Due date: 15-Aug-2013

Task

**Content assessed:** Professionalism and ethics in accounting and the history of accounting.

**Key generic skills:** Research, critical thinking and written communication.

**Question 1- (1000 words)**

Robert Keating is an accountant for a large firm that manufactures kitchen utensils. In the course of his normal bookkeeping work, he comes across what appears to be strange cheque requisitions. The requisition numbers are out of sequence and the recipient of the funds is an entity which he no knowledge about. The supporting documents that accompany the cheque requisitions appear to be all in order, however. Robert decides to report the matter to his superior who says he will ‘follow it up’. Four weeks later, Robert asks the supervisor about the issue. The supervisor says ‘Oh sure, yeah, I checked it out. It’s all good. Nothing to worry about, Robert’.

Robert identifies that the cheque requisitions continue to appear, they are always for substantial sums and always payable to the same mysterious entity. Robert raises the matter with the auditor and is once again reassured that, after a detailed investigation by the auditor, everything is ‘absolutely fine’.

Robert is still perturbed by the strange cheque requisitions and he again raises the issue with his supervisor. The response Robert gets this time is that the supervisor has ‘already looked into this and it was all okay. If you keep pestering me and wasting my time then you should think about updating your CV because you’ll be looking for another job’. Robert, feeling intimidated, decides that discretion is the better part of valour.

Ten months later, Robert’s junior tells him ‘in confidence’ that he has uncovered a scheme in which the auditor and members of senior management have been siphoning large sums of cash from the business for their own benefit.

**Required:**

1. Describe to Robert the main normative ethical theories.
2. Advise Robert of an appropriate decision from the teleological ethics perspective of ‘ethical egoism’. Explain why it is based on ‘ethical egoism’.
3. Advise Robert of an appropriate decision from the deontological ethics perspective. Explain why it is based on deontological ethics.

**Use APA in text and end referencing**

**Question 2- (1000 words)**

1. Since 1800, what are the key events that have shaped the development of accounting? Explain how these events support the notion that accounting is socially constructed.
2. To what extent can these events you identified in part a) be used to argue that accounting can have an influence on society? Justify your position.

**Use APA in text and end referencing**

**Rationale**

This assignment has been designed to assess your ability to:  
  
· argue the case for the need for professional and ethical behaviour by accountants;

 ·identify some of the ethical issues confronting accountants;

· briefly describe some of the various theoretical approaches to ethics;

· recognise the social forces which have impacted on the development of accounting;

· discuss whether accounting could also be seen to have an impact on society.

**Marking criteria**

**Relevance of the answer:**  
Are the important issues raised in the question identified? Did the student answer the question(s)?  
  
**Critical capacity:**  
Has reference material been carefully analysed or uncritically accepted?

**Structure of the answer:**  
Is the answer well structured and the argument logically developed?  
  
**Writing style:**  
Is the style concise and lucid, or confused, making it difficult for the reader to get the point?  
  
**Scope of reading:**  
Does the answer indicate a satisfactory coverage of literature relevant to the question?