PSYU3399 SUMMARIES

- Ethics module: given 4 scenarios involving a runaway trolley (tram)
- In each case, asked to make a choice about how human lives can be valued comparatively

BRANCHES OF ETHICS

1. **Normative Ethics**

Normative ethics	Studies ethical action
	Focuses on theorising how we ought to behave; right from wrong actions
	3 core theories:
	i. Consequentialism (action and behaviour)
	ii. Deontological Ethics (duty to abide by ethical framework)
	iii. Virtue Ethics (individual virtues)
	These 3 theories interact with each other
Consequentialism	Utilitarianism
	Stuart **Mill** and Jeremy **Bentham** (18th & 19th centuries)
	Main concepts:
	• Focus on **consequence** of actions
	• *Utility* of actions
	• Good intention
	• **Greatest good for greatest number**
	Critique
	• Good intention but unforeseen consequences
	• What about the ones who are not included? E.g. lots of research funding allocated to research on cancer; what about diseases that do not affect such a large number of people; are those people less valued?
	Example that challenges approach
	Simon to visit his lonely mother v volunteer with large group of refugees?
Deontological ethics	**Kant** (18th century)
	Duty to behave in a way that is aligned with our rationality and that:
	• Leads to universalisable actions (acceptable and endorsed by most people)
	• Is based on humanist principles (dignity/integrity)
	Main concepts:
	• **Categorical imperatives**; a rule of conduct that is unconditional or absolute for all agents
	• **Duty**
	Critique
	• Removes personal factor (agency) if always abiding by a broader framework
	• Ignores emotions/ feelings (duty supersedes emotions)
	• Conflicting duties (e.g. duty to family v duty to employer)
	Example that challenges approach
	Peter's obligation to report homeless man who provided false info on how long he has been homeless v not disclose to superiors as he has developed a relationship with person
Virtue ethics	**Aristotle** (380 BC)
	• Ethical behaviour results from developing good character through development of virtues (courage, benevolence, compassion, loyalty)
	Critique
	• What virtues should we be developing? Valued virtues differ depending on context
	• Virtuous character may not lead to good actions
	Example that challenges this approach
	• Virtues may conflict e.g. compassion v bravery during war

2. **Descriptive Ethics**

Descriptive ethics	Studies **moral beliefs** and what motivates people to act ethically

3. **Applied Ethics**

Applied ethics	Studies how ethics can be applied to various fields (bioethics, environmental ethics, research ethics)

Low risk research	Involve activities where participants are **unlikely to suffer burden or harm** These studies must not present any more than what could be considered a minimal risk and/or burden to participants Risks to participants include: • Physical risks • Psychological • Spiritual • Social harm • Distress Burdens may include: research that is intrusive, causes discomfort, inconvenience or embarrassment for participants *All research-based PACE activities must be considered low risk in nature and must not present any more than what could be considered a minimal risk and/or burden to participants* *Any research with Indigenous, vulnerable or young participants and/or communities is considered greater than low risk*
Quality assurance	Organised process that **evaluates**, **assesses** and seeks to **improve service delivery** and outcomes; usually for informational purposes only e.g. informing organisational policy or decision-making Data collection **conducted for the purposes of the partner organisation only**; the **student may not publish the results at any stage** QA-based activities do not require formal Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) approval but are to be carried out in an ethical manner

Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research

The Code	Foundation for high-quality research, credibility and community trust in the research endeavour Principles-based document; articulates broad principles and responsibilities that underpin conduct of Australian research Developed jointly by: • The National Health and Medical Research Council • The Australian Research Council • Australian Vice Chancellors Committee

National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research

National Statement	• Sets out principals for ethical conduct of research involving human participants in Australia • Relationship between researchers and research participants is the ground on which human research is conducted

Four ethical principles listed in National Statement:

(1) Merit and integrity	Research is justified by potential benefit; researchers have expertise; respect for participants is never compromised; appropriate methods employed; principles of ethical conduct are upheld; disseminate all results
(2) Justice	Fair selection of participants and reporting of results; no exploitation; relationship of mutual trust with participants
(3) Beneficence	Benefits will outweigh costs; risk is minimised; benefits and risks must be clarified to participants; where there are unacceptable risks, research should be suspended and modified
(4) Respect	Intrinsic value of humans; due regard for the welfare, beliefs, perceptions, customs and cultural heritage of individuals and communities; respect privacy, confidentiality and cultural sensitivies

Student's Roles and Responsibilities

Legal responsibilities	Workplace Health & Safety Act 2011 and Macquarie University Health and Safety Policy Ensure health and safety of yourself and of others in workplace
PACE student responsibilities	Macquarie University **PACE Governance and Guidelines** outlines expectations a student will undertake

Identifying risks

Key points of risk assessment	Identify the hazards Assess the risk/s Control the risk/s Review

Step 1: Identify

Hazards	Objects, environments or situations that have potential to cause harm in a workplace
Risks	Probability that harm will occur Includes considering type, severity and likelihood of harm that could occur
Ways to identify hazards	• Workplace inspections • Reviewing incident or injury information • Asking employees about hazards in their work
Common hazard categories and examples	
Physical	Excess noise, poor lighting, trip hazards, radiation, weather or temperature extremes, magnetic fields, pressure extremes (high pressure or vacuum) etc.
Ergonomic	Repetitive movements, poor postures, improper workstation set up, etc
Psychosocial	Bullying, unreasonable workloads or timeframes, distressed people, aggressive or violent customers, discrimination, etc.
Biological	Bacteria, virus, mould, or toxin exposures via soil, water, human, animal, insect contact etc
Chemical	Includes substances which are flammable, oxidizing, corrosive, toxic, explosive etc
Electrical	Frayed cords, overloaded power boards or sockets, lack of electrical isolation, no safety switch etc
Mechanical	Inappropriate/ lack of machine guarding, equipment malfunction or breakdown

Step 2: Assessing Risk

Assessing risk	Consider consequences and likelihood of harm eventuating

Step 3: Managing Risks and Control Measures

Control measures	Assist to eliminate or minimise health and safety risks Include training and preparation, supervision, debriefing, counselling, or protective equipment for hazardous materials
Hierarchy of risk controls	List of control measures starting from what is considered to be highest protection and reliability in dealing with health and safety risk to what is considered to be lowest protection 1. Eliminate the hazard 2. Substitute hazard with safer alternative