

A Code of Ethics for Assessment Centre Practice

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36th Annual SA Assessment Centre Study Group (ACSG)
conference, 8 April 2016 at NH Lord Charles in
Somerset West, South Africa



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A Code of Ethics for Assessment Centre Practice

To compile the basics of an Ethical Code for AC Practice and to compile a task team to design the Code of Ethical Practice

Format of Session:

- Introducing Topics
- Round Table Discussions
- Synthesis of Discussions

Agenda

- Background
- Code of Ethics Described
- Difference to AC Guidelines
- Round Table Discussions – 5 Themes
- Road Ahead

Background

HPCSA – “Ethics management in the profession of psychology” – Leon Van Vuuren

Board’s ethics vision - A three-tier outcome

- Revised ethical rules for promulgation – 2017
- Ethics guidelines for practitioners – 2017 (professional associations), as example Industrial and Organisational Psychology
- Encourage the development of Professional Ethics Guidelines, e.g., Assessment Centers

Code of Ethics (CoE) Described

Ethics

Doing what is good for self and what is good for others (Van Vuuren & Schlebusch, 2013)

Professional Ethics

“The principles and standards that guide a profession and its members in their interactions with internal and external stakeholders” (Van Vuuren, 2015)


Purpose of Professional Ethics is to build trust in the profession

Code of Ethics (CoE) Described (continued)

Working Description of Code of Ethics:

Values, principles, standards, rules of behaviour that guides decision-making and conduct when interacting with people in various contexts. The resulting decisions and conduct are in the best interest of all stakeholders

(continued)

Aspirational		Directional
Values Driven		Rules-based
Integrity		Compliance
Voluntary		Enforceable

Supported by Guidelines

(Van Vuuren, 2015)

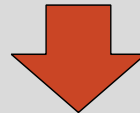
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Code of Ethics (CoE) Described (continued)

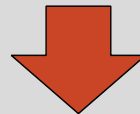
Prevent abuse of power



**Promote responsible use of
power**



Trust in profession



Reputation

Code of Ethics (CoE) Described (continued)

- Rules / Codes reflect the ethics of the profession, but rules/codes = **not ethics**
- Rules float on a sea of ethics
- Rules / Codes at best , is a minimum ethic
- If a behaviour is acceptable in terms of Rules / Codes, it is not guaranteed to be ethical
- There is a time lag between ethics and rules
- One cannot make a new rule for everything that go wrong

(Van Vuuren 2015)

Difference to Best Practice Guidelines

Purpose of Best Practice Guidelines:

“Establish professional guidelines and communicate ethical considerations for users of ACs in South Africa” p3

AC BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES 2016

- Guidelines describe the “**what**” and to some extent the “**how**” of **conducting ACs**
- **AC guidelines 2016 - Ethics** - *Informed consent , Participant rights , Re-assessment, Dealing with, Copyright, AC Integrity, Portraying an AC as delivering results, Using AC results for things other than its intended purpose, Using one AC across different contexts, Repeated exposure, Assessors who know participants, Compromising professional conduct, Social responsibility*
- A Code of Ethical Practice addresses the “**how**’ in more detail”, specifically how AC practitioners behave within the AC context and when interacting with other contexts

Why Do We Require a CoE Practice

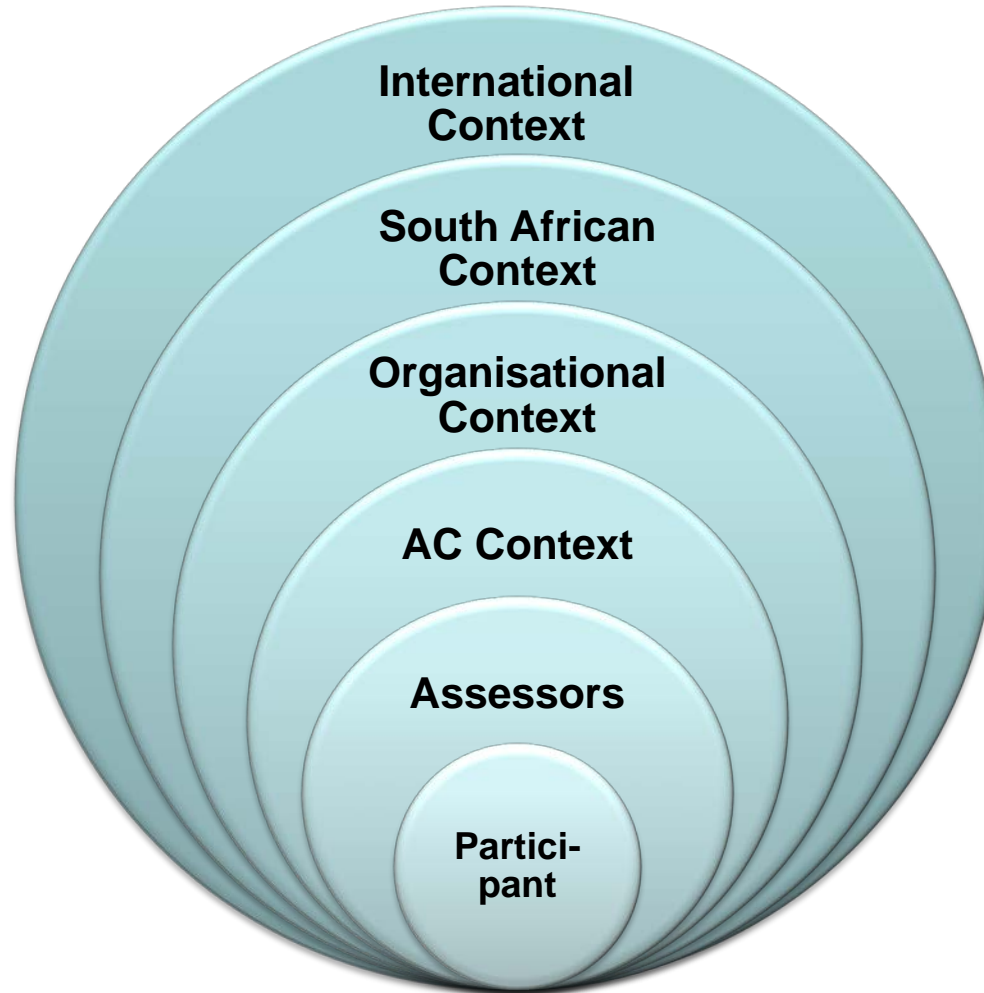
Despite existing Best Practice Guidelines, many unethical AC practices still exist in SA (Muleya, 2014)

- Managerial influence
- Using instruments with unknown reliability and validity
- Not competent assessors and role-players
- Untrained and inexperienced Centre designers

Often incongruence between expectations of organisation and expectations of conducting ethical ACs (Muleya, Fourie, & Schlebusch, 2013)

Why do we Require a CoE Practice (continued)

AC Ethical Challenges in South Africa Emanate from Various Contexts



Why do we Require a CoE Practice (continued)

Various perspectives:

- AC provider internal to organisation
- AC provider external to organisation



(Adapted from Schlebusch & Roodt, 2008)

Process of Round Table Discussions

1. Introduce Topic
2. 10 Minute Round Table Discussion
3. Each Table Enters their Conclusion
4. Synthesis of Conclusions
5. Repeat for next Topic

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Round Table Discussion 1

What is the value of having a Code of Ethical AC Practice

Round Table Discussion 2

**Who are the Stakeholders we Need to Consider
Drawing-up a CoE for AC Practice ?**

Round Table Discussion 3

What are AC Practitioners' Core Values that should be encompassed in the Code of Ethical AC Practice?

Round Table Discussion 4

**How Do We Enforce the CoE AC Practice
(compliance)?**

**How Do We Inspire Practitioners to Apply the
CoE AC Practice (inspirational)?**

Round Table Discussion 5

**Who Must Be Part of the Task Team to Compile
the CoE AC Practice?**

Who Volunteers to Be part of the Task Team?

Road Ahead

- Constitute a Task Team
- Compile draft Code of Ethical AC Practice
- Acceptance from 2017 ACSG conference

References

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