



FACULTY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

MASTERS IN SCIENCE IN MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATION AND INNOVATION

MTD 8403 IT PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Date: 8th April 2015

Time: 2.5 hours

Instructions: Choose any 4 from Section 1 and any 2 from Section 2

Questions from section 1 are worthy 15 points and from section 2, 20 points.

Section 1 (Based on the Text book). Choose 4 questions from this section (15 marks)

- I. 'A human being is essentially different from any other animal'.
From an Ethical viewpoint tell us whether you agree or not with this statement and defend your opinion. (15points)
- II. A human being, just like an animal, has passions.
 - a. They are classified into two kinds, which are they? (4 points)
 - b. Please describe their nature and list them. Kindly also explain whether they are good, bad or neutral. (7 points)
 - c. Would a life lived in pursuit of satisfying ones passions be a happy one? Explain why? (4 points)
- III. Explain the meaning of the following concepts:
 - a. Temperament, Character or Personality. (6 points)
 - b. What is the role of the intelligence and the will in the quest for building one's character? (9 points)
- IV. Aristotle says:
"You are what you do habitually; quality is not an act, it is a habit".
This statement means that a person can be good or evil depending on how he/she behaves. This means also that acts have consequences on the building of one's character".

Based on that explain what are vices and virtues? Describe the main human virtues. (15 points)

- V.
 - a) What is the foundation of human dignity? (3 points)
 - b) Why can't one repay evil with evil? (3 points)

- c) If one cheats in an exam, achieves enough marks to pass and gets away with it. Would you consider it a success or a failure, why? (3 points)
- d) The virtue of Justice is defined by “giving each what is his/her due”. Describe some vices and virtues allied to Justice. Is it possible to live this virtue in relation to everybody? Please explain. (6 points)

Section 2 (Based on 3 Cases Studied)

QUESTION 1: Data accuracy and the Credit Bureau Industry

The purpose of the credit bureau industry is to provide information to organizations which routinely grant credit to their customers: banks, financial companies, retail stores, hotels, real estate, car rental, and so on. Any of these organizations can request a credit report on a client or a prospective customer and thereby assess which of the customers might be a bad credit risks based on their past history. Credit reports usually contain detailed information about an individual's employment and credit history. They include information about one's credit cards and other credit accounts, bank loans, and student loans. The report reveals salient facts about the individual's payment history and highlights any late payments or other problems. The report also includes information about the subject's mortgage amount, terms, balance due, and payment record over the past year. Nevertheless, the report will reveal the presence of outstanding property taxes and whether or not there are any liens against the property. The report might even contain information from various public sources regarding bankruptcy proceedings, divorce proceedings, marriage licenses, civil lawsuits, and so forth. The report will list any occasions when one's credit card has been reported as lost or stolen, since this may imply that one is careless and perhaps a bad credit risk. Hence, the credit report is a comprehensive lens to the creditworthiness of a consumer who is a candidate for a mortgage or some other form of credit such as an installment plan.

Answer the following questions

- a) To what extent can the credit bureau industry both support and undercut principles of freedom of information? Explain your opinion. (10 points)
- b) What ethical issues are raised by making available individual's credit reports to interested parties? (10 points)

QUESTION 2: Intel's Pentium Chip Product controversy

The error produced by Intel's chips that ultimately caused the company nearly \$500 million in financial damages began at Intel's testing laboratory in Folsom, California in May 1994, a full year after the Pentium was released. Vin Dham, one of Intel's quality control managers, brings an error caused by a precise long division operation in the flagship processor's FPU (floating point unit) to top management at Intel. Since this particular error was statistically determined to be duplicated once every twenty-seven thousand years of average consumer use, Intel management decides it is not a significant enough issue to warrant a fix. However, since management knows a small minority of their users perform intensive calculations with their product, they assess the costs behind

fixing the product only for those who need it, for those individuals may encounter the error "as often as once a day." Since the costs are to the order of tens of thousands of dollars in this plan of action, the company decides it is not a responsible financial decision and decides to keep the bug a secret and fix the issue in the next version of the product. This may have worked successfully if not for the poor behavior of an Intel technical support representative.

Answer the following questions

- a) Describe the vice Intel was victim of. (4 points)
- b) What lessons can be learned from this case, especially regarding ethical responsibilities of IT vendors? (16 points)

QUESTION 3: Ethics, Technology, and the workplace

Technology moves at a pace that can easily outrun ethical standards surrounding its use. The effects of technology on work ethics move at a similar pace with employers moving to establish ethical boundaries that seem to infringe on employee privacy rights and restrict communication abilities. These tactics have led to courtroom battles, quick job terminations and complaints filed with the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Services. On the other hand, technology in the digital age and the accessibility of the Internet allow employees to access personal email accounts and talk to friends and family in a variety of ways. This has led to increased employer monitoring of employee communications during working hours in an effort to maintain employee focus on work tasks. An ethical dilemma arises from employers potentially viewing personal employee information and respecting privacy rights.

Answer the following question

- a) Briefly outline pros and cons spanning Ethics, Technology, and the Workplace. (20 points)