



# BCaBA Test Content Outline (6th ed.)

The BCaBA Test Content Outline (6th ed.; TCO) describes the content that will appear on the BCaBA® certification examination beginning in 2025. The TCO represents the knowledge and skills identified as being important for entry-level BCaBA practitioners by the most recent job task analysis (see the [February 2022 BACB Newsletter](#)). The BCaBA examination includes 150 scored questions and 25 unscored pilot questions. The TCO includes 90 tasks organized in 9 domains as follows:

| Domain   | # of Questions (% of Exam) |
|--|----------------------------|
| A. Behaviorism and Philosophical Foundations     | 10 (7%)                    |
| B. Concepts and Principles                       | 18 (12%)                   |
| C. Measurement, Data Display, and Interpretation | 20 (13%)                   |
| D. Experimental Design                           | 10 (7%)                    |
| E. Ethical and Professional Issues               | 18 (12%)                   |
| F. Behavior Assessment                           | 17 (11%)                   |
| G. Behavior-Change Procedures                    | 22 (15%)                   |
| H. Intervention Development and Monitoring       | 20 (13%)                   |
| I. Supervisory Relationships                     | 15 (10%)                   |
| <b>Total Questions</b>                           | <b>150</b>                 |

| Domain | # of Questions |
|--------|----------------|
|--------|----------------|

## A. Behaviorism and Philosophical Foundations 10

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|--|---|
| A.1. Explain the goals of behavior analysis as a natural science (i.e., description, prediction, control).   | A.4. Distinguish among behaviorism, the experimental analysis of behavior, applied behavior analysis, and professional practice guided by the science of behavior analysis. |
| A.2. Explain the philosophical assumptions underlying the science of behavior analysis (e.g., selectionism, determinism, empiricism, parsimony, pragmatism). | A.5. Identify and describe dimensions of applied behavior analysis (Baer, Wolf, & Risley, 1968).  |
| A.3. Describe and explain behavior from the perspective of radical behaviorism.  |   |

## B. Concepts and Principles 18

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|--|---|
| B.1. Identify and distinguish among behavior, response, and response class.                                | B.8. Identify and distinguish among simple schedules of reinforcement.                                      |
| B.2. Identify and distinguish between stimulus and stimulus class.   | B.9. Identify examples of operant extinction.   |
| B.3. Identify and distinguish between respondent and operant conditioning.                                 | B.10. Identify and distinguish between types of stimulus control.   |
| B.4. Identify and distinguish between positive and negative reinforcement contingencies.                   | B.11. Identify and distinguish between discrimination and generalization.                                   |
| B.5. Identify and distinguish between positive and negative punishment contingencies.                      | B.12. Define and identify examples of unconditioned motivating operations.                                  |
| B.6. Identify and distinguish between automatic and socially mediated contingencies.                       | B.13. Identify and distinguish between rule-governed and contingency-shaped behavior.                       |
| B.7. Identify and distinguish among unconditioned, conditioned, and generalized reinforcers and punishers. | B.14. Identify and distinguish among elementary verbal operants.  |
|  | B.15. Define and identify examples of processes that promote emergent relations and generative performance. |

## C. Measurement, Data Display, and Interpretation

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- C.1. Define and identify dimensions of behavior (e.g., count, duration, magnitude).
- C.2. Describe the form (i.e., topography) and develop operational definitions of behavior.
- C.3. Distinguish among direct, indirect, and product measures of behavior.
- C.4. Develop and implement continuous measurement procedures (e.g., duration recording, event recording).
- C.5. Develop and implement discontinuous measurement procedures (e.g., interval recording, time sampling).
- C.6. Evaluate the validity and reliability of measurement procedures.
- C.7. Select a measurement system to obtain representative data given the dimensions of behavior and the logistics of observing and recording.
- C.8. Graph data to communicate relevant quantitative relations (e.g., equal-interval graphs, bar graphs, cumulative records).
- C.9. Interpret graphed data.
- C.10. Develop and evaluate mastery criteria.

## D. Experimental Design

10

- D.1. Distinguish between dependent and independent variables.
- D.2. Distinguish between internal and external validity.
- D.3. Identify the defining features of single-case experimental designs (e.g., individuals serve as their own controls, repeated measures, prediction, verification, replication).
- D.4. Identify strengths of single-case experimental design.
- D.5. Distinguish among and implement single-case experimental designs (e.g., reversal, multiple baseline, multielement, changing criterion).
- D.6. Distinguish among and implement comparative, component, and parametric analyses.

## E. Ethical and Professional Issues

18

- E.1. Identify and apply core principles underlying the ethics codes for BACB certificants (e.g., benefit others; treat others with compassion, dignity, and respect; behave with integrity).
- E.2. Identify the risks to oneself, others, and the profession associated with engaging in unethical behavior (e.g., misuse of social media, misrepresentation of one's credential, making confidential information public).
- E.3. Identify one's area(s) of competence and when to seek a supervisor's guidance.
- E.4. Identify professional development activities that strengthen and expand areas of competence (e.g., attend conferences, read literature, seek consultation, establish mentors).
- E.5. Identify and comply with requirements for collecting, using, protecting, and disclosing confidential information.
- E.6. Identify steps that should be taken when transitioning clients or supervisees to another professional or when a BCaBA transitions to a different supervisor.
- E.7. Identify types of and risks associated with multiple relationships, and how to mitigate those risks when they are unavoidable.
- E.8. Identify and apply interpersonal and other skills (e.g., accepting feedback, listening actively, seeking input, collaborating) to establish and maintain professional relationships.
- E.9. Engage in cultural humility in service delivery and professional relationships.
- E.10. Apply culturally responsive and inclusive service and supervision activities.
- E.11. Identify and apply the legal, regulatory, and practice requirements (e.g., licensure, jurisprudence, funding, certification) relevant to the delivery of behavior-analytic services.

## F. Behavior Assessment

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- F.1. Review relevant information in available records and data (e.g., educational, medical, historical) at the outset of a case.
- F.2. Identify conditions that warrant behavior-analytic services.
- F.3. Identify and prioritize socially significant, client-informed, and culturally responsive behavior-change goals.
- F.4. Implement assessments of relevant skill strengths and deficits, and contextual fit (e.g., client values, cultural variables, social validity, environmental resources).
- F.5. Implement preference and reinforcer assessments.
- F.6. Implement functional assessments of behavior, including indirect, descriptive, and experimental analyses.

## G. Behavior-Change Procedures

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- G.1. Develop and implement positive and negative reinforcement procedures, including contingent and noncontingent applications.
- G.2. Develop and implement procedures to establish and use conditioned reinforcers.
- G.3. Develop and implement procedures that incorporate motivating operations and discriminative stimuli.
- G.4. Develop and implement procedures to teach simple and conditional discriminations.
- G.5. Develop and implement procedures using stimulus and response prompts that include appropriate fading procedures (e.g., errorless, least-to-most, stimulus fading).
- G.6. Develop and implement modeling procedures.
- G.7. Develop and implement procedures that use instructions and rules.
- G.8. Develop and implement shaping procedures.
- G.9. Develop and implement chaining procedures.
- G.10. Develop and implement procedures to teach elementary verbal operants.
- G.11. Develop and implement procedures to promote emergent relations and generative performance.
- G.12. Develop and implement procedures that promote behavioral persistence.
- G.13. Develop and implement acquisition procedures that are appropriate to the client's skills and intervention goals (e.g., discrete-trial, free-operant, and naturalistic teaching arrangements).
- G.14. Develop and implement group contingency procedures.
- G.15. Develop and implement contingency contracting procedures.
- G.16. Develop and implement self-management procedures.
- G.17. Develop and implement procedures to promote stimulus and response generalization.
- G.18. Develop and implement differential reinforcement procedures with and without extinction.
- G.19. Define and implement positive and negative punishment procedures (e.g., time-out, response cost, overcorrection).
- G.20. Develop and implement procedures to promote maintenance of behavior change.

## H. Intervention Development and Monitoring

20

- H.1. State intervention goals in observable and measurable terms.
- H.2. Identify potential interventions based on assessment results and scientific evidence.
- H.3. Develop intervention goals and procedures based on risks and contextual fit (e.g., client preferences and values, cultural variables, social validity, environmental resources).
- H.4. Identify alternative behaviors to be established or increased when a target behavior is to be decreased.
- H.5. Identify possible unwanted effects when using reinforcement, extinction, and punishment procedures.
- H.6. Evaluate client progress and procedural integrity.
- H.7. Make data-based decisions about the effectiveness of procedures and the need for modification.
- H.8. Collaborate with and include others who support and/or provide services to clients.

## I. Supervisory Relationships

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- I.1. Use behavior-analytic supervision practices and state the potential risks of ineffective supervision (e.g., poor client outcomes, impaired job satisfaction, employee turnover).
- I.2. Identify and apply strategies for establishing and maintaining effective supervisory relationships (e.g., active listening, providing reinforcement, reciprocal feedback).
- I.3. Identify and implement methods that promote equity in supervision practices.
- I.4. Establish clear performance expectations for the supervisor and supervisee.
- I.5. Select supervision goals based on an assessment of the supervisee's skills.
- I.6. Apply empirically validated and competency-based approaches to train supervisees to perform assessment and intervention procedures.
- I.7. Identify and apply empirically validated and culturally responsive performance management procedures (e.g., modeling, practice, feedback, reinforcement, task clarification, manipulation of response effort).
- I.8. Apply a function-based approach (e.g., performance diagnostics) to assess and improve supervisee behavior.
- I.9. Evaluate the effects of supervision (e.g., on client outcomes, on supervisee repertoires).