

PSC TODAY

PSC PARTICIPATES AT THE 2024 COLLEGE OF ECONOMIC & MANAGEMENT SCIENCES DEAN'S LEADERSHIP SESSION

On Friday, 21 June 2024, the Acting Chairperson of the Public Service Commission, Ms Zukiswa Mqolomba participated virtually, as a panelist at the 2024 College of Economic & Management Sciences Dean's Leadership Session hosted by the University of South Africa. The theme for the session was **"Promotion, Integrity and Accountability of Public Service Leadership"**.

In her contribution as a Panelist, Commissioner Mqolomba reflected on the importance of Accountability as one of the democratic values enshrined in the Constitution. She said that "it is the weak enforcement of accountability at the national, provincial and local legislatures as well as within the government, oversight institutions and state parastatals that lie at the heart of poor service delivery, financial mismanagement and general malfeasance in the country". She argued that although the Constitution does not define accountability, conventional definitions have tied accountability to openness and transparency whereby it will be difficult to achieve (accountability) without a culture of openness and transparency. She further said that "accountability should involve a series of mechanisms and institutions which are designed to control and constrain government in order to prevent the arbitrary abuse of power. These mechanisms include political accountability, legal accountability and administrative accountability".

She opined that "the success of accountability should be dependent on set goals and objectives, service standards and performance targets as well as crucially holding those culpable and liable for any non-performance".

"Accountability can also therefore serve as a performance measure for continuous improvement with the ultimate objective of enhancing the qualitative delivery of services. Therefore, the measurable objectives should be the maintenance

of law and order, the alleviation of poverty and the reduction of inequality, improved public welfare as well as maintaining values like equality, impartiality, fairness, representivity, citizenship and justice", said Commissioner Mqolomba.

"What is clear is that public accountability in South Africa has eroded over the past two decades to the extent that there is an accountability crisis at all levels of the public sector and public administration. Part of the challenge is that when public services fail, there is little clarity about who is responsible as the blame constantly shifts between the public administration and the public service".

"The adoption of the National Framework Towards the Professionalisation of the Public Sector Professionalisation Framework (in October 2022) could be a possible solution which will bring a shift in discourse and a renewed vigour for change, as it is seen by many as a catalyst for systematic change in the organisation, administration, capacity, capability and ethos of the public sector as a whole. The benefits thereof are that it will create purpose and direction as well as providing the agility, authority and legitimacy that will span across the public sector and will go beyond the traditional paradigm. This will have the effect of creating coherence, synergy and a clear line of sight of what is to be achieved", she concluded.

