Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

PSPETHC501B Promote the values and ethos of public service

Revision Number: 1

ISC INDUSTRY SKILLS COUNCILS
Creating Australia's Future

PSPETHC501B Promote the values and ethos of public service

Modification History

Not applicable.

Unit Descriptor

Unit descriptor	This unit covers the responsibility of those in public service to model and encourage in others the highest standards of ethical conduct. It includes promoting ethical standards, assisting staff to avoid conflicts of interest, and modelling and fostering integrity of conduct.
	In practice, ethical conduct is demonstrated in the context of other generalist or specialist work activities such as developing client services, coordinating financial resources, providing human resource services, conducting investigations, letting contracts etc.
	This unit replaces and is equivalent to *PSPETHC501A Promote the values and ethos of public service*.

Application of the Unit

Application of the unit	This unit supports the attainment of skills and knowledge required for applying ethical conduct and accountability required in those working in government employment.

Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not applicable.

Pre-Requisites

Not applicable.

Employability Skills Information

Employability skills   This unit contains employability skills.

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements are the essential outcomes of the unit of competency.

Together, performance criteria specify the requirements for competent performance. Text in *italics* is explained in the Range Statement following.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
1. **Promote ethical standards**	1.1 Interpretation of ethical standards is discussed with senior staff to ensure common understanding of requirements
	1.2 The ethical obligations of public service and the *consequences of unethical conduct* are explained to others in a manner suited to their levels of understanding, experience and specific needs
	1.3 Conduct of self and others is assessed against *ethics standards*, *legislation and guidelines*, and feedback or assistance is timely, constructive, and consistent
	1.4 Impartial, culturally and politically neutral advice is provided in accordance with organisational procedures
	1.5 Resolution and/or *referral* of *ethical problems* identified in dealings with staff and the public are used as learning opportunities within the workgroup without compromising privacy and confidentiality considerations
2. **Assist staff to avoid conflicts of interest**	2.1 *Conflict of interest* requirements are explained to staff using language and supporting material suitable to their needs and the situations they are likely to experience
	2.2 Matters involving competing interests or conflicting views on appropriate action are discussed with staff, and resolved or referred in accordance with policy and guidelines
3. **Model and foster integrity of conduct**	3.1 Personal work practices are used to provide a consistent example of desired ethical conduct, and staff/team values are developed through collaboration and leadership
	3.2 Ethical, lawful and reasonable directions are provided to staff, and protection is provided from reprisals for refusing others' directions to act unethically
	3.3 The *principles of procedural fairness* are modelled and explained to others using strategies and language suited to their levels of understanding, experience and specific needs
	3.4 Decision making which upholds ethical standards is used, promoted and explained to others
	3.5 The risk of *unethical conduct* is assessed in accordance with organisational guidelines, and changes to policies or practices are recommended to improve outcomes
	3.6 The *reporting* of suspected unethical conduct is encouraged, dealt with in a confidential manner and acted on promptly, and in accordance with policy and procedures

Required Skills and Knowledge

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

This section describes the essential skills and knowledge and their level, **required for this unit**.

Knowledge requirements

Look for evidence that confirms knowledge and understanding of:

- public sector ethics
- organisational code of ethics/conduct
- legislation related to privacy, freedom of information, human rights, whistleblower protection
- procedural fairness
- equal employment opportunity, equity and diversity principles
- procedures for declaring conflicts of interest
- procedures or protocols for reporting unethical conduct
- occupational health and safety procedures relating to ethical work practices

Skill requirements

Look for evidence that confirms skills in:

- applying ethical decision making/problem solving
- using a variety of words and language structures to explain complex ideas to different audiences
- interpreting and explaining complex, formal documents and assisting others to apply them in the workplace
- using strategies to clarify understanding
- preparing written advice and reports requiring accuracy of expression
- accessing legislation and codes of ethics electronically or in hard copy
- responding to diversity, including gender and disability
- assisting others to apply occupational health and safety and environmental procedures relating to ethical work practices

Evidence Guide

EVIDENCE GUIDE

The Evidence Guide specifies the evidence required to demonstrate achievement in the unit of competency as a whole. It must be read in conjunction with the Unit descriptor, Performance Criteria, the Range Statement and the Assessment Guidelines for the Public Sector Training Package.

Units to be assessed together	• *Pre-requisite* unitsthat <u>must</u> be achieved <u>prior</u> to this unit:*Nil* • *Co-requisite* unitsthat <u>must</u> be assessed <u>with</u> this unit:*Nil* • *Co-assessed units* that <u>may</u> be assessed with this unit to increase the efficiency and realism of the assessment process include, but are not limited to, a range of (2 or more) generalist or specialist units of competency at Diploma level. Choice from the following units is recommended: PSPGOV502B Develop client services PSPGOV503B Coordinate resource allocation and usage PSPGOV506A Support workplace coaching and mentoring PSPGOV511A Provide leadership PSPGOV508A Manage conflict PSPGOV517A Coordinate risk management PSPHR503A Facilitate performance management processes PSPLEGN501B Promote compliance with legislation in the public sector PSPPM502B Manage complex projects PSPPROC502A Establish contract management arrangements PSPPROC503A Manage contract performance PSPREG501B Conduct prosecutions
Overview of evidence requirements	In addition to integrated demonstration of the elements and their related performance criteria, look for evidence that confirms: • the knowledge requirements of this unit • the skill requirements of this unit • application of Employability Skills as they relate to this unit • promotion of the values and ethos of public service in a range of (3 or more) contexts (or occasions, over time) where contexts include generalist or specialist work activities such as developing client services, coordinating financial resources,

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providing human resource services, conducting investigations, letting contracts etc

Resources required to carry out assessment

These resources include:

- ethics-related legislation and guidelines
- codes of conduct and codes of ethics
- public sector standards, procedures and protocols
- ethical decision making/problem solving models

Where and how to assess evidence

Valid assessment of this unit requires:

- a workplace environment or one that closely resembles normal work practice and replicates the range of conditions likely to be encountered when working ethically and promoting ethical behaviour in others in a public sector environment, including coping with ambiguity, difficulties, irregularities and breakdowns in routine
- promotion of the values and ethos of public service in a range of (3 or more) contexts (or occasions, over time) where contexts include generalist or specialist work activities such as developing client services, coordinating financial resources, providing human resource services, conducting investigations, letting contracts etc

Assessment methods should reflect workplace demands, such as literacy, and the needs of particular groups, such as:

- people with disabilities
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- women
- young people
- older people
- people in rural and remote locations

Assessment methods suitable for valid and reliable assessment of this competency may include, but are not limited to, a combination of 2 or more of:

- case studies
- portfolios
- questioning
- scenarios
- simulation or role plays

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- authenticated evidence from the workplace and/or training courses

For consistency of assessment   Evidence must be gathered over time in a range of contexts to ensure the person can achieve the unit outcome and apply the competency in different situations or environments

Range Statement

RANGE STATEMENT

The Range Statement provides information about the context in which the unit of competency is carried out. The variables cater for differences between States and Territories and the Commonwealth, and between organisations and workplaces. They allow for different work requirements, work practices and knowledge. The Range Statement also provides a focus for assessment. It relates to the unit as a whole. Text in *italics* in the Performance Criteria is explained here.

Consequences of unethical behaviour may include	- disciplinary action - transfer - demotion - dismissal - legal liability - that outlined in legislation, policy and/or guidelines
Ethics standards may include	- public sector standards - standards referred to in State/Territory/Commonwealth legislation - codes of ethics - organisational codes of conduct - organisational mission and values statements - organisational procedures/guidelines - government policy - professional standards
Legislation and guidelines may include	- legislation for public sector management - freedom of information legislation - privacy legislation - equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination law - public sector standards - equity guidelines - workplace diversity guidelines - Ministerial directions - State/Territory/Commonwealth codes of ethics - organisational codes of conduct - organisational mission and values statements - organisational policy, procedures/guidelines - government policy

RANGE STATEMENT

- legal precedents

Referrals of ethical problems may be made to	• line management • human resources • workplace relations officer • grievance officer • chief executive officer • public service commissioner • public sector standards body • organisational ethics committee • internal grievance mechanisms • confidant programs (whistleblower protection programs) • organisational professional reporting procedures • unions and professional bodies • ombudsman
Ethical problems which may need to be referred rather than resolved at this level may include	• conflict between public sector standards and personal values • conflict between public sector standards and other standards such as professional standards • conflict between public sector standards and directions of a senior officer or Minister • tension between two 'rights' for example, the right to privacy versus the right to freedom of information • conflict regarding issues of personal and organisational intellectual property
Conflicts of interest may include	• perceived, potential and actual conflicts • bribery • improper use of official information • offers of gifts, entertainment • outside employment • intellectual property • favours for friends, relatives and others • memberships of organisations • political activity • pecuniary and non-pecuniary conflicts • conflicts relating to tendering and contracting

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Principles of procedural fairness may include	• the right to be heard/put your case • the right to be informed of a complaint or case against you • the right to be advised of the outcome/recommendations of an investigation involving you • the right to know reasons for decisions affecting you • the right to privacy • the right to representation • the right to remain silent • the decision maker should not be a judge in his/her own cause • in accordance with the law
Unethical conduct may include	• fraud, corruption, maladministration and waste • unauthorised access to and use of information, money/finances, vehicles, equipment, resources • improper public comment on matters relating to the government and/or the organisation • falsifying records • giving false testimonials • dishonesty • improper use of telephones, credit cards, frequent flyer points, email and Internet • extravagant or wasteful practices • personal favours, preferential treatment • putting barriers in place, hindering, blocking action • compromising behaviour including sexual harassment • directing others to act unethically • oppressive/coercive management decisions • resorting to illegality to obtain evidence
Actions relating to the reporting of unethical conduct may include	• protection and support of those reporting unethical conduct • informal, low key investigation and evidence gathering to confirm allegations • referral to authority identified in guidelines • use of confidant programs such as whistleblower protection programs or organisational professional reporting procedures

Unit Sector(s)

Not applicable.

Competency field

Competency field   Ethics and Accountability