

Q1. An officer admits to herself that she carries an inherited dislike for a particular community, an attitude absorbed unconsciously from her upbringing, yet she also believes she has always served every citizen at her counter without discrimination. Critically examine the gap that can open between a privately held attitude and outward administrative behaviour, and explain whether a civil servant can be considered ethical merely by acting fairly while the underlying prejudice remains unexamined. **(10 marks)**

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Q2. During a disaster relief drive a District Officer faces a grieving family that pleads, with great emotion, for a benefit for which they are clearly not eligible under the relief norms. The officer feels deep sympathy and is tempted either to bend the rule or to turn cold and dismissive to end the encounter. Discuss how the competencies of emotional intelligence, particularly self-regulation and empathy as described by Daniel Goleman, can help such an officer remain both compassionate and honestly firm, and explain why mere emotional detachment is not the same as emotional intelligence. **(10 marks)**

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Q1. An honest officer may privately believe that a struggling shopkeeper should be spared a heavy penalty for a minor licensing lapse, yet the law and her public duty require her to impose it without favour. Ethics, law and personal morality usually point the same way, but in office they can pull apart. Critically examine whether what is morally good for a public servant in private life is always what the law and the public role permit, and bring out whether private conscience and public duty should be held to a single standard or kept distinct. **(10 marks)**

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Q2. The ethics a person owes to a close friend or to her own community is not the same as the ethics a public servant owes to the office she holds in trust for citizens. A quiet request from a friend, or an expectation from her own community, can pull against her impartial public duty. Discuss how the obligations of a private relationship differ from the obligations of a public office, and how a conscientious public servant should order the two when personal loyalty collides with public duty. **(10 marks)**

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Q3. Objectivity asks a civil servant to decide on the evidence and the merits rather than on her own preference, and dedication to public service asks her to place the public good above personal advantage. Both can be hard precisely where she has discretion and a stake in the outcome. What do you understand by objectivity and dedication to public service as foundational values? Explain with examples how an officer can keep a discretionary decision objective and service-first when her personal conviction or self-interest pulls the other way. **(10 marks)**

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Q1. A young officer grows up absorbing the values of her family, her community and her school, and these inherited values shape her conscience long before she ever reads the Constitution. Sometimes a value she received at home, such as deference to elders within her own social group or a quiet preference for her own community, sits uneasily with the constitutional values of equality and impartiality that her office now demands of her. Comment on the roles that family, society and educational institutions play in inculcating values, and on what a public servant should do when an inherited social value conflicts with a constitutional value. **(10 marks)**

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Q2. Kautilya writes in the Arthashastra, "In the happiness of his subjects lies his happiness; in their welfare his welfare; whatever pleases himself he shall not consider as good, but whatever pleases his subjects he shall consider as good." Elucidate what this teaching demands of anyone who holds public power, especially where the ruler's own preference or convenience pulls against the welfare of the people, and explain with an example how it can guide a public servant's everyday decisions. **(10 marks)**

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Q3. Immanuel Kant writes in the Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, "So act that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means." In administration, an officer is often tempted to treat a citizen, a subordinate or a beneficiary merely as a means to a target, a statistic or a desired outcome. Analyse what Kant's teaching demands of a public servant, and explain with an example how treating every person as an end in herself, never merely as a means, should shape an administrator's conduct. **(10 marks)**

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Q1. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, in his final address to the Constituent Assembly on 25 November 1949, observed: "However good a Constitution may be, it is sure to turn out bad because those who are called to work it, happen to be a bad lot. However bad a Constitution may be, it may turn out to be good if those who are called to work it, happen to be a good lot." Elucidate what this observation demands of those who hold public office, and explain, with an example, how the personal integrity of a public servant can decide whether a sound law serves or fails the citizen it was written for. **(10 marks)**

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Q2. An administration that is strictly accountable insists that every officer act only by the written rule and remain answerable for each step, while an administration that is responsive expects the same officer to use discretion and bend the routine to meet a citizen's genuine and urgent need. Critically examine whether rule-bound accountability and responsiveness to the public are in genuine conflict in everyday governance, or whether a sound ethical work culture can hold the two together without either drifting into rigidity or into unaccountable favour. **(10 marks)**

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Q3. A professional who moves between a government department and a private firm finds that the two carry different first loyalties: the public office is meant to answer to the citizen and the public interest, while the private institution is meant to answer to its owners and the pursuit of profit. Discuss whether the ethical concerns and dilemmas faced in government and in private institutions are different in kind or only in degree, and examine what an individual should do when the loyalty owed to the institution that employs her collides with her own conscience and the wider public interest. **(10 marks)**

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Q4. Laws, rules and regulations give a public servant a clear and defensible standard to act upon, while conscience supplies an inner judgement of right and wrong that no rulebook can fully capture. Comment on the statement that the law and the rulebook should always be the first source of ethical guidance for a civil servant, and conscience only the last, and bring out what an officer ought to do when a lawful written instruction appears to her conscience to be plainly unjust. **(10 marks)**

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Q1. A public office is held in trust for the people who are governed, and not as a personal entitlement of the one who occupies it. Yet the same office carries real authority over funds, appointments and decisions, which can quietly be used for private advantage or to oblige one's own circle. Examine the idea that public office is a public trust, and bring out how this single idea separates probity in governance from the mere use of office as personal power. **(10 marks)**

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Q2. The Right to Information Act, 2005 made openness the norm and secrecy the exception, so that a citizen can see how a decision in government was actually taken. At the same time, officers worry that every file noting may be made public, and some grow cautious and slow in recording honest opinions on file. Discuss whether the citizen's right to information genuinely conflicts with the confidentiality and candour that honest file work seems to need, and whether transparency and frank decision making can be reconciled in the same office. **(10 marks)**

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Q3. A code of conduct lists what a public servant may not do and punishes the breach, while a code of ethics holds up the values a public servant should aspire to, and trusts conscience to do the rest. It is sometimes argued that only an enforceable code of conduct can actually secure probity, because an aspirational code of ethics asks for goodwill that cannot be compelled. Do you agree? Bring out the distinct roles of the two codes and consider whether probity in governance can rest on enforcement alone. **(10 marks)**

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Q4. A citizens' charter publicly promises a fixed standard and time limit for each service, such as a ration card or a pension within so many days, and so converts the citizen from a supplicant into a holder of an entitlement. In practice many charters are displayed on a wall and then quietly ignored, with public funds spent on the promise but not on its honest delivery. Comment on the gap between the promise of a citizens' charter and its actual delivery, and bring out what an ethical use of public funds demands of the officer who signs that charter. **(10 marks)**

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Q1. A civil servant is expected to remain politically neutral and to serve the government of the day with equal sincerity, whichever party holds office. At the same time, the same servant is expected to be responsive to the policy direction of the elected government and to carry out its programmes with energy. Critically examine whether political neutrality and non-partisanship genuinely conflict with responsiveness to the elected government, and explain where a public servant should draw the line so that loyal implementation does not slide into partisanship. **(10 marks)**

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Q2. While building the All India Services, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel advised the political executive in the Constituent Assembly that a civil servant must be allowed to express an opinion "without fear or favour", and warned that a service which cannot speak its mind freely will not hold the country together. Elucidate the human value of fearless and candid counsel that this lesson carries, and explain, with an example, how a serving officer can offer honest advice to superiors and the political executive while still respecting their authority to take the final decision. **(10 marks)**

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Q1. An honest officer adopts a means that is entirely proper, a fair and open tender, yet the outcome harms the very poor she meant to serve, while a colleague who quietly bends a procedure secures a far better result for them. A human action carries a moral weight in its intention, in the means it uses, and in the consequences it produces, and these three do not always point the same way. Examine whether the rightness of an administrative act should be judged chiefly by the propriety of the means it employs or by the goodness of the consequences it brings about, and bring out how a civil servant may hold the two together. **(10 marks)**

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Q2. Tiruvalluvar, in the chapter on the Right Sceptre in the Tirukkural, writes: "The king all the whole realm of earth protects; And justice guards the king who right respects." (Tiruvalluvar, Tirukkural, Couplet 547). Here the one who wields authority protects the realm, yet his own protection rests not on the power he holds but on the justice with which he holds it. Elucidate what this couplet demands of a public servant who is tempted to use the powers of office for personal gain or favour, and explain, with an example, how the idea that fairness alone secures lasting authority can guide everyday administrative decisions. **(10 marks)**

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Q3. Describing the conditions under which fair principles of justice would be chosen, John Rawls writes that behind a veil of ignorance "no one knows his place in society, his class position or social status, nor does anyone know his fortune in the distribution of natural assets and abilities, his intelligence, strength, and the like." (John Rawls, A Theory of Justice). The thought is that a rule is fair if we would accept it without knowing which side of it we will fall on. Critically analyse how this idea of deciding as if one did not know one's own place can help a public servant frame an impartial policy on the allocation of a scarce public good, and consider whether a decision-maker who already knows the circumstances of real, identifiable people can genuinely set that knowledge aside. **(10 marks)**

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Q1. It is often said that probity is rarely lost in a single large act. More commonly it wears away through many small accommodations, each one defended as harmless or as the way things are done here. A young officer who once refused even a cup of tea may, after a few years of overlooked files, hurried sanctions and quiet favours to seniors, no longer notice that her integrity has shifted. Critically examine why personal probity tends to erode gradually under everyday institutional pressure rather than collapsing at once, and bring out what allows some public servants to hold their integrity firm where others slowly give way. **(10 marks)**

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Q2. A municipal commissioner finds that the law clearly permits her to grant a building completion certificate to a developer who has met every written requirement, yet she knows that the approved plan, though lawful, will block the only natural drain serving a poor settlement downstream and expose those residents to flooding. The rule book points one way and her conscience points the other. Comment on how a public servant ought to resolve a dilemma in which a lawful course and an ethical course pull in opposite directions, and explain which principle should finally guide the decision when the letter of the law and the spirit of public good do not agree. **(10 marks)**

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Q3. A large company, after a costly fraud, sets up an elaborate code of conduct, an ethics training calendar and a confidential vigil mechanism for its directors and employees, and declares its governance reformed. A sceptic argues that ethics cannot really be taught to an adult, that codes and trainings only sharpen the dishonest, and that integrity rests on character formed long before anyone joins an office. Do you agree that ethical competence can be genuinely strengthened through training, codes and institutional safeguards, or does sound conduct ultimately depend on prior character that no programme can supply? Discuss with reference to both private institutions and public service. **(10 marks)**

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Q1. A senior official must decide on a regulatory clearance for a company in which he still holds a modest block of shares inherited some years ago. He is confident that so small a holding will not sway his judgement and is reluctant to step aside, since he is the most experienced person available to take the call. Examine whether a public servant's private confidence in his own honesty is a sufficient safeguard against conflict of interest, or whether the appearance of a private financial stake shadowing a public decision is by itself enough to require recusal. **(10 marks)**

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Q2. It is often said that a person of conscience should be able to speak up against wrongdoing without needing the shelter of any law. Yet in practice honest officials stay silent unless the system promises to protect them from retaliation. Comment on why institutional safeguards for whistleblowers are necessary for honesty to function inside an organisation, and bring out the limits of such protections in actually encouraging disclosure. **(10 marks)**

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Q3. Neha Kulkarni is a newly posted Block Development Officer in charge of a rural housing scheme that pays subsidies directly to eligible poor families. While reconciling the muster rolls she finds that her immediate senior, who is also her reporting officer and a long-time mentor, has been entering the names of fictitious beneficiaries and routing the released funds to a few private accounts. The senior is widely respected, is months away from retirement, and has quietly helped Neha Kulkarni through her difficult early postings. When she raises the matter privately, he tells her that the leakage is small, that exposing it will damage the office and her own career, and that she should let it pass. Her colleagues advise silence, since complaints against seniors rarely succeed and often rebound on the complainant.

- (a)** Identify the stakeholders and the ethical issues involved in this situation.
- (b)** What options are available to Neha Kulkarni? Evaluate the merits and demerits of each.
- (c)** What is the most appropriate course of action for her? Justify your answer with the rules, principles and protections that govern her decision.

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Q1. Ms. Asha Menon is the Public Information Officer of a district welfare department. An applicant under the Right to Information Act, 2005 seeks the complete file relating to the sanction of disability pensions in a particular ward, including the medical certificates of every beneficiary and the internal notings written by individual junior clerks who processed the cases. The applicant claims the file will expose favouritism. Ms. Menon finds that the file does contain a few irregular sanctions, but the same papers also carry intimate medical details and the disability status of dozens of poor beneficiaries who are not accused of any wrongdoing, along with frank personal opinions recorded by named junior staff. A senior officer privately advises her to reject the request outright in the name of privacy, while a local activist warns her that any refusal proves a cover up.

- (a)** Identify the stakeholders involved and bring out the ethical issues at stake in this request.
- (b)** What options are available to Ms. Menon between full disclosure and outright refusal? Examine the merits and demerits of each.
- (c)** What is the most appropriate course of action for her, and how should she balance transparency against the privacy of third parties? Justify with the rules and principles that govern her decision.

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Q2. Mr. Rajeev Bhatt is the head of a State Pollution Control Board regional office in a backward district. A large textile-dyeing factory there employs nearly two thousand local workers and is the area's only major source of formal jobs. Routine testing shows that the factory has for months been discharging untreated effluent into the river that supplies drinking water to several downstream villages, in clear breach of its consent conditions. The unit's owner, supported by a delegation of worker representatives and local traders, pleads that any closure or heavy penalty will destroy livelihoods and frighten away future investment, and offers to install treatment equipment slowly over two years. Senior functionaries hint that Mr. Bhatt should record a soft warning and look the other way for now. He must decide what enforcement action to take.

- (a)** Identify the stakeholders and the principal ethical issues raised by this situation.
- (b)** Discuss the options before Mr. Bhatt, weighing the merits and demerits of each.
- (c)** Recommend the course of action he should adopt, and justify it with reference to the environmental statutes and principles that bind him.

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Q3. Ms. Kavita Rao chairs the Internal Committee constituted under the workplace sexual-harassment law in a large government office. A junior woman employee on probation has filed a written complaint alleging persistent sexual harassment by a senior officer who is widely regarded as powerful, well connected and on the verge of a promotion. Soon after the complaint is filed, the complainant is informally warned by colleagues that her probation could be terminated, and Ms. Rao receives quiet messages from above urging her to treat the matter as a misunderstanding and close it without a full inquiry to protect the office's reputation. The accused denies everything and demands that the complaint be dismissed as motivated. Ms. Rao must decide how to proceed with the inquiry.

- (a)** Identify the stakeholders and the ethical issues that arise in this case.
- (b)** Critically examine the options open to Ms. Rao, bringing out the merits and demerits of each.
- (c)** What is the most appropriate course of action for her, and how should she ensure a fair inquiry while protecting the complainant? Justify with the relevant law, guidelines and service conduct rules.
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Q4. Mr. Sunil Deshmukh is a procurement officer evaluating competing bids for a multi-crore supply contract. One of the bidders is a firm in which Mr. Deshmukh's brother-in-law is a senior partner, though the firm is not in his own name. As the evaluation enters its final stage, the proprietor of that firm sends Mr. Deshmukh a costly gift on the occasion of a family wedding, arranges an all-expenses-paid family holiday described as a goodwill gesture, and hints that a comfortable advisory position will await Mr. Deshmukh in the firm after his retirement, which is not far away. Nothing has been asked of him in so many words, and a colleague tells him that everyone quietly accepts such courtesies. Mr. Deshmukh must decide how to handle both the contract and the offers.

(a) Identify the stakeholders and the ethical issues involved.

(b) Analyse the options available to Mr. Deshmukh, evaluating the merits and demerits of each.

(c) What is the most appropriate course of action for him, and how should he insulate the decision from any conflict of interest? Justify with the conduct rules and anti-corruption provisions that govern his position.

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Q5. Dr. Meera Iyer is the medical superintendent of a district government hospital during a severe seasonal outbreak of viral fever that has filled the wards. At one point only two intensive-care beds remain free, and three critically ill patients arrive at almost the same time: a young daily-wage labourer with the best chance of full recovery, an elderly farmer who came in first but whose prospects are poorer, and the ailing relative of a powerful local notable whose office telephones Dr. Iyer directly to demand priority and hints at consequences for the hospital if it is refused. The duty doctors look to her for a rule to follow. Dr. Iyer must decide who receives the two beds and on what basis.

(a) Identify the stakeholders and the ethical issues raised by this allocation.

(b) Critically analyse the options before Dr. Iyer, bringing out the merits and demerits of each criterion she might apply.

(c) What is the most appropriate course of action for her, and what fair and defensible principle should govern the allocation? Justify with reference to medical ethics, the right to health and the duty to resist undue influence.

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Q1. Tara Sundaram is the product manager for a popular home water purifier at a large private manufacturing company. Three days before a nationwide launch already backed by heavy advertising, her quality team quietly flags that a faulty valve in one batch can, in rare cases, allow contaminated water to pass through undetected. A recall and redesign would delay the launch by two months, cost the company a large sum, and very likely cost Tara Sundaram her promotion, which her seniors have linked to an on-time release. Her marketing head argues that the failure rate is statistically tiny, that no incident has yet occurred, and that the company can fix it silently in the next production cycle without alarming customers or regulators. Tara Sundaram must decide what to recommend to the board.

- (a)** Identify the stakeholders and the ethical issues involved in this situation.
- (b)** Evaluate the merits and demerits of the options available to Tara Sundaram.
- (c)** What is the most appropriate course of action for her, and justify it with reference to the duties and principles that govern her decision.

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Q2. Ravindra Naik, a District Collector, is directed to acquire land for an irrigation reservoir that will benefit several drought-prone districts downstream. A part of the submergence zone falls in a Scheduled Area where tribal families have farmed and lived for generations, and the Gram Sabha has refused consent, fearing that the promised rehabilitation will never reach them as it failed earlier displaced families nearby. Senior officials remind Ravindra Naik that the project is a state priority, that thousands will gain assured water, and that delay invites political and administrative displeasure. He is also told informally that the Social Impact Assessment can be hurried and the consent process treated as a formality. Ravindra Naik believes the public benefit is genuine, yet he cannot ignore the broken promises that haunt these families.

(a) Identify the stakeholders and the ethical issues involved.

(b) What options are available to Ravindra Naik, and bring out the merits and demerits of each.

(c) Which course of action should he adopt, and justify it with the rules and principles that govern his decision.

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Q3. Sunita Joshi, a municipal officer, receives a written order to clear a long-standing cluster of street vendors who have spread onto a busy pavement near a market, causing congestion that residents have complained about for months. Most of these vendors are migrants who have sold vegetables and tea there for years, and the eviction would fall in the middle of the monsoon, when finding alternative space is hardest and a daily wage missed means a meal lost. The order is lawful and the encroachment is real, yet the local town vending committee that the law requires has never been properly constituted, and no survey or alternative vending zone has been offered. Her superior wants the pavement cleared within forty-eight hours and treats Sunita Joshi's hesitation as softness.

- (a)** Identify the stakeholders and the ethical issues involved.
- (b)** Discuss the options available to Sunita Joshi and assess the merits and demerits of each.
- (c)** What is the most appropriate course of action for her, and justify it with the rules and principles that bear on her decision.

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Q4. Imran Qureshi heads the technology unit of a state welfare department that holds a large database of beneficiaries, including their Aadhaar-linked details, collected to deliver a food subsidy. His superior, a senior administrator, asks him to quietly extract the contact details and addresses of beneficiaries in a particular region and hand them over to a unit running an unrelated outreach drive, arguing that the data already exists, that it is for a good cause, and that seeking fresh consent would only slow things down. Imran Qureshi knows the people gave their information for the subsidy alone and were never told it could travel elsewhere. Refusing may be read as obstructing a well-meaning superior and could mark him as difficult, yet complying would use citizens' data for a purpose they never agreed to.

- (a)** Identify the stakeholders and the ethical issues involved.
- (b)** Critically examine the options before Imran Qureshi, bringing out the merits and demerits of each.
- (c)** What course of action is most appropriate, and justify it with the principles and provisions that govern his decision.

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Q5. Deepak Sharma, a section officer who clears building-plan approvals, has on his desk an application from a small businessman, Mahesh, whose papers are entirely in order and who is legally entitled to approval. Mahesh's loan instalment is due and every week of delay bleeds him, so he offers Deepak Sharma a sum of money, framing it not as a bribe but as a thank-you to move his genuine, lawful file ahead of the long queue. Deepak Sharma feels real sympathy: the file deserves to clear, the man is not corrupt, and the office routinely sits on such files for weeks. Accepting would cost the public nothing visible and help an honest applicant, yet it would mean taking money to do what duty already requires, and would push others further down the queue.

(a) Identify the stakeholders and the ethical issues involved.

(b) Analyse the options open to Deepak Sharma, evaluating the merits and demerits of each.

(c) What is the most appropriate course of action, and justify it with the rules and principles that should guide his decision.

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Q6. Lakshmi Nair chairs the interview board for a competitive recruitment to a state service. Among the shortlisted candidates is the nephew of a powerful official who has done much to advance Lakshmi Nair's own career and who now calls to say, warmly but unmistakably, that he would be grateful if the young man were helped across the line. The nephew is competent but clearly weaker than two other candidates who have no backing and whose families have pinned their hopes on a fair contest. Lakshmi Nair can adjust the interview marks within the board's discretion without leaving an obvious trail, and a small tilt would settle the matter quietly while keeping a valued benefactor pleased. She knows that the marks she awards will decide whether the selection is made on merit or on connection.

(a) Identify the stakeholders and the ethical issues involved.

(b) Comment on the options available to Lakshmi Nair and the merits and demerits of each.

(c) What is the most appropriate course of action for her, and justify it with the principles and rules that govern her decision.

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Space for question, comments, feedback, etc.