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Guidance

# The Seven Principles of Public Life

An overview of the 'Nolan principles', which are the basis of the ethical standards expected of public office holders.

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From: [Committee on Standards in Public Life](#)  
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## Documents

### Details

The Seven Principles of Public Life outline the ethical standards those working in the public sector are expected to adhere to. They were first set out by Lord Nolan in 1995 in [the first report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life](#) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mps-ministers-and-civil-servants-executive-quangos>) and they are included in a range of codes of conduct across public life.

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The descriptors to the principles were amended in [the Committee's 14th report, Standards Matter](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standards-matter-a-review-of-best-practice-in-promoting-good-behavior-in-public-life) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standards-matter-a-review-of-best-practice-in-promoting-good-behavior-in-public-life>), and [its 23rd report, Upholding Standards in Public Life](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/upholding-standards-in-public-life-published-report) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/upholding-standards-in-public-life-published-report>).

For further information on the Seven Principles and the work of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, [watch our short videos about the Committee and each of the Seven Principles](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCL04xn0gFY8rx2an6GM112Q). (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCL04xn0gFY8rx2an6GM112Q>)

You can also visit [the Committee's website](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-committee-on-standards-in-public-life) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-committee-on-standards-in-public-life>) and [the Committee's blog](https://cspl.blog.gov.uk/) (<https://cspl.blog.gov.uk/>).

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