



Candidate Information Guide

For individuals interested in becoming International Board Certified Lactation Consultants®

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What is IBLCE®?

IBLCE®, or the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners®, is the independent international certification body conferring the International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® (IBCLC®) credential.

IBLCE Offices

IBLCE is comprised of 4 offices:

- International Office (IO) in Falls Church, VA, USA
 - Central office
 - Executive Director: Sara Blair Lake, J.D., CAE
- Americas (AMS) office in Falls Church, VA, USA
 - Serving North, Central and South America, and Israel
 - Regional Director: Anna Utter, IBCLC
- Asia-Pacific (AP) office in Queensland, Australia
 - Serving Australia, Asia Pacific and Africa
 - Regional Director: Karolyn Vaughan, IBCLC
- Europe and Middle East (EUME) office in Baden bei Wien, Austria
 - Serving Europe, the Middle East and northern Africa
 - Regional Director: Ilse Bichler, IBCLC

IBLCE Websites

IBLCE has 4 websites, one for each office, because of the need for regionalized information and the large number of translated documents.

- International Office: www.iblce.org/home
- AMS Regional Office: www.americas.iblce.org
- AP Regional Office: www.iblce.edu.au
- EUME Regional Office: www.europe.iblce.org

Contact Information

For matters pertaining to the Board of Directors or IBLCE policy, please contact the International Office. Inquiries about the IBLCE certification program and examination should be sent to the regional office that serves your country:

- International Office: international@iblce.org
- AMS Regional Office: iblce@iblce.org
- AP Regional Office: rd@iblce.edu.au
- EUME Regional Office: office@iblce-europe.org

To find out which regional office serves your country, go to www.iblce.org/home and use the “Find Office in Your Country” search function found in the upper right-hand corner of the webpage.

Key Dates

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| January 31 | MILCC Scholarship Application Postmark Deadline: Monetary Investment for Lactation Consultant Certification (MILCC) awards scholarships to deserving IBLCE exam candidates. Visit www.milcc.org for details. |
| February 28 | First Initial Exam Application Deadline: <i>Discounted fee applies</i> |
| April 30 | Second Initial Exam Application Deadline: <i>Full fee applies</i> |
| June 20 | Withdrawal Request Postmark Deadline |
| Last Monday in July | EXAM DAY; July 30 is the date for the 2012 IBLCE exam |
| Late October | Final Exam Results Mailed to Exam Candidates |

Important Publications

IBLCE exam candidates should be familiar with the following publications, all of which can be found on the International Office website at www.iblce.org/resources.

- *Clinical Competencies for the Practice of IBCLCs*
- *Code of Professional Conduct for IBCLCs*
- *IBLCE Exam Blueprint* (Appendix A, page 14 in this guide)
- *Scope of Practice for IBCLCs*
- *Eligibility Appeals Policy*
- *Exam Appeals Policy and Procedures*

Overview of Eligibility Requirements

IBLCE offers 3 ways through which applicants may qualify for the certification exam for lactation consultants. These 3 pathways have specific minimum requirements. However, regardless of the pathway followed, all first-time exam candidates must meet requirements in each of the following areas.

- General Education in the Health Sciences (Step A below)
- Lactation Specific Clinical Practice (Step B below)
- Education in Human Lactation and Breastfeeding (Step C below)

The 3 pathways to become eligible for the IBLCE Exam are:

- Pathway 1: Use Clinical Experience in Lactation and Breastfeeding Care
- Pathway 2: Graduate from an Academic Program in Human Lactation and Breastfeeding
- Pathway 3: Complete a Directly Supervised Clinical Apprenticeship

The Pathway Checklist found on page 10 of this guide provides a convenient summary of the IBLCE exam eligibility requirements.

Please Note: The IBLCE certification program offers a voluntary credential. Please carefully note that one must abide by the legal authority in the jurisdiction in which you practice or wish to practice.

Deciding Which Pathway to Follow

When making decisions about which pathway to follow, it is helpful to consider the following question:

Are you a licensed, registered or recognized health professional who works within the health care system to provide care to breastfeeding families?

Your response to this question impacts decisions about the General Education in the Health Sciences and Lactation Specific Clinical Practice requirements, as well as decisions about which pathway to follow.

With regard to the General Education in the Health Sciences requirement, your response has the following effects on the decision-making process:

- Health professionals have already completed these courses in the health sciences during their professional education.
- If you are not a health professional, you will need to evaluate your higher education transcripts to determine if you are missing any of the required courses in the health sciences.

When evaluating the Lactation Clinical Practice requirement, one should take into consideration that IBLCE recognizes and gives credit for two types of clinical experience that may be used to qualify through Pathway 1:

- Working or volunteering as a health professional to provide lactation and breastfeeding care.
- Breastfeeding support through volunteer or paid service for an organization that meets IBLCE-defined criteria for mother support counselor organizations.

Individuals who are unable to obtain paid or volunteer employment in lactation and breastfeeding may find that Pathway 2 or Pathway 3 is a better option. Alternatively, some individuals, even those with clinical experience in lactation and breastfeeding care, may prefer the learning methods and structure provided by Pathway 2 or 3, as

opposed to the clinical experience used by Pathway 1 candidates. Please note that Pathway 2 and 3 may not be available in every location; you should contact the IBLCE regional office that serves your country of residence for details.

Step A: Are you a recognized health professional?

| Health Professionals | Mother Support Counselors |
|--|---|
| <p>The following health professions are recognized by IBLCE as having completed the General Education in the Health Sciences courses during their professional education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chiropractor • Dentist/Dental Hygienist • Dietitian/Nutritionist • Midwife • Nurse <i>(Please Note: Assistant nurses or nursing aides are not recognized health professionals.)</i> • Occupational Therapist • Pharmacist • Psychologist/Social Worker • Physical Therapist/Physiotherapist • Physician/Medical Doctor • Physician's Assistant • Speech Pathologist/Therapist <p>General Education Requirement If your profession is listed above, the General Education in the Health Sciences requirement is complete.</p> <p>Health professionals must meet the national definition for their health profession and provide evidence of having completed an academic degree and/or meet the regulations and standards for practice in a recognized health profession in their country.</p> <p>When applying for the exam, health professionals must demonstrate completion of the General Education requirement by submitting a copy of their license, registration, diploma or transcript.</p> | <p>For the purposes of explaining the qualification requirements for the IBLCE exam, individuals who provide lactation support and care in other capacities, besides being a recognized health professional, are called mother support counselors. Mother support counselors must complete the General Education courses outlined below.</p> <p>General Education Requirement Courses in subjects typically studied by health professionals during their professional education are required of mother support counselors. These courses may be completed at any accredited school of higher learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 General Education in the Health Sciences courses must be completed prior to applying for the IBLCE exam. This requirement includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 8 higher education subjects, and ○ 6 additional subjects that may be completed through continuing education courses. • There is no time limit on this education. It is acceptable if it was completed some years ago. • Mother support counselors are required to submit copies of their transcripts and/or certificates to demonstrate completion of these General Education courses. <p>Completion of these health science courses may require several years of prerequisite study. The time and financial cost involved should be evaluated early in the process of deciding which pathway to follow. More information on the General Education requirement for mother support counselors is included below.</p> |

General Education Requirements Details

Health Professionals have already completed the General Education requirements

The [List of Recognized Health Professions](#) is included above and can be found at www.iblce.org/certification.

General Education for Mother Support Counselors

Courses in subjects typically studied by health professionals during their professional education are required of mother support counselors. These courses may be completed at **any** accredited school of higher learning.

- All General Education in the Health Sciences courses must be completed prior to applying for the IBLCE exam. This requirement includes: 8 higher education subjects and 6 continuing education topics.
- There is no time limit on this education. It is acceptable if it was completed some years ago.
- For detailed information, please consult the [General Education Guidelines](http://www.iblce.org/certification) found at www.iblce.org/certification.
- Mother support counselors are required to submit copies of their transcripts and/or certificates to demonstrate completion of these General Education courses.

At least one course in each of the eight (8) higher education subjects is required. The IBLCE Board of Directors defines higher education as education acquired after completion of compulsory education. It is typically provided at academies, universities, colleges, vocational schools, institutes of technology, trade schools and career colleges that award academic degrees or professional credentials. **Please Note:** The definition of what constitutes completion of compulsory education varies from country to country.

Candidates must have a passing grade in each higher education course. Each course must be at least one academic credit term in length and completed at an accredited institution of higher learning.

Please Note: The names given to academic terms vary and depend upon how the institution of higher learning divides the academic year.

- Semester is one of two divisions of an academic year that are typically 16-18 weeks long.
- Trimester is one of 3 divisions of an academic year that are typically 14-16 weeks long.
- Quarter is one of 4 divisions of an academic year that are typically about 12 weeks long.
- Mini-mester is a term used to describe an intensive of study period between semesters through which students may earn the same credit they would earn during a regular semester.

Regardless of the terminology used by an academic institution, candidates must receive a final passing grade in each of the higher education courses in the health sciences.

The higher education courses may be completed as in-person classroom education or through distance learning methods. A transcript, preferably an official transcript, showing the name of the school, course name and a passing grade is sufficient to document completion of study in the following 8 subjects:

- Biology
- Human Anatomy
- Human Physiology
- Infant and Child Growth and Development
- Nutrition
- Psychology or Counseling or Communication Skills
- Introduction to Research or Statistics
- Sociology or Cultural Sensitivity or Cultural Anthropology

IBLCE also requires completion of a course in each of six (6) additional health science topics. Courses in these topics are typically available as non-credit, continuing education courses of varying length. Copies of certificates of completion will satisfy the documentation requirements for the following 6 subjects:

- Basic life support (e.g. CPR)
- Medical documentation
- Professional ethics for health professionals
- Medical terminology
- Occupational safety and security for health professionals
- Universal safety precautions and infection control

Step B: Obtaining Experience in Lactation Specific Clinical Practice

Lactation specific clinical experience is defined as providing maternal/child care that supports breastfeeding families, including lactation assistance to pregnant and breastfeeding women and lactation education to families and/or professionals. Exam candidates are required to have varying amounts of lactation specific clinical practice hours, depending upon the pathway being followed.

The IBLCE exam tests the application of knowledge in the disciplines listed on the [IBLCE Exam Blueprint](#). The skill sets published in the [Clinical Competencies for the Practice of IBCLCs](#) are representative of the ways in which IBCLCs apply this knowledge to clinical situations. Candidates should have a broad range of experience in providing lactation and breastfeeding care that spans the spectrum from pre-conception through weaning and encompasses an extensive variety of clinical skills.

There are 3 ways to obtain the required lactation specific clinical practice and how a candidate obtains clinical practice in lactation care determines the pathway they will follow.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Through clinical experience (follow Pathway 1) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Applicants must have a minimum of 1000 hours of lactation specific clinical practice. b. This practice must have been obtained within the 5 years immediately prior to applying for the exam. |
| 2. As an integrated part of the academic program (follow Pathway 2) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The academic program curriculum incorporates the required clinical practice hours. b. Review the Pathway 2 Academic Program List found at www.iblce.org/certification for academic programs currently available. |
| 3. By completing an approved clinical apprenticeship (follow Pathway 3) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Clinical practice hours are incorporated within a directly supervised clinical apprenticeship. b. Individuals who want to follow this pathway must first submit a Pathway 3 Plan to IBLCE for approval. |

Pathway 1 Details (Relating to Lactation Clinical Practice)

Health Professionals

Health professionals may report clinical practice hours lactation support, assistance and education to pregnant and breastfeeding women, as well as lactation education to families and/or professionals. Four types of employment are recognized by IBLCE as meeting the Pathway 1 requirements for health professionals:

1. Independent practice by health professionals who are legally permitted to practice without supervision.
2. Maternal-child health care in a setting in which the health professional's lactation care is supervised by an on-site supervisor who may or may not be an IBCLC.
3. Practice in homes or other locations without on-site supervision and provisions are made for the health professional's off-site supervisor to conduct regular, periodic evaluation of the care provided.
4. Volunteer service as an accredited mother support counselor for one of the organizations on the list of [Recognized Mother Support Counselor Organizations](#).

In each of the above situations, Pathway 1 applicants may report the number of hours of lactation care they have provided over the 5 years immediately prior to exam application. The application form provides a template for calculating the hours.

In addition, health professionals applying through Pathway 1 must provide the names of 2 individuals who can verify the applicant's clinical practice hours and testify to the lactation care provided.

Mother Support Counselors

The lactation specific clinical practice hours that mother support counselors may use must have been obtained through their volunteer or paid service for an organization that meets the following requirements specified by IBLCE.

The organization must be a non-profit mother support counselor organization or health care delivery organization that requires its mother support counselors to:

1. Complete a structured training program that includes comprehensive education in breastfeeding management;
2. Work within a supervision structure that is appropriate to their training;
3. Adhere to defined ethical standards for conduct; and
4. Remain up to date by participating in continuing education.

Organizations that meet these criteria can be found on the list of [Recognized Mother Support Counselor Organizations](#) at www.iblce.org/certification.

Two types of mother support counselors may use their experience to qualify through Pathway 1:

| Accredited mother support counselors who volunteer from a mother support counselor organization | Mother support counselors working in a primary role of lactation support/care within a health care delivery organization |
|---|---|
| <p>Accredited, volunteer mother support counselors applying through Pathway 1 may receive up to 500 hours credit for each full year (or 10 hours/week) of service to their accrediting organization, within the 5 years immediately prior to exam application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The only exception to this rule is for mother support counselors who provide telephone and/or email counseling only. In this case, they may receive 250 hours credit for each full year (or 5 hours per week) of service. <p>The accrediting organization must provide a letter that verifies the mother support counselor's years of service. In addition, the applicant must provide the names of 2 other individuals who can testify to their lactation care.</p> | <p>For the purposes of following Pathway 1, mother support counselors who provide lactation care within a health care delivery organization must be supervised by an IBCLC or other health professional that is knowledgeable in lactation and breastfeeding care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mother support counselors may report the number of hours of lactation care they provided over the 5 years immediately prior to exam application. The application form provides a template for calculating the hours. • Their supervisor must verify the accuracy of the hours reported and the applicant must provide the names of 2 individuals, one of whom could be their supervisor, who can testify to the lactation care they provided. |

Pathway 2 Details (Relating to Lactation Clinical Practice)

Exam application must be made within the 5 years immediately following graduation from an academic program in human lactation and breastfeeding that meets Pathway 2 requirements. The academic program must:

- Be at least one year in length and offered by an accredited college or university
- Require students to complete the General Education in the Health Sciences requirement either before admission or concurrently with the other required studies and clinical experience
 - *Please Note: Health professionals will have already met this requirement.*
- Include both the classroom instruction and the clinical experience requirements in the curriculum
- Have recertified IBCLCs as the program director and primary faculty members
- Require a minimum of 90 hours of instruction in human lactation and breastfeeding
- Provide a minimum of 300 hours of lactation specific clinical experience that is **directly supervised** by currently certified IBCLCs

Health professionals and Mother support counselors who are considering Pathway 2 should take into consideration the limited number of accredited programs that are currently available. In fact, qualification through Pathway 2 is not available in all countries. Please consult the [Pathway 2 Academic Program List](#) for more information.

Completion of the General Education in the Health Sciences requirement should also be taken into consideration. This may involve completion of prerequisite coursework prior to admission to the academic program and most certainly before graduating from the academic program.

Graduation from an academic program may not occur until after the final IBLCE exam application deadline. In order to apply and qualify for the exam, Pathway 2 applicants must complete and sign a *Memorandum of Understanding* that outlines the documentation and deadlines that must be met in order to qualify for the exam in the same year in which they graduate. Please see the [Sample Memorandum of Understanding](#) at www.iblce.org/certification for details.

Pathway 3 Details (Relating to Lactation Clinical Practice)

The Pathway 3 Plan, or clinical apprenticeship, must be directed and mentored by one or more IBCLCs who have recertified at least once and the plan must be approved by IBLCE before the applicant begins accumulating the required minimum of 500 hours of directly supervised clinical practice. Health Professionals and Mother Support Counselors can find detailed information about the development and submission of a Pathway 3 Plan in the [Pathway 3 Plan Guide](#), available at www.iblce.org/certification.

Step C: Completing Education in Human Lactation & Breastfeeding

Within the 5 years immediately prior to applying for the IBLCE exam, health professionals and mother support counselors must complete at least 90 hours of evidence-based instruction in the disciplines and chronological periods listed on the [IBLCE Exam Blueprint](#).

The way this education is obtained depends upon the pathway followed:

| Pathway 1 and Pathway 3 | Pathway 2 |
|---|---|
| Enrollment in lactation specific courses offered by education providers is required. Lactation specific education is offered through in-person courses and distance learning. | The lactation specific education is completed as an integrated part of the academic program. |
| Sources of lactation education for Pathway 1 and Pathway 3 candidates include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses offered by independent educators and/or universities or colleges. There are a wide variety of such courses offered worldwide. The website of the IBLCE regional office that serves your country is a good resource for locating these courses. • Courses that have been approved by the Accreditation and Approval Review Committee (AARC) on Education, www.aarclactation.org. • Continuing education that is approved for CERPs (Continuing Education Recognition Points). For more information about CERP-approved education, visit the regional website that serves your country. | At this time, there are a limited number of academic programs in human lactation and breastfeeding which meet the requirements for Pathway 2. Please consult the Pathway 2 Academic Program List for more information. |







IBLCE will permit individuals to apply for the exam before completion of the lactation specific education. In order to be eligible for this privilege, candidates must agree to abide by the terms and conditions of a *Memorandum of Understanding* that outlines the documentation and deadlines that must be met in order to qualify for the exam in the same year in which they complete the education. Please see the [Sample Memorandum of Understanding](#) for details.

Please Note: The lactation specific education is an entirely separate requirement from the General Education in the Health Sciences requirement. For example, even though your lactation education may include information about some of the General Education topics, you must complete 90 hours of lactation education and also complete the coursework listed in the General Education in the Health Sciences.

Example Pathways Scenarios

The following charts offer some examples that may assist you in making decisions about the next steps toward meeting your goal of becoming an IBCLC.

These charts shown below are based upon this question: **Are you recognized by IBLCE as a health professional?**

| Answer: | YES, I am a health professional... | | |
|--|--|--|---|
|  | <p>...who works within the health care system to provide care to breastfeeding families.</p> | <p>...but I do not work within the health care system. I want to use my experience as a La Leche League (LLL) Leader to qualify for the IBLCE exam.</p> | <p>...who works in a hospital; however, I do not have experience in providing care to breastfeeding families. I would prefer to learn the clinical skills under the supervision of experienced IBCLCs.</p> |
|  | <p>✓ General Education in the Health Sciences requirement is complete. When you apply for the exam, you will need to provide a copy of your license, registration, transcript of your academic qualification or, diploma.</p> | | |
|  | <p>You may be able to use your clinical hours in lactation care to qualify through Pathway 1, if your experience meets IBLCE criteria for appropriate supervision.</p> | <p>LLL meets IBLCE criteria for mother support counselor organizations. If you have at least 2 years of service as a La Leche League Leader, you may be able to use this service to qualify through Pathway 1.</p> | <p>A Pathway 3 Plan, which involves a clinical apprenticeship, under the direct supervision of experienced IBCLCs, sounds like a good option for you.</p> |
| <p>In addition, you will need a minimum of 90 hours of education in human lactation and breastfeeding if you follow Pathways 1 or 3.</p> | | | |
| Answer: | NO, I am not a health professional. | | |
|  | <p>I work as a mother support counselor in my local hospital and want to use this experience to qualify for the exam.</p> | <p>I work in a retail store that rents and sells breastfeeding products.</p> | <p>I am a volunteer mother support counselor with the Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA).</p> |
|  | <p>✗ You will need to complete the General Education in the Health Sciences courses. You should evaluate your higher education transcripts to determine whether or not your previous education fulfills any of the General Education requirements.</p> | | |
|  | <p>Hospitals meet IBLCE criteria for organizations that employ mother support counselors; therefore, you may be able to use your employment to qualify through Pathway 1.</p> <p>In addition, you will need a minimum of 90 hours of education in human lactation and breastfeeding.</p> | <p>Retail stores do not meet IBLCE criteria for mother support counselor organizations. If obtaining employment in a suitable organization is not possible, consider Pathways 2 or 3.</p> <p>Pathway 2 provides an integrated academic program that includes all exam requirements. Pathway 3 is a clinical apprenticeship that must be pre-approved by IBLCE.</p> | <p>ABA meets IBLCE criteria for mother support counselor organizations. You may be able to qualify through Pathway 1, if you have at least 2 years of service as an ABA counselor.</p> <p>In addition, you will need a minimum of 90 hours of education in human lactation and breastfeeding.</p> |

Pathway Checklist

Pathway 1: Clinical Experience in Lactation and Breastfeeding Care

- General Education Courses: complete all 14 required courses
 - Licensed, registered or recognized health professionals have already satisfied these courses during their professional education.
 - Individuals who are not health professionals should review their transcript to determine if they have completed the 8 required higher education courses and 6 continuing education courses.
- Education in Human Lactation and Breastfeeding: enroll in courses offered by lactation education providers and complete 90 hours of instruction.
- Lactation Specific Clinical Practice: minimum of 1000 hours
 - Review the types of experiences that can be applied towards your required hours.
- References from 2 individuals who can testify to your clinical practice hours

Pathway 2: Academic Program in Human Lactation and Breastfeeding

- General Education Courses: complete all 14 required courses
 - Licensed, registered or recognized health professionals have already satisfied these courses during their professional education.
 - Before enrollment in the academic program, review the required courses and your transcript to see if you will need to take any courses to complete this requirement.
- Graduate from an academic program that integrates the following in the curriculum:
 - 90 hours of classroom instruction in human lactation and breastfeeding
 - 300 hours of **directly supervised** clinical practice in lactation and breastfeeding care
- References from 2 individuals who can testify to your clinical practice hours

Pathway 3: IBLCE-Approved Clinical Apprenticeship

- General Education Courses: complete all 14 required courses
 - Licensed, registered or recognized health professionals have already satisfied these courses during their professional education.
 - Review the required courses and your transcript to see if you will need to take any courses to complete this requirement.
- Submit a Pathway 3 Plan to IBLCE for approval.
- Education in Human Lactation and Breastfeeding: enroll in courses offered by lactation education providers and complete 90 hours.
- Lactation Specific Clinical Practice: complete 500 hours of directly supervised clinical practice as outlined in your IBLCE-approved Pathway 3 clinical apprenticeship.
- References from 2 individuals who can testify to your clinical practice hours.

Applying for the IBLCE Exam

Complete information about the cost, deadlines, exam center locations and other IBLCE exam details can be found in the *Exam Candidate Supplement* specific to your country or region of the world. Please visit the website of the IBLCE regional office that serves your country for details.

Information about the cost, deadlines, test center locations, etc. can be found in your *Exam Candidate Supplement*.

Exam Eligibility

Applicants who successfully meet all requirements will be notified by email of their eligibility to take the exam. This eligibility notification will include information about exam center locations and exam day procedures.

Reasonable Accommodations

IBLCE works with candidates to provide reasonable accommodations during the exam administration for medical conditions, disabilities and/or other situations that require consideration. The IBLCE exam application form will ask you to disclose the reasons that you are requesting reasonable accommodations during the exam.

Depending upon the reasons for your request, you will be required to provide documentation of the medical need for reasonable accommodations and details about the requested modifications to the exam administration procedure.

To allow sufficient time for making reasonable accommodations, candidates must notify IBLCE of their requests at the time they apply for the exam. If an issue arises after submitting the exam application, please report your request to IBLCE as soon as possible.

Special Note for Pregnant Women

If you experience health difficulties that may interfere with your ability to take the exam, please notify the regional office that serves your country and refer to the cancellation/withdrawal policy found in the Exam Candidate Supplement. This policy addresses the financial implications of cancelling/withdrawing from the exam and the IBLCE regional office staff will assist you in making informed decisions about your options.

Special Note for New Mothers

IBLCE has specific policies and procedures for allowing breastfeeding breaks during exam administration. If you expect to need such allowances, please read the section below.

IBLCE Procedures for Breastfeeding Breaks during Exam Administration

The IBLCE mission and purpose focus on the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding. Therefore, it is appropriate for IBLCE to make reasonable accommodations for exam candidates who are also the mothers of breastfed babies.

It is necessary that these accommodations meet all the requirements for ensuring IBLCE exam security while at the same time offering reasonable solutions that will allow mothers of breastfed babies to feed their babies and preserve the breastfeeding relationship. The entire [Procedures for Breastfeeding Breaks During Exam Administration](#) is available at www.iblce.org/resources.

Bilingual Dictionary

IBLCE translates the exam into a wide range of languages. For candidates whose primary language is not among those into which the exam is translated, IBLCE will permit the use of a bilingual dictionary during the exam.

If a request for use of a bilingual dictionary is approved, IBLCE will provide the dictionary to the exam site location for use by the candidate during the exam administration. The use of personal dictionaries is not permitted. The dictionary provided by IBLCE will NOT be a medical dictionary.

Exam Policies and Procedures

Exam Admission Procedures

To gain admission to the exam, you must present **TWO (2) forms of identification**, one with a current photograph. Both forms of identification must be current and include your current name and signature. The **FIRST** form of identification **MUST** be one of the following:

- driver's license with photograph
- state identification card with photograph
- passport with photograph
- military identification card with photograph

The **SECOND** form of identification **MUST** display your name and signature for signature verification. For example, you may bring one of the following:

- credit card with signature
- social security card with signature
- employment/student ID card with signature

If your name on the SECOND form of identification is different than it appears on your FIRST form of identification, you must bring proof of your name change (e.g., marriage license, divorce decree or court order).

Please Note: If you do not have these 2 forms of identification, you should contact the IBLCE regional office that serves your country. Please do not wait until the day of the exam to discuss this with your regional office, as you will not be admitted without the correct identification.

Candidates should allow adequate time for arrival at the exam site. Once registration is completed and the exam room door is closed, admission to the exam will not be permitted. **Candidates who arrive late will not be admitted and they will forfeit all rights to any refund of exam fees.** Likewise, candidates who fail to register on the day of the exam will forfeit all rights to any refund of exam fees. **There are no exceptions to these rules.**

Exam Administration Policies and Procedures

Each exam site will be supervised and monitored by one or more proctors. Candidates are expected to follow the rules announced by the proctors. The rules are in place to ensure that the exam administration is as free as possible from distractions and that all candidates are treated fairly. The proctors will designate a location where personal belongings such as purses are to be stored during the exam. During the exam administration, proctors will be monitoring the room for any signs of cheating or other inappropriate behavior.

Use of electronic devices such as cell phones is not allowed during the exam.

Use of electronic devices such as cell phones is not allowed during the exam. ***Candidates found in possession of and/or using such devices during the exam will be dismissed. There are no exceptions to this rule.*** Candidates are advised that some cell phone alarms will ring even if the phone is powered off.

Candidates who bring their cell phones to the exam site must power off the phone (putting the phone on silent/mute is not sufficient) and store it in the place designated by the proctor. [Please note: Neither the proctors nor IBLCE are responsible for your personal property.] ***If a candidate's cell phone rings or the alarm function sounds during the exam administration, the candidate will be dismissed from the exam. There are no exceptions to this rule.***

Talking to another exam candidate is not permitted during the exam. Questions regarding the exam administration will be answered by the proctor during orientation. Questions concerning the examination content are not permitted. Proctors are not allowed to provide interpretation or clarification of exam questions. Nor are they allowed to define words. Cheating will not be tolerated. The proctor has the authority to terminate the exam for anyone s/he determines is cheating.

The exam will be administered either by computer or by paper and pencil. For computer-based testing, the candidate will view and answer questions on the computer provided. For paper and pencil testing, the exam questions will be provided in a booklet and answers must be recorded on an answer sheet using a pencil.

Retest Policy

There is no limit to the number of times an unsuccessful candidate may apply to retake the IBLCE certification exam. Applicants who plan to re-take the exam should carefully review their exam score report and enroll in education in those areas of the exam in which their performance was poor. To be eligible to take the exam again, a candidate must meet current eligibility requirements, submit an application for the applicable exam year, and pay the relevant exam fee.

Appeals Policies and Procedures

The following policies and procedures apply to exam eligibility, exam administration and exam scoring. These policies and procedures can be found on the International website at www.iblce.org/resources.

Appealing an Exam Eligibility Decision

The IBLCE certification program is more than an exam. It is a process that includes eligibility requirements, and ongoing recertification. Eligibility requirements are established to be sure that candidates are reasonably well prepared for the exam by virtue of their education and experience. These background characteristics do not guarantee passing the exam, but they do correlate with exam performance.

To view and download the policy and procedures for appealing an exam eligibility decision, [click here](#).

Exam Administration Complaints, Hand Scoring and Appealing an Exam Outcome

IBLCE expends significant effort in creating a standardized and uniform exam environment, and in verifying the accuracy of scores. However, candidates who believe that they were examined under adverse conditions or that their scores are not accurate may file a complaint regarding the exam administration, request a hand score, or appeal an exam outcome. Candidates who wish to do so should submit the appropriate form, along with any applicable fee, to the appropriate IBLCE regional office.

To view and download the policy and procedures for submitting an exam administration complaint, requesting hand scoring or appealing an exam outcome, [click here](#).

Exam Results Notification

Official exam results will be mailed in mid to late October. Candidates who pass the exam will also receive their IBCLC certificate and identification card, along with their score report.

IBCLC Registry

IBLCE reserves the right to publish the names of current IBCLCs. This registry can be found on the IBLCE websites.

Closing

Thank you for your interest in the International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) credential. If you need additional assistance with exam eligibility or application, please contact the IBLCE regional office that serves your country of residence.

IBLCE in the Americas: serving North, Central and South America and Israel

- www.americas.iblce.org

IBLCE in Asia Pacific: serving Australia, Asia and Africa

- www.iblce.edu.au

IBLCE in Europe: serving Europe, the Middle East and North Africa

- www.europe.iblce.org

IBLCE Exam Blueprint

All exam questions have both Discipline and Chronological parameters. This blueprint gives you an indication of the breadth of information you need to know for the exam. The examples given are for guidance only, they are not inclusive of all aspects covered under each learning discipline.

DISCIPLINES

- A. Maternal and infant ANATOMY**
e.g. breast and nipple structure and development; blood, lymph, innervations, mammary tissue; infant oral anatomy and reflexes; assessment; anatomical variations
- B. Maternal and infant normal PHYSIOLOGY and ENDOCRINOLOGY**
e.g. hormones; lactogenesis; endocrine/autocrine control of milk supply; induced lactation; fertility; infant hepatic, pancreatic and renal function; metabolism; effect of complementary feeds; digestion and GI tract; voiding and stooling patterns
- C. Maternal and infant normal NUTRITION and BIOCHEMISTRY**
e.g. breastmilk synthesis and composition; milk components, function and effect on baby; comparison with other products/milks; feeding patterns and intake over time; variations of maternal diet; ritual and traditional foods; introduction of solids
- D. Maternal and infant IMMUNOLOGY and INFECTIOUS DISEASE**
e.g. antibodies and other immune factors; cross-infection; bacteria and viruses in milk; allergies and food sensitivity; long term protective factors
- E. Maternal and infant PATHOLOGY**
e.g. acute/chronic abnormalities and diseases, both local and systemic; breast and nipple problems and pathology; endocrine pathology; mother/child physical and neurological disabilities; congenital abnormalities; oral pathology; neurological immaturity; failure to thrive; hyperbilirubinemia and hypoglycemia; impact of pathology on breastfeeding
- F. Maternal and infant PHARMACOLOGY and TOXICOLOGY**
e.g. environmental contaminants; maternal use of medication, OTC preparations, social or recreational drugs and their effect on the infant, on milk composition, and on lactation; galactagogues/suppressants; effects of medications used in labor; contraceptives; complementary therapies
- G. PSYCHOLOGY, SOCIOLOGY, and ANTHROPOLOGY**
e.g. counseling and adult education skills; grief, postnatal depression and psychosis; effect of socio-economic, lifestyle, and employment issues on breastfeeding; maternal-infant relationship; maternal role adaptation; parenting skills; sleep patterns; cultural beliefs and practices; family; support systems; domestic violence; mothers with special needs, e.g. adolescents, migrants

H. GROWTH PARAMETERS and DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

e.g. fetal and preterm growth; breastfed and artificially fed growth patterns; recognition of normal and delayed physical, psychological and cognitive developmental markers; breastfeeding behaviors to 12 months and beyond; weaning

I. INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCH

e.g. skills required to critically appraise and interpret research literature, lactation consultant educational material, and consumer literature; understanding terminology used in research and basic statistics; reading tables and graphs; surveys and data collection

J. ETHICAL and LEGAL ISSUES

e.g. IBLCE Code of Ethics; ILCA Standards of Practice; practicing within scope of practice; referrals and interdisciplinary relationships; confidentiality; medical-legal responsibilities; charting and report writing skills; record keeping; informed consent; battery; maternal/infant neglect and abuse; conflict of interest; ethics of equipment rental and sales

K. BREASTFEEDING EQUIPMENT and TECHNOLOGY

e.g. identification of breastfeeding devices and equipment, their appropriate use, and technical expertise to use them properly; handling and storing human milk, including human milk banking protocols

L. TECHNIQUES

e.g. breastfeeding techniques, including positioning and latch; assessing milk transfer; breastfeeding management; normal feeding patterns; milk expression

M. PUBLIC HEALTH

e.g. breastfeeding promotion and community education; working with groups with low breast-feeding rates; creating and implementing clinical protocols; international tools and documents; WHO Code; BFHI implementation; prevalence, surveys and data collection for research purposes

CHRONOLOGICAL PERIODS

1. Preconception
2. Prenatal
3. Labor/birth (Perinatal)
4. Prematurity
5. 0 - 2 days
6. 3 - 14 days
7. 15 - 28 days
8. 1 - 3 months
9. 4 - 6 months
10. 7 - 12 months
11. Beyond 12 months
12. General principles