Fact sheet

Pro-integrity culture

The foundations of a strong integrity culture in the Australian Public Service (APS) are outlined in the APS Values, Employment Principles and the Code of Conduct, as set out in the Public Service Act 1999. In particular, the Code of Conduct and the APS Values provide a clear statement to those within the APS, and to the Australian people, of the conduct that is expected of public servants[[1]](#footnote-1).

Building on this, the APS must maintain and foster a culture at the institutional level that values, acknowledges and champions doing the right thing.

## What is pro-integrity?

Pro-integrity involves the embedding of integrity into an agency’s culture, where it is a core consideration of all it does—from the conduct of its individual employees, to its systems and practices.

In a pro-integrity culture the primary motivating factor in the day-to-day conduct of APS employees is driven by a genuine commitment to upholding and championing integrity as a core component of a professional public service.

Our own individual integrity guides our professionalism, however a pro-integrity culture sets expectations that all APS employees and their agencies are accountable for their decisions and act consistently in the public interest.

Strengthening integrity culture delivers several benefits to APS agencies by:

* producing better decision-making
* exemplifying high professional standards
* enhancing public trust in the APS, and
* protecting against misconduct.

## Building blocks for pro-integrity

A culture of integrity requires a strong values-driven mindset at every level, exemplified by leaders, as well as systems and frameworks that enable and encourage individuals to do the right thing.

The ‘building blocks’ for this pro-integrity culture can be framed around the dimensions of awareness, capability and accountability.

* **Awareness** of the obligations for working professionally and the role and responsibilities of agencies to support APS employees to understand and navigate challenges to ethical decision-making.
* **Capability** of APS employees to identify and work through ethical challenges, ensuring they have or can develop the skills to address these integrity concerns.
* **Accountability** for decisions and actions at every level, and systems for addressing concerns about employees’ integrity or conduct appropriately and consistently.

## Where can I find further information?

There is support available to discuss and learn more about integrity including:

* specific policies and guidance provided by your agency
* your HR area
* the Australian Public Service Commission’s Ethics Advisory Service
* the APS Academy
* your supervisor or a trusted colleague.
1. State of the Service Report, 2019-20 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)