

University of Auckland fires senior academic who tried to shake female Muslim student's hand

From [tago Daily Times](#)

A senior male academic has been fired by the University of Auckland (UoA) after he tried to force a female Muslim student to shake hands. When she refused, he laid a sexual discrimination complaint against her.

UoA vice-chancellor Stuart McCutcheon sent a newsletter to his staff warning them such "serious misconduct" would not be tolerated.

"Late last year we terminated the employment of a senior male academic staff member, after a complaint was received," he says in a [Stuff NZ](#) Western Leader a Muslima journalist writes gloatingly as to how she too, avoids reciprocating the customary polite courtesy to any Kiwi man rash enough to want to treat her as an equal citizen.

Journalist Mahvash Ali is a hijab wearing, sassy Muslim who does not shake hands with men. I'll greet you my way so please don't give me a hand

It's a bit of a dance really.

Him, your friendly Kiwi bloke, and I, the headscarf-wearing, loud Muslim woman.

He's about to extend his hand to shake mine, and I am watching him carefully – most of his moves are invisible to the naked eye. Before he can put his hand out towards me, I nod a little, maybe put my hand on my heart . . .

It's quick enough to beat him, but subtle enough to give him a polite message.

I can hear the commentary in my head.

"And she's done it again, watch it in replay, oh that's a photo finish." (Crowd cheers wildly)

People's choices need to be respected.

If they don't want to shake hands, it's not because they don't like you – it is a choice, the single most modern and liberal thing about our society.

Now please tell me you have struck 'sexual discrimination' off your list and replaced it with "I am a mature man and I don't mind because it's her choice".

I wonder how she copes with the Haka?