



# 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 Fledist 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

<b>Infraction Level</b>	<b>First Offence</b>	<b>Repeat Offence</b>	<b>Aggravated / Grave Offence</b>
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*