

Course outline

Ethics, Culture and Governance



**Governance
Academy**

Ethics, Culture and Governance – course details

Mode of study	Online, on-demand	Virtual	Face-to-Face
Method of study	Independent, self-paced online study	Facilitated, within a virtual setting	Facilitated, in-person
Time commitment	6 hours of flexible online study including completion of assessments.	A 3.5 hour facilitated session followed by 2.5 hours of online study including completion of assessments.	
Access period	<p>A short course and aligned assessments must be completed within the entitlement period provided. Entitlement periods apply as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any stand-alone short course registration - 30 days • Certificate registration (six short courses bundled) - 180 days 		
Course prerequisites	Short courses are open entry. There is no prerequisite study.		
Assessment	<p>A short course is assessed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A final quiz (multiple choice, achieve 75% to pass, unlimited attempts). • A short case study written response (suggested answers are revealed for reflection). • Knowledge checks are included as you progress through the course material (these are not assessed). • See the Assessment Rules for further information. 		
CPD Hours	6 CPD Hours		

Course description

The aim of this course is to provide governance professionals with a core understanding of ethics, culture, and governance and the required standards of professional practice.

In this course, you will explore how ethics are embedded through codes of conduct and measured through cultural assessments and indices.

The course will also help you understand how governance systems, reporting frameworks, and the organisation’s processes, policies, and administrative operations are driven by ethical considerations which support and inform the strategic direction and success of an organisation.

Learning objectives

- Define and describe the core principles of ethics in the context of organisational culture and corporate governance.
- Apply learning in a case study to assess the rigour of the ethical culture.
- Instil a culture of ethical best practice through the application of technical knowledge and awareness of relevant legislation, policy and industry best practice.

Course structure

Section A – Governance Principles

- The relationship between ethics and governance – understanding the relationship, Ethics Index 2025, operationalising ethics.
- Ethics, integrity and morality – the difference between these concepts.
- Ethical decision-making: Background and key theories - consequentialism and utilitarianism, deontology, virtue ethics.
- Governing artefacts – the key governing artefacts and drivers across sectors; private sector, public sector, Not-for-Profit, and non-governmental organisations.
- Three Lines of Defence – about the concept, and key roles in the model in relation to ethics.
- Culture, values and purpose: The blueprint for ethics – examples in practice, tone from the top down.
- Ethics and organisational culture – what is organisational culture, corporate governance and assessment processes.

Section B – Professional Practices

- Ethical leadership - how to define and examples.
- Ethical dilemmas - how to define and exploring well cited and referenced theories.
- Ethics in practice - understanding how having a framework in place is useful for ethical leaders – decision making models, ethical questions, value driven leadership and giving voice to values.
- Ethical oversight by the governing body - an overview of directors' obligations, four lenses, process for addressing ethical decision-making.
- Codes of conduct and codes of ethics – an understanding of principle-based vs rule-based code of conduct and conflicts of interest, including examples to illustrate how different scenarios may apply.
- Corruption and anti-corruption – understanding corruption and the impacts of it, review the corruption perceptions index and the forms of corruption.
- Whistleblowing – an overview of the term, what serious wrongdoing may involve, importance of and whistleblower programs.

Section C – Personal Thinking

This case study examines the issue of conflicts of interest within the context of a fictional not-for-profit (NFP) sporting organisation and explores the implications to NFPs if they fail to effectively manage conflicts of interest.

Case study 1: The ball is in your court (fictional scenario)

At the centre of an investigation (Operation Keppel) conducted by the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) was the 'close personal relationship' between the Premier, Gladys Berejiklian, and a Member of Parliament, Daryl Maguire. This case study reviews the findings ICAC reported and explores issues of – open disclosure, fairness, objectivity and transparency in decision-making and promoting a speak-up culture.

Case study 2: Navigating the ethical pathway – Berejiklian v Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC)

Governance capabilities

Governance Institute short courses address capabilities at the emerging level of our Governance Capability Framework, offering practical learning supported by professional qualifications and experience.

Governance professionals at the emerging level are continuing to learn to support performance in their role. They seek guidance and support on a case-by-case basis from peers and line managers. As they develop their knowledge through study and practice, they increasingly work autonomously and gain confidence in their abilities. As their knowledge increases, they may take the lead on specific initiatives and, in larger teams, may have some responsibility for the activities of others.

Capabilities addressed in this course

- Governance & Oversight
- Strategy & Culture
- Leading
- Legislation & Policy
- Ethics & Integrity
- Critical & Independent Thinking

Course author

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How will my achievement be recognised?

A [My eQuals](#) digital badge is awarded by the Governance Institute of Australia upon successful completion of the course and assessments.



This badge can be shared across your online platforms.

Certificate graduates (six short courses bundled) become eligible for Affiliated Membership of Governance Institute of Australia.