

BCET Ethics Exam Study Guide

Welcome Letter from Ashley Shapiro

Dear Examinee,

Welcome to the BCET Ethics Exam journey! On behalf of the Certification Board, I am thrilled you've chosen to deepen your commitment to ethical practice as an educational therapist. The new exam format is designed to reflect real-world ethical challenges encountered by educational therapists, giving you the opportunity to demonstrate your ability to critically analyze dilemmas, apply the AET Code of Ethics, and craft thoughtful, informed solutions using the Shapiro Ethical Decision-Making Model (EDM).

Becoming a BCET is not just a designation—it's a testament to your dedication to ethical excellence and professional growth. AET is excited for you to embark on this meaningful process and to see how your insights contribute to our field.

Warm regards,



Ashley Shapiro, MA, BCET
Chair, AET Certification Board

Purpose of the BCET Exam

The BCET exam evaluates your ability to navigate ethical challenges in educational therapy, applying the AET Code of Ethics and core principles to real-world dilemmas drawn from clinical practice. This process ensures that candidates demonstrate critical reasoning and align their actions with best practices in the field through the Shapiro Ethical Decision-Making Model.

Defining an Ethical Dilemma

An ethical dilemma occurs when a person or organization must choose between two or more courses of action, each with differing levels of moral rightness or wrongness. These situations often require balancing competing ethical principles, relying on the AET Code of Ethics for guidance and applying the Shapiro Ethical Decision-Making Model to resolve conflicts. As Fogelson and Opell (2010) state, ethical practice demands a deep understanding of professional standards and the ability to reason through nuanced issues.

Exam Instructions

This exam evaluates your ability to understand and analyze ethical dilemmas, engage in dialogue, and arrive at rational conclusions using the Shapiro Ethical Decision-Making Model. Each dilemma is based on real-world experiences in educational therapy.

Instructions:

- **Duration:** 4 hours.

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- **Resources:** You may use a **self-printed hard copy** of the following documents on the exam: the AET Code of Ethics, the Ethics Exam Rubric, the Ethical Decision-Making Process Graphic, and the Foundational Ethical Principles chart. No AI or external consultation is allowed.
- **Response Format:** Respond to 3 out of the 5 scenarios provided. Each response should include thorough analysis and address all steps of the Shapiro Ethical Decision-Making Model.
- **Evaluation Criteria:** You will be assessed on the quality of your reasoning, application of ethical principles, and writing clarity.

Confidentiality: This exam is strictly confidential and may only be viewed by the Exam Coordinator, designated readers, and the examinee. Unauthorized use is prohibited.

The Shapiro Ethical Decision-Making Model (EDM)

Steps: "Do Something To Solve Problems"

1. **D: Describe the Problem** (2-3 Sentences)
 - Summarize the ethical dilemma and the conflicting values or principles in 2-3 sentences.
 - Example: A student discloses confidential information that may pose harm to themselves or others.
 2. **S: Seek Information** (minimum of 5 questions)
 - Formulate at least five critical questions to gain clarity (e.g., Am I a mandated reporter? Who else is aware of the situation?).
 - Identify individuals or resources to consult.
 3. **T: Theories and Principles in Conflict** (2 paragraphs minimum)
 - Identify and discuss all ethical principles in conflict, using the AET Code of Ethics.
 - Include a "versus" analysis (e.g., autonomy vs. nonmalefeasance).
 4. **S: Solutions – Possible Courses of Action** (3 paragraphs minimum)
 - Explore multiple solutions, detailing the benefits, consequences, and guiding principles for each.
 - Select the most appropriate solution and explain your reasoning.
 5. **P: Process is Dynamic** (1 paragraph)
 - Recognize that new information may arise, requiring adjustments.
 - Reflect on potential outcomes and how they shape future decisions.
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Foundational Ethical Principles

These professional values guide ethical decision-making in many fields and are integral to the Shapiro Ethical Decision-Making Model:

1. **Autonomy:** Supporting individuals' right to direct their lives and make informed choices.
2. **Nonmalefeasance/Nonmaleficence:** Avoiding actions that cause harm.
3. **Beneficence:** Acting in ways that promote the well-being of individuals and society.
4. **Justice:** Ensuring fairness and equity in treatment.
5. **Fidelity:** Maintaining trust by fulfilling commitments and responsibilities.
6. **Veracity:** Communicating truthfully and transparently.
7. **Duty:** Upholding professional responsibilities and obligations with diligence and care.
8. **Rights:** Fundamental liberties and protections that every individual is entitled to (such as the right to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness)

Note: You may use the Foundational Ethical Principles chart during the exam.

To learn more about these principles, consider the following resources:

- [APA Code of Ethics](#) (p. 3-4)
 - [Principles of Ethics and Code of Conduct](#)
 - [ACA Guide to Ethical Decision Making](#)
 - [Principles of Clinical Ethics](#)
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Enhanced Preparation Materials

- [Ethics Webinar](#): Free to AET members.
 - [Ethical Decision Making in Educational Therapy](#) by Marion Marshall and Risa Graff: Now available in Paperback
 - **BCET Ethics Exam Practice Scenarios**: 3 Scenarios are provided, along with exam instructions, for practice
 - **Ethics Exam Rubric**: Detailed evaluation criteria.
 - **Foundational Ethical Principles Graphic**: A visual summary of key ethical principles.
 - **Ethical Thinking Processes Graphic**: A step-by-step guide to applying the Shapiro Ethical Decision-Making Model.
 - **Sample Scenario**: Provided for practice but not permitted during the exam.
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Q&A: What Happens If I Do Not Pass?

If you do not pass your first attempt, here's what you can expect:

- You are encouraged to revisit your resources and practice additional ethical dilemma models using the Shapiro Ethical Decision-Making Model.
- You will have the opportunity to participate in a one-hour coaching call with an experienced BCET mentor to review your first attempt and practice for your second attempt.
- After the coaching session, you can schedule your second attempt with the Exam Coordinator.

If you fail your second attempt, you need to wait one year before retesting, pay a new exam fee, and review your preparation procedures.

Note: This exam assesses your decision-making process and rationale. Your written responses must convey your ideas clearly and logically.

The Certification Board is currently writing an accommodations policy, which will be posted as a resource once available. Currently, standard accommodations provided to all examinees include spell check, keyboarding, and a dictionary and synonyms tool. Requests for extended time, text-to-speech, and ESL translation need to be made formally in writing to the Exam Coordinator.
