

FIT1049: IT professional practice

Week 11: Towards an inclusive, fair and safe workplace



Things to cover today...

At the end of this lecture, you will broadly understand:

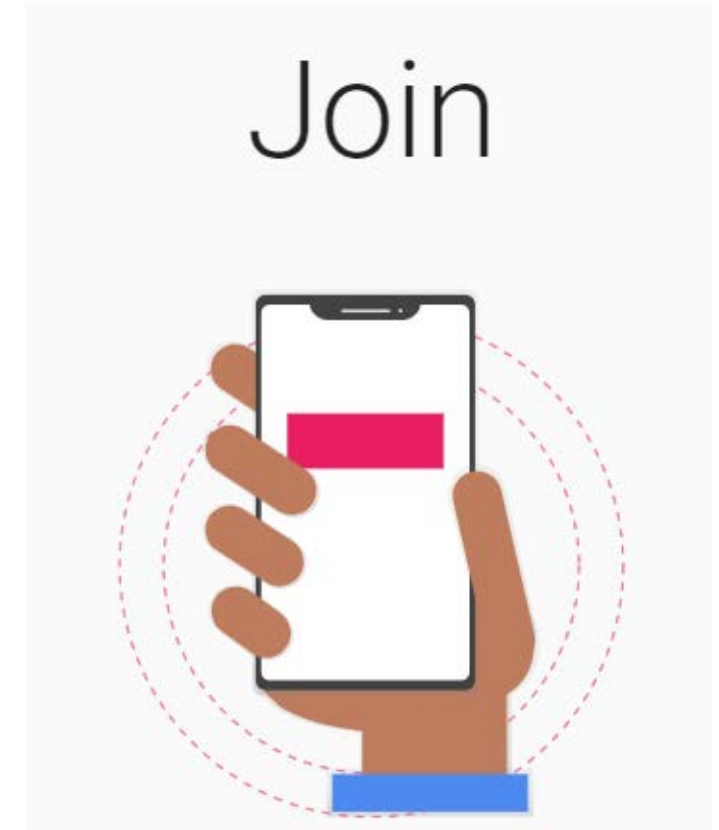
1. What constitutes professionally unacceptable behaviours, such as harassment, bullying and discrimination; and
2. How to respond to such instances of unacceptable behaviours at the workplace.

Week 11 ePub revision: Recall and apply...

Please head to **<https://flux.qa>** and sign in with your Monash account (you should then stay logged in for the semester).

Hit the plus button in the top right and type in code **8JQJ4J** to join the FIT1049 group. The code is case sensitive.

*Please note that this is a Monash system, and your responses to questions are not anonymous.



Question 1: Unacceptable behaviours

Sam is a Business Analyst at a large consulting firm, recently being deployed to a client organisation that is a bank. One day Sam mistakenly forgot to submit a report on behalf of the team; he and his team completed it, but he forgot to send it to the clients by the deadline. The clients were not able to present the report to their stakeholders, and are now demanding some explanations from Sam's team and organisation for the damage this mistake incurred by failing to present this report on time. Which one of the following is professionally unacceptable behaviours?

1. The clients pointing out to Sam in the presence of his team how much damage the mistake incurred to their organisation.
2. Sam's manager demanding further explanations from Sam on how this happened and what Sam would do in response.
3. Sam's team sending an email to Sam's manager detailing the mistake Sam made.

Question 2: Equality and equity

You are working in a company where the leadership roles within the IT Department are occupied solely by male managers and team leaders. As part of the initiative across the company to increase female representation in the senior positions, the management is now considering only to hire female managers and team leaders for the next round of recruitment when these positions became vacant. Which of the following would be the most likely justification the company would hold?

1. This arrangement aims to achieve the provision of equal opportunities for female candidates.
2. This arrangement would provide the equity to female candidates.
3. This arrangement is nothing to do with equality or equity, but aims to increase the diversity of the workforce for creativity and innovation.

Question 3: Discrimination

Julian is a Project Manager working for a consulting firm. His colleague, Rachelle, worked previously with him on a same project, and during this time Rachelle confided with Julian that she had at one stage suffered from a particular mental health condition which made her attendance at work inconsistent. Now Julian is being deployed to his next project, and his manager nominated Rachelle to be one of the project members. Julian knows that it is a high-stakes project, and he requested his manager an alternative member on the basis of Rachelle's previous medical condition. Which of the following describes Julian's recommendation best?

1. Direct discrimination
2. Indirect discrimination
3. No discrimination

Question 4: Sexual harassment

Stephanie is working in a medium-sized software development company as a frontend developer, amongst other colleagues who are all male. One of the colleagues has in his wallpaper a meme that contains a subtle yet derogatory message about women, and even though the meme is visible only partially behind numerous open windows on the screen, it bothers her personally. Stephanie respects this colleague as a developer, and finds him generally a very nice person to work with. She also knows that this colleague thinks that this meme is more like a clever satire than a derogatory joke. Which of the following describes the situation best?

1. What one has as a wallpaper is after all up to one's personal preference, and Stephanie would be asking for potentially too much a personal favour if she was to ask him to take the meme down.
2. Stephanie knows that it was not ill-intended, so she can just let it go unless she finds it unbearable. After all it is a professional workplace, so she should not be commenting on his personal preference nor judging on his sense of humour.
3. Stephanie felt uncomfortable, and that is enough a reason to raise this as an issue.

Question 5: Power abuse

Alex and Nicola are both working for the same project for three months. Alex is a Senior Business Analyst deployed from the IT Department for the new client management system, while Nicola is a Junior Marketing Officer deployed by the Sales and Marketing Department for a short term engagement in the project. Even though they are from different work areas, they both got along quite well with each other at work. One day Alex had to pick up his private mobile phone from a repair shop, but because of some issues arising from the project, he found himself not able to pick it up himself. Alex and Nicola often take a turn to pick up lunch for each other when they are busy, so Alex thought if Nicola could perhaps pick his phone up on the way back to office, since she is at another location close to the repair shop. Would that be a problem?

1. Yes. Alex should not be asking Nicola something unrelated to work during the work hours.
2. Yes. Nicola might feel obliged to say yes even if she did not want to do this.
3. No, they are friends with each other, so this is acceptable as long as Nicola is happy to do so.

Question 6: Cultural stereotyping

You are working in a team of colleagues from a diverse range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. One day one of your colleagues approached you to compliment the quality of your work, and jokingly attributed to your ethnic background. Which of the following describes the situation best?

1. Such a behaviour is acceptable if the cultural stereotype was used positively to compliment or recognise the quality of one's work.
2. Such a behaviour is unacceptable since any ethnically or culturally based stereotype, however harmless it may seem, could lead to racism.
3. Such a behaviour can be acceptable in this specific instance if both you and your colleague know each other well.

Workplace inclusivity, fairness and safety...

...do not come at the end but a starting point,...

...and they are not a bonus but the most basic conditions.

Question 7: Bullying 1

Anne is a mother who has two young children, and is currently working as a part-time programmer 3 days a week. She has been deployed to a team that recently lost its long-serving team member for redundancy. From the start, Anne was met with very hostile attitudes from the team members who falsely believed that her appointment was the main reason that resulted in the sacking of the said member who lost his job. Their behaviours quickly escalated into a series of bullying behaviours, and the team, for example, deliberately scheduled regular team meetings on Mondays, on which Anne does not work. Anne raised this with the team, but they insisted that holding these meetings on Mondays is part of the 'operational requirements'. They further criticised her for working part-time, while making no effort at all to share with her what is actually discussed at these meetings. Which of the following describes the situation best?

1. This is a form of direct discrimination against Anne as a working mother.
2. This is a bullying behaviour in the form of indirect discrimination against Anne who can only work three days a week.
3. This specific behaviour does not actually constitute bullying, and the team has a valid point holding meetings on Mondays.

Question 8: Bullying 2

In the same scenario, now you are being deployed as a new team member to Anne's team. You quickly realise that there is something going on between Anne and the rest of the team, but you were still oblivious to the team's bullying behaviours till Anne confided to you the details. Since your experience in other teams within the same company has been so positive, what she told you was initially a big surprise for you, and at the same time, you felt rather angry about the treatment Anne received to date. Which of the following would be the most appropriate action to take?

1. You as a team member speak to those identified as bullies and point out that their behaviours have been unacceptable.
2. You as a colleague encourages Anne to speak to the manager for further actions.
3. You as a staff member report to your manager these bullying incidents.

Question 9: Bullying 3

Again in the same scenario. One morning, you received an email from those engaged in the bullying behaviours. The email was legitimately operational and work related, except, at the bottom of the email you found a thread of previous emails they forgot to delete. The thread included a series of derogatory and humiliating comments about Anne, and it also implied that those participating in the exchange of such emails have intimate knowledge of Anne's children and personal life, presumably obtained from Anne's social media account visible to the public. What's your immediate step to take?

1. Notify Anne straight away since this may pose a risk to her children and personal life.
2. Forward the email to your manager with an outline of what you know about the bullying behaviours as background.
3. Speak to the manager and/or HR urgently and report this as an incident.

Why does it matter?

*It's not just for you, your immediate colleagues
and friends, but...*

*also for the sake of your professional
and social responsibilities.*

Table 1: Gender Composition of domestic enrolments by field of study, 2001 and 2016

		2001		2016		Change
Dominance (2016)	Field of Study	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (pp.)
Female dominated	Creative Arts	66.1	33.9	61.1	38.9	-5.1
	Society and Culture	65.3	34.7	64.8	35.2	-0.6
	Education	75.3	24.7	75.0	25.0	-0.4
	Health	73.0	27.0	73.0	27.0	-0.1
Mixed	Management and Commerce	48.7	51.3	46.7	53.3	-2.1
	Natural and Physical Sciences	51.8	48.2	49.9	50.1	-1.8
	Agriculture Environmental and Related Studies	46.1	53.9	52.7	47.3	6.6
Male Dominated	Information Technology	25.7	74.3	16.4	83.6	-9.4
	Architecture and Building	38.5	61.5	38.9	61.1	0.4
	Engineering and Related Technologies	15.7	84.3	15.6	84.4	-0.1
Total		55.9	44.1	57.5	42.5	1.6

Source: Department of Education and Training (2017), Higher Education Statistics Data Cube (uCube)². Agency calculations.

Table 2: Award course completion for domestic undergraduate and postgraduate students by gender, 2016

Award course completion by gender, 1999		Award course completion by gender, 2016	
Female	Male	Female	Male
57.9%	42.1%	59.3%	40.7%

Source: Department of Education and Training (2017), 2016 Full-Year Domestic Award Course Completions.³ Agency graph.

Do geek stereotypes keep women out of computer science?



Charlie Jane Anders
6/27/13 6:00pm • Filed to: PSYCHOLOGY

33.4K 264 8 f t e



The media is full of geek stereotypes, everywhere from *Big Bang Theory* to episodes of *CSI* and *NCIS*. These images of geeks as antisocial, immature dorks may seem harmless — but a new study suggests these media images help keep women out of computer science.

(Anders, 2013)

(WGEA, 2018)


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About Athena SWAN

Athena SWAN Charter is an accreditation program designed to enhance gender equality in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM) disciplines.



Promoting Inclusiveness in STEMM

A focus on gender equity and inclusiveness at Monash is fundamental to our organisational strategy.



Meet Our Women in STEMM

We have outstanding women disciplines. Their research is : major challenges and making on the world.


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(Athena, 2018)

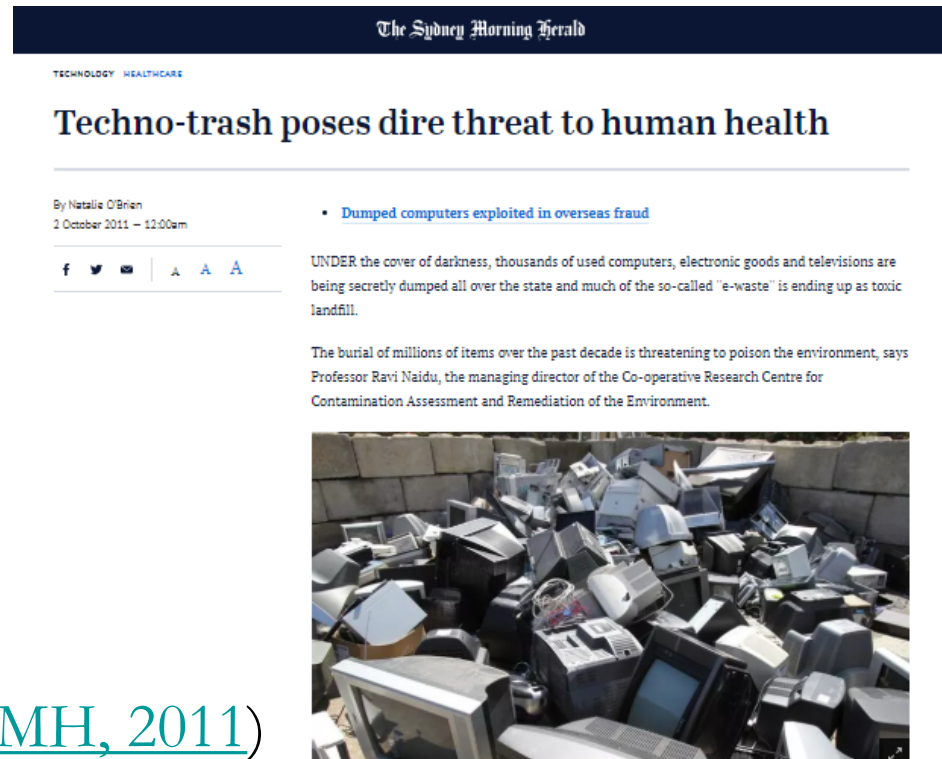
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celebrating
20 YEARS





(ABC, 2002)



(SMH, 2011)



(Latimer, 2018)

Answers and comments for the quizzes

- 1) All can be ‘professionally unacceptable’, if they were done in certain ways. The option 1 can be bullying if the clients did it deliberately to accuse and humiliate Sam, for example (the clients have all the rights to demand explanations though). The option 2 can also be bullying if the manager did so in front of the team, for example, and can be a form of intimidation and harassment if it was done in a certain manner even though it is indeed part of the manager’s role to provide feedback. The main point is to consider how the message is delivered.
- 2) The answer is 2. This arrangement is not providing ‘equal opportunities’ as such, and that is why it can potentially be contentious. Be clear about the difference between equality and equity, and consider the challenges that come with affirmative actions (i.e. equity approach) while also considering potential ‘double standards’ associated with the idea of equality. The option 3 is a bit of curved ball; the first sentence is wrong in the context of the scenario, but the second part highlights the general justification for the arrangement one way or another.
- 3) The answer is 1. There is also a major privacy breach here if Julian told the manager about the nature of Rachelle’s medical condition.
- 4) The answer is 3. The motivation is irrelevant in any case of harassment, and the fact that Stephanie felt uncomfortable constitutes the basis of taking a further action. What can Stephanie do? Think about it.

Answers and comments for the quizzes (cont'd)

- 5) The answer is 2, though the option 1 can also be 'correct' depending on the organization's policies and culture around work hours. What is at the bottom of this is power relations. Even though they are from different work units, Alex is in a senior position, which would inevitably affect their relationship. The option 2 is thus a point on which one needs to execute reasonable caution as not to give any sense of coercion, and in this instance whatever the situation was, Alex should be aware of his seniority and not ask anything that would put Nicole in a vulnerable position.
- 6) No 'correct' answer as such, but this is to highlight some differing views on the subject, and to highlight the importance of cultural sensitivities as well as the danger of cultural generalisation, especially in light of the singularity of individuals.
- 7) The answer is 2. Be clear about what constitutes 'indirect discrimination' as oppose to 'direct discrimination'.
- 8) The answer is 2 then possibly 3, depending on Anne's response. The option 1 may lead to victimization of Anne. The option 2 would be ideal if Anne is comfortable, but if not, you may report more generally to your manager as a serious issue within the team. One way or another the goal is to make a change; you cannot just sit on it.
- 9) The answer is 3. It is a serious issue, and needs to be dealt with urgently with appropriate levels of authority. The option 1 may not be recommended; Anne should know, but due to the seriousness of the matter, you may like to first consult how this should be communicated to Anne. That is where an organizational approach to workplace issues come in.

So, how will this week's topics be assessed in the exam?

Sample question 1 (based on this week's ePub and lecture): Provide an example of affirmative action, and briefly discuss both its benefits and potential issues arising from such an arrangement.

Hints: This is one way to address inequity. Have a think about how the idea of equity came about, and also its limitations (and why we still find it relevant despite the limitations).

So, how will this week's topics be assessed in the exam?

Sample question 2 (based on this week's ePub and lecture): Tim is a permanent resident in Australia, having been lived in Melbourne for 20 years, most of which he had worked as an IT security analyst. He recently found a job advert for a role within an federal government agency, but the role is only available to Australian citizens. Is this direct/indirect discrimination? Or does it not constitute discrimination in this specific instance?

Hints: This is not a case of discrimination. Consider why.

Next week...

Week 12 lecture

- Lecture on the organisational approach to the management of security risks and incidents (guest lecture)
- Exam revision

Things to do this week...

1. Attend your Tutorial session(s) this week, in which you will be conducting a group presentation; and
2. Read the ePub for Week 12 before the lecture next week. You will also see in the Week 12 tab on the Moodle Site a summary of what to come in Week 12.