

A training manual for staff of the Nigerian Public Complaints Commission (PCC) should strengthen officers' knowledge of accountability, transparency, ethics, complaint handling, and good governance in line with the Commission's constitutional mandate and the PCC Act.

The Commission is mandated to investigate administrative injustice, promote fairness, ensure accountability, and improve public administration through impartial investigations and recommendations.

Training Manual

Public Sector Accountability, Transparency and Good Governance

For Staff of the Public Complaints Commission (PCC)

Overall Goal

To equip Commission staff with the knowledge, skills, values, and practical tools required to promote accountability, transparency, integrity, and good governance in the discharge of their responsibilities.

Learning Objectives

At the end of the training, participants should be able to:

- Explain the concepts of accountability, transparency, integrity, and good governance.
- Understand the constitutional and legal mandate of the Public Complaints Commission.
- Apply ethical principles in complaint investigation and public service delivery.
- Promote transparency and accountability in Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs).
- Handle complaints professionally while maintaining confidentiality and impartiality.

- Prevent corruption and conflicts of interest.
- Strengthen citizen engagement and public trust.

MODULE 1: INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC SECTOR GOVERNANCE

Topics

- Meaning of governance
- Public administration in Nigeria
- Principles of democratic governance
- Characteristics of good governance
- Role of oversight institutions
- Learning Outcome Participants understand governance principles and the role of the PCC in promoting administrative justice.

INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC SECTOR GOVERNANCE

Public sector governance refers to the system of laws, policies, institutions, processes, and practices through which public organizations are directed, managed, and held accountable in the delivery of public services. It provides the framework for how government institutions make decisions, allocate resources, implement policies, and interact with citizens and other stakeholders.

The primary objective of public sector governance is to ensure that public institutions operate effectively, efficiently, transparently, and ethically while serving the public interest. Good governance strengthens citizens' trust in government, promotes sustainable development, protects the rule of law, and enhances the quality of public service delivery.

Public sector governance encompasses all levels of government—national, state, and local—as well as public agencies, commissions, regulatory bodies, and state-owned enterprises. Institutions such as the Public Complaints Commission play an important role by promoting administrative justice, protecting citizens' rights, investigating complaints against public authorities, and improving accountability in public administration.

Objectives of Public Sector Governance

- Promote accountability in public administration.
- Ensure transparency in government decision-making and resource management.
- Enhance efficiency and effectiveness in public service delivery.
- Uphold the rule of law and constitutional principles.
- Encourage citizen participation in governance.
- Prevent corruption and misuse of public resources.
- Promote equity, fairness, and social justice.
- Core Principles of Public Sector Governance
 - Accountability – Public officials are answerable for their decisions and actions.
 - Transparency – Government processes and decisions should be open and accessible to the public.
 - Integrity – Public servants should act honestly, ethically, and in the public interest.
 - Rule of Law – Government actions must comply with the Constitution and applicable laws.
 - Participation – Citizens should have opportunities to contribute to public decision-making.

- Responsiveness – Public institutions should respond promptly and effectively to citizens' needs.
- Efficiency and Effectiveness – Public resources should be managed to achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Equity and Inclusiveness – All citizens should have fair access to public services and opportunities.

Importance of Public Sector Governance

Effective public sector governance:

- Improves the quality of public service delivery.
- Reduces corruption and abuse of office.
- Builds public confidence in government institutions.
- Promotes economic growth and sustainable development.
- Protects human rights and democratic values.
- Strengthens institutional performance and policy implementation.

Conclusion

Public sector governance is the foundation of an effective, accountable, and citizen-centred government. By adhering to the principles of accountability, transparency, integrity, participation, and the rule of law, public institutions can deliver better services, promote public trust, and contribute to national development. For organizations such as the Public Complaints Commission, a sound understanding of public sector governance is essential to fulfilling their mandate of ensuring fairness, accountability, and good governance in public administration.

MODULE 2: ACCOUNTABILITY IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Topics

Meaning and dimensions of accountability

Types of accountability:

- Administrative
- Financial
- Legal
- Political
- Ethical
- Social
- Accountability mechanisms
- Public officers' responsibilities

Practical Exercise Analyse a case of administrative negligence and identify accountability failures.

Accountability in Public Administration

Accountability in public administration refers to the obligation of public officials and government institutions to explain, justify, and take responsibility for their decisions, actions, and use of public resources. It ensures that public servants perform their duties in accordance with laws, ethical standards, and the public interest.

Definition

According to administrative scholars, accountability means that public officials are answerable for their actions and are subject to oversight, evaluation, and sanctions if they fail to meet legal, ethical, or professional standards.

Types of Accountability

- **Political Accountability**

Public officials are accountable to elected representatives, legislatures, and ultimately the citizens.

- Example: Ministers answering questions in parliament.
- **Administrative Accountability**

Civil servants are accountable to their supervisors and higher administrative authorities.

Ensures adherence to rules, regulations, and organizational policies.

- **Legal Accountability**

Government officials must act within the law and are answerable to courts and legal institutions.

Example: Judicial review of administrative decisions.

- **Financial Accountability**

Ensures proper management and use of public funds.

Achieved through budgeting, auditing, and financial reporting.

- **Professional Accountability**

Public servants are expected to follow professional ethics, competence, and standards of conduct.

- **Social (Public) Accountability**

Citizens, media, and civil society organizations hold government accountable through public participation, social audits, and feedback mechanisms.

Importance of Accountability

- Promotes transparency and good governance.
- Prevents corruption and misuse of public resources.
- Improves efficiency and effectiveness in public service delivery.
- Builds public trust and confidence in government.
- Protects citizens' rights and ensures fairness
- Strengthens democratic governance.
- Mechanisms for Ensuring Accountability
 - Parliamentary oversight
 - Independent judiciary
 - Auditing institutions
 - Anti-corruption agencies
 - Ombudsman institutions
 - Right to Information (RTI) laws
 - Citizen charters
 - Social audits and public hearings
 - Performance evaluation and internal controls

Challenges to Accountability

- Corruption and political interference
- Weak institutional frameworks
- Lack of transparency
- Inadequate citizen participation
- Bureaucratic inefficiency
- Poor enforcement of laws

Conclusion

Accountability is a fundamental principle of public administration that ensures government officials act responsibly, transparently, and in the public interest. Effective accountability strengthens democratic governance, improves public service delivery, and enhances citizens' confidence in government institutions.

MODULE 3: TRANSPARENCY IN PUBLIC SERVICE

Topics

- Meaning of transparency
- Benefits of transparency
- Open government principles
- Record management
- Information disclosure
- Public access to information
- Building public confidence
- Learning Outcome Participants appreciate transparency as a foundation for public trust.

Transparency in Public Service

Transparency in public service is the principle that government institutions and public officials conduct their activities in an open, honest, and accessible manner. It ensures that decisions, policies, procedures, and the use of public resources are visible and understandable to citizens, thereby promoting trust, accountability, and good governance.

Objectives of Transparency in Public Service

- Promote openness in government operations.
- Prevent corruption, fraud, and abuse of office.
- Build public trust and confidence in government institutions.
- Enable citizens to participate meaningfully in governance.
- Improve the quality and efficiency of public service delivery.

Key Principles of Transparency

- Openness – Government processes and decisions should be accessible to the public.
- Access to Information – Citizens have the right to obtain information held by public institutions, subject to lawful limitations.
- Disclosure – Public agencies should proactively publish information on budgets, procurement, policies, and performance.
- Integrity – Public officials should act honestly and ethically.
- Responsiveness – Government should provide timely and accurate information to citizens.

Importance of Transparency

- Strengthens accountability in public administration.

- Reduces opportunities for corruption and misuse of public funds.
- Enhances public participation in governance.
- Improves the credibility and legitimacy of government institutions.
- Promotes efficient and effective service delivery.
- Encourages informed decision-making by citizens and stakeholders.

Challenges to Transparency

- Corruption and vested interests.
- Poor record-keeping and information management.
- Weak implementation of transparency laws.
- Political interference.
- Limited public awareness of citizens' rights.
- Inadequate use of digital technologies.
- Strategies for Promoting Transparency
- Enforce freedom of information laws.
- Strengthen anti-corruption institutions.
- Digitize government services through e-governance.
- Publish government budgets, contracts, and audit reports.
- Protect whistleblowers.
- Promote ethical leadership and continuous training for public servants.
- Encourage citizen engagement and public oversight.

Conclusion

Transparency is a cornerstone of good governance and effective public administration. By ensuring openness, access to information, and ethical conduct, public institutions become more accountable, efficient, and responsive to citizens' needs. A transparent public service fosters trust, supports sustainable development, and strengthens democratic governance.

MODULE 4: GOOD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

- Topics
- Rule of law
- Participation
- Equity and inclusion
- Responsiveness
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Accountability
- Consensus building
- Anti-corruption
- Case Study Improving service delivery in a government agency through good governance.

Good governance refers to the way public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources in a manner that is accountable, transparent, effective, and responsive to the needs of citizens.

The key principles of good governance are:

- **Participation** – Citizens should have the opportunity to participate in decision-making, either directly or through elected representatives.
- **Rule of Law** – Laws should be applied fairly and equally, with an independent judiciary protecting human rights and ensuring justice.
- **Transparency** – Government decisions, policies, and procedures should be open and accessible to the public.
- **Accountability** – Public officials and institutions should be answerable for their actions and decisions.
- **Responsiveness** – Governments should respond promptly and effectively to the needs and concerns of citizens.
- **Equity and Inclusiveness** – All people should have equal opportunities and access to public services without discrimination.
- **Effectiveness and Efficiency** – Public resources should be used wisely to achieve desired outcomes while minimizing waste.
- **Consensus-Oriented** – Governments should mediate different interests to reach broad agreement on policies that benefit society.
- **Strategic Vision** – Leaders should have a long-term perspective on development and governance while considering future challenges.

These principles help promote democracy, sustainable development, public trust, and improved service delivery.

MODULE 5: LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

TOPICS

- Nigerian Constitution
- Public Complaints Commission Act
- Public Service Rules
- Code of Conduct for Public Officers
- Freedom of Information Act
- Relevant anti-corruption laws
- Learning Outcome Participants understand the legal basis for accountability and investigations.

LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR PUBLIC SECTOR GOVERNANCE

A legal and institutional framework refers to the system of laws, regulations, policies, institutions, and procedures that guide how public organizations operate, make decisions, and are held accountable. It provides the foundation for transparency, accountability, integrity, and good governance in the public sector.

1. Legal Framework

The legal framework consists of the constitutional, statutory, and regulatory provisions that govern public administration. It defines the powers, responsibilities, and limits of public institutions and officials.

Key elements include:

The Constitution – establishes the structure of government, separation of powers, and citizens' rights.

Acts of Parliament/National Assembly – laws establishing public institutions and defining their mandates.

Public Service Rules and Regulations – govern the conduct, discipline, recruitment, and promotion of public servants.

Financial Regulations and Procurement Laws – ensure prudent management of public resources.

Code of Conduct and Anti-Corruption Laws – promote ethical behaviour and prevent abuse of office.

Freedom of Information Laws – guarantee citizens' access to public information.

2. Institutional Framework

The institutional framework comprises the organizations responsible for implementing laws, enforcing standards, and promoting good governance.

In Nigeria, key institutions include:

Public Complaints Commission – investigates complaints against public institutions and protects citizens against administrative injustice.

Code of Conduct Bureau – enforces ethical standards for public officers.

Economic and Financial Crimes Commission – investigates and prosecutes economic and financial crimes.

Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission – prevents and prosecutes corruption.

Office of the Auditor-General for the Federation – audits government accounts and promotes financial accountability.

National Human Rights Commission – protects and promotes human rights.

3. Importance of the Legal and Institutional Framework

- Promotes accountability and transparency.
- Ensures compliance with laws and regulations.
- Protects citizens' rights and access to justice.
- Prevents corruption and abuse of public office.
- Enhances public confidence in government institutions.
- Supports efficient and effective public service delivery.

4. Challenges

- Weak enforcement of laws.
- Political interference in public institutions.
- Corruption and unethical practices.
- Inadequate funding and capacity of oversight bodies.
- Limited public awareness of legal rights.
- Delays in the administration of justice.

5. Recommendations

- Strengthen the independence of oversight institutions.
- Enforce anti-corruption and accountability laws consistently.
- Build the capacity of public servants through continuous training.
- Increase public access to government information.
- Encourage citizen participation in governance.
- Improve coordination among accountability institutions.

Conclusion

A strong legal and institutional framework is essential for achieving transparency, accountability, and good governance. Effective laws, supported by capable and independent institutions, ensure that public officials act in the public interest, uphold the rule of law, and deliver quality public services. This framework is particularly important for staff of the Public Complaints Commission, whose mandate is to promote administrative justice and strengthen public trust in government.

MODULE 6: ETHICS, INTEGRITY AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

TOPICS

- Ethical values
- Integrity in public service
- Professional behaviour
- Conflict of interest
- Confidentiality
- Neutrality

- Impartiality
- Exercise Identify ethical dilemmas and propose appropriate responses. investigative competence consistent with the mandate.
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

ETHICS, INTEGRITY, AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Introduction

Ethics, integrity, and professional conduct are fundamental principles that guide the behaviour of public officials and professionals in every organization. In an ombudsman institution or the Public Complaints Commission, these principles promote fairness, accountability, transparency, public confidence, and effective service delivery. They help officers perform their duties impartially, uphold the rule of law, and protect the rights of citizens.

1. Ethics

Ethics refers to the moral principles and standards that guide individuals in determining what is right or wrong. It provides a framework for making decisions and acting responsibly in both personal and professional life.

- Core Ethical Principles
- Honesty and truthfulness
- Fairness and impartiality
- Respect for human dignity
- Accountability
- Transparency

- Justice and equity
- Confidentiality
- Responsibility

2. Integrity

Integrity is the quality of being honest, trustworthy, and consistent in adhering to strong moral and ethical principles, even when no one is watching.

Characteristics of Integrity

- Honesty in all official dealings
- Consistency between words and actions
- Courage to do the right thing
- Avoidance of corruption and bribery
- Compliance with laws and organizational policies
- Accountability for decisions and actions

3. Professional Conduct

Professional conduct refers to the expected standards of behaviour, attitude, and performance that govern members of a profession while carrying out their official responsibilities.

Elements of Professional Conduct

- Competence and diligence
- Respect for colleagues and the public
- Confidential handling of information
- Neutrality and impartiality

- Proper communication and courtesy
- Punctuality and discipline
- Commitment to continuous learning
- Compliance with organizational rules and ethical codes

Importance of Ethics, Integrity, and Professional Conduct

- Promotes public trust and confidence.
- Prevents corruption and abuse of office.
- Enhances transparency and accountability.
- Improves decision-making.
- Ensures fairness in service delivery.
- Protects the rights of citizens.
- Strengthens institutional credibility.
- Encourages professionalism and teamwork.
- Ethical Challenges in Public Service
- Conflict of interest
- Bribery and corruption
- Abuse of power
- Political interference
- Confidentiality breaches
- Favouritism and nepotism
- Sexual harassment
- Misuse of public resources

- Promoting Ethical Behaviour
- Develop and enforce a code of conduct.
- Provide regular ethics training.
- Strengthen internal accountability systems.
- Encourage whistleblower protection.
- Apply disciplinary measures for misconduct.
- Promote transparent decision-making.
- Lead by example through ethical leadership.

Application in an Ombudsman/Public Complaints Commission

Officers should:

- Handle complaints fairly and impartially.
- Maintain confidentiality of complainants.
- Avoid conflicts of interest.
- Resist undue influence from external parties.
- Treat all complainants with dignity and respect.
- Make evidence-based decisions.
- Uphold the law and organizational values.

Conclusion

Ethics, integrity, and professional conduct are essential pillars of good governance and effective public administration. For officers of an ombudsman institution or the Public Complaints Commission, adherence to these principles enhances public confidence, ensures justice, promotes accountability, and enables the institution to fulfil its mandate of protecting citizens against

maladministration and abuse of power. Continuous ethical education, strong leadership, and effective accountability mechanisms are necessary to sustain a culture of integrity and professionalism.

TOPICS

- Performance indicators
- Complaint statistics
- Quality assurance
- Lessons learned
- Continuous improvement
- Institutional learning
- Training Methodology
- Interactive lectures
- Group discussions
- Case studies
- Role plays
- Practical investigations
- Simulations
- Experience sharing
- Knowledge assessment
- Module quizzes
- Group assessment