Members must book one of the 12 places ahead. Members can book online or by phone. An unbooked visitor may arrive when all places are taken.
B. Keep some for visitors	Book 8 places online or by phone; keep 4 for people who arrive without booking. Visitors may arrive after the four places are full.

1. Agree a trial

Choose or adapt a policy within the limits. Give a reason, acknowledge a drawback and ask a real question about another view. Agree what will happen when places are full. Decide what evidence would make you change the policy.

Our trial and reason: _____

A condition or practical safeguard: _____

A question we discussed and our response:

What we do not know / how we will review it:

2. Give your own recommendation

Take turns. Recommend a trial, answer your partner's question and explain one limit of the feedback. Your partner says what they understood; check it. Then swap. Look back at page 2 only if you need help.

What became clearer after feedback? _____

Run a discussion worth revising

Suggested B2-C1 | Adults and older teens | About 60 minutes

Outcome: a supported recommendation, a meaningful condition, a drawback and a relevant response. Check use again in a new case.

Share: pages 1-2 first; page 3 after feedback. Keep pages 4-5. All cases are invented. No research, personal disclosure or recording needed.

The core route

Time	Teacher action
0-5	Ask when conversation helps or interrupts work. Accept imagined examples. Set the policy decision.
5-14	Read page 1. Pairs discuss evidence and rewrite claims. Check overlap, missing views and outside-call assumptions.
14-22	Read page 2's model. Check its three meaning questions, then invite a different response. Use the key on page 5.
22-34	Prepare, discuss in pairs or groups of 3-4 and record a plan. Listen for reasons and relevant responses.
34-40	Reveal the update below. Groups reconsider without changing the budget or seat limits.
40-46	One-minute recommendations and questions. Note useful language and one problem worth repairing.
46-50	Give selective feedback. Model or elicit one clearer condition, claim or response; let learners retry it.
50-58	Share page 3. Allow 4 minutes to plan, then 4 for paired recommendations, questions and a swap.
58-60	Ask what became clearer and what still needed help. Set the optional follow-up or choose a next speaking check.

Update: keep hidden until minute 34

The covered outdoor area will be closed for the whole trial. There is no other sheltered outdoor space. This weakens outside-call plans in bad weather; it does not make every outdoor call impossible. Ask what changes, what remains uncertain and how the plan can still work.

B2: keep the phrase bank visible, allow notes and explain a condition with if. **C1:** ask how representative the feedback is and what evidence would reverse the decision. Relevant plain language counts; six phrases or equal turn counts are not a success score.

Online: share pages 1-2 in small rooms; reveal updates orally or in chat. **One-to-one:** take the other view, ask a genuine question and let the learner challenge you. For three or four learners, rotate the reporter and allow each a question. Extend timings if needed.

Check meaning and reasoning

Several policies can work | Judge the explanation and interaction

Page 1: evidence and accurate claims

1a. The counts can overlap: one person can mention several needs. **1b.** Eight users did not reply; frequency, strength of preference and overlap are unknown. **1c.** Outside calls must be feasible, including weather and access; leaving work briefly may not be possible.

2a. Eight of twelve respondents mentioned distracting noise; we do not know that all twenty want the same quiet policy.

2b. Two zones might reduce interruptions, although sound could still travel. Accept other accurate rewrites.

Page 2: the reply and the language

1a. Quiet hours protect concentration. **1b.** Users must know when calls are allowed. **1c.** Sound travelling is possible, not certain. The compromise and review still leave practical details to discuss.

Meaning matters: although + clause acknowledges a contrast; do not add but to join the same two clauses. Provided (that) + clause introduces a condition, not a reason. If / as long as can also work here. Provided is relatively formal; natural wording is welcome. May / might / could + base verb can express possibility in these examples. We cannot yet tell whether ... makes uncertainty explicit.

A possible room recommendation after the update

Try two zones, provided that all twenty seats stay usable and users see the boundary on the board. Noise may still disturb quiet work. Note problems and ask all twenty users after four weeks about noise, calls and collaboration. Reconsider if quiet work remains difficult. Accept other plans that address outside access, sound, staffing and seats. No invented soundproof barrier or extra room.

Page 3: the fresh booking decision

Counts overlap; ten members did not reply. Printed instructions work with either policy. A offers certainty to booked users; B keeps four places for visitors. Neither guarantees a place to everyone. Explain full sessions and cancellations without an indoor queue or extra staff. Review attendance, unused bookings and people turned away; ask all members. Nine responses do not show everyone's preference.

Notice each learner, then choose a next step

For each learner, note **independent / with support / next time**: accurate claim; meaningful condition; relevant question/response; reasoned recommendation. Record an example and support. Group answers or copied repairs alone are not individual evidence. Compare attempts; check retention another lesson.

Optional follow-up: write 90-120 words recommending either trial, with a drawback, condition and evidence limit. Next lesson, ask what would change it. No single policy key. Reference: Cambridge English Grammar Today, Conditionals: other expressions; Conjunctions: contrasting. Classroom effectiveness untested.