

THE PRACTICE SAMPLES

THE AMERICAN BOARD OF FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY, INC. (ABFP)

A. How Practice Samples Fit into the Certification Process

Successful completion of the Written Examination leads to an invitation to submit two Practice Samples of the Candidate's forensic psychological work. If the Practice Samples and follow-up documentation of licensure and professional affiliation are deemed acceptable, the Candidate proceeds to an Oral Examination that is substantially based on the Practice Samples.

B. The Practice Samples

1. Purpose and Substance

The Practice Samples assist ABFP in its attempts to ensure that the Candidate possesses a high level of professional competence and maturity, with the ability to articulate an explicit and coherent rationale for his or her work in forensic psychology. Two Practice Samples are required, with each one representing a primary area of the Candidate's practice. The Candidate's choice of Practice Samples will help to define those areas covered by the Oral Examination.

The prototype for each Practice Sample is a forensic evaluation; however, with the prior agreement of the Corresponding Secretary, and for good cause, an alternative submission, solely authored by the Candidate, may be substituted for *one* of the two Practice Samples. Examples of potentially acceptable alternative submissions are:

- (a) a forensic psychological book chapter;
- (b) a forensic psychological article accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal;
- (c) a forensic psychological test manual;
- (d) a forensic psychological treatment program or treatment protocol.

Just as evaluation-based Practice Samples are intended to demonstrate a high level of professional competence and maturity, alternative submissions, when permitted, should demonstrate a similar level of forensic psychological expertise.

2. Distinct Areas of Practice

Each Practice Sample should represent one of two distinct and separate areas of forensic psychological knowledge and practice. These two areas should differ in legal standards, case law applications, and methodologies.

- (a) Examples of sufficiently distinct forensic activities include:
 - i. (1) sanity/mental state at the time of the offense, and (2) competence to stand trial; or
 - ii. (1) worker's compensation, and (2) guardianship.
- (b) Examples of forensic activities that are *not* sufficiently distinct include:
 - i. (1) parenting/child custody examination involving a relocation issue, and (2) parenting child custody examination involving allegations of sexual abuse; or
 - ii. (1) personal injury examination, and (2) worker's compensation examination.
- (c) The Corresponding Secretary is available for consultation to help the Candidate clarify selection of Practice Samples. Candidates are strongly advised to take advantage of this consultation.

3. Format

Candidates will submit a *curriculum vitae*, two Practice Samples, and psychological test data used in the evaluation for any Practice Sample will be appended to each Practice Sample.

A. *Curriculum Vitae* describing the Candidate's background, training, and involvement in forensic psychology is attached

B. *Each* of the two Practice Samples should include the following:

- (a) *Title Page* with your name, address, telephone number, fax number and e-mail address. The title should reflect the nature of the underlying case.
- (b) *Table of Contents* clearly indicating each section.
- (c) *Introduction* detailing the nature of the Candidate's role and involvement in generating the Forensic Work Product in question.
- (d) *Forensic Work Product*. Typically, this is the report that resulted from the forensic evaluation in question, with a maximum length of 70 double-spaced

pages. The Forensic Work Product must have been composed no more than two (2) years prior to the date upon which the Candidate's credentials were initially accepted by the American Board of Professional Psychology.

- (f) *Supplementary Materials.* When applicable to the type of Practice Sample submitted, these include the following:
 - i. the most relevant third party documentation;
 - ii. the most relevant state or federal statutes, regulations, and case law;
 - iii. ethical principles, standards, and guidelines of particular relevance; and
 - iv. references to published research of particular relevance (optional).

Essentially, Supplementary Materials consist of third party documentation that is critical for understanding your Forensic Work Product. You are not required to include, for example, routine police reports and hospital records that are adequately summarized in your own report.

Neither practice sample can exceed 80 pages in its entirety.

Contact the Corresponding Secretary to request a waiver if you feel that this space limitation prevents you from adequately presenting either of your contemplated Practice Samples.

C. Psychological test data. There is no page limit for psychological test data, which are appended to the practice sample.

4. Technical Aspects

- (a) Except as noted below, all Practice Samples should be:
 - i. double-spaced;
 - ii. in 12 point font;
 - iii. with one-inch margins on all sides; and
 - iv. with page numbers on each page, including supplementary materials and psychological test data.
- (b) Approved alternative submissions may remain, if deemed sufficiently legible by the Corresponding Secretary, in their original published format.

- (c) Each Practice Sample begins with page number 1 and is numbered sequentially thereafter, including all Supplementary Materials and psychological test data.
- (d) Edit the Practice Sample for grammatical errors, spelling errors and typographical errors. Practice Samples may be disqualified on the basis of careless presentation.
- (e) All pages are to be clear and legible. Any handwritten, original documents (*e.g.*, psychological test responses) must be legible. If they are not, please type them out.
- (f) Approved alternative submissions must have been accepted for publication no more than two (2) years before the date upon which the Candidate's credentials were initially accepted by the American Board of Professional Psychology.

5. Confidentiality

- (a) *Each Practice Sample must obscure the identity of parties to the proceedings in question (e.g., defendants, parents, and children), victims, and lay witnesses.*

This is accomplished by redacting names or by assigning fictitious identities to the individuals in question.

- (b) This measure is required even if the material in question has become part of the public record. If fictitious identities have been assigned, a statement must be provided to this effect in the Introduction. If you choose to obscure confidential information by "blacking" or "whiting" it out, you should ensure that the redacted material cannot be read through the marking. This effect is often enhanced by photocopying the document after names have been obscured and then submitting the photocopy.
- (c) *Failure to protect confidentiality in this fashion may result in the rejection of a Practice Sample and termination of Candidacy.*

6. Time Frames and Extensions

- (a) Practice Samples must be received within **one year** of the date on which the Candidate received notice of passing the Written Examination.
- (b) The Candidate may request extensions for good cause, in writing, from the Corresponding Secretary, conveying the circumstances upon which the request is based and a timetable for completing and submitting the Practice Samples.
- (c) *No more than two extensions may be granted, for a combined total of one additional year.*

- (d) If this time frame (with extensions) is not met, the Candidacy shall be terminated. One year after notification of termination, the Candidate may apply to the American Board of Forensic Psychology, thus starting over again with the certification process, except that those reapplying do not have to retake the Written Examination.

7. Authorship and Review

- (a) The Practice Samples must be of the Candidate's sole authorship. Supervisory input and the participation of coworkers or assistants must be at a minimum, and must not represent substantive contributions to the Forensic Work Product in question.
- (b) A Practice Sample shall *not* be reviewed or critiqued by any other person, during its composition or at any other time prior to the Oral Examination.
- (c) Applicants may request that others review or critique *other* examples of their forensic work; however, such forensic work may not be used as any part of a Practice Sample.
- (d) Do not submit a Practice Sample for which a preponderance of the psychological testing was administered by another party, whether or not that person was functioning under the Candidate's supervision.

C. Practice Sample Submission Process

8. Submission

- (a) Practice Samples are submitted to the Chair of Practice Samples, *in electronic format only*. Microsoft Word and Acrobat (.PDF) are the acceptable formats.

Formats may be combined when necessary; for example, the Candidate may choose to submit all aspects of a Practice Sample in Word, with the exception of scanned Supplementary Materials in Acrobat (.PDF).

- (b) Practice Samples should be submitted on a compact disc to the Chair of Practice Samples. No hard copy or e-mail submissions are acceptable.

9. Screening Process

- (a) The Chair of Practice Samples coordinates the screening of Practice Samples in order to determine their sufficiency for proceeding to the Oral Examination.
- (b) This screening process will result in one of the following:

- i. notification that both Practice Samples are acceptable and that the Candidacy may proceed;
 - ii. notification that certain changes should be made to one or both Practice Samples before the Candidacy may proceed;
 - iii. notification that *one* Practice Sample is unacceptable for proceeding to the Oral Examination and must be replaced within six (6) months by an acceptable replacement Practice Sample; *or*
 - iv. notification that *both* Practice Samples are unacceptable for proceeding to the Oral Examination, and that the Candidacy is terminated.
- (c) Should any replacement Practice Sample be determined unacceptable, or should the Candidate fail to submit a replacement Practice Sample on time, then the Candidacy shall be terminated.
- (d) One year after notification of termination, the Candidate may reapply to the American Board of Forensic Psychology, thus starting over again with the certification process, except that those reapplying do not have to retake the Written Examination.

10. Process Subsequent to Practice Sample Approval

Upon the submission of two acceptable Practice Samples, the Candidate will then be contacted by the National Chair of Examinations, who will collaborate with the Candidate in obtaining ethical clearance from various psychological boards and associations, before initiating the process of scheduling the Oral Examination.

A Checklist for Practice Samples

This checklist will help you make sure that your Practice Sample submission is completed in accordance with the requirements above. Please print and complete this checklist, and send it hard copy to the Chair of Practice Samples when you submit your Practice Samples on CD.

This checklist is required and must be received before you Practice Samples may be reviewed.

- ___ I have prepared two Practice Samples that represent one of two distinct and separate areas of forensic psychological knowledge and practice. These are primary areas of my forensic work.
- ___ Both Practice Samples meet all of the criteria outlined in these Guidelines, including those for recentness and sole authorship.
- ___ I have included my *Curriculum Vitae* detailing my background, training, and involvement in forensic psychology.

For each Practice Sample, I have provided the following ...

- ___ a *Title Page* with my name, address, telephone number, fax number and e-mail address, including a title reflecting the nature of the underlying case.
- ___ a *Table of Contents* clearly indicating each section.
- ___ an *Introduction* detailing the nature of my role and involvement in generating the Forensic Work Product in question.
- ___ my *Forensic Work Product*.
- ___ a *Supplementary Materials* section.
- ___ Each Forensic Work Product, including its Supplementary Materials, does not exceed 80 pages in its entirety.
- ___ My psychological test data are appended to each Practice Sample and continue the page numbering from which the Practice Sample ended.

I will now ...

- ___ send one copy of each Practice Sample to the Chair of Practice Samples in the appropriate electronic format (on CD).
- ___ retain an electronic copy of each Practice Sample. *I understand that if my Practice Samples are ultimately approved, I will be asked to produce additional bound copies in due course for use in the Oral Examination.*

In addition ...

- ___ Each Practice Sample is clear and legible.
- ___ Each Practice Sample is separately, fully, and sequentially paginated throughout, beginning with page 1.
- ___ ***I understand that a practice sample in which the required confidentiality measures have not been observed may result in rejection of that practice sample and termination of my candidacy.***
- ___ ***I understand that a copy of a forensic psychological report to a referral source, by itself, does not constitute a “practice sample” as described by these guidelines.***

Signature of Candidate

Date

Contact information for the Chair of Practice Samples:

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