# Ethical Capability glossary

alternative framework

Agreed ways to guide decision-making that are distinct from the consequences, duties and virtues frameworks, such as feminist care ethics or frameworks from other cultures.

beneficence

‘To do good’, that is, rules, dispositions and actions should have the goal of benefiting the good of others.

consequences framework

An ethical framework that emphasises the ethical significance of foreseeable consequences when deciding the rightness or wrongness of actions; for example, deciding that an action to help someone is the right thing to do, with the justification that as a result, or consequence, it will increase the wellbeing of those involved overall to a greater degree than other actions.

duties framework

An ethical framework that emphasises the intrinsic rightness of certain acts independently or regardless of their consequences, when deciding the rightness or wrongness of actions; for example, an action to help someone being selected as the right thing to do as it is consistent with a particular duty, such as protecting human rights.

ethical concept

A concept that has ethical meaning and can be used to describe and evaluate ethical significance, such as good, bad, respect, freedom, harm or truth.

ethical dilemma

A situation in which there are competing alternatives for the best way to act, and in which all alternatives align with held values and are therefore somewhat acceptable but not fully acceptable. Typically, these values are in conflict with each other.

ethical framework

Agreed theories, methods or processes used for ethical decision-making, typically to help decide between competing actions that all align with held values or other aspects of ethical perspectives.

ethical issue

A situation, activity or scenario that creates conflict with an ethical perspective, for example by not aligning with held values, a worldview or shared expectations.

ethical perspectives

Vantage points used to interpret the ethical significance of the events, behaviours, actions and decisions made within the natural and human world and, at a deeper level, the ethical significance of the people, animals and environments that make up the world.

ethical significance

A judgement of what matters, why it matters and how strongly it matters, made with reference to general ethical concepts such as good, bad, better or worse, and/or specific ethical concepts such as freedom, respect, equality or justice, for example ‘This is wrong [the general ethical concept ‘wrong’ is used to show that the situation matters ethically] because it is unjust [why it matters] and will cause significant harm [how much it matters]’.

non-maleficence

‘Do no harm’, that is, rules, dispositions and actions should have the goal of avoiding harming others, which can apply to people, animals or the broader world.

respect

An attitude or orientation towards something or someone (including oneself) involving acknowledgement of them, careful attention towards them and/or valuing of them, as well as conscious actions in accordance with this attitude.

**shared expectations**

Standards of appropriate behaviour derived from a particular system of values held by groups such as a family, school or cultural group, or broader society.

values

Ethical concepts thought to be important by an individual or group.

virtues framework

An ethical framework that emphasises actions consistent with particular virtues (dispositions thought to be ethically good) when deciding the rightness or wrongness of actions; for example, an action to help someone would be justified as the right thing to do as it is consistent with the virtue of generosity.

worldview

A set of concepts, stories and/or beliefs about the nature of the world around us that inform our thinking, knowing, values and actions. These concepts, stories and/or beliefs can have a non-religious, religious and/or spiritual basis.