

WSU and Cybertrace join forces to tackle cybercrime

Sydney, 21 September 2021. Western Sydney University (WSU) and the investigation company Cybertrace are running a programme for cybersecurity students. The participants benefit from practical experiences through their placement at Cybertrace. With the combination of academic IT studies and solving real life cases they are best prepared to work in the cybersecurity industry or with any big business that is facing the increasing impact of cybercrime.

Research conducted by the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) found that the total economic impact of pure cybercrime on Australian individuals as a whole in 2019 was approximately \$3.5b.* This number is guaranteed to increase with cybercriminals becoming more agile, using new technologies and adapting their attacks using new methods.

WSU and Cybertrace are addressing this issue with their collaboration: Cybersecurity & Behaviour students are trained on the job, learning to uncover criminals and helping to minimise the damage done by them.

During their studies of Cybersecurity and Behaviour at WSU students focus on human behaviour, computer science and data analytics with an emphasis on work integrated learning. Students learn through WCACE – the first university cyber incident response centre that assists small business with ransomware, data breach and business email compromise. After training, students go to work with industry partners such as Cybertrace to gain new skills and to expose them to the professional world. “We entered the cooperation with Cybertrace to provide cyber intelligence and digital forensics experience to complement what they learn in the classroom”, explains Dr. Alana Maurushat, Professor of Cybersecurity and Behaviour at WSU.

The collaboration with Cybertrace includes a 3-month internship at the company’s head office in Sydney. Here students work on real cases under the team’s supervision and are required to problem solve, use their skills, and show their ability to think outside the box.

Dan Halpin, Managing Director of Cybertrace, explains: “Most of the work we do with the interns is investigation of global scams including website forensics.”

According to Halpin these skills are unique to the company and are not currently taught at most universities: “I feel this is a gap in the current education for cybersecurity students. One of the biggest learning points is that our interns will be able to view a case from a criminal perspective rather than only an IT perspective.”

Prof. Dr. Alana Maurushat and Dan Halpin are sure that the graduates’ skills will be highly valued by all large firms and that the requirement for well-trained cybersecurity

professionals will further increase in the coming years with the growing impact of cybercrime.

*Australian Institute of Criminology 2021. Statistical Bulletin 34: Estimating the cost of pure cybercrime to Australian individuals. Coen Teunissen, Isabella Voce and Russell G Smith. https://www.aic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-07/sb34_estimating_the_cost_of_pure_cybercrime_to_australian_individuals.pdf

About Cybersecurity at Western Sydney University:

Located in Parramatta, Sydney, Western Sydney University offers many cybersecurity and cybercrime programs of study including: Bachelors of Cybersecurity and Behaviour, and both computer science, information communications technology specialisations in cybersecurity. WSU is deeply committed to providing students work integrated learning, and we value our industry partners such as Cybertrace.

About Cybertrace:

Cybertrace is a private investigations company providing cyber-investigation. The company specialises in cyber fraud (scam) investigation and cryptocurrency tracing. With its head office in Sydney, Australia, Cybertrace provides its services to clients from all over the world with permanent operations in Australia and a Europe office planned for 2022. Both the Sydney and the Hague, Netherlands, operations will focus on cyber fraud and cryptocurrency tracing operations.

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