

CODE OF ETHICS

DESIRED OUTCOME

A fire and rescue service which has embedded and is committed to the ethical principles and professional behaviours contained in the Core Code of Ethics (Core Code) and in so doing generates a more positive working culture and continuously improves the quality of service to the public.

This is evidenced by the attitudes and conduct of those who lead and all who work for, or on behalf of, the service and that the service operates according to corporate ethical business practices.

BUSINESS AREAS

Strategic, Cultural

CAPABILITIES

Ethics, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO MEET THE FIRE STANDARD

A fire and rescue service must:

1. Adopt and embed the Core Code to demonstrate that the service is fully committed and compliant at both an individual and corporate level.
2. Ensure the attitudes, professional behaviours and conduct described within the core code are reflected in its decision-making, policies, procedures, processes, and associated guidance that govern how the service manages and supports its workforce.
3. Provide training and support to all those who work for, or on behalf of, a service to achieve their understanding of the Core Code and an appreciation of their responsibilities in adhering to it.
4. Not detract from the Core Code.

Those who **lead services and those who work for, or on behalf of, the service** must:

5. Understand, respect, and follow the principles of the Core Code and demonstrate this by their commitment to it and their responsibility for upholding it.
6. Conduct themselves in accordance with the Core Code.



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Those **responsible for the governance of fire and rescue services, whilst complying with their own ethical codes must:**

7. hold the Chief Fire Officer to account for the implementation of the Core Code at a local level;
8. play a proactive role in challenging behaviour inconsistent with the Core Code; and
9. ensure strategies, policies and performance measures are in place to promote and embed a positive and inclusive culture.

A fire and rescue service should:

10. Designate a senior leader who is responsible for promoting the Core Code throughout the service and ensuring that all those who work for, or on behalf of, the service understand its contents and what is expected of them.

EXPECTED BENEFITS OF ACHIEVING THE FIRE STANDARD

1. Achieves greater consistency in ethical and professional behaviour throughout the service
2. Generates a more positive working culture, which embraces learning and is transparent and accountable
3. Improves trust in and reputation of the service
4. Enables all those who work for, or on behalf of, to challenge inappropriate behaviour and hold others to account for their actions
5. Improves the recruitment and retention of a workforce that is representative of the community it serves
6. Improves governance and leadership of the service

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS OR MANDATORY DUTIES

This Fire Standard reflects only the most appropriate legislation to this topic. We recognise that fire and rescue services must comply with a broader list of legislation to undertake their duties, which would be applicable to all standards. [View the legislation which applies to all Fire Standards.](#)

- [Equality Act](#)
 - [Public Sector Equality Duty](#)
- [Local Audit and Accountability Act](#)
- [The Accounts and Audits Regulations](#)

LINKED QUALIFICATIONS, ACCREDITATIONS OR FIRE STANDARDS

This Fire Standard and the core code underpin all Fire Standards.

Currently there are no specific or linked qualifications and accreditations for this Fire Standard.

GUIDANCE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- [Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services](#)
- [Associated guidance for the Core Code of Ethics](#)
- [CIPFA Principles of Good Governance](#)

UPDATES TO THIS STANDARD

5 JUNE 2025

FIRE STANDARDS AND HMICFRS

Below are the HMICFRS Characteristics of Good, from the 2025-27 framework, that relate to this Fire Standard.

7. How effective is the FRS at promoting, embedding and improving its values and culture, and ensuring the health and well-being of its workforce?

7.1. The FRS's governance arrangements provide oversight and assurance that its people strategies are effective at establishing a positive culture and standards of conduct that support the health and well-being of its workforce.

7.2. The FRS regularly assesses its culture by using and sharing learning to continuously improve. The FRS makes sure that its values and the Code of Ethics are established across the service, and acceptable standards of behaviour are understood and demonstrated by all. The FRS carries out effective background checks to help prevent unsuitable people from joining or remaining in the service.