

Title	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of ethics in the New Zealand State sector		
Level	5	Credits	4

Purpose	People credited with this unit standard, with reference to the New Zealand State sector, are able to: describe core ethical values and standards; outline ethical values and standards contained in legislation and codes; describe areas of ethical conflict for State sector employees; and describe two recent case studies which illustrate the importance of ethical values and standards.
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Classification	Public Sector Services > Public Sector Core Skills
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Available grade	Achieved
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Guidance Information

- 1 This unit standard is intended for persons who are employed in the State sector.
- 2 Resources relevant to this unit standard, including the State Services Code of Conduct, *Standards of Integrity and Conduct* (State Services Commission, 2007), available at <http://www.ssc.govt.nz>.
- 3 Definitions

Public sector refers to the State sector (central Government), including the public service, crown entities, non-uniformed staffs of the services and forces, offices of Parliament; and all local authorities (local Government), including local authority trading enterprises (LATEs).

Public Service refers to the 36 departments of State which carry out core government business and which are listed in the Schedule 1 of the State Sector Act 1988.

State sector refers to all organisations that are included in the ‘Government reporting entity’ and are referred to in s27(3) of the Public Finance Act 1989, namely: Public Service departments; other organisations defined as departments for the purposes of the Public Finance Act 1989; Offices of Parliament (e.g. the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment); State owned enterprises; Crown entities; and the Reserve Bank of New Zealand.

Principles, in the context of this unit standard, refer to socially recognised core ethical values, rules, and/or standards which are expected of public servants in carrying out their duties; for example, the principles of justice and equity.

Conventions, in the context of this unit standard, refer to widely accepted understandings that guide conduct and relationships in the New Zealand public sector – either explicit or implicit; for example, the neutrality of the public service.

Practice, in the context of this unit standard, refers to the usual way the work of the New Zealand public sector is conducted, which is born out of experience; for example, public servants should not become involved in party political affairs.

Ethics, in the context of this unit standard, refer to values about what is right, fair, just, and good in terms of conduct which guide behaviour in the State sector. Ethics provide a basis for assessing the morality of a situation, decision, or outcome.

Values, in the context of this unit standard, are beliefs shared in common by public servants and/or society. The values of the public sector are likely to be a mix of institutional arrangements (such as accountability), instrumental values (such as efficiency), and fundamental values (such as integrity and fairness).

Standards, in the context of this unit standard, arise out of the shared values, and refers to the bases for assessing and measuring expected behaviours.

- 4 Legislation relevant to this unit standard includes the State Sector Act 1988 and the Protected Disclosures Act 2000.

Outcomes and performance criteria

Outcome 1

Describe core ethical values and standards which apply to the New Zealand State sector.

Performance criteria

- 1.1 The description identifies and explains core State sector ethical values.
- Range examples include but are not limited to – justice, fairness, integrity, responsibility, openness, accountability, stewardship, competence. evidence of four examples is required.
- 1.2 The description identifies and explains reasons for ethical standards in the State sector.
- Range examples include but are not limited to – public expectations, nature of democratic governance, need to encourage voluntary compliance, discretionary powers, accountability requirements. evidence of three examples is required.

Outcome 2

Outline ethical values and standards contained in legislation and codes which have relevance to the conduct of the State sector.

Performance criteria

2.1 The outline identifies and explains ethical values and standards contained in the State Sector Act 1988.

Range implied and/or explicit;
examples include but are not limited to – being imbued with the spirit of service to community, maintaining appropriate standards of integrity and personal responsibility, concern for the public interest, being efficient, respecting the law.
evidence of three examples is required.

2.2 The outline identifies and explains the standards of integrity and conduct contained in the State Services Code of Conduct.

Outcome 3

Describe areas of ethical conflict for State sector employees.

Performance criteria

3.1 The description identifies and explains areas of ethical conflict between personal and public interests.

Range examples include but are not limited to – acceptance of gifts, hospitality, travel, air points, sponsorship, secondary employment, moonlighting, post employment obligations, disclosure of information, political activities, standing for public elections.
evidence of three examples is required.

3.2 The description identifies and explains areas of ethical conflict between duty to government of the day and duty to public interest.

Range examples include but are not limited to – non-partisan nature of the public service, tendering of 'free and frank' advice, matters of conscience and duty, leaking, whistle blowing.
evidence of two examples is required.

Outcome 4

Describe the importance of ethical values and standards in relation to the State sector.

Performance criteria

4.1 The description identifies and explains two recent case studies reported in the public arena that illustrate the importance of ethical values and standards within the State sector.

4.2 The description identifies and explains the importance of ethical values and standards within the candidate's own organisation and role within that organisation.

This unit standard is expiring. Assessment against the standard must take place by the last date for assessment set out below.

Status information and last date for assessment for superseded versions

Process	Version	Date	Last Date for Assessment
Registration	1	31 August 1998	31 December 2023
Revision	2	21 August 2001	31 December 2023
Review	3	27 May 2003	31 December 2023
Rollover and Revision	4	17 October 2008	31 December 2023
Review	5	25 February 2021	31 December 2023

Consent and Moderation Requirements (CMR) reference

0121

This CMR can be accessed at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/framework/search/index.do>.