



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE

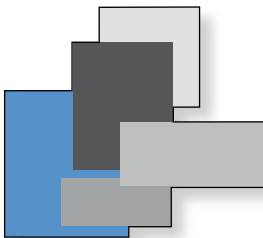


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FURTHER to the recommendation of the Advisory Council on Personnel Policies (ACPP), I am pleased to announce that I have decided to introduce officially at UNESCO the new standards of conduct for international civil servants. The standards, which the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) spent three years preparing and which were welcomed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2001, will replace the previous standards adopted in 1954.

Adapted to meet the new challenges of the twenty-first century, the new standards reflect the way in which the world has changed in recent decades and embody the values promoted by the organizations of the United Nations system. These values, which concern fundamental human rights, social justice, the dignity of the human person and respect for the equal rights of men and women, should inspire and guide international civil servants in their professional activities as well as in their personal conduct.

The introduction of the new standards at UNESCO is timely in more ways than one, since ethical issues are central to the reform that is currently under way in the United Nations system as a whole. UNESCO has, moreover, just instituted a new policy aimed at preventing and putting an end to all forms of harassment, be it moral or sexual.

The publication of the new standards will be coupled with an information campaign so that each of us can better assimilate and adopt the values set out in the text. It is my hope that a culture of respect for others and a favourable working environment, characterized by integrity, professionalism and mutual trust, will thus be strengthened at UNESCO.

It is up to all of us to make these goals a reality in our Organization.



Mr Koichiro Matsuura

*Director-General
of UNESCO*

> The last chapter of the brochure contains a series of questions and answers that explain, with the help of examples, how these standards of conduct apply to staff at UNESCO (conduct within UNESCO, disclosure of information, conflicts of interest and external relations).

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE

*“The integrity of men
is to be measured by their
conduct, not by their professions.”*

Junius

English political author

1 Introduction

The United Nations and the specialized agencies embody the highest aspirations of the peoples of the world. Their aim is to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and to enable every man, woman and child to live in dignity and freedom.

2

The international civil service bears responsibility for translating these ideals into reality. It relies on the great traditions of public administration that have grown up in member States: competence, integrity, impartiality, independence and discretion. But over and above this, international civil servants have a special calling: to serve the ideals of peace, of respect for fundamental rights, of economic and

social progress, and of international cooperation. It is therefore incumbent on international civil servants to adhere to the highest standards of conduct; for, ultimately, it is the international civil service that will enable the United Nations system to bring about a just and peaceful world.

Guiding principles

3 Rights of men and women

The values that are enshrined in the United Nations organizations must also be those that guide international civil servants in all their actions: fundamental human rights, social justice, the dignity and worth of the human person and respect for the equal rights of men and women and of nations great and small.

4

International civil servants should share the vision of their organizations. It is loyalty to this vision that ensures the integrity and international outlook of international civil servants; it guarantees that they will place the interests of their organization above their own and use its resources in a responsible manner.

5 Integrity

The concept of integrity enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations embraces all aspects of behaviour of an international civil servant, including such qualities as honesty, truthfulness, impartiality and incorruptibility. These qualities are as basic as those of competence and efficiency, also enshrined in the Charter.

6 Tolerance

Tolerance and understanding are basic human values. They are essential for international civil servants, who must respect all persons equally, without any distinction whatsoever. This respect fosters a climate and a working environment sensitive to the needs of all. To achieve this in a multicultural setting calls for a positive affirmation going well beyond passive acceptance.

7 Loyalty

International loyalty means loyalty to the whole United Nations system and not only to the organization for which one works; international civil servants have an obligation to understand and exemplify this wider loyalty. The need for a cooperative and understanding attitude towards international civil servants of other United Nations organizations is obviously most important where international civil servants of several organizations are serving in the same country or region.

The following are contrary to the concept of integrity: theft, falsification of official documents, falsification of the amount of medical expenses or school fees, false statements of travel expenses, false statements in reference to a family situation, establishment of contracts for fictitious temporary assistance or for the benefit of close family members, personal use of extra-budgetary funds, misappropriation of funds, manipulation of the rules and procedures governing purchases, and corruption.

No one shall circulate, anonymously or not, information that is libellous or detrimental to the professional integrity or personal dignity of another individual.

An international civil servant must never favour nationals from his/her country of origin, for example, when awarding temporary assistance contracts.

No one shall exert pressure on a member of an evaluation panel with a view to encouraging the recruitment of a particular candidate.

8 Impartiality

If the impartiality of the international civil service is to be maintained, international civil servants must remain independent of any authority outside their organization; their conduct must reflect that independence. In keeping with their oath of office, they should not seek nor should they accept instructions from any Government, person or entity external to the organization. It cannot be too strongly stressed that international civil servants are not, in any sense, representatives of Governments or other entities, nor are they proponents of their policies. This applies equally to those on secondment from Governments and to those whose services have been made available from elsewhere. International civil servants should be constantly aware that through their allegiance to the Charter and the corresponding instruments of each organization, member States and their representatives are committed to respect this independent status.

9 Tact and discretion

Impartiality implies tolerance and restraint, particularly in dealing with political or religious convictions. While their personal views remain inviolate, international civil servants do not have the freedom of private persons to take sides or to express their convictions publicly on controversial matters, either individually or as members of a group. This can mean that, in certain situations, personal views should only be expressed with tact and discretion.

10 International outlook

This does not mean that international civil servants have to give up their personal political views or national perspectives. It does mean, however, that they must at all times maintain a broad international outlook and an understanding of the international community as a whole.

11 Independence

The independence of the international civil service does not conflict with, or obscure, the fact that it is the member States that collectively make up (in some cases with other constituents) the organization. Conduct that furthers good relations with individual member States and that contributes to their trust and confidence in the secretariat strengthens the organization and promotes its interest.

12

International civil servants who are responsible for projects in particular countries or regions may be called upon to exercise special care in maintaining their independence. At times they might receive instructions from the host country but this should not compromise their independence. If at any time they consider that such instructions threaten their independence, they must consult their supervisors.

If a woman applies for a post for which she has all the requisite qualifications, she cannot be excluded from the selection process on the grounds that she is pregnant.

13 Respect for diversity

An international outlook stems from an understanding of and loyalty to the objectives and purposes of the international organization itself as set forth in its legal instruments.

It implies, inter alia, respect for the right of others to hold different points of view and follow different cultural patterns. It requires a willingness to work without bias with persons of all nationalities, religions and cultures; it calls for constant sensitivity to how proposals, events and statements may look to others. It requires punctilious avoidance of any expressions that could be interpreted as biased or intolerant. Working methods can be different in different cultures. International civil servants should not be wedded to the attitudes, working methods or work habits of their own country or region.

14 Gender equality

Freedom from discrimination is a basic human right. International civil servants are expected to respect the dignity, worth and equality of all people without any distinction whatsoever. Assumptions based on stereotypes must be assiduously avoided. One of the main tenets of the Charter is the equality of men and women, and organizations should therefore do their utmost to promote gender equality.

Working Relations

15 Mutual respect

Managers and supervisors are in positions of leadership and it is their responsibility to ensure a harmonious workplace based on mutual respect; they should be open to all views and opinions and make sure that the merits of staff are properly recognized. They need to provide support to them; this is particularly important when they are subject to criticism arising from the carrying out of their duties. Managers are also responsible for guiding and motivating their staff and promoting their development.

16

It is natural for managers to be seen as role models and they have therefore a special obligation to uphold the highest standards of conduct. It would be quite improper for them to solicit favours, gifts or loans from their staff; they must act impartially, without intimidation and favouritism. In matters relating to the appointment or career of others, no international civil servant should try to influence colleagues for personal reasons.

17 Sharing of information

It is naturally incumbent on managers and supervisors to communicate effectively with their staff and share information with them. International civil servants have a reciprocal responsibility to provide all pertinent facts and information to their supervisors

Supervisors must never subject their subordinates to humiliating reprimands.

Supervisors must not use their rank to make their subordinates carry out personal services that have nothing to do with the job.

Staff members must not hire an individual lacking the proper qualifications simply because that person is known to them, nor should the contract of the person hired be renewed, for the same reason, if the services provided prove to be unsatisfactory.

During the recruitment process, members of evaluation panels must make their recommendations solely on the basis of candidates' actual qualifications and competencies and not on personal considerations.

and to abide by and defend any decisions taken, even when these do not accord with their personal views.

18

International civil servants have to follow the instructions they receive in connection with their official functions and if they have doubts as to whether an instruction is consistent with the Charter or any other constitutional instrument, decisions of the governing bodies or administrative rules and regulations, they should first consult their supervisors. If they cannot agree, the international civil servant may ask for written instructions. These may be challenged through the proper institutional mechanisms, but any challenge should not delay carrying out the instruction. International civil servants may also record their views in official files. They should not follow verbal or written instructions that are manifestly inconsistent with their official functions or that threaten their safety or that of others.

19

It must be the duty of international civil servants to report any breach of the organization's rules and regulations to a higher level official, whose responsibility it is to take appropriate action. An international civil servant who makes such a report in good faith has the right to be protected against reprisals or sanctions.

Harassment

20

Harassment in any shape or form is an affront to human dignity and international civil servants must avoid it. They should not engage in any form of harassment and must be above any suspicion of it. International civil servants have the right to an environment free of harassment. It is the responsibility of organizations to explain their interpretation of the term and to establish rules and provide guidance on what constitutes harassment and how it will be dealt with.

Conflict of interest

21

It can happen that international civil servants are confronted with a question entailing a conflict of interest; such questions can be very sensitive and need to be treated with care. Conflict of interest includes circumstances in which international civil servants, directly or indirectly, would appear to benefit improperly, or allow a third party to benefit improperly, from their association in the management or the holding of a financial interest in an enterprise that engages in any business or transaction with the organization.

No form of harassment is tolerated at UNESCO. Administrative Circular No. 2232 of 20 April 2005 defines harassment as: "any deliberate, offensive, undesired conduct, incompatible with the Standards of Conduct, in the workplace or in connection with work, that can be reasonably perceived as such, and has the purpose or effect of: (a) an affront to the identity, the personality, the dignity or the physical integrity of an employee/a group of employees; or (b) the creation of an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive work environment".

An administrator with a financial interest in an office supply company must not order supplies from it.

A staff member must not influence his/her supervisors to engage the services of a company in which the staff member has a private interest or for which one of his/her relatives or friends works.

In dealing with outside official bodies, international civil servants must never express disagreement with the official position of the Secretariat.

22

There can be no question but that international civil servants should avoid assisting private bodies or persons in their dealings with their organization where this might lead to actual or perceived preferential treatment. This is particularly important in procurement matters or when negotiating prospective employment. At times, international civil servants may be required to disclose certain personal assets if this is necessary to enable their organizations to make sure that there is no conflict. They should also voluntarily disclose in advance possible conflicts of interest that arise in the course of carrying out their duties. They should perform their official duties and conduct their private affairs in a manner that preserves and enhances public confidence in their own integrity and that of their organization.

Role of the secretariat

23 To assist the governing bodies

International organizations are constituted by member States, and their secretariats have the responsibility for providing services to them. The main function of the secretariat is to assist legislative bodies in their work and to carry out their decisions. The executive head is responsible for directing and controlling the work of the secretariat. Accordingly, when submitting proposals or advocating positions

before a legislative body or committee, international civil servants are presenting the position of the executive head, not that of an individual or unit.

24 To serve the interests of the Organization

In providing services to a legislative or representative body, it goes without saying that international civil servants should serve only the interests of the organization. It would not be appropriate for international civil servants to prepare for government or other international civil service representatives any speeches, arguments or proposals on questions under discussion. It could, however, be quite appropriate to provide factual information, technical advice or assistance with such tasks as the preparation of draft resolutions.

25

It is entirely improper for international civil servants to lobby or seek support from government representatives or members of legislative organs to obtain advancement either for themselves or for others or to block or reverse unfavourable decisions regarding their status. By adhering to the Charter and the constitutions of the organizations of the United Nations system, Governments have undertaken to safeguard the independence of the international civil service; it is therefore understood that government representatives and members of legislative bodies will neither accede to such requests nor intervene in such matters. The proper method for an international civil

servant to address such matters is through administrative channels; each organization is responsible for providing these.

Staff management relations

26 Freedom of association

Relations between management and staff should be guided by mutual respect. Elected staff representatives have a cardinal role to play in the consideration of conditions of employment and work, as well as in all matters of staff welfare. Freedom of association is a fundamental human right and international civil servants have the right to form and join associations, unions or other groupings to promote and defend their interests. Continuing dialogue between staff and management is indispensable. Management should facilitate this dialogue.

27

Elected staff representatives enjoy rights that derive from their status; this may include the opportunity to address legislative organs of their organization. These rights should be exercised in a manner that is consistent with the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international covenants on human rights and does not undermine the independence and integrity of the international civil service.

In using the broad freedom of expression they enjoy, staff representatives must exercise a sense of responsibility and avoid undue criticism of the organization.

28

Staff representatives must be protected against discriminatory or prejudicial treatment based on their status or activities as staff representatives, both during their term of office and after it has ended.

Relations with member States and legislative bodies

29 Neutrality

It is the clear duty of all international civil servants to maintain the best possible relations with Governments and avoid any action which might impair this; they should certainly not interfere in the policies or affairs of Governments. It is unacceptable for them, either individually or collectively, to criticize or try to discredit a Government. At the same time, it is understood that international civil servants may speak freely in support of their organizations' policies. Any activity, direct or indirect, to undermine or overthrow a Government constitutes serious misconduct.

Staff members attending conferences, even in their personal capacity, may not criticize the government policy of UNESCO's Member States.

Staff members must refrain from engaging in public activities that might be interpreted as criticizing the government policy of one of the Organization's Member States.

30

International civil servants are not representatives of their countries, nor do they have authority to act as liaison agents between international organizations and their Governments. The executive head may, however, request an international civil servant to undertake such duties, a unique role for which international loyalty and integrity are essential. For their part, neither Governments nor organizations should place international civil servants in a position where their international and national loyalties may conflict.

Relations with the public

31 Public information

For an international organization to function successfully, it must have the support of the public. All international civil servants therefore have a continuing responsibility to promote a better understanding of the objectives and work of their organizations. This requires them to be well informed of the achievements not only of their own organizations but of the United Nations system as a whole. The opportunity to provide information to the public can arise at any time.

32 Moderation

There is a risk that on occasion international civil servants may be subject to criticism from outside their organizations; in keeping with their responsibility as

international civil servants, they should respond with tact and restraint. They have the right to be defended by their organizations against criticism for actions taken in fulfilment of their duties and they should be confident that this will be done.

33

It would not be proper for international civil servants to air personal grievances or criticize their organizations in public. International civil servants should endeavour at all times to promote a positive image of the international civil service, in conformity with their oath of loyalty.

Staff members must refrain from criticizing the action of the United Nations system or UNESCO because it might undermine the image of the Organization and constitute a violation of their oath of loyalty.

Relations with the media

34 Transparency

Openness and transparency in relations with the media are effective means of communicating the organizations' messages, and the organizations should have guidelines and procedures for this purpose. Within that context, the following principles should apply: international civil servants should regard themselves as speaking in the name of their organizations and avoid personal references and views; in no circumstances should they use the media to further their own interests, to air their own grievances, to reveal unauthorized information or to attempt to influence policy decisions facing their organizations.

Confidential information, such as that contained in an audit report or concerning staff members, may not be divulged for any reason.

Use and protection of information

35 Confidentiality

The disclosure of confidential information may seriously jeopardize the efficiency and credibility of an organization. International civil servants are responsible for exercising discretion in all matters of official business. They must not divulge confidential information without authorization. Nor should international civil servants use information that has not been made public and is known to them by virtue of their official position to private advantage. These are obligations that do not cease upon separation from service. It is necessary for organizations to maintain guidelines for the use and protection of confidential information, and it is equally necessary for such guidelines to keep pace with developments in communications technology. It is understood that these provisions do not affect established practices governing the exchange of information between the secretariats and member States, which ensure the fullest participation of member States in the life and work of the organizations.

Respect for different customs and culture

36

The world is home to a myriad of different peoples, languages, cultures, customs and traditions. It is self-evident that a genuine respect for them all is fundamental for an international civil servant. Any behaviour that is not acceptable in a particular cultural context must be avoided. However, if a tradition is directly contrary to any human rights instrument adopted by the United Nations system, the international civil servant must be guided by it. International civil servants should avoid an ostentatious lifestyle and any display of an inflated sense of personal importance.

Security and safety

37

While an executive head must remain free to assign staff in accordance with the exigencies of the service, it is the responsibility of organizations to make sure that the health, well-being and lives of their staff, without any discrimination whatsoever, will not be subject to undue risk. The organizations should take measures to protect their safety and that of their family members. On the other hand, it goes without saying that it is incumbent on international civil servants to comply with all instructions designed to protect their safety.

Staff members must not ostentatiously display the flag of their country of origin in the office, as such action might be interpreted by colleagues or visitors as running counter to the duty of impartiality.

International civil servants must show the utmost respect for cultural diversity in the context of their duties and in their personal conduct. They must, in particular, adapt themselves to the local customs of each country to which they are assigned.

Staff members are invited to consult the Travel & Security website on the Organization's Intranet home page.

Staff members must honour their private obligations such as rental payments, loan reimbursements or payment of maintenance allowances.

A staff member who owns a vehicle with a K or diplomatic number plate must observe the Highway Code, in particular parking regulations, when using the vehicle for personal reasons. If faced with fines for offences in this case, the staff member must pay them.

Personal conduct

38

The private life of international civil servants is their own concern and organizations should not intrude upon it. There can be situations, however, in which the behaviour of an international civil servant can reflect on the organization. International civil servants must therefore bear in mind that their conduct and activities outside the workplace, even if unrelated to official duties, can compromise the image and the interests of the organization. This can also result from the conduct of members of international civil servants' households and it is the responsibility of international civil servants to make sure that their households are fully aware of this.

39 **Respect for local law**

The privileges and immunities that international civil servants enjoy are conferred upon them solely in the interests of the organizations. They do not exempt international civil servants from observing local laws, nor do they provide an excuse for ignoring private legal or financial obligations. It should be remembered that only the executive head is competent to waive the immunity accorded to international civil servants or to determine its scope.

40

Violations of law can range from serious criminal activities to trivial offences, and organizations may be called upon to exercise judgement in the light of the nature and circumstances of individual cases. A conviction by a national court will usually, although not always, be persuasive evidence of the act for which an international civil servant was prosecuted, and acts that are generally recognized as offences by national criminal laws will normally also be violations of the standards of conduct for the international civil service.

Outside employment and activities

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The primary obligation of international civil servants is to devote their energies to the work of their organizations. It is therefore improper for international civil servants to engage, without prior authorization, in any outside activity, whether remunerated or not, that interferes with that obligation or is incompatible with their status or conflicts with the interests of the organization. Any questions about this should be referred to the executive head.

Staff members must not consult Internet sites whose content promotes values that are contrary to those of UNESCO. See the Directives for the use of information and communication in UNESCO.

42

Subject to the above, outside activities may, of course, be beneficial both to staff members and to their organizations.

Organizations should allow, encourage and facilitate the participation of international civil servants in professional activities that foster contacts with private and public bodies and thus serve to maintain and enhance their professional and technical competencies.

43

International civil servants on leave, whether with or without pay, should bear in mind that they remain international civil servants in the employ of their organization and are still subject to its rules. They may, therefore, only accept employment, paid or unpaid, during their leave with proper authorization.

44 **Political activities**

In view of the independence and impartiality that they must maintain, international civil servants, while retaining the right to vote, should not participate in political activities, such as standing for or holding local or national political office. This does not, however, preclude participation in local community or civic activities, provided that such participation is consistent with the oath of service in the United Nations system. It is necessary for international civil servants to exercise discretion in their support for a political party or campaign, and

they should not accept or solicit funds, write articles or make public speeches or make statements to the press. These cases require the exercise of judgement and, where there is any doubt, should be referred to the executive head.

45

The significance of membership in a political party varies from country to country and it is difficult to formulate standards that will apply in all cases. In general, international civil servants may be members of a political party provided its prevailing views and the obligations imposed on its members are consistent with the oath of service in the United Nations system.

Gifts, honours and remuneration from outside sources

46

To protect the international civil service from any appearance of impropriety, international civil servants must not accept, without authorization from the executive head, any honour, decoration, gift, remuneration, favour or economic benefit of more than nominal value from any source external to their organizations; it is understood that this includes Governments as well as commercial firms and other entities.

Staff members must not accept major responsibilities within a political party, as their potential visibility might interfere with their duty of discretion and neutrality.

Any staff member selected to receive a prize for research conducted while at UNESCO must accept the prize on behalf of the Organization, since such research is an integral part of his/her professional activities.

47

It is not proper for international civil servants to accept supplementary payments or other subsidies from a Government or any other source prior to, during or after their assignment with an international organization if the payment is related to that assignment. Balancing this requirement, it is understood that Governments or other entities should not make or offer such payments, recognizing that they are at variance with the spirit of the Charter and the constitutions of the organizations of the United Nations system.

 **CONCLUSION****48**

The attainment of the standards of conduct for the international civil service requires the highest commitment of all parties. International civil servants must be committed to the values, principles and standards set forth here. They are expected to take a positive and active approach in upholding them. They should feel responsible for contributing to the broad ideals to which they dedicated themselves in joining the United Nations system. International organizations have a particular responsibility to ensure that the necessary guidance or rules are adopted to implement these standards. For their part, member States are expected, through their allegiance to the Charter and other constituent instruments, to preserve the independence and impartiality of the international civil service.

49

For these standards to be effectively applied, it is essential that they be widely disseminated, and that measures be taken to ensure that their scope and importance are understood throughout the international civil service, the member States and the organizations of the United Nations system.

50

Respect for these standards assures that the international civil service will continue to be an effective instrument in fulfilling its responsibilities and in meeting the aspirations of the peoples of the world.

Basic standards of conduct

1 A staff member fails to respect his or her obligations to pay support to a spouse or a child, notwithstanding a court order to do so. Does this violate the standards of conduct?

Yes. Staff members must not use their privileges and immunities to avoid discharging their private obligations or observing local laws (see Staff Regulation 1.8).

2 A staff member fails to comply with domestic violence laws or a court order regarding visitation rights. Does this violate the standards of conduct?

Yes. Staff members are required to comply with the law, including laws against domestic violence. This includes not only physical assault, but also violent acts or the threat of violence to those in the staff member's household. UNESCO cannot become involved in purely domestic disputes. It is however in its interests as an international

organization to ensure that its staff members do not abuse the immunities accorded to them, subject their household members to cruelty or violate court orders. Staff members should conduct themselves at all times in a manner befitting their status as international civil servants. (see Staff Regulation 1.4).

Conduct at UNESCO

3 Your daughter is at a university abroad and you occasionally send her e-mails from the office. Is this a violation of the standards of conduct?

No, provided that such communications are limited and rapid. The primary purpose of electronic mail (e-mail) facilities is for official communications. The personal use of e-mail facilities at Headquarters is permitted as long as this does not encroach on work time, overburden the electronic network, or involve significant extra expense for UNESCO. With regard to the use

of Internet facilities in general, staff members should avoid consulting sites whose content does not correspond to UNESCO's values, as stipulated in Administrative Circular 2204 of 22 March 2004.

Use and disclosure of information

4 You are an expert on water resources and would like to write a letter to the editor of a newspaper regarding a national hydrological project. Do you need clearance from UNESCO?

Yes, you must request formal authorization from the Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM) through the Bureau of Public Information (BPI). HRM will examine the issues covered and the context in which the letter is being written. It will consider in particular whether the author is identified as a UNESCO staff member, whether the letter could reasonably be expected to have an adverse effect on UNESCO's policies or activities, and whether

such a project has a significant impact on UNESCO's relations with the country in question (the presumption is that it could be a significant issue).

5 One of your fields of expertise (acquired outside UNESCO) is the protection of children; a local journalist would like to interview you on this topic. Do you need UNESCO clearance for the interview?

Yes. In addition, you must ensure that:

- you are interviewed in your personal capacity and your name is not associated with UNESCO;
- you avoid commenting directly on controversial national policy issues in this area (if you do intend to address such controversial issues, you should submit your comments to UNESCO for prior authorization);
- you do not mention UNESCO's name, use its logo, or refer to your post at UNESCO, and no reference to your function is made by anyone else involved in the interview (see Staff Rule 101.6).

Conflicts of interest

6 You are engaged in discussion with a potential contractor for a UNESCO project. The invitation to tender has just been issued. At the end of the discussion, the contractor invites you to lunch in a restaurant. Should you accept the invitation?

No. As the competitive bidding process has not yet been completed, it would be inappropriate to accept the invitation as that could give the impression that you might be influenced in your choice.

7 You learn through your brother-in-law, who works for a printing firm, of new software produced by the firm that may be of interest to UNESCO. Are you permitted to arrange a meeting between the firm and representatives of UNESCO?

Yes, providing that you discuss with your supervisor the nature of your relationship with the outside contractor and any conflict of interest that might arise. You should refrain

from influencing UNESCO's decision in any way with regard to purchasing the software or otherwise using the firm's products, as that would be a clear case of conflict of interest.

8 A staff member in your Division has the authority to conclude contracts up to \$30,000 without the supervisor's approval. You notice, however, that the supplier for a particular item has not changed in the past few years, even though the market is very competitive in this area. Furthermore, you do not find any record of other potential suppliers in the files. What should you do?

Whenever the cost of a contract exceeds \$2,500, price comparisons between at least three potential contractors should be made with a view to determining the lowest acceptable price. You should alert the staff member and supervisor concerned and remind them of the rules in force in this regard (see the Procurement Guide, UNESCO Manual, Vol. I, Appendix 10c).

9 It may sometimes be difficult to know how to react when a supplier or partner offers you a gift. Here are some examples of the appropriate way to act in such situations :

- the gift has no commercial value (for example, calendars or notepads), you may accept it and share it with all of your colleagues;
- the gift has substantial value (for example, a gold watch), you should refuse the gift and return it, explaining that your status as an international civil servant does not permit you to accept such gifts. The same principle applies to gifts of less, and even symbolic, value (for example, a bottle of wine or a travel souvenir). You should bring all such cases to the notice of your supervisor.

Outside activities

10 You have been invited by a university to teach a course on educational planning, for which you will be paid. Can you accept the invitation?

You may accept the invitation, provided that :

- you receive prior approval from your supervisors and HRM with regard to both your participation and the remuneration proposed;
- you provide details on the course content; and
- the work, including preparation, is done in your spare time and does not interfere with your official duties (see Staff Rules 101.6 and 101.8).

11 You own an apartment that you rent out in order to generate income. Are you obliged to report this fact to UNESCO to avoid violating the rules on outside activities?

No. You may rent your property without prior authorization from UNESCO, as long as the rental does not become a regular outside activity run as a business.

12 Can you participate in a lawful public demonstration on an issue not closely related to the work of UNESCO, for example, abortion policy or nuclear disarmament without prior authorization?

Yes, provided that you do not make your UNESCO status public. If, however, you intend to make a public statement on a question of national policy, prior authorization is required.

13 Can you join and participate in the activities of a non-governmental organization of an environmental, religious or civic nature?

You may join both formal and informal clubs and non-governmental organizations if you can do so without making your UNESCO status public, associating your name with the Organization, causing embarrassment to UNESCO or adversely affecting its interests. You should conduct yourself at all times in a manner befitting your status as an international civil servant (see Staff Regulation 1.4).

14 Can you sign a petition supporting a political candidate or endorse a candidate for elected office in your country?

Yes, under certain conditions. You may sign a petition supporting a political candidate or endorse a

candidate for elected office in the country in which you are qualified to vote, or join a political party, if you can do so without making your UNESCO status public and without causing embarrassment to UNESCO or adversely affecting its interests.

15 Your former university invites you to receive an honorary degree in recognition of activities and services that are not connected with your current duties at UNESCO. Can you accept?

Yes, under certain conditions. Staff Regulation 1.6 stipulates that no staff member should accept any honour, decoration or other favour from an external source. However, under certain circumstances, the Director-General may authorize a staff member to accept such a distinction. A prior request for authorization should always be submitted to HRM.