The Code of Ethics is the Code of Conduct for the purposes of the Public Sector Act 2009 (SA). The Code applies to, and is binding on, all public sector employees, including all DECD employees employed under the Children’s Services Act, the Education Act and the Public Sector Act, regardless of their employment level and status.

**Objectives**

The Code of Ethics has four objectives for all public sector employees:

- To guide and support professional activities
- To strengthen public confidence
- To earn respect
- To set standards of professional conduct

**VALUES**

Values are the foundation of ethical behaviour in the South Australian Public Sector.

**Democratic values:** Loyally serving the government and maintaining political neutrality; administering and complying with rules and regulations; assisting the public to access public information.

**Service, respect and courtesy:** Providing quality services to SA citizens in a collaborative manner; respecting the value and human dignity of every person; acting impartially, fairly and equitably with respect for citizens’ rights; responding to changing needs through teamwork, innovation and creativity.

**Honesty and integrity:** Acting honestly in every aspect of your work; ensuring transparency and acting impartially when making decisions or providing advice.

**Accountability:** Always acting within the spirit and to the letter of the law; being accountable to the Minister of Education in regard to delegated authority; working, individually or in structured teams, within a system of performance management, towards clear objectives in order to achieve results.

**Professional conduct:** Demonstrating the highest standards of professional conduct, as described in the Professional Conduct Standards.

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT STANDARDS**

The Professional Conduct Standards provide a common framework for the disciplinary provisions of the Code of Ethics, and include the following.

**Professional and courteous behaviour:** Acting in a reputable manner; complying with lawful and reasonable direction, treating others with respect and courtesy; having appropriate reasons for absence; diligence in discharge of duties.

**Public comment:** Ensuring that you have the authority to speak in an official capacity; avoiding expressing personal opinions in an official context; awareness of the various forms of communication public comment can take; ensuring you adhere to the guidelines when commenting in a private capacity.

**Handling official information:** Treating information confidentially; not disclosing official information unless authorised; avoid potential misuse of information; maintaining the integrity and security of information; ensuring the privacy of individuals.

**Use of government and public resources:** Using work resources and equipment appropriately and efficiently; understanding that resources include physical, technological, financial and intellectual property; recognised that DECD retains ownership of such resources.

**Conflicts of interest:** Acting impartially and without prejudice; recognising that conflict of interest can be actual or potential; ensuring personal or financial interests do not influence or interfere in your role; disclosing, in writing, any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

**Outside employment:** As a DECD employee, not engaging in other employment that conflicts with or affects your performance; recognising the need for written permission to be employed outside DECD; obtaining permission for volunteer work if a potential conflict exists; on leaving DECD, avoiding situations of unfair advantage to a new employer.

**Acceptance of gifts and benefits:** Maintaining impartiality and avoiding undue influence; not seeking or accepting gifts or benefits; understanding that non-pecuniary gifts may be accepted; complying with DECD policies in regard to accepting/declaring or recording of all gifts and benefits of any kind.

**Criminal offences:** Advising your manager at the earliest opportunity if charged with a criminal office; complying with all relevant legislation relevant to your role/performance.

**Reporting unethical behaviour:** Complying with the expectations of DECD in the performance of your duties; reporting unethical behaviour falling within guidelines; being aware of rights and responsibilities of employees under the Whistleblowers Protection Act 1993.