



# Content Outline

## Board Certified Coach Examination (BCCE)

### Definition

The Board Certified Coach Examination (BCCE) is a certifying examination that measures coaching knowledge based on the Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE) core competencies (i.e., Ethical and Professional Standards, Agreements and Goal-Setting, Coach Presence and Applied Skills, Effective Coach–Client Communication and Rapport, Facilitating Client Growth and Accountability, and Coaching Business Practices and Professional Development) and how to apply the competencies and follow ethical guidelines. The qualifying criteria to take the BCCE are stated in the minimally qualified candidate profile. Coaching is a professional practice in which the coach has specialized education, training, and experience to help clients identify specific goals; collaborate with clients on solutions; and offer strategies that assist individuals, groups, and organizations in reaching identified goals.

### Examination Purpose

The BCCE provides a standardized measure of the CCE core competencies associated with professional coaching; thus, the BCC certification informs clients that certified coaches subscribe to professional standards and ethics. The examination’s development was based on a national job analysis of 395 coaches (of which 95% have an active BCC credential) who determined the core competencies of coaching and developed the examination content of the BCCE.

The core competencies associated with professional coaching were determined to be:

- 1. Ethical and Professional Standards**

The principles and guidelines that govern the conduct and behavior of coaches to ensure integrity, credibility, and accountability within the profession.

- 2. Agreements and Goal-Setting**

The process of establishing mutual understanding between the coach and client about the purpose of and commitments required for effective and efficient coaching.

- 3. Coach Presence and Applied Skills**

The skills and abilities coaches should demonstrate to provide effective and efficient coaching.

#### **4. Effective Coach–Client Communication and Rapport**

The creation and maintenance of a strong working relationship between a coach and a client.

#### **5. Facilitating Client Growth and Accountability**

The ability to help a client reflect on their progress, identify next steps, and ultimately move toward achieving their goals and transition upon attainment.

#### **6. Coaching Business Practices and Professional Development**

The strategies and techniques involved in running a coaching business and staying up to date on coaching best practices.

## **Target Population and the Minimally Qualified Candidate**

The minimally qualified candidate (MQC) for the BCCE has a bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited institution, has completed CCE-approved training for coaching, and has completed the required number of coaching hours. The MQC, through the combination of education, training, and coaching experience, can appropriately demonstrate knowledge and competencies in the domains of Ethical and Professional Standards, Agreements and Goal-Setting, Coach Presence and Applied Skills, Effective Coach–Client Communication and Rapport, Facilitating Client Growth and Accountability, and Coaching Business Practices and Professional Development.

## **Examination Form**

The BCCE is composed of 12 case studies comprised of a vignette followed by 10 multiple-choice questions each. The case studies present hypothetical clients, settings, and scenarios involving coaching. Each case study assesses a candidate's ability to provide coaching services in a safe and effective way. Of the 120 examination items on the BCCE, 100 items are scored and 20 are unscored items. Both scored and unscored items are of the same structure, and they appear in a randomized order throughout the examination. The 20 unscored multiple-choice questions provide statistical information for the items to be used in future examinations. You will have 3 hours to complete the examination.

## **Job Analysis and Content Outline**

The BCCE was developed based on a national job analysis of 395 coaches (of which 95% have an active BCC credential) who identified the competencies most relevant to the field of coaching. This content outline was drafted and approved by the BCCE Subject Matter Expert (SME) Committee in 2024. The committee's responsibilities included, but were not limited to, developing the examination blueprint by finalizing the content outline and deciding on weighting for each domain and sorting items into the domains. Table 1 presents the six domains and the percentage and number of scored items on the BCCE for each domain.

**Table 1***The weight for each domain*

	<b>Domain</b>	<b>Percent of Scored Items</b>
1	Ethical and Professional Standards	20
2	Agreements and Goal-Setting	10
3	Coach Presence and Applied Skills	25
4	Effective Coach–Client Communication and Rapport	15
5	Facilitating Client Growth and Accountability	15
6	Coaching Business Practices and Professional Development	15

The following work behaviors are supported by the coaching literature and resulted from a job analysis completed by credentialed coaches. These work behaviors are meant to be general in scope and applicable to various contexts (e.g., life, executive, business, career, health and wellness).

**Table 2***Skills and knowledge areas related to the domains***1. Ethical and Professional Standards**

- A. Abide by governing laws and regulations (i.e., HIPAA, GDPR)
- B. Adhere to the *BCC Code of Ethics*
- C. Operate with honesty and integrity
- D. Refer the client to other helping professionals or service providers as necessary
- E. Consult with peer coaches when necessary
- F. Explain the difference between coaching, mentoring, consulting, counseling, and therapy

- G. Determine if there is a fit between the coach and the client
- H. Obtain client agreement to the nature of coaching
- I. Establish responsibilities for both client and coach
- J. Understand client diversity and intersectionality
- K. Identify and discuss any dual relationships that could influence the coaching process
- L. Identify and acknowledge a sponsor, if present
- M. Manage conflicts of interest effectively
- N. Describe to clients the parameters of privacy
- O. Confirm terms of privacy and interactions between a sponsor and client
- P. Maintain boundaries for the client and yourself
- Q. Adhere to best practices of client privacy
- R. Securely maintain client data and records

## **2. Agreements and Goal-Setting**

- A. Obtain client verbal/written agreement for codesigning the coaching partnership
- B. Clarify expectations of sessions and protocols
- C. Confirm with the client the direction of the session
- D. Partner with the client to identify and prioritize their desired outcomes
- E. Assist the client in identifying achievable short- and long-term goals
- F. Support the client in creating their vision
- G. Identify how a client's goals may be measured using an assessment
- H. Support the client in modifying or changing goals
- I. Revisit and/or clarify the client's goals as needed

### **3. Coach Presence and Applied Skills**

- A. Support the client with an appropriate level of empathy
- B. Recognize the client as a whole, resourceful, and creative person
- C. Utilize socio-emotional skillset to provide a space for the client's emotions
- D. Identify limiting beliefs
- E. Identify client assumptions
- F. Recognize themes, trends, and patterns of the client
- G. Recognize when the client is falling into a thinking trap
- H. Remember what the client said about their past success
- I. Assess the client's confidence
- J. Notice an absence of verbal communication
- K. Pay attention to nonverbal communication
- L. Remain client-centered
- M. Remain flexible to client shifts
- N. Listen for what is not being said
- O. Avoid assuming the client's next words
- P. Maintain silence when appropriate
- Q. Check in during the session to determine alignment with the client's desired agenda
- R. Be fully present and focused
- S. Remain curious and open-minded
- T. Control your own reactions
- U. Follow your intuition in the coaching process
- V. Be genuine in how you present and conduct yourself

#### **4. Effective Coach–Client Communication and Rapport**

- A. Respectfully acknowledge the client as a unique individual shaped by intersecting identities
- B. Remain in the role of coach while interacting with clients
- C. Provide feedback when appropriate to challenge the client
- D. Provide additional perspectives
- E. Be supportive of and positive toward the client
- F. Demonstrate respect for the client
- G. Establish and maintain trust
- H. Celebrate and build on successes
- I. Acknowledge the client’s self-disclosure
- J. Acknowledge the client through verbal and nonverbal cues
- K. Adapt communication style to meet the needs of the client
- L. Reflect or paraphrase the client’s words
- M. Use inclusive language
- N. Avoid interrupting client or finishing their thought

#### **5. Facilitating Client Growth and Accountability**

- A. Ask the client how they are going to monitor their progress
- B. Ask the client how they will gather evidence of their success
- C. Help the client to establish achievable actionable steps and timelines
- D. Support the client in identifying their accountability measures
- E. Identify obstacles to attaining goals
- F. Invite the client to try new approaches
- G. Discuss the progress of previously established action steps with the client
- H. Help the client use past success to guide future actions
- I. Use assessments to measure a client’s progress toward goals

- J. Utilize assessment tools as appropriate
- K. Share available resources or tools
- L. Assist the client in shifting their thinking paradigm, perspectives, or limiting beliefs
- M. Reflect on what did not work for the client between sessions
- N. Acknowledge the client's progress
- O. Celebrate client wins and provide affirmation

## **6. Coaching Business Practices and Professional Development**

- A. Establish expectations for coaching terms of service
- B. Have a contract signed by the client and yourself
- C. Follow your own contract thoroughly
- D. Plan end of coaching engagement with client and/or sponsor
- E. Respond to client communication in a timely manner
- F. Pursue opportunities to hone skills as a coach
- G. Maintain professional certifications, accreditations, and business licenses
- H. Stay active with professional associations
- I. Stay up to date with new trends, research, and technology
- J. Research and develop tools, models, and frameworks to help the client
- K. Remain a qualified provider of specific tools, models, and assessments
- L. Seek learning opportunities that will impact the client
- M. Immerse self in valid professional models
- N. Attain liability insurance when needed
- O. Maintain legitimacy of your business
- P. Utilize social media with confidentiality
- Q. Disclose the use of artificial intelligence (AI)

## Sample BCCE Narrative

Your client is a 27-year-old Black, cisgender, gay man. You have been working together for 2.5 years. During this time, your client completed his graduate studies in education and began a new career. He lives with his partner, who works at a local bank and is able to keep regular hours. Your client reports his partner is supportive of his academic and professional endeavors; however, he often expresses guilt for not carrying his share of household responsibilities.

In your early work, your client's primary concerns were connected to his multiple diagnoses, including ADHD, a traumatic brain injury, and a chronic health condition. Together, the symptoms of these conditions result in challenges with focus and attention, memory and concentration, fatigue, and endurance. As a condition of your working relationship, your client continues to see a neurologist and an immunologist and takes medication for ADHD. He remains compliant with treatment recommendations and diligent with medication, though he frequently skips or misses meals, which exacerbates his symptoms. He reported long days at work, along with graduate school, as the primary reason he did not consistently meet basic nutritional needs.

As a graduate student, your client faced challenging and rigorous class loads and a full-time job. Your client often reported that despite spending many hours at the library to work on assignments outside of class, he rarely felt caught up and sometimes missed assignment deadlines. You worked with your client to improve his study skills, time management, and feelings of self-efficacy as he navigated graduate school. Although there were noticeable improvements, your client continued to struggle with time management and focus. He was able to complete his graduate program and moved into a job search. For several months, your sessions focused on job application and interview processes. Your client interviewed for multiple positions as a classroom teacher and received an offer at a district an hour away. He shared that his partner was supportive and able to transfer but expressed concern that if he were to relocate, he would no longer be able to work with you. You explained that you offer remote services and that this location change is not an issue.

Your client accepted the position, and he and his partner relocated. You shifted to remote sessions to provide support in adjusting to a new town and a new career. Your client soon encountered some challenges with new colleagues and continued to struggle with similar concerns to those he experienced previously. At the current time, your client is focused on navigating challenging relationships at work; managing his workload; and meeting nutritional needs in a way that supports his physical, mental, and emotional health.

Although this adjustment is mostly going well, your client shared several interactions with a new colleague that were concerning. Your client reported that during two separate conversations, an older White male colleague made specific comments about his age and lack of experience. This colleague also told your client about other coworkers' perceptions of him, which were generally



negative. Your client does not seem to recognize these comments as particularly upsetting, though they did leave him feeling sad and lonely and unsure how to navigate these new relationships.

At your most recent appointment, you discussed prioritizing the concerns your client holds like time management, communication with colleagues, and meal planning.

## Sample Questions

### ***Domain 1.***

When your client begins experiencing the same concerns with his new job as he experienced in your earlier work together, you start to doubt your competence as a coach. What resource is available to you as you navigate this challenge?

- A. You can talk to coaches you have met at a local event to see if they have similar fears.
- B. You can enroll in a relevant program to add a new credential to your résumé.
- C. You can seek a peer coach or mentor to process your feelings and concerns.**

### ***Domain 3.***

At your most recent appointment, your client identified several areas of concern to prioritize. What concept connects these individual areas?

- A. psychoeducation
- B. executive functioning**
- C. mindfulness

### ***Domain 2.***

To increase your client's sense of self-efficacy and develop more effective study strategies, what assessment would you utilize to gain more insight into your client's academic strengths?

- A. You would assess the client's personality type with the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.
- B. You would assess the client's preferred method of learning with a viable learning styles assessment.**
- C. You would assess the client's personality type with the 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire.

**Domain 1.**

Your client's colleague expressed opinions that potentially could be characterized as what?

- A. misogyny
- B. microaggression**
- C. heterosexism

**Domain 5.**

What type of intervention may be most helpful to your client to reduce self-judgment and cultivate a kinder inner voice when encountering struggles at school or work?

- A. somatic
- B. self-compassion**
- C. emotional

**Domain 2.**

What tool is designed to facilitate decision-making by focusing on the perceived positive and negative aspects of pursuing a choice?

- A. SWOT Analysis**
- B. Personal Values Card Sort
- C. SMART Template

**Domain 6.**

Where should you ensure communication regarding your coaching modalities (i.e., remote, in-person, hybrid)?

- A. website
- B. coaching contract**
- C. business cards

**Domain 4.**

What aspects of your client's identity may be a priority when selecting assessments or other interventions?

- A. male identity
- B. cisgender identity
- C. Black identity**

**Domain 1.**

During your coaching relationship, your client invited you to attend his graduate school commencement, stating that your work together facilitated his ability to accomplish this goal. Would it be acceptable to attend this event?

- A. No, as this would constitute a dual relationship conflict.
- B. It may be acceptable to attend if you do not tell your client, thus avoiding ethical concerns.
- C. It may be acceptable after careful consideration and discussion about expectations.**

**Domain 4.**

Given the executive function challenges your client is facing at work, it may be advisable for him to disclose his ADHD diagnosis to his employer. He is hesitant because of his partner cautioning against this. How can you proceed in a supportive and non-directive manner with your client?

- A. Provide him with information on the protections afforded by the Americans with Disabilities Act and reasonable accommodations and offer to discuss at the next session.**
- B. Offer to call your client's employer and disclose on his behalf; you can explain the diagnostic criteria of ADHD and answer questions the employer may have.
- C. Refer your client to your state's vocational rehabilitation agency; you do not want to offer an inappropriate level of care, and a vocational rehabilitation specialist will have better advice.