



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

PSPETHC301B Uphold the values and principles of public service

Release 3

PSPETHC301B Uphold the values and principles of public service

Modification History

Release	TP Version	Comments
3	PSP12V1	Unit descriptor edited.
2	PSP04V4.2	Layout adjusted. No changes to content.
1	PSP04V4.1	Primary release.

Unit Descriptor

This unit of competency describes the outcomes required to demonstrate ethical conduct required of those in public service. It includes applying ethical standards and dealing with ethical problems.

No licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication.

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.

In practice, ethical conduct is demonstrated in the context of other generalist or specialist work activities such as building and maintaining networks, delivering client services, using financial resources, procuring goods or services, etc.

Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not applicable.

Pre-Requisites

Not applicable.

Employability Skills Information

This unit contains employability skills.

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements describe the essential outcomes of a unit of competency.

Performance criteria describe the required performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element. Where ***bold italicised*** text is used, further information is detailed in the required skills and knowledge and/or the range statement. Assessment of performance is to be consistent with the evidence guide.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

1. Apply ethical standards

- 1.1 Interpretation of ***ethical values and principles*** is reviewed with senior staff to ensure accuracy.
- 1.2 Personal ***work practices*** are undertaken in compliance with public sector ethics standards, organisational policy and ***guidelines***.
- 1.3 Verbal and written advice and reports are prepared containing information which is impartial, substantiated, accurate and complete.
- 1.4 Public ***resources*** are ***used*** in accordance with public sector ethics standards, organisational policy and guidelines.
- 1.5 ***Conflicts of interest*** are identified, declared, addressed and documented in accordance with policy and procedures.
- 1.6 Personal behaviour and relationships with the public, suppliers and business contacts are conducted in accordance with ethics standards, policy and guidelines.

2. Deal with ethical problems

- 2.1 Situations which pose ethical problems are resolved or ***referred*** in accordance with organisational guidelines.
- 2.2 Decision-making ***processes*** used to resolve ethical problems are recorded in accordance with organisational policy and procedures.
- 2.3 Organisational policies/codes on the prevention and reporting of ***unethical conduct*** are accessed and applied.

Required Skills and Knowledge

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

Required skills:

Look for evidence that confirms skills in:

- applying objective and impartial evaluation of conflicting requirements
- using ethical decision making
- preparing written advice and reports requiring accuracy of expression
- accessing legislation and codes of ethics electronically or in hard copy
- tailoring communication to suit different audiences
- responding to diversity, including gender and disability
- applying occupational health and safety procedures relating to ethical work practices

Required knowledge:

Look for evidence that confirms knowledge and understanding of:

- the nature of ethics and ethical values
- fundamental ethical principles such as justice, respect for persons, procedural fairness, confidentiality, responsible care
- values of public sector office
- natural justice/procedural fairness
- equal employment opportunity, equity and diversity principles
- where to access ethical decision making/problem solving models, organisational codes and procedures
- procedures for declaring conflicts of interest
- protocols for reporting fraud, corruption and maladministration
- occupational health and safety procedures relating to ethical work practices

Evidence Guide

The Evidence Guide provides advice on assessment and must be read in conjunction with the Performance Criteria, Required Skills and Knowledge, the Range Statement and the Assessment Guidelines for the Training Package.

Units to be assessed together

- *Pre-requisite* units that must be achieved prior to this unit: *Nil*
- *Co-requisite* units that must be assessed with this unit: *Nil*
- *Co-assessed units* that may be assessed with this unit to increase the efficiency and realism of the assessment process include, but are not limited to:
 - PSPGOV303B Build and maintain internal networks
 - PSPGOV305B Access and use resources and financial systems
 - PSPGOV307B Organise workplace information
 - PSPGOV308B Work effectively with diversity
 - PSPGOV309A Address client needs
 - PSPGOV312A Use workplace communication strategies
 - PSPGOV314A Contribute to conflict management
 - PSPIM301A Process claims
 - PSPLAND302A Investigate tenure and land use history
 - PSPLEGN301B Comply with legislation in the public sector
 - PSPOHS301A Contribute to workplace safety
 - PSPPROC302A Undertake basic procurement
- This unit should be co-assessed with other units to supply the context for ethical behaviour

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
- ethical conduct in a range of (3 or more) contexts (or occasions, over time) where contexts may be generalist or specialist work activities such as building and maintaining networks, delivering client services, using financial resources, procuring goods or services 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
- manager/mentor/network who role models ethical conduct

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 in a public sector environment, including coping with ambiguity, difficulties, irregularities and breakdowns in routine
- ethical conduct in a range of (3 or more) contexts (or occasions, over time) where contexts may be generalist or specialist work activities such as building and maintaining networks, delivering client services, using financial resources, procuring goods or services 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
- 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

The range statement relates to the unit of competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. ***Bold italicised*** wording, if used in the Performance Criteria, is detailed below. Add any essential operating conditions that may be present with training and assessment depending on the work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts.

<i>Ethical values and principles</i> may include:	• respect for the law • integrity • objectivity • accountability • honesty • openness • responsibility • impartiality • diligence • trustworthiness • confidentiality • respect for persons • responsible care • probity • economy and efficiency • natural justice/procedural fairness, that is: • the right to be heard/put your case • the right to be informed of a complaint or case against you • the right to know the outcomes/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 silence • the decision maker should not be a judge in his/her own cause
<i>Work practices</i> may include:	• behaviours • conduct • relationships with work colleagues, external individuals and organisations • the manner in which work activities are carried out
<i>Legislation and guidelines</i> may include:	• legislation for public sector management • freedom of information • privacy legislation • equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination law • public sector standards

	• Ministerial directions • State/Territory or Commonwealth codes of ethics • organisational codes of conduct • sets of values • organisational mission and values statements • organisational policy, procedures/guidelines • government policy • professional codes of ethics and conduct • equity guidelines, workplace diversity guidelines
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Public resources may include:	• time • stationery • equipment • telephones • Internet • Email
Use of public resources includes:	• effective use • efficient use - avoiding/minimising waste • not for private use
Conflicts of interest may include:	• potential, perceived and actual conflicts • bribery • improper use of official information • improper use of resources, including plant and equipment • acceptance of gifts • entertainment • previous and outside employment, including voluntary work • favours for friends and/or relatives • memberships of organisations • political activity • pecuniary and non-pecuniary conflicts
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
Referrals of ethical problems may be made to:	• line management • chief executive officer • public service commissioner • public sector standards body • organisational ethics committee • internal grievance mechanisms, including identified officers • confidant programs (whistleblower protection programs) • organisational professional reporting procedures • unions and professional bodies • ombudsman • police
Processes for resolving	• accessing relevant standards and other information

ethical problems may include:	• withdrawing from a situation • using models of ethical decision making/problem solving • reflection, discussion, seeking clarification from others.
<i>Unethical conduct</i> may include:	• fraud, corruption, maladministration and waste • unauthorised access to and/or use of information, money/finances, vehicles, equipment, resources, time • improper actions during contractual processes, such as release of intellectual property, infringing copyright, release of tender information, inappropriate disclosure during tender process • improper public comment on matters relating to the government and/or the organisation • falsifying records • giving false testimonials • dishonesty • improper use of plant and equipment, credit cards, frequent flyer points, telephones, email and Internet • extravagant or wasteful practices • personal favours • preferential treatment • putting barriers in place, hindering, blocking action • compromising behaviour including sexual harassment • lack of confidentiality • directing others to act unethically • oppressive/coercive management decisions • resorting to illegality to obtain evidence

Unit Sector(s)

Not applicable.

Competency field

Ethics and Accountability.