

# FIT1049: IT professional practice

Week 9: An introduction to organizational communications – documentation



# Things to cover today...

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

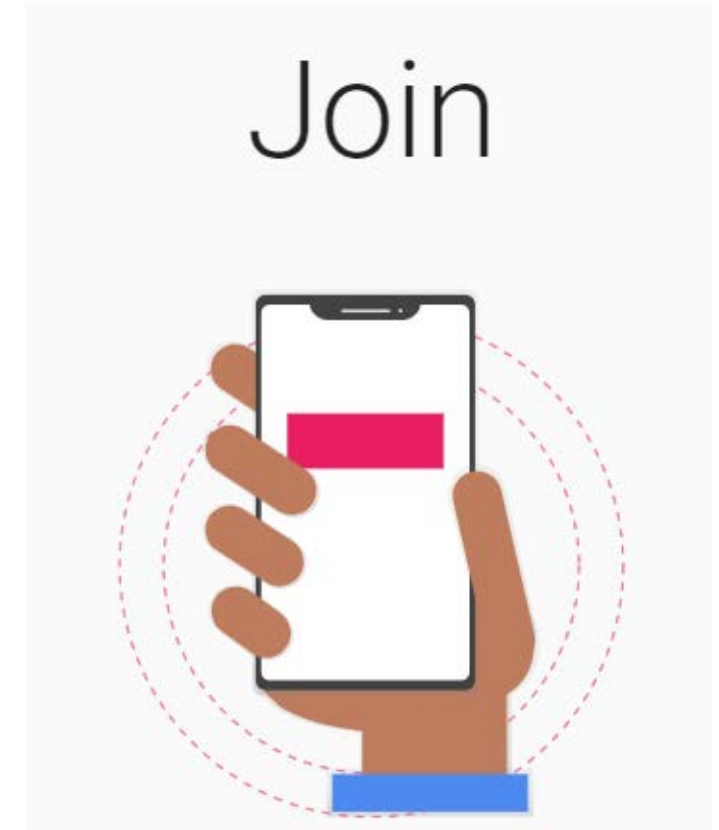
1. How different management structures influence the organisation's communications; and
2. How certain types of documentation are used in organisations to serve specific purposes, and
3. How they interact with external frameworks such as laws and socio-cultural climates.

# Week 9 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: Organisational structure

As an employee of an international retail company, you are visiting the New York City to meet with the North American counterpart of your IT Department in the Melbourne office. After a few days exchanging ideas with your American colleagues, you find out so much of the business processes in the US branch are different from their Australian equivalent, and you realise why there have been so many instances of miscommunications and inefficiency in the past between your (i.e. Melbourne) IT Department and the IT Department in the States when working together. Which of the following would be the likely organisational structure in your company?

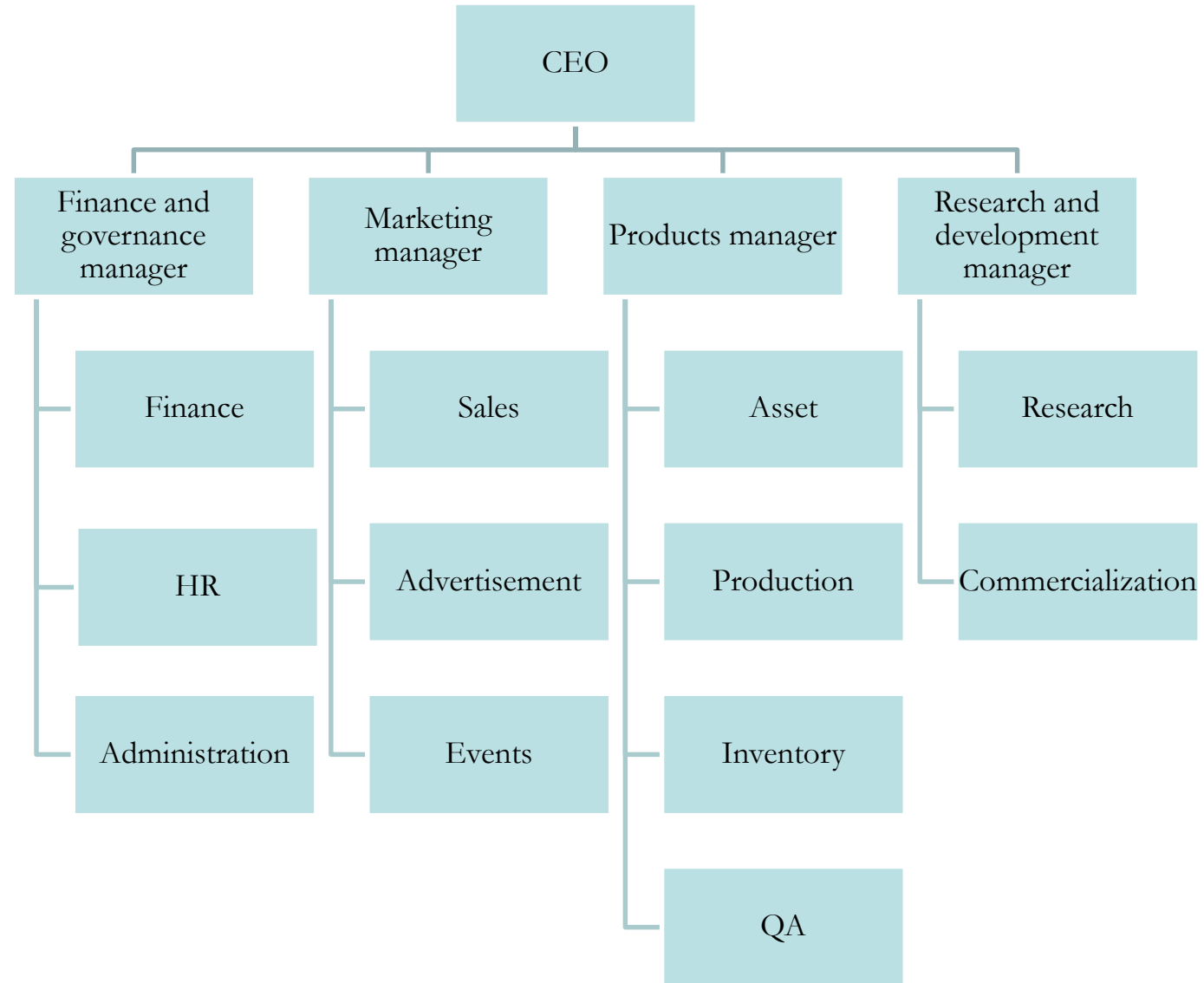
1. Matrix
2. Functional
3. Divisional

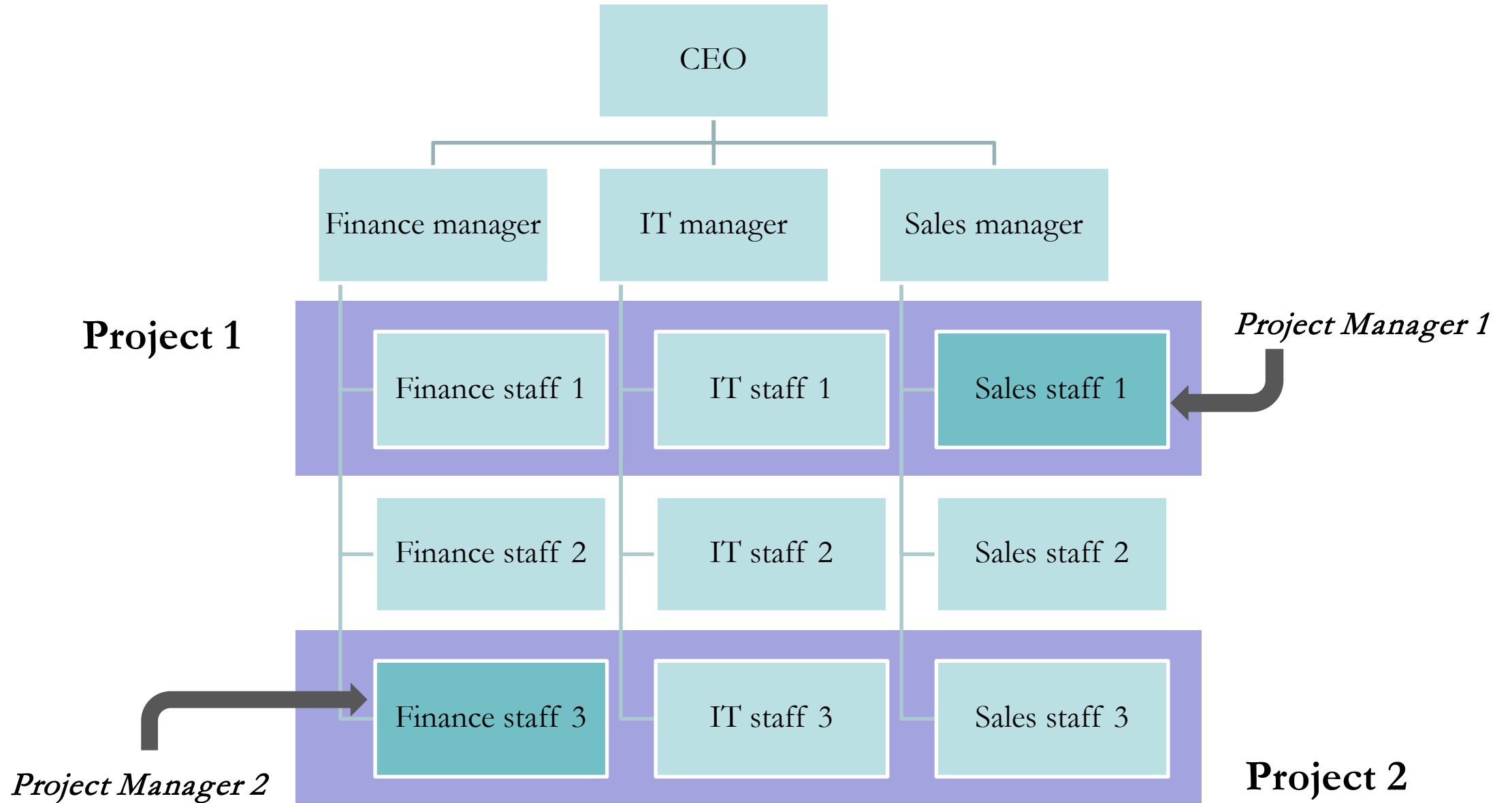


## Question 2: Communications and organisational structures

You are working in an organisation that has a matrix structure of management. Which of the following options describes likely challenges best?

1. The structure may result in different areas of the organisation (e.g. IT, Finance, Legal) isolated from each other, creating silos of their respective expertise that lead to lack of communications and hence inefficiency.
2. The structure would assign staff with multiple reporting lines to manage, which can lead to complexity in human resource management as well as communications to regularly maintain.
3. The structure may reinforce their own local culture and processes in an autonomous environment, and this may result in the communication errors due to the lack of shared context between different sections of the organisation.







# Question 3: Documents and messages

Which of the following written communications is NOT a characteristic of well prepared documentation?

1. A well prepared document is self-sufficient, so that anyone who reads the document can ascertain who prepared the document for what purpose for whom in which circumstance.
2. A well prepared document is complete, so that it addresses its purposes internally without needing to refer the reader to sources outside the document.
3. A well prepared document is open, so that it includes a set of specific instructions and/or initiatives for the reader to follow through in order to complete the communication.



# Question 4: Organisational goals and objectives

Which one of them would NOT be part of ‘organisational goals’?

1. Our organisation thrives to be one of the best consulting firms in the Asia Pacific region.
2. Our organisation aims to cater for those disadvantaged, and deliver positive changes to the communities and societies.
3. Our organisation aims to deliver a 20% increase of the number of customers in the next two financial years.



# Question 5: Policies and procedures

Which one of the following statements would best fit in a procedure document than in a policy document?

1. This product will not collect any personal information of its users.
2. All the personal information mistakenly recorded in the system will need to be deleted immediately.
3. The employment may be terminated if the correct procedure was not followed.

# Question 6: Guidelines and best practice

Which of the following is NOT part of the purpose of guidelines and best practice documents?

1. They are another version of the procedures however with some extra details specific to the organisation in order to supplement what is not covered in the procedures.
2. They are used when there are certain processes that are recommended but cannot be enforced or prescribed uniformly across by the procedures.
3. They consolidate the ways one can achieve the highlight standard of practice when there is no legal or professional frameworks are available.

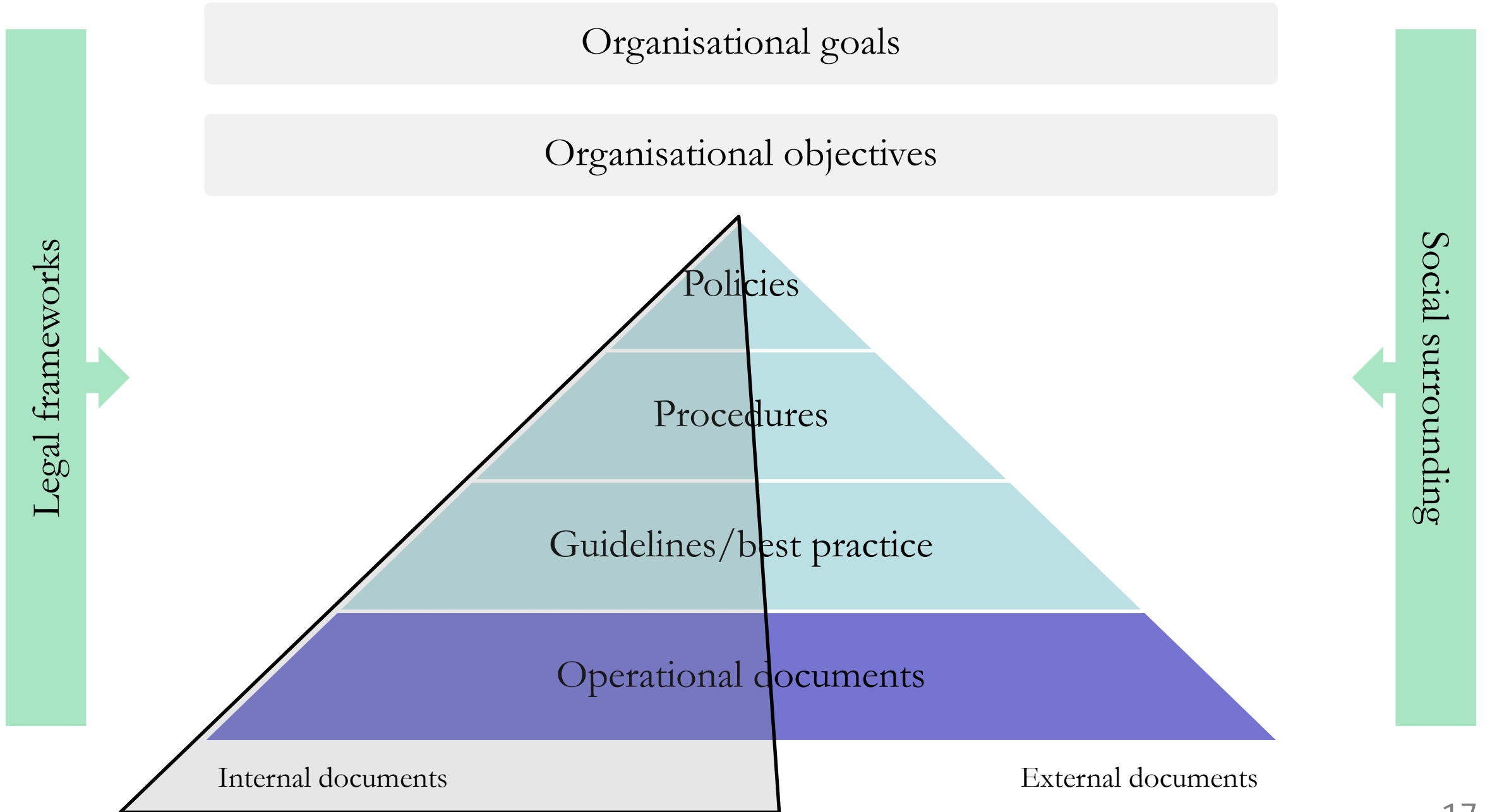


# Question 7: Strategic, governance and operational documents

Which of the combination below reflects the best alignment between the examples and their respective types of documents?

1. Annual plan (strategic); Internet Use Policy for Staff (governance); Meeting minutes arising from one of the project meetings (operational).
2. Mission statement (governance); Staff Procedures on Customer Data Retention (operational); Project proposal produced to engage with a new client (strategic).
3. Whitepaper written on the topic of emerging technology (operational); Acceptable Use Policy (strategic); One of the emails sent out from the project team to a client's organisation outlining the company's position on certain legal matters (governance).







## Question 8: External and internal documents 1

Ming is a business analyst working as part of the consulting team deployed by his company to a client organisation, and he is also Project Manager responsible for this deployment. One of his team members from Finance has recently spoke to Ming that she will have to be away unexpectedly to attend a family commitment for two weeks, and Ming had arranged to 'borrow' a replacement staff member even though he was working on a different project within the Finance Department.

This arrangement will not cause any changes to the project's progress, but Ming will need to implement some changes to the workflows since this replacement staff is not familiar with the background of the project. There will soon be another milestone meeting with the clients, and Ming will have to submit a progress report. Provided that he has the full authority over resourcing (i.e. no need to consult the clients of the change of staff), how Ming should communicate this to his stakeholders?

## Question 8 (cont'd): External and internal documents 1

1. Ming should advise the change of staff informally to the client to reassure that there are no implications to the progress, while he does not mention the specifics of the staff changes in the report itself.
2. Ming should advise both informally and in the progress report the change of staff, including the reason for the original team member to be absent.
3. Ming does not need to let the clients know anything about the change of staff, since this change would not affect the progress of the project at all from the client's viewpoint.

## Question 9: External and internal documents 2

In the same scenario, Ming will also have to submit a regular report to a group of managers at his own organisation of the progress of this deployment. What the course of action would Ming be following?

1. Ming should be covering in the report the replacement arrangement as well as the justifications and the implications of this arrangement to different sections, as well as the project's progress itself.
2. Ming would not need to be reporting on the staff arrangement, since he has the full authority over resourcing of this deployment.
3. Ming should be reporting on the project only, and have an informal conversation with his own manager in IT of the above arrangement.

## Question 10: Authorship of documentation

Jasmine has just written for Christine, i.e. her manager, minutes from the latest meeting with one of their clients. In the meeting, it was clear that there were some confusion around the scope of work between Jasmine's organisation and the client's (which Jasmine could not resolve with her limited authority), and Jasmine is wondering what could be done now. Choose from the following the most appropriate approach in this situation.

1. Jasmine should send the minutes to both the clients and Christine as an accurate record of the meeting, since it was she who attended the meeting after all.
2. Jasmine should first check with Christine before sharing the minutes with the clients.
3. Jasmine should first share the minutes with the clients to see if they agree, before she sends the document to Christine.

# Question 11: Organisational documents and compliance

You are working in an Australian organisation however with a strong business presence in Italy. There were recently major changes to the data protection regulation in EU, and this regulation appears to be more stringent than the position your company's existing policies currently hold. What your company should do?

1. Nothing. It is not an Australian regulation, so as long as staff working in Italy are aware of this change, there is no need to change anything at this stage.
2. The current policies need to be revised and a new policy should be in place to be compliant with the new regulation, since the current business practice based on the same policy may violate the new regulation when applied in Italy.
3. The current policies need to be revised and a new policy should be in place, so that your organisation's policies would reflect the latest trend in data protection while observing the highest standard in data protection for the benefits of clients.

Menu

**Home**

The Process

The Regulation

Quick Links

GDPR Key Changes

GDPR FAQs

Privacy Policy

Partners

**The EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is the most important change in data privacy regulation in 20 years.**

The regulation will fundamentally reshape the way in which data is handled across every sector, from healthcare to banking and beyond.

(EU GDPR, 2018)



# Answers and comments for the quizzes

- 1) The answer is 3. The idea is that there are ‘divisions’ that are geographically or functionally instituted, and each of these divisions has its own autonomous structure within. In the scenario, there are geographically separate divisions, which both has its own IT departments. Also consider potential challenges such a structure may have.
- 2) The answer is 2. The option 1 is a likely challenge for the functional structure, while the option 3 is for the divisional structure. Again, consider the differences, and their strengths and weaknesses, both for communications and business processes.
- 3) The answer is 3. This is true with ‘messages’, which we will cover next week.
- 4) The answer is 3. Note the difference between the directional/aspirational statements and the tangible deliverable/outcome oriented statements. Some companies may have ‘missions statements’ or ‘value statements’ in place of, or together with, what we refer to as the ‘organisational goals’ in the ePub.

## Answers and comments for the quizzes (cont'd)

- 5) The answer is 2. The policies are usually to do with WHAT, while the procedures are to do with HOW to make what the policies outline happen. It is a useful skill to be able to contribute to policy discussion, and filter through what should be included in policies as opposed to procedures, for example.
- 6) The answer is 1. Any guidelines should not be 'another version' of the procedures, and they should have their own purpose, as outlined in the options 2 and 3.
- 7) The answer is 1. Note different examples of organisational documents. Each options are ordered with an example of strategic, governance and operational document.
- 8) The answer may be 1 or 3. The option 1 sounds reasonable, but there may well be a situation where the option 3 is appropriate. The idea is to determine which information should go in informal communications, and then selectively curate the information for a document to suit the purpose. Also note the 'reassurance' part of the scenario. As much as it is important to stick to the purpose of the report to be submitted, it is also important to maintain the context of communication so that the recipient of the communication will be 'prepared' to receive the communication. There is also a potential privacy issue in the option 2, which you should be able to identify.

## Answers and comments for the quizzes (cont'd)

- 9) The answer would be 1 (or 3). The option 1 may be the safest option in theory to inform the managers as well as formally document his management decisions, but if the manager tells him otherwise (e.g. “well, we don’t usually discuss operational matters in this meeting” or something), he would do the option 3. Again, the details are not very important since these are all hypothetical, but emphasize that in professional practice one will be spending so much time creating a context before they even start writing something. There is also something to be said about the option 2; why would this be wrong? Think about the extent of authority Ming has been given.
- 10) The answer is 2. The minutes of the meeting will hold its power as an external document representing Jasmine’s firm. Since Jasmine does not have the authority, it is best to check with Christine if the firm’s position is not misrepresented here. Having said, I have heard all the three justifications one way or another in real situations with varying consequences...
- 11) The answers are 2 and 3, which represents two of the common incentives for organisations – compliance (forensic) and aspiration.

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

**Sample question 1 (based on this week's ePub and lecture):** Draw an organizational chart of an organisation that has a divisional structure. List two of the advantages and potential risks for communications arising from having this organizational structure.

Hints: This is a little too straightforward... Please see the Question 1 of the quiz in this lecture, or the ePub for this week.

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

**Sample question 2 (based on this week's ePub and lecture):** Briefly describe the differences between the following types of organisational documents: 1) policies, 2) procedures and 3) guidelines.

Hints: Again, as explained in the lecture. Do understand, though, the hierarchical relationship between these organisaitonal documents.

So, how *else* will the last week's topics be assessed in the exam?

**Sample question 3 (based on the last week's ePub):** Peter has developed data visualization software as part of his data analysis work at a consulting firm. The development of the software was not in the original scope of data analysis work; he just developed it to make the process easier for him and his team. He now thinks that he could commercialise it as his own, but his company thinks that the software belongs to the company since it was developed during Peter's work hours using the company's facilities. Is the company right to assume that it owns this software? And if so, does Peter still have any of the following left for him to enjoy: 1) copyright, 2) patents, or 3) trademark?

**Sample question 4 (based on the last week's ePub):** List and briefly describe two (2) responses to the increasing level of copyright protection by laws.

# After the break...

## **Week 10 lecture**

- Lecture on organisational communications – messages
- Lecture on Assignment 2 reflective writing (guest lecture)

## **Week 11 lecture**

- Lecture on workplace issues and management
- Lecture on organisational approach to the management of workplace issues (guest lecture)

## **Week 12 lecture**

- Lecture on 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, and continue working on the Assignment 2, and
2. Read the ePub for Week 10 before the lecture next week. You will also see in the Week 10 tab on the Moodle Site a summary of what to come in Week 10.

*Have a lovely break...*