



Africa Centre *for* Public Leadership (ACPL)

Code of Conduct for Members and Fellows

Preamble

The Africa Centre for Public Leadership (ACPL) is a professional association committed to the advancement of ethical, competent, and transformational public leadership across Africa. Founded under FLED International Leadership Institute on the **Fledism Leadership Philosophy**, ACPL holds that leadership is a **moral mandate, a discipline of service, and a lifelong process of formation**.

This Code of Conduct articulates the standards of behaviour, responsibility, and accountability expected of all **Members and Fellows** of ACPL. Membership of ACPL signifies entry into a **professional and moral covenant** that transcends titles, positions, and credentials.

1. Core Principles of Fledism Leadership

All Members and Fellows shall conduct themselves in accordance with the following Felist principles:

1. **Leadership as Service** – Leadership exists to serve the common good, not personal ambition.
2. **Character before Credentials** – Moral integrity precedes titles, rank, or recognition.
3. **Continuous Formation** – Leadership competence must be continually renewed through learning and reflection.
4. **Accountability and Discipline** – Authority must always be matched with responsibility and openness to review.
5. **Transformational Impact** – Leadership should produce measurable positive change in institutions and society.

2. Scope of Application

This Code applies to all categories of ACPL membership, including:

- Members
- Fellows
- Honorary Fellows (where applicable)

The Code governs conduct in:

- Professional and public service roles
- ACPL activities, programmes, and representations

- Use of ACPL name, logo, titles, and post-nominals
- Public communication and behaviour that may affect the reputation of ACPL

3. Standards of Conduct

3.1 Ethical Integrity

Members shall:

- Act with honesty, transparency, and fairness in all professional dealings;
- Avoid corruption, fraud, abuse of office, and conflicts of interest;
- Uphold the dignity of persons and institutions.

3.2 Professional Competence

Members shall:

- Maintain and improve leadership competence through **Mandatory Continuing Professional Leadership Development (MCPLD)**;
- Apply knowledge responsibly and evidence-based in public decision-making;
- Avoid misrepresentation of qualifications, experience, or authority.

3.3 Rejection of Performative Credentialism

Members shall not:

- Use ACPL membership as mere status symbolism;
- Claim or display ACPL titles without meeting ongoing professional obligations;
- Substitute credentials for ethical conduct or competence.

3.4 Respect for the ACPL Community

Members shall:

- Treat fellow members with respect and professionalism;
- Engage constructively in peer learning and review;
- Avoid conduct that brings the Centre into disrepute.

3.5 Responsible Public Representation

Members shall:

- Represent ACPL accurately and responsibly;
- Refrain from unauthorised public statements on behalf of ACPL;
- Use ACPL affiliation only in ways consistent with its values.

4. Mandatory Continuing Leadership Formation

All Members and Fellows are required to:

- Participate in ACPL-approved leadership development programmes;
- Meet annual or periodic MCPLD requirements as prescribed;
- Submit evidence of compliance when requested.

Failure to meet these requirements constitutes a breach of this Code.

5. Infractions and Violations

Infractions include, but are not limited to:

- Ethical misconduct or abuse of public office;
- Persistent failure to undertake mandatory professional development;
- Misuse of ACPL name, titles, or post-nominals;
- False representation or credential inflation;
- Conduct that undermines public trust or the reputation of ACPL;
- Defiance of disciplinary processes or ethical review.

6. Sanctions and Disciplinary Measures

ACPL adopts a graduated and corrective approach to discipline, consistent with Fledism's emphasis on leadership formation and accountability.

6.1 Possible Sanctions

Depending on severity and recurrence, sanctions may include:

1. **Advisory Notice** – Formal guidance and corrective instruction;
2. **Written Warning** – Official notice of breach and required remediation;
3. **Mandatory Remedial Training** – Compulsory ethics or leadership formation programmes;
4. **Suspension of Privileges** – Temporary loss of membership rights, titles, and post-nominals;
5. **Public Reprimand** – Where public trust has been compromised;
6. **Withdrawal or Termination of Membership/Fellowship** – For grave or persistent violations.

6.2 Factors Considered

Disciplinary decisions shall consider:

- Nature and gravity of the infraction;
- Intent and pattern of behaviour;
- Impact on public trust and ACPL's reputation;
- Willingness to accept responsibility and corrective action.

7. Due Process and Fair Hearing

ACPL shall ensure:

- Right to be informed of allegations;
- Opportunity for response and defence;
- Impartial review by a designated disciplinary or ethics committee;
- Proportional and reasoned sanctions.

8. Affirmation and Compliance

All Members and Fellows shall:

- Formally affirm this Code upon induction and renewal;
- Submit to ACPL's disciplinary authority;
- Understand that membership is conditional upon ongoing compliance.

9. Schedule of Infractions and Minimum Sanctions

This Schedule provides a regulatory guide to infractions and corresponding **minimum sanctions**, consistent with the **Fledism Leadership Philosophy**, Nigerian public service rules, and widely accepted African governance norms. Sanctions may be escalated depending on severity, recurrence, or public impact.

Category A: Ethical Misconduct (Grave Infractions)

Aligned with the Nigerian Public Service Rules (PSR), the Code of Conduct for Public Officers (Fifth Schedule, 1999 Constitution), and African Union values on integrity.

Infractions include:

- Corruption, bribery, fraud, embezzlement, or abuse of office;
- Serious conflict of interest or illicit enrichment;
- Acts that bring ACPL, FLED Institute or public institutions into grave disrepute.

Minimum Sanction:

- Immediate suspension of membership privileges;
- Mandatory ethics review and hearing;
- Possible termination or withdrawal of membership/fellowship.

Category B: Professional Misconduct and Incompetence

Consistent with Nigerian civil service disciplinary standards and African peer accountability norms.

Infractions include:

- Persistent failure to meet MCPLD requirements;
- Gross professional negligence or repeated incompetence;
- Misrepresentation of qualifications, experience, or authority.

Minimum Sanction:

- Written warning and compliance notice;
- Mandatory remedial training;
- Suspension of use of ACPL titles and post-nominals until compliance is restored.

Category C: Performative Credentialism and Status Abuse

Explicitly prohibited under Fledism and inconsistent with African leadership ethics.

Infractions include:

- Using ACPL membership solely for prestige or political leverage;
- Displaying ACPL titles without fulfilling obligations;
- Publicly claiming ACPL endorsement without authorization.

Minimum Sanction:

- Formal reprimand;
- Withdrawal of title usage for a defined period;
- Mandatory leadership formation and reflection programme.

Category D: Conduct Unbecoming of a Public Leader

Aligned with Nigerian PSR provisions on conduct unbecoming and AU governance standards.

Infractions include:

- Disrespectful or abusive behaviour in professional settings;
- Public actions that undermine social cohesion, equity, or human dignity;
- Reckless public statements that damage institutional trust.

Minimum Sanction:

- Advisory notice or written warning;
- Ethics counselling or corrective guidance;
- Escalation for repeat offences.

Category E: Non-Compliance with ACPL Processes

Infractions include:

- Refusal to cooperate with investigations or hearings;
- Ignoring official directives or compliance notices;
- Obstruction of disciplinary processes.

Minimum Sanction:

- Suspension of membership privileges;
- Possible termination for persistent defiance.

10. Alignment with Nigerian and African Governance Norms

This Code is interpreted and applied in harmony with:

- The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999, as amended);
- The Code of Conduct for Public Officers;
- The Nigerian Public Service Rules and related regulations;
- The African Union Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration;
- ECOWAS and other regional governance and anti-corruption frameworks.

Where a Member is subject to statutory public service rules, compliance with such laws is mandatory and takes precedence. ACPL sanctions are **professional and moral**, and may apply in addition to any statutory or judicial consequences.

11. Disciplinary Procedure and Ethics Committee Charter

11.1 Establishment of the Ethics and Disciplinary Committee (EDC)

There is hereby established an **Ethics and Disciplinary Committee (EDC)** of the Africa Centre for Public Leadership (ACPL), consistent with the Nigerian Public Service Rules (PSR) approach to discipline, fairness, and due process.

The EDC shall be responsible for:

- Receiving and reviewing allegations of misconduct;
- Conducting preliminary assessments and investigations;
- Ensuring fair hearing and procedural justice;
- Recommending appropriate sanctions to the Management of FLED Institute.

11.2 Composition of the Committee

The EDC shall consist of:

- A Chairperson of proven integrity and senior standing;
- At least two senior Members or Fellows knowledgeable in ethics, public service, or law;
- The ACPL Registrar or nominee (Secretary, non-voting);
- Co-opted experts where necessary (without voting rights).

Members of the EDC shall be bound by confidentiality, impartiality, and independence.

11.3 Disciplinary Procedure (PSR-Style)

The disciplinary process shall follow these steps:

1. Complaint or Report

Allegations may arise from petitions, reports, referrals, or self-disclosure.

2. Preliminary Review

The EDC shall determine whether there is a *prima facie* case.

3. **Notice of Allegation**
The Member shall receive written notice stating the allegations, relevant provisions, and required response timeline.
4. **Response and Defence**
The Member shall be given reasonable time to submit a written defence and supporting evidence.
5. **Hearing (Where Required)**
Oral hearings may be conducted in serious or contested matters, ensuring fair hearing.
6. **Findings and Recommendation**
The EDC shall make findings and recommend sanctions based on evidence and this Code.
7. **Decision and Communication**
The Management of FLED Institute shall ratify decisions and communicate outcomes formally.

11.4 Principles Governing Discipline

All disciplinary actions shall observe:

- Fair hearing and natural justice;
- Proportionality of sanctions;
- Consistency with this Code;
- Protection of institutional integrity and public trust.

12. Sanctions Escalation Matrix

Sanctions shall escalate based on recurrence, gravity, and aggravating factors, consistent with PSR disciplinary logic.

12.1 Escalation Framework

Infraction Level	First Offence	Repeat Offence	Aggravated / Grave Offence
Minor Misconduct	Advisory Notice	Written Warning	Suspension of Privileges
Professional Non-Compliance	Written Warning + Remedial Training	Suspension of Titles	Suspension of Membership
Performative Credentialism	Formal Reprimand	Withdrawal of Title Usage	Suspension or Termination
Ethical Misconduct	Suspension Pending Hearing	Termination Recommendation	Immediate Termination
Obstruction / Defiance	Written Warning	Suspension	Termination

12.2 Aggravating Factors

Aggravating circumstances include:

- Damage to public trust;
- Abuse of senior position;
- Repetition despite prior warnings;
- Refusal to accept responsibility;
- Reputational harm to ACPL.

12.3 Mitigating Factors

Mitigating factors may include:

- Early admission and remorse;
- Voluntary corrective action;
- Isolated incident;
- Cooperation with investigations.

13. Final Provision

This Code of Conduct reflects ACPL's conviction that **leadership credibility flows from character, competence, and commitment—not titles alone**. Any member unwilling to live by these standards forfeits the moral basis of professional recognition under the Fledism Leadership Philosophy.

Adopted by the Management of FLED International Leadership Institute