



### Dating a work colleague

A manager is attracted to a recent recruit. Is the relationship appropriate?

#### The story

Guinevere works in a state service department as a manager. She has been in the position for ten years and is in her 40s. She has just hired a junior analyst, Jack, who is in his early 20s and straight out of university.

Guinevere finds Jack attractive and decides to spend more time with him. She starts taking more of an active role in his projects, frequently helps him with problems, and introduces him to industry stakeholders and senior employees in other departments.

After a few weeks, Guinevere asks Jack out on a date. Jack is flustered and asks whether that would be appropriate. Guinevere says that it's okay and happens all the time. Jack agrees to the date, and they end up dating for a few months.

After the relationship ends, Jack admits to HR that he never felt comfortable in the relationship and felt that he had to agree to it because Guinevere is his boss. He was also concerned that the special treatment, such as being introduced to influential people, would stop if he did not date her.

#### Questions

1. What are the ethical issues around this situation?
2. Has Guinevere committed misconduct?
3. What are the potential impacts for Guinevere, Jack and the state service department?
4. What could be done to address the issues?

The information used in this scenario is not factual – we created it for education and discussion. Any likeness to actual persons or events is coincidental.



#### The Commission can help

We are available to provide support and assistance with identifying, reporting, investigating, managing and preventing misconduct: [prevention@integrity.tas.gov.au](mailto:prevention@integrity.tas.gov.au) or 1300 720 289.

For more Misconduct Prevention resources go to [www.integrity.tas.gov.au/resources](http://www.integrity.tas.gov.au/resources)