



**MCBA**

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**ETHICAL  
AND  
PROFESSIONAL  
STANDARDS**

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# MCBA ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

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## 1.0 Responsibility

- 1.01 Certificants promote and maintain behaviours that are honest, truthful, and just in all professional environments and in all forms of communication (i.e., with relevant entities and stakeholders). Certificants attempt to make amendments to any inaccurate information the first instant it is made known to them.
- 1.02 Certificants adhere to MABA Ethical and Professional Standards, the relevant law and regulations, and the requirements of their professional community.
- 1.03 Certificants hold responsibility for all their professional activities and make decisions in the best interest of the clients first before relevant stakeholders. Certificants attempt to resolve any hindrance that could prevent them from assuming this responsibility.
- 1.04 Certificants provide services only within their area of expertise. Certificants initiate further studies, training and supervision, collaboration, or make referrals out of their practices if they encounter cases that are out of their area of expertise.
- 1.05 Certificants continuously engage in professional development opportunities deemed appropriate by MABA's Standards of Competency and approved continuing education events (CE) to improve and maintain their professional and ethical standards.
- 1.06 Certificants ensure cultural competency within themselves and their supervisees to avoid any discriminatory actions towards clients and stakeholders from different backgrounds.
- 1.07 Certificants do not harass or create a hostile environment towards others.
- 1.08 Certificants are objective when carrying out professional activities. Certificants are mindful about the influence of personal biases on their professional activities and attempt to resolve them if necessary.
- 1.09 Certificants are mindful about the impact of multiple relationships on maintaining objectivity with their clients. Certificants take appropriate measures to avoid the development of multiple relationships, and are accountable to declare and resolve any multiple relationships that have inadvertently developed.

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## 1.0 Responsibility

- 1.10 Certificants do not accept gifts that serve as an expected source of income on a regular basis. Certificants only accept gifts that does not result in financial or personal benefit in accordance to local anti-corruption and anti-bribery law.
- 1.11 Certificants do not misuse their authority to coerce or exploit any person in a professional relationship with unequal power dynamic.
- 1.12 Certificants are mindful about the impact of romantic and sexual relationships in maintaining objectivity and professionalism. Certificants avoid romantic and sexual relationships, and only maintain professional relationships with clients, stakeholders, and supervisees until the end of the documented professional tenure.
- 1.13 Certificants comply with the self-reporting requirements from relevant authorities including but not limited to MABA.
- 1.14 Certificants provide services in the best interest of their clients, respect the autonomy of their clients, do no harm, and devise plans that accord their dignity.

## 2.0 Confidentiality

- 2.01 Certificants treat information of clients (details of services and all records of service delivery, personal identifiable record, documentation, research or progress data, exchange of communication via verbal, written or electronic devices etc.) as confidential and take appropriate measures to protect confidential information of the clients. Certificants comply with applicable laws and regulations about information sharing, privacy, and data handling.
- 2.02 Certificants only disclose confidential information about clients when:
  - i) Informed consent is obtained.
  - ii) There is a risk of harm (possible criminal activity) to clients or the others.
  - iii) Required by law.

When certificants are permitted to disclose confidential information with a third party, they only disclose information that are essential for the discussion.

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## 2.0 Confidentiality

- 2.03 Certificants comply with applicable laws and regulations in all processes of documentation retention and disposal. The responsibility transfers to the organisation in the event the certificants leave the organisation.
- 2.04 Certificants obtain informed consent (or assent if applicable) from client:
- i) At the onset of service provision.
  - ii) When making adjustments to the service delivery (e.g., interventions).
  - iii) When disclosing confidential information.

Certificants ensure the clients are aware and understand the conditions of informed consent including documentation.

- 2.05 Certificants ensure clients and stakeholders are informed of the affairs where disclosures of confidentiality are necessary or inevitable at the onset of the service provision.

## 3.0 Effective Communication

- 3.01 Certificants communicate and document the scope of services, service termination processes, and provide accurate credentials when required at the onset of service. Certificants effectively communicate assessments, behaviour plans, report progress, and present data in understandable language to clients and all stakeholders.
- 3.02 Certificants prioritise their clients' best interests while working collaboratively with other certificants and professionals from different backgrounds.
- 3.03 Certificants ensure their roles and responsibilities of their professional activities towards all parties are clearly stated and documented at the beginning of their services.
- 3.04 Certificants only enrol clients after ensuring competency and adequate resources are available to provide services to the needs of their clients.

## 3.0 Effective Communication

3.05 Certificants ensure a service agreement that consists of the following is signed by the certificants and the parties involved from the onset of the service:

- i) Roles and responsibilities of all parties including the certificants and stakeholders involved.
- ii) Details of the behavioural services to be provided by the certificants.
- iii) Certificants' responsibilities in complying to MABA Ethical and Professional Standards.
- iv) The complaint procedures to MABA should there be any dissatisfaction arises.

Changes in services must be updated in the service agreement and signed by all relevant parties.

3.06 Certificants ensure information on reports, invoice, itemised bills, and receipt statements are accurate and only billed on the services they are providing. Certificants should not incur bills on non-behavioural services to their clients.

3.07 Certificants clearly state the fees for their services and avoid incurring fees for services they did not provide. In the case where their services are billed under other agencies/centres, they take the responsibility to make sure all information is accurate.

3.08 Certificants ensure the fees incurred or any charges that might occur must be agreed and signed in the financial agreement before the commencement of the service with all relevant parties. Should there be any agreement on pro bono and bartering, certificants ensure the agreement complies with MABA Ethical and Professional Standards and must be documented and signed.

3.09 Certificants consult or refer to other professionals based on clients' needs while maintaining client's confidentiality or gaining consent in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. Certificants declare relationship and any reimbursement received from third-party consultants or referrals, and ensure documentation of these information.

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## 3.0 Effective Communication

- 3.10 Certificants ensure a service agreement that consist of the following is signed with third-party services (e.g., schools, NGO or other organisations) when their services are contracted:
- i) Roles and responsibilities of all parties including the certificants and the third party involved.
  - ii) Details of the behavioural services that the certificants are providing.
  - iii) The certificants' responsibilities in complying to MABA Ethical and Professional Standards.
  - iv) The information obtained and used by all parties.
  - v) Limitation of confidentiality.

Certificants inform the clients' parent or legal guardian if the client is not in the capacity to make decision for themselves on the request of the third party.

- 3.11 Certificants maintain up-to-standard documentations in the entirety of service provision duration directly with the certificants or with other professionals involved. Certificants ensure the documentations are updated at all times to assist communication and transition of service when needed.
- 3.12 Certificants inform and educate clients and all relevant parties regarding current evidence based behavioural interventions. Certificants also recommend appropriate duration and intensity of the behaviour analytic services for the clients based on research findings and the clients' service goals.

## 4.0 Service Delivery

- 4.01 Certificants ensure clients and all stakeholders understand the need for services, understand each person's roles, and discuss the risks and benefits of the services provided prior to service delivery.
- 4.02 Certificants ensure behaviour analytic services provided to clients are individualised, effective, and evidence-based according to behaviour analytic research. Certificants seek training, supervision or relevant certification if the need to incorporate non-behaviour analytic services arise.

## 4.0 Service Delivery

- 4.03 Certificants encourage clients and all stakeholders to participate in drafting individualised plans, assessments, behaviour plans, and progress monitoring.
- 4.04 Certificants use assessment tools that are aligned with principles of applied behaviour analysis, with established level of validity and reliability to the population that they serve, and appropriate to clients' profile (e.g., age and language preference). Certificants make recommendations based on the assessment results and data collected. Certificants document reports and ensure assessment results are clearly explained to the clients and stakeholders.
- 4.05 Certificants ensure all procedures are carried out under adequate supervision and with prior training if required to appoint unqualified personnel to implement behaviour analytic services.
- 4.06 Certificants create behaviour plans according to these guidelines:
- i) Obtain clients' or stakeholders' consents before designing or modifying behaviour plans.
  - ii) Behaviour plans are evidence-based and derived from updated behavioural research and principles.
  - iii) Behaviour plans contain goals and targets that are clearly defined by mastery criteria as well as projected timelines for progress updates and review.
  - iv) Behaviour plans are written with language that is understandable to all stakeholders for accurate implementation. Certificants ensure translation is available when needed.
  - v) Behaviour plans prioritise least intrusive procedures before considering restrictive or punishment-based intervention. Certificants ensure risk and benefit analysis is done before considering these procedures, and ensure termination of these procedure if deemed ineffective.
- 4.07 Certificants ensure accurate data collection for all behaviour analytic activities and make data-based decisions on whether to continue, adjust or terminate any of the behaviour plans provided.
- 4.08 Certificants identify any barriers (e.g., environmental conditions, disagreement between stakeholders) that may interfere with the effectiveness of behaviour plans and take appropriate actions to resolve the issues in a timely manner.

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## 4.0 Service Delivery

- 4.09 Certificants do not abandon clients. In the case of absence or termination of services, certificants are responsible in facilitating the continuity of services to their clients and stakeholders to another certificant or personnel who are equally competent. Certificants also provide sufficient time to notify clients and stakeholder about such changes and take reasonable steps (e.g., handover of reports, facilitate meeting between stakeholders) to ensure smooth transition of services.
- 4.10 Certificants immediately cease services to clients if there are physical, psychological or legal factors impeding their abilities to provide objective and effective treatment, or if other issues render them ineligible to maintain their effectiveness in the services they provide. Consultation, supervision, and transition of clients should be performed without further delay. Certificants are encouraged to seek appropriate help to establish their work capacity.

## 5.0 Supervision

- 5.01 Certificants adhere to all supervisory requirements including, but not limited to, MABA Ethical and Professional Standards, and MABA Standards of Competency.
- 5.02 Certificants supervise only within their areas of expertise and accept only the volume of supervisory activities that is commensurate with their ability to be effective.
- 5.03 Certificants are responsible for their supervisory activities, including each of their supervisees' professional activities throughout the supervisory period.
- 5.04 Certificants ensure accurate and complete documentation of their own supervision activities whilst adhering to all applicable laws and regulations. Certificants retain the supervision documentation for at least 5 years and dispose all documentation in accordance to all applicable rules and regulations.
- 5.05 Certificants ensure supervision and training are behaviour-analytic in content, effectively and ethically designed, and in compliance with all applicable requirements. Certificants delegate tasks based on supervisees' competencies, and provide necessary trainings to ensure supervisees meet the required competencies.



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## 5.0 Supervision

- 5.06 Certificants design individualised feedback and reinforcement system for the supervisee to ensure the provision of documented and timely feedback regarding the performance of the supervisee.
- 5.07 Certificants are responsible for ongoing evaluation of their performance as supervisors, make necessary modification based on supervision feedback and outcome, and document such efforts.
- 5.08 Certificants make reasonable and timely effort to facilitate the continuity of supervision with all relevant parties in the event of planned and/or unplanned disruptions.
- 5.09 Certificants devise and document a plan that minimizes negative impacts to the supervisee when the supervision is being terminated.

## 6.0 Research

- 6.01 Certificants obtain approval from relevant institutions, organisations or local review committee prior to commencing research protocols. Certificants ensure research is conducted within the approved research protocol and in accordance to applicable laws and regulations.
- 6.02 Certificants prioritise the safety and welfare of all personnel involved in their research. They plan and make necessary arrangements to avoid causing harm in any way to all parties involved.
- 6.03 Certificants obtain informed consent (or assent where applicable) prior to the research without coercion. Informed consent include (but not limited to) the purpose of the study, the research protocol, the use of data as educational purposes for the scientific community, the potential risks to all parties involved and the right to withdraw at any time without any negative setback on their service delivery.
- 6.04 Certificants maintain confidentiality and avoid revealing identifiable information of the research participants. Any form of information disclosure must be consented by the relevant parties, unless under extreme circumstances required by laws.

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## 6.0 Research

- 6.05 Certificants conduct research only within their area of expertise. Certificants pursue relevant training or make arrangements to collaborate with other experts who are competent if necessary. Certificants ensure all personnel involved abide to the ethical requirements of the research.
- 6.06 Certificants declare all conflicts of interest (e.g., personal, institution/ organisation/ service, financial) in their research activities and make efforts to minimise the risks involved.
- 6.07 Certificants do not plagiarise another author's work. Certificants give proper disclosure, credit, acknowledgement or citation to the original author's work as well as to individuals who contributed in their research publication, in accordance to the updated citation guidelines.
- 6.08 Certificants ensure accuracy in the data collected, stored, and published in their research. They attempt to resolve any errors in data and avoid any misuse of data in their publication. Certificants are responsible in retaining (at least for 5 years) or disposing any research documentation (both physical or electronic format) in accordance to the applicable laws and regulations.

## 7.0 Public Statement

- 7.01 Certificants ensure privacy of their clients and protect their rights, which also includes taking all precautions to prevent accidental sharing of confidential information when making public statements.
- 7.02 Certificants ensure all information mentioned in public statements (i.e., made by themselves and/or others) regarding their professional activities are truthful, and are behaviour analytic in nature. Certificants refrain from giving behaviour analytic related advices in public forums.
- 7.03 Certificants give appropriate credits when using others' intellectual properties (e.g., logo and copyrighted materials) and seek for permission to use them when necessary.
- 7.04 Certificants are responsible for the promotion of their behaviour analytic services made by themselves and/or others. A disclaimer must be made when services advertised are non-behaviour analytic in nature.

## 7.0 Public Statement

- 7.05 Certificants must not solicit testimonials and/or reviews from current and former clients for the benefit of themselves and their organisations. Certificants do not share and promote unsolicited testimonials and/or reviews from all public forums. Certificants may seek formal reference letters from current and/or former clients for non-advertising purposes.
- 7.06 Certificants must not publish contents of their clients and stakeholders on their personal social media platforms. When publishing contents about their clients and stakeholders on their professional social media platforms, certificants ensure that:
- i) Informed consent from all parties is obtained before publication.
  - ii) A disclaimer is included to prevent any misuse of the contents.
  - iii) Published contents cannot be shared by others without seeking permission from the creator.
  - iv) Contents are constantly updated and monitored for accuracy.



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