Ethics Checklist 1 - Mandate

Use this checklist to rate features of an ethical approach in parliamentary research & library services. Put a cross in the last column if this feature exists (is already 'in place') in your service. Feel free to write in features that you think should be listed, and rate them. Please add any comments in the box at the end.

'Mandate' checklist		Very important	Useful	Not useful	Impractical / high risk	*In place*
1.1	There is a clear, comprehensive and up-to-date mandate for the research & library service, set by parliament or a parliamentary body.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1.2	The mandate is set by statute (is expressed in law, not just internal administrative documents).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1.3	The mandate provides guidance on some or all of the ethical issues facing the service	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1.4	In addition to the mandate document, there are specific ethical standards for the service, set by parliament or a parliamentary body	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1.5	Ethical standards for the service are set by statute	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1.6	Ethical standards for the research & library service are set internally by the service itself	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1.6	There are general ethical standards for the institution and/or the public service in general, complementing the ethical code of the research & library service.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1.7	The research service shares the generic ethics code of the institution or public service - there are no specific ethical standards for the research & library service.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

'Mandate' issues

ꞈ The 'mandate' for the service is its constitutional document(s), setting out what it is intended to do (and not do) and the principles by which it should operate.

ꞈ An explicit, clear, comprehensive and up-to-date mandate reduces the number of ethical choices that parliamentary research & library services need to make.

ꞈ The mandate itself may not be completely 'ethical' according to some viewpoints. It is, however, for the institution to define what it wants from an in-house service and to take responsibility for choices made in the mandate. Provided the mandate is explicit, professionals can make the ethical choice whether to accept it or work elsewhere.

'Mandate' checklist	Very important	Useful	Not useful	Impractical / high risk	*In place*	'Mandate' issues
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	) The professional role in the service is to apply the explicit mandate fairly, ethically.
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	) If there is not a clear, comprehensive and up-to-date mandate, or if issues are not (well) answered in the mandate - then the service itself must devise practical and ethical answers. This is a challenge and imposes additional professional responsibility, which in turn requires support in the form of training and a structure which allows for independent professional decision-making.
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	) Some professionals might prefer a vaguer mandate which permits them to devise an appropriate ethical policy for their service.
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

Comments Ethics Checklist 1 'Mandate'