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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Millennials and Londoners more likely to perform buy/wear/return online wardrobing,  
money makes men behave badly and  
retirees more relaxed on tax avoidance than Generation X**

Hot on the heels of the post-New Year sales/returns frenzy a survey\* has revealed that 1 in 6 (17%) people find it acceptable to buy an item of clothing online, wear it once and return it to the retailer for a refund.

The survey, commissioned by the **Chartered Institute for Securities & Investment (CISI)** and undertaken by YouGov, revealed that 1 in 3 (32%) of 18-29 year olds and 11% of 50-59 year olds found it acceptable to perform this buy/wear/return online action, suggesting that young people are more inclined to do this than the older generation.

Gender was evenly split on this activity, with 1 in 6 (17%) of men, and the same proportion of women, thinking that it is acceptable. The age differences in approach to this particular retail activity, commonly known as “wardrobing”, are further compounded by regional variations, as the survey showed that 9% of those in the East Midlands versus 24% of those in London believe this type of activity is okay.

However, when asked “*How acceptable is it to buy an item from a **local retailer**, wear it once and return it the next day for a refund?*” only 1 in 9 (11%) said this was acceptable. This suggests that the faceless nature of technology may have made this practice more acceptable leading people to behave less ethically.

“We all know that when we are actually face-to-face with someone on a day-to-day exchange, our connection with that person, however brief, is stronger than any digital connection. Face to face transactions remain in our subconscious and bring to the fore other emotions such as empathy, trust and possible embarrassment,” says Rebecca Aston, CISI Integrity and Ethics Manager.

For this face-to-face activity the acceptability reduced across the generations, with 23% of 18-29 yr olds vs 6% of 50-59 yr olds finding it acceptable to return an item in person having worn it once.

The CISI is the professional body for those working in the securities, investment, wealth and financial planning professions and it has undertaken this research as part of its remit to

provide thought leadership for financial services on the topic of integrity and ethics. The CISI believes that integrity and ethics are key components of professionalism, which it defines as the effective combination of knowledge, skills and behaviour.

### Faceless commerce vs the individual

The survey findings also raise some debate around group ethical behaviour in social situations. Respondents were asked *“If you are in a restaurant with a group of friends and, following your meal, the waiter brings the bill, you notice that he has omitted the round of drinks you had at the bar beforehand. You say nothing and pay the amount shown on the bill. How acceptable is this?”*

Thirty nine percent of respondents thought this was acceptable, with 51% of 18-29 yr olds versus 35% of 50-59 yr olds finding this acceptable. Regional variations in responses were polarised in this scenario also, with 46% of those in the North West confirming this was acceptable, compared to 33% in the South West. *“This example reveals more about human nature, with a “strength in numbers” approach when we are faced with an ethical dilemma. The responses also demonstrate that an unethical action may be deemed more acceptable when it affects a company/commercial entity, rather than an individual,”* said Mrs Aston.

The CISI asked a number of questions about every day situations which people typically face and how they would choose to react - the findings show a disparity between participants responses when an **individual** is affected as opposed to their response when a **company/commercial entity** was involved. **SEE INFOGRAPHIC FOR FURTHER DETAILS.**

### Gender and money: men behaving badly

The CISI survey findings show that gender and age are key factors in determining how people behave in everyday scenarios, with women displaying more ethical judgements in these situations than men. Money is also a factor determining behaviour between genders in that **when money is involved men tend to respond more unethically than women:**

Action	% of <b>women</b> who thought this was acceptable	% of <b>men</b> who thought this was acceptable	Difference
Failure to report a bank error in your favour	19%	29%	+10
Failure to pay as much income tax as you should	8%	12%	+4
Inflating the value of an insurance claim	11%	17%	+6
Keeping a low value gift from a customer without declaring it	37%	44%	+7
If you come across confidential information belonging to a competitor, use that information for the gain of your employer	33%	47%	+14
Allow a colleague to take the blame for mistakes they did not make	5%	10%	+5

“Our survey data on the relationship between gender, ethics and money is particularly interesting. It correlates with [research undertaken in 2013](#) by the Universities of Pennsylvania

and California, Berkeley which showed that men seem far more willing than women to sacrifice their ethical values in exchange for money or successes on the job and therefore behave badly,” said Mrs Aston.

### **Age, technology and ethical behaviour**

The CISI research has revealed that in some situations younger people tend to be less ethical than older people, with technology being a major factor in this finding: 43% of people said it was **acceptable to download video or tv content without paying**. This was highest among 18-29s (63%), compared to just 37% of 50-59 year olds.

Again, when asked **how acceptable it is to watch live TV without a licence** 20% of people said it was acceptable. Acceptability was highest among 18-29s - 35% - compared to 27% of 30-39s and only 15% of 50-59s.

On the technology theme, when respondents were asked **how acceptable it is to offer to download software from a copied CD not paid for**, 39% people said this was acceptable. Of these, 55% were aged 18-29, 42% aged 30-39, 40% aged 40-49 and 34% aged 50-59.

One of the findings in the CISI survey bucked the trend spectacularly on ethical behaviour and age: 15% of retirees said it was **acceptable to not pay as much income tax as you should** versus 8% of 30-39 year olds. “The difference in the response to this question on income tax could possibly be explained by retirees perceiving a sense of entitlement ie ‘this is what I’m due,’ therefore, for them, justifying this behaviour.” said Mrs Aston.

Simon Culhane Chartered FCSI and CISI Chief Executive said: “This survey has demonstrated that ethical behaviour and motivation on a day to day basis can be affected by gender, age and money. Technology is also a significant factor in influencing our ethical decisions as it seems to have made a number of activities mainstream and acceptable. But technology has also removed the opportunities for face-to-face, daily interaction between people, which could point to our becoming desensitised to the person behind the corporate entity, firm or online retailer. Our ability to empathise has been eroded and this is an issue in particular for our own industry where the merits of robo advice are being debated.”

The CISI has been promoting integrity and ethics in financial services since its foundation in 1992 and 2017 is the Institute’s 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Its members have to sign up to a Code of Conduct to uphold the highest standards of integrity. In 2013 it became the first professional body to require UK candidates taking customer facing entry level exams for wholesale/capital markets financial services activities to pass an integrity test. This policy has since been extended to cover the entire 40,000 CISI global membership.

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*\*The CISI survey fieldwork was conducted by YouGov 11-18 October 2016. The survey was carried out online and all figures, unless stated otherwise, are from YouGov plc. Total sample size was 2,056 adults aged 18+.*

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## **Chartered Institute for Securities & Investment**

The CISI's mission is to help members attain, maintain and develop their knowledge and skills and to promote the highest standards of ethics and integrity in the securities, investment, wealth and financial planning professions.

Based in the City of London, the CISI is a global organisation with representative offices in financial centres such as Dublin, Singapore, Hong Kong, Manila, Dubai, Mumbai and Colombo. We work in close cooperation with regulators, firms and other professional bodies worldwide and over 42,000 examinations were taken in the last twelve months