



Australian Government

Australian Public Service Commission

Candidate Skills Recognition Booklet

PSP40104 Certificate IV in Government

**PSPETHC401A: Uphold and support the
values and principles of public service**



**NATIONALLY RECOGNISED
TRAINING**

**Candidate Name:
Department/Agency:
Telephone:
Email:**

Skills Recognition

This Booklet is designed for the recognition candidate to initially self-assess against each element within the unit of competency. It is, however, recommended that the supervisor is involved in supporting the Candidate through the assessment of their skills.

While this Booklet addresses each of these elements individually, they will be assessed together as a Unit of Competency or in conjunction with a number of Units.

This Booklet:

- ⇒ provides a framework to guide the Candidate in preparing a portfolio of evidence as a basis for recognition under the National Skills Framework for this Unit of Competency
- ⇒ breaks the unit down into its component elements and addresses these in order. While the recognition process itself will be more holistic, the Booklet allows Candidates to address each element either in isolation or in combination with other elements or Units
- ⇒ encourages the Candidate to identify evidence from within the workplace, if possible
- ⇒ contains a range statement that explains some of the terms in *italics* used in the Performance Criteria for each element
- ⇒ provides examples of evidence and optional work based activities
- ⇒ includes a third party report template and a feedback form.

Candidates should familiarise themselves with the information contained in the Candidates Information Guide that can be downloaded from the Australian Public Service Commission's website: <http://www.apsc.gov.au/rto/>

More information about the Unit of Competency contained in this booklet is available from the National Training Information Service. A link to the unit is included on page 3 of this booklet.

Note: Evidence must be gathered over time in a range of contexts to ensure you can achieve the unit outcome and apply the competency in different situations and environments.

This Booklet can be downloaded from the Australian Public Service Commission website <http://www.apsc.gov.au/rto/> and printed for completion by hand or electronic means. If there is insufficient space to record your input, please insert or attach additional pages. A completed copy of this booklet (with appropriate supporting evidence) can be submitted for recognition which can lead to the awarding of a nationally recognised Statement of Attainment or a Qualification from the Australian Public Service Commission.

Uphold and support the values and principles of public service

Introduction

This is a core unit of competency in the PSP40104 Certificate IV in Government and covers the ethical conduct required of those in public service and the responsibility to encourage ethical conduct in others – colleagues or supervised staff.

Being competent in this unit means being able to:

- ✓ *Contribute to an ethical public sector workplace*
- ✓ *Participate in ethical decision making.*

There are other related competencies in the key area of working in government that deal with ethics and accountability. If you feel this unit: **Uphold and support the values and principles of public service** is not appropriate to your skill level, please consider one of the Units below as an alternative.

- PSPETHC301B Uphold the values and principle of public service
- PSPETHC501B Promote the values and principle of public service
- PSPETHC601B Maintain and enhance confidence in public service

Useful links

Unit of Competency: PSPETHC401A Uphold and support the values of public service

<http://www.ntis.gov.au/?/trainingpackage/PSP04/unit/PSPETHC401A>

The National Training Information Service: <http://www.ntis.gov.au/>

The APSC Registered Training Organisation website: <http://www.apsc.gov.au/rto/>

Relationship to the Integrated Leadership System

This Unit of Competency underpins the following capabilities outlined in the Integrated Leadership System.

APS 3 - 6

Demonstrates public service professionalism and probity

- *adopts a principled approach*
- *adheres to the APS Values and Code of Conduct*
- *acts professionally*
- *operates within the boundaries of organisational processes and legal and public policy constraints*

For further information

Please consult the Commission's [Candidate Information Guide](#) for additional information on the recognition process and how to initiate formal assessment and recognition by the Australian Public Service Commission.

Information for supervisors

As a supervisor you play an important role in assisting the Candidate to develop their skills. By undertaking this recognition activity, the Candidate will be assessed against competencies developed by Government Skills Australia, the Industry Skills Council with responsibility for the public sector. By having their skills recognised, the Candidate is contributing to the identification of your organisation's intellectual capital.

As every organisation is different, you may be able to assist the Candidate identify the work requirements, work practices and knowledge relevant to your environment.

The Candidate is encouraged to complete the self-assessment checklist and identify appropriate evidence, which is then recorded in the 'supporting evidence list' section. Sample work-based activities have been included in the Booklet for the candidate who is unable to identify sufficient evidence to address each competency and needs to produce further evidence of their skills and knowledge. The sample activities in the Booklet could be modified by the candidate and their supervisor to better suit workplace requirements and needs.

Third party reports

At the end of the booklet is a blank Third Party Report template. In some cases the candidate may require a corroborating statement from a third party. Supervisors, or other third parties, can complete these reports, where appropriate, which Candidates can add to their portfolio of evidence.

On completing their portfolio of evidence, Candidates can submit it to the Australian Public Service Commission for recognition, which can contribute to the awarding of a Diploma of Government.

Benefits for Supervisors

The self assessment process will enable you and your staff to identify current skill levels and assists you in determining if your staff are ready to undertake recognition or whether they may require additional training and/or development. Formal training can be an expensive option, especially if the Candidate can already demonstrate their existing skills and have them recognised.

Additionally, the assistance you provide the Candidate can be used as evidence for recognition of your skills against the *PSPGOV416A Monitor performance and provide feedback* and *PSPGOV510A Undertake and promote career management* units of competency.

Further information

If you have any questions, you can contact the National Recognition Coordinator on 02 6202 3787 or email your query to rto@apsc.gov.au.

Feedback

Finally, a feedback form template is included at the end of this Booklet. As we seek to continuously improve our processes, procedures and resource materials, we would appreciate your feedback as a supervisor. You can use a copy this template to detail your comments. If you provide feedback, consider keeping a copy of your submission as it supports *PSPGOV405B Provide Input to change processes*.

1 Contribute to an ethical public sector workplace

This element requires:

- Information on the ***ethical values and principles*** of the workplace is accessed, its interpretation confirmed with others and applied accordingly
- Application of ethical values and principles is discussed with senior management and colleagues to ensure common understanding and application
- ***Others*** are assisted to access and use public sector ethics ***legislation and guidelines*** to ensure their work practices comply with requirements
- The differences between public sector ethics/values and personal beliefs/values are explained to others to encourage understanding and compliance
- Hypothetical work practices that would constitute ***unethical conduct*** are identified and discussed with work colleagues, and strategies to avoid or deal with them are identified in accordance with organisational policy and procedures

Text in *italics* is explained in the Range Statement on page 11 of the Booklet.



Self assessment

Answering the following questions will help you assess the level of your current skills and help you identify appropriate evidence for your portfolio.

Ask yourself the following questions and indicate your response accordingly.	Yes	No	?	If you answer Yes , list examples of evidence you can provide
Do I access Information on the <i>ethical values and principles</i> of the workplace (e.g. respect for the law, integrity, accountability, natural justice/procedural fairness, confidentiality), confirm your interpretation with others and apply the values and principles accordingly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do I discuss the application of ethical values and principles with senior management and colleagues to ensure common understanding and application?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do I assist <i>others</i> to access and use public sector ethics <i>legislation and guidelines</i> to ensure their work practices comply with requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Can I explain the differences between public sector ethics/values and personal beliefs/values to others to encourage understanding and compliance?

Can I identify hypothetical work practices that would constitute **unethical conduct** and discuss them with your work colleagues?



Examples of evidence

The following list may provide guidance in identifying suitable evidence of your knowledge and skills.

- Records of one or more discussions with your line manager on ethical issues. Your notes should identify:
 - the issue(s) discussed
 - the workplace policies and procedures relevant to the discussion
 - the reason for the discussion
 - the common understanding reached
 - any changes that resulted from this discussion.
- A copy of your workplace values statement (also known as ‘guiding principles’ ‘our beliefs’, ‘core values’, ‘vision and behaviour statement’ etc). Explain how you have:
 - promoted these values to others
 - assisted others comply with these behaviours.
- Minutes of one or more meetings where you raised an ethical issue and referred to appropriate policies/ legislation in resolving the matter. (The minutes must clearly show that you either instigated the discussion or contributed significantly to the discussion.)
- A testimonial from your line manager describing how you have contributed to the creation of an ethical workplace.
- Two or more diary or log entries outlining discussions you’ve had with colleagues about particular ethical issues and indicating the support/advice you provided.



Confirm self-assessment with supervisor

Discuss your self assessment with your supervisor or other support person. If you have answered **Yes** to a question you should be able to identify potential examples of evidence to support this. List details of the evidence that you can enclose in a portfolio to submit with this booklet.

Reference number	Details of documents or other evidence that demonstrates your knowledge, skills and abilities.

If you have answered **No** to any of the above questions, or are unsure, or have been unable to identify sufficient suitable evidence, you could consider whether training, a work based activity or some other form of development would assist you in developing these skills.

The following work-based activity may assist in generating evidence for inclusion above.



Work-based activity: Contribute to an ethical public sector workplace

The following suggestion for a work-based activity may be of use in demonstrating your ability to meet the competency requirements of this unit.

Use the checklist below to review recent discussions you have had with your line manager or colleagues on ethical issues and indicate your contribution to the discussion and/or the support/advice you provided.



Activity checklist

Detail the nature and objective of the discussion and when it occurred.	
Who was present and why?	
What information did you access on the ethical values and principles in the workplace?	
What workplace policies and procedures were relevant to the discussion?	
What was the common understanding reached with others involved in the discussion?	
How did you apply the values and principles accordingly? (e.g. respect for the law, integrity, accountability, natural justice/procedural fairness, confidentiality)	
What discussions did you have with senior management and colleagues? How did you ensure you had a common understanding and application of ethical values and principles?	
How did you explain the difference between public and private values to others? If so, when, to whom and what did you say?	
How did you assist others to access and use public sector ethics legislation and guidelines ? How did you ensure their work practices complied with requirements?	

What did you say to encourage understanding and compliance?	
What strategies did you suggest to minimise the likelihood of unethical behaviour?	
What policies and procedures guide your workplace behaviour?	
Were you able to access these written documents easily? Where are they located?	
How do you make sure you are up to date with your organisation's ethical requirements?	
What other discussions have you had with your colleagues or managers about ethical issues?	
What strategies did you suggest to minimise the likelihood of unethical behaviour?	
What ethical problems have been identified by your workgroup? How have you contributed to resolving them?	
Who did you consult with about ethical problems you were unable to resolve?	

2 Participate in ethical decision making

This element requires:

- Real and potential **ethical problems** are identified, and decision making processes are used to resolve or refer them in accordance with organisational policy and procedures
- Information is regularly accessed to ensure currency in ethical knowledge, and ethical judgment is developed through involvement in workplace discussions or ongoing professional development related to ethical standards and practices
- Other staff are supported as necessary to contribute to ethical discussions and problem solving to develop their ethical judgment
- Processes for preventing and reporting unethical conduct are used and others are assisted in their application



Self assessment

Answering the following questions will help you assess the level of your current skills and help you identify appropriate evidence for your portfolio.

Ask yourself the following questions and indicate your response accordingly.	Yes	No	?	If you answer Yes , list examples of evidence you can provide
Do I identify real and potential ethical problems and use decision making processes to resolve or refer them in accordance with organisational policy and procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do I regularly access information to ensure your ethical knowledge is current?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do I develop your ethical judgment through involvement in workplace discussions or ongoing professional development related to ethical standards and practices?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do I support other staff as necessary to contribute to ethical discussions and problem solving to develop their ethical judgment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



Examples of evidence

- Minutes from two or more meetings where you have played an important role in identifying and resolving an ethical dilemma.
- A minimum of two testimonials from colleagues describing how you have supported them in resolving ethical problems.
- Evidence of ongoing professional development related to ethical standards and practices e.g. Statements of Attendance, program outlines, minutes of in-house meetings/committees focused on relevant issues.
- Copies of at least two written communications you've sent to colleagues when supporting them on ethical matters. This can take the form of:
 - emails e.g. referring work mates to appropriate websites or policies and procedures
 - suggestions/advice.
- A copy of workplace protocols for reporting unethical conduct with an explanation of when/ where you would lodge a formal complaint (as opposed to raising the matter with the person directly).
- A copy of a report you've written that clearly demonstrates your ability to uphold and support public sector principles e.g. a panel report describing the fair and merit-based selection of a job applicant (but make sure confidentiality is maintained) or a document you've authored or co-written that recommends one course over another based on ethical principles.
- A report describing:
 - your identification of unethical behaviour on the part of a colleague
 - your approach to the situation
 - the policies and procedures that guided your behaviour
 - the outcome.

- A summary of an ethical decision-making model for the public sector with an example of how you have used this model to resolve an ethical dilemma (an ethical decision making model can often be found in the Commonwealth, State or Territory Public Sector Code of Conduct).



Confirm self-assessment with supervisor

Discuss your self assessment with your supervisor or other support person. If you have answered **Yes** to a question you should be able to identify potential examples of evidence to support this. List details of the evidence that you can enclose in a portfolio to submit with this Booklet.

Reference number	Details of documents or other evidence that demonstrates your knowledge, skills and abilities.

If you have answered **No** to any of the above questions, or are unsure, or have been unable to identify sufficient suitable evidence, you could consider whether training, a work based activity or some other form of development would assist you in developing these skills.



Work-based activity: Participate in ethical decision making

The following suggestion for a work-based activity may be of use in demonstrating your ability to meet the competency requirements of this unit.

Use the checklist below to report on how you have used an ethical decision-making model to resolve an ethical dilemma in the workplace. (An ethical decision-making model can often be found in the Commonwealth, State or Territory Public Sector Code of Conduct).

Outline your decision, the reasons for your decision and the discussion you had with one or more people.



Activity checklist

Detail the nature of the ethical dilemma in the workplace, when it occurred and with whom.	
What real or potential ethical problems did you identify in the workplace?	
What decision-making process did you use to resolve or refer the ethical dilemma in the workplace?	
What organisational policy and procedures guided your decision-making process?	

What ongoing professional development did you undertake to remain up-to-date in relation to workplace and public service ethical standards?	
What workplace discussions have you been involved with to develop your ethical judgment?	
How does your organisation support others in behaving ethically?	
How did you support clients or co-workers in understanding and adopting ethical behaviors?	
How did you explain the legislation and guidelines to others?	
How did you support others in behaving ethically? What support did you provide other staff to develop their ethical judgment and contribute to ethical discussions and problem solving?	

Range statement

The following information is taken from the Unit of Competency as outlined in the Public Sector Training Package (PSP04).

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.

<p><i>Ethical values and principles may include</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the right to be heard/put your case ○ the right to be informed of a complaint or case against you ○ the right to know reasons for decisions affecting you ○ the right to know the outcomes/recommendations of an
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	<p>investigation involving you</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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
Others may include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● colleagues ● supervised staff ● contractors
Legislation and guidelines may include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● legislation for public sector management ● freedom of information ● privacy legislation ● equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination law ● public sector standards ● Ministerial directions ● State/Territory/Commonwealth codes of ethics ● organisational codes for conduct/ethics ● organisational mission and values statements ● organisational policy, procedures/guidelines ● government policy ● professional codes of ethics and conduct ● equity guidelines, organisational workplace diversity guidelines
Unethical conduct may include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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

<p><i>Ethical problems</i> which may need to be referred rather than resolved at this level may include</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<p>Referrals of ethical problems may be made to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

 **Do you have any questions?**

A list of Frequently Asked Questions is published in the Candidate Information Guide and also available via the Australian Public Service Commission’s RTO website.

<http://www.apsc.gov.au/rto/faq.html>

 **Third party report**

Third party reports provide supplementary evidence to support the recognition of your skills. Completed Third Party Reports can be referenced in your booklet and a copy placed in your portfolio of evidence. Copy this form if you require additional Reports. An electronic version in Microsoft Word format can be downloaded from <http://www.apsc.gov.au/rto/downloads.html>.

 **Candidate to complete:**

Dear <insert name of third party>,

In support of my seeking skills recognition I am requesting a third party report for the following Unit of Competency element.

<Candidate to write in element name>

I would appreciate your comments in relation to myself against the above criteria I would appreciate your return of the report to me on completion

Portfolio reference: _____

Candidate Name: Signature:.....

 **Third Party to complete:**

It would be appreciated if you could provide comments relating to the above-named Candidate for recognition against the criteria they have selected

Please provide your appraisal on the Candidate in the context of observed performance. Where possible please refer to relevant situations and examples of which you have observed or are aware.

Name:	Signature:
Position:	Date:
Relationship to Candidate: Indicate one (eg supervisor, manager, peer, other)	Duration: for months

If you have any queries about this process, please email the rto@apsc.gov.au
Additional information is available on the Australian Public Service Commission's RTO website:
<http://www.apsc.gov.au/rto/>

Feedback

The Australian Public Service Commission welcomes for comments, feedback and suggestions for improvement.

We hope you have had the opportunity to review this booklet and would especially appreciate your thoughts.

Please forward completed forms to:

National Recognition Coordinator
Level 5, 16 Furzer Street
PHILLIP ACT 2606
Facsimile: 02 6202 3799
Email: rto@apsc.gov.au

Please Note:

If you provide feedback, keep a copy for your evidence portfolio as it supports *PSPGOV405B Provide Input to change processes*.

Please tick / circle your answers

1. I found this Skill Recognition Booklet to be?

Difficult to use 1 2 3 4 5 Easy to use

2. What suggestions do you have to improve this Skills Recognition Booklet?

- 3 Other comments