



## Mains Practice Question

### Case Study

**Q.** You share a private hostel room with Aman, a final-year MBA student who has been dealing with a series of personal and academic challenges. Due to a prolonged illness, Aman's grades in the last two semesters have significantly dropped, putting his eligibility for campus placements at risk. His financial situation is also precarious, burdened by a substantial educational loan and a weak economic background.

As the final semester exams approach, Aman becomes increasingly anxious and confides in you about his plan to purchase exam papers to ensure he meets the placement criteria. He justifies his decision by referencing his poor health, economic hardships, and family responsibilities, portraying it as his only viable option. In desperation, Aman asks you for financial assistance to execute his plan, appealing to your friendship and sense of responsibility.

- (a) What are the stakeholders involved in this situation?
- (b) What are the ethical issues involved in this situation?
- (c) What are your roles and responsibilities in this situation, and what course of action would you take?

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### Introduction:

This case revolves around an **ethical dilemma** where you are faced with a choice between supporting **Aman**, a financially and academically struggling student, and upholding the principles of **integrity** and **academic honesty**. Aman's plan to **purchase exam papers** to secure placements reflects the pressures of **financial hardship**, an **educational loan**, and the fear of failure, forcing you to balance **empathy** with ethical responsibility.

### Body:

- (a) What are the stakeholders involved in this situation?

Stakeholder	Role/Interest
<b>You (Friend)</b>	Provide emotional and moral support to Aman while upholding ethical values and integrity.
<b>Aman (Roommate)</b>	A student under immense financial and academic pressure, seeking a solution that might compromise ethical standards.
<b>Educational Institution</b>	To ensure the sanctity of academic integrity, maintain a fair system, and support students facing genuine challenges.
<b>Employers</b>	To recruit candidates based on genuine merit, ensuring fairness in hiring processes.
<b>Society</b>	To foster and uphold the principles of honesty, meritocracy, and ethical behavior in education and professional life.

- (b) What are the ethical issues involved in this situation?

The situation involves several ethical issues that require careful deliberation:

- **Conflict Between Friendship and Integrity:**
  - **Friendship:** A natural sense of loyalty and empathy may compel one to support Aman during his crisis.
  - **Integrity:** Assisting in an unethical act like purchasing exam papers contradicts moral principles and academic values, creating a conflict between emotional ties and ethical duties.
- **Short-term Relief vs. Long-term Harm:**
  - While aiding Aman might offer immediate relief, it risks severe consequences like **potential expulsion, damaged reputation, and loss of trust**, adversely affecting his future prospects.
- **Complicity in Wrongdoing:**
  - Providing financial support for an unethical act implicates you in the **wrongdoing**, compromising your ethical standing and setting a harmful precedent for rationalizing misconduct.
- **Undermining Academic Integrity:**
  - Supporting Aman's actions **undermines the credibility of educational institutions**, devalues others' hard work, and fosters a culture of dishonesty, harming the overall educational environment.
- **The Ethical Principle of Justice:**
  - Helping Aman circumvent legitimate processes is **unjust to other students who adhere to ethical standards**, thereby violating the principle of fairness and equity.

(c) What course of action would you take?

#### Suggested Course of Action:

- **Empathize and Build Trust:** Begin by listening to Aman's concerns without judgment, acknowledging the depth of his struggles.
  - This helps build trust and shows him that you genuinely care about his well-being.
- **Discourage Unethical Practices:** Gently explain why **purchasing exam papers** is unethical and harmful.
  - Highlight the **potential risks**, such as **disciplinary actions, loss of credibility, and damage to his career prospects**.
  - Emphasize that **integrity is a foundational value that cannot be compromised**, regardless of the circumstances.
- **Offer Ethical Alternatives:** Suggest approaching the college administration or faculty for help.
  - Many institutions have provisions for students facing extraordinary challenges, such as granting **academic leniency, additional time, or financial aid**.
  - Help Aman focus on strategic preparation for his exams by sharing study resources, forming study groups, or providing guidance on effective study techniques.
- **Provide Practical Assistance:** If possible, **offer financial assistance for legitimate purposes, such as tuition, study materials**, or hiring a tutor.
  - This demonstrates commitment to helping him within ethical boundaries.
  - Assist Aman in exploring **part-time work** opportunities or scholarships to alleviate his financial burden.
- **Monitor and Support:** Stay actively involved to ensure Aman does not resort to unethical practices under stress.
  - Regularly check in with him to provide encouragement and reassurance.

#### Conclusion:

Navigating **ethical dilemmas** requires balancing compassion with integrity. While it is important to empathize with Aman's struggles, **supporting him in unethical behavior would compromise both his future and the values of fairness and honesty**. By guiding him toward ethical alternatives and offering genuine support, you can help him overcome his challenges while upholding moral principles. This approach not only safeguards his credibility but also reinforces the importance of integrity within the academic system.

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