CANDIDATE INFORMATION GUIDE

For initial, repeat, and lapsed candidates who plan to apply for the IBCLC® examination

As an International Organisation, IBLCE® uses British English in its publications.
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I. 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.

A. Contact Information

International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE)
10301 Democracy Lane, Suite 400
Fairfax, VA 22030-2545
USA
Phone: +1 703-560-7330
Fax: +1 703-560-7332
www.iblce.org

IBLCE has locations in Austria, Australia, and the United States. Candidates may reach the location that serves their country of residence by using the contact information found on the IBLCE website.

B. Key Dates

Please visit the IBLCE website for application deadlines and other important key dates.

II. Purpose of Certification

Purpose: The purpose of the IBCLC certification is to recognise each individual who meets established criteria which uphold standards of practise and thereby promote public protection.

Population Being Certified: An IBCLC is a professional member of the healthcare team who has earned and maintains the credential which identifies knowledge and expertise in breastfeeding management and care. An individual who holds the credential has met defined eligibility requirements and passed a rigorous, psychometrically sound examination. Since 1985, the IBCLC credential has provided evidence that as a practitioner, the IBCLC has the required knowledge to:

- Advocate and educate about breastfeeding as a global public health imperative
- Provide leadership for society, from communities to policymakers
- Promote environments that support breastfeeding
- Facilitate an optimal breastfeeding experience for families
• Identify and manage high acuity lactation challenges

An IBCLC works independently and in collaboration to empower mothers, children, and families to meet their breastfeeding goals.

Mark Issued: The designation issued to an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant is both International Board Certified Lactation Consultant and in abbreviated form IBCLC.

The IBCLC certification programme offers a voluntary credential and certification does not necessarily confer the right or privilege to practise. Individuals who hold the IBCLC credential must abide by the legal authority in the jurisdiction in which they practise or wish to practise. Candidates must meet the eligibility criteria outlined in this Guide, adhere to the Code of Professional Conduct for IBCLCs, as well as pass an examination in order to earn the IBCLC certification.

To maintain the IBCLC certification, certificants must recertify every 5 years. Five years after last passing the examination, IBCLC certificants have the option to recertify by completing 75 continuing education recognition points (CERPs) or equivalent individual CERPs OR re-examination. Re-examination is mandatory within 10 years after last passing the examination. Please review the Recertification Guide on IBLCE’s website for further information about recertification requirements.

Please note: commencing with IBCLCs recertifying in 2022, the examination will remain an option for recertification but will no longer be a requirement. A self-assessment and required focused continuing education will be an option in lieu of examination at each five-year recertification period.

IBCLC certificants who let their certification lapse will have one examination attempt within one year immediately following their expiration year to sit the examination without having to meet the clinical hour and education requirements and must pay the full examination fee. For any subsequent examination attempts, lapsed candidates must meet all eligibility requirements for an initial candidate valid at the time of examination application and pay the full examination fee.

III. IBCLC Examination Eligibility Requirements

IBLCE requires that all IBCLC applicants must meet the following key components of the IBCLC eligibility requirements irrespective of Pathway chosen.

A. Health Sciences Education
Education in health science subjects typically studied by health professionals during their professional education is required of all candidates.

Candidates must complete education in the 14 subjects described in the Health Sciences Education Guide. If one is educated in one of the professions on the Recognised Health Professions List, one meets this requirement. Or, one meets this requirement if one can provide evidence from a governmental authority that recognises the profession as a clinical health profession.

**B. Lactation Specific Education**

Comprehensive education in human lactation and breastfeeding is a vital part of preparing to become an IBCLC. Candidates are encouraged to secure education which covers all the disciplines and chronological periods listed on the IBCLC Detailed Content Outline.

**Please note:** starting with examination applications for the April 2021 examination administration and those administrations following, in addition to the 90 hours of lactation specific education, five (5) hours of education focused on communication skills will be required. Preferably, these five hours will be directly related to lactation and breastfeeding care, but this is not a requirement. This change was recommended as communication is a key area in the IBCLC Detailed Content Outline and in practise, as IBCLCs must understand the client and provide the most appropriate plan of care, engage in active listening and emotional support, and assist the client in making informed decisions.

IBLCE does not offer, approve, or accredit lactation education designed to prepare candidates for the certification examination. Nor does IBLCE recommend or endorse any particular programme or course in lactation education.

**C. Lactation Specific Clinical Experience**

All candidates must complete relevant clinical experience. Clinical skills are a key knowledge area and important for successful practise as a lactation consultant.

Lactation specific clinical experience is providing maternal/child care that supports breastfeeding families, including lactation assistance to pregnant and breastfeeding women and lactation education to families and/or professionals.

All reported lactation specific clinical experience must be supervised. Depending upon the eligibility pathway a candidate follows, clinical experience may need to be directly supervised.

Candidates are encouraged to 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. The IBCLC examination tests the application of knowledge in the disciplines listed on the *IBCLC Detailed Content Outline*.

Actual practise and provision of lactation and breastfeeding care is required. Observation or shadowing of lactation practitioners does not count as lactation specific clinical hours.

Clinical experience may include in-person consultations, telephone consultations, or online breastfeeding or lactation care.

**D. Adherence to the Code of Professional Conduct for IBCLCs**

The Code of Professional Conduct for IBCLCs and accompanying procedures are publicly available on the IBLCE website. The purpose of this is to define professional conduct for IBCLCs and to protect the public.

**IV. Pathways to IBCLC Examination Eligibility**

To be eligible to sit the IBCLC examination, one may pursue one of three pathways to meet the key eligibility components set forth above. One must meet the criteria through one of the following pathways to be eligible to sit for the IBCLC examination. The pathways are designed to ensure that all applicants have a health sciences background, a minimum of 90 hours of lactation specific education, as well as relevant clinical experience and adherence to the *Code of Professional Conduct for IBCLCs* by attestation. These three eligibility pathways permit individuals from a variety of diverse backgrounds to gain the knowledge and skills relevant to practise as an IBCLC. Further details may be found on the IBLCE website.

**A. Pathway 1: Recognised Health Professionals and Recognised Breastfeeding Support Counsellors**

Pathway 1 IBCLC candidates must practise as a *Recognised Health Professional* or provide breastfeeding support through a *Recognised Breastfeeding Support Counsellor Organisation*. In the case of applicants who provide breastfeeding support through a Recognised Breastfeeding Support Counsellor Organisation, they must have completed the 14 subjects set forth in the Health Sciences Education Guide. Additionally, all Pathway 1 candidates must have the following:

- Minimum of 90 hours of lactation specific education within the **five years immediately** prior to examination application.
- If applying for the April 2021 examination or beyond, an additional five (5) hours of education focused on communication skills. Preferably these five hours will be directly related to lactation and breastfeeding care, but this is not a requirement.
• Minimum of 1000 hours of lactation specific clinical practise in an appropriate supervised setting within the **five years immediately** prior to examination application.

• Clinical practise is to be obtained in an appropriate supervised setting, to include the following:
  - Hospital
  - Birth Centre
  - Community Clinic
  - Lactation Care Clinic/Practice
  - Primary Care Practitioner’s Practice/Office

• Clinical practise hours can be earned through independent practise as a licensed/registered healthcare professional in non-healthcare settings.

• For clinical practise, breastfeeding support counsellors from a **Recognised Breastfeeding Support Counsellor Organisation**, clinical hours must be earned in a delivery setting which meets the following criteria:
  - Provide structured training programmes for their counsellors which include comprehensive education in breastfeeding and lactation management
  - Have a Code of Ethics or Professional Conduct
  - Provide structured supervision for counsellors, with an appropriate level of training
  - Provide a continuing education programme for counsellors

• **Please note:** Candidates associated with an **IBLCE Recognised Breastfeeding Support Counsellor Organisation** are to earn clinical hours on an hour-per-hour basis. Please reference the **IBLCE Recognised Breastfeeding Support Counsellor Organisation** on the IBLCE website for detailed implementation information.

• Whether a **Recognised Health Professional** or a breastfeeding support counsellor from a **Recognised Support Counsellor Organisation**, the 1000 hours does not need to be **directly** supervised.

• Adherence to, with attestation, the **Code of Professional Conduct for IBCLCs**.

**B. Pathway 2: Accredited Lactation Academic Programmes**

Pathway 2 IBCLC applicants must complete a comprehensive academic programme in human lactation and breastfeeding that is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) or another accrediting body with equivalent accreditation standards for lactation academic programmes. The programme must be accredited at the time of the candidate’s completion.

These comprehensive lactation academic programmes are university or college-based, include both didactic and clinical components, and require health sciences education, whether as a prerequisite or as education which must be earned concurrently, prior to
completion of the academic programme.

All Pathway 2 applicants, via their lactation academic programme, must have:

- Minimum of 90 hours of lactation specific education within the **five years immediately prior** to examination application.
- If applying for the April 2021 examination or beyond, an additional five (5) hours of education focused on communication skills. Preferably these five hours will be directly related to lactation and breastfeeding care, but this is not a requirement.
- Minimum of 300 hours of *directly supervised* lactation specific clinical practise within the **five years immediately prior** to examination application.
  - The IBCLC(s) providing the direct supervision must be currently certified IBCLCs in good standing.
- Adherence to, with attestation, the *Code of Professional Conduct for IBCLCs*.

Pathway 2 IBCLC applicants must have completed the accredited lactation academic programme within the five years immediately prior to their examination application. Please review the current list of programmes that are eligible for this Pathway on the IBLCE website. Only these specific programmes are eligible and applicants must check this list or contact the programme provider with any questions about its accreditation status.

**C. Pathway 3: Mentorship with an IBCLC**

Pathway 3 mentorship is a structured, defined relationship between an applicant and IBCLC(s) which must be preapproved. The mentorship must be developed according to the specifications found in the *Pathway 3 Plan Guide*, and the certification status of the IBCLCs serving as mentors must be verified by IBLCE prior to beginning the mentorship. **All Pathway 3 Plans MUST be verified by IBLCE through an application process (which includes a fee) PRIOR to earning clinical hours for this Pathway.**

In addition to the *Health Sciences Education* courses, Pathway 3 candidates must complete:

- Minimum of 90 hours of lactation specific education within the **five years immediately** prior to examination application.
- If applying for the April 2021 examination or beyond, an additional five (5) hours of education focused on communication skills. Preferably these five hours will be directly related to lactation and breastfeeding care, but this is not a requirement.
- Minimum of 500 hours of *directly supervised* lactation specific clinical practise as described in the *Pathway 3 Plan Guide* and obtained within the **five years**
immediately prior to examination application.

- The IBCLC(s) who provide the direct supervision must be currently certified IBCLCs in good standing.
- Adherence to, with attestation, the Code of Professional Conduct for IBCLCs.

The Pathway 3 Plan Guide can be found on the IBLCE website.

V. Important Publications for Examination Candidates

IBCLC examination candidates should be familiar with the following publications, all of which can be found on the IBLCE website.

- IBCLC Detailed Content Outline
- Clinical Competencies for the Practice of International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs)
- Scope of Practice for International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) Certificants
- IBLCE Disciplinary Procedures
- IBLCE Appeals Policies (in the Candidate Information Guide and Recertification Guide) and Forms
- Code of Professional Conduct for IBCLCs

VI. Applying to Sit the Examination

A. Choose Your Pathway

After determining their examination eligibility pathway, applicants should use the Pathway Checklist found at the end of this Guide to be sure they have met all requirements of that pathway and retain any documentation that verifies completion of the pathway requirements, as they will need to submit evidence if audited.

B. Complete an Online Application

The online application is available in the same languages as IBLCE offers the examination. Visit the IBLCE website and locate your language.

C. Fees and Payments

Complete information about the fees and payment options can be found at the end of this Guide.

D. IBCLC Examination Overview
The examination consists of 175 multiple choice questions. Each question has only one correct answer, and there is no penalty for a wrong answer. It is to your advantage to answer all questions. The examination is given in two parts, and most questions in Part Two are associated with an image. The standard IBLCE examination is of four hours’ duration. Thirty extra minutes of time are allocated for test takers who attest that the examination is not offered in their primary language. Additional test time is provided for paper; the paper examination requires use of an examination booklet, a photo booklet as well as an answer sheet, whereas use of the computer-based testing system is more streamlined. The IBCLC examination consists of content related to the knowledge domains described in the IBCLC Detailed Content Outline.

E. Examination Sites

IBLCE offers computer-based testing (CBT) for the examination worldwide. In countries where CBT centres are not geographically available or in cases of substantiated reasonable accommodations, paper and pencil administration of the examination may be offered. Test centre locations can be viewed prior to applying for an examination, but please know that IBLCE’s available test centre list changes periodically. Test centre availability will be most accurate at the time that you apply and go to schedule the examination appointment. IBLCE will notify you by email when you are able to schedule an appointment. Scheduling as soon as you receive this notice can assist you with finding the test centre of your choice.

F. Examination Security and Incident Review Protocols

The IBCLC examination is offered in secure testing environments in order to maintain the integrity of the examination and the IBCLC certification programme. IBLCE examination administrations follow security and confidentiality protocols.

IBLCE reviews incidents during examination administrations, and after the examinations, to follow up as needed to determine the nature of the incident and to seek resolution as applicable.

G. Reasonable Accommodations

IBLCE works with candidates to provide reasonable accommodations during the examination administration for medical conditions and disabilities. The IBLCLC examination application form asks the candidate whether s/he seeks reasonable accommodation for the examination. If the candidate answers in the affirmative, IBLCE reaches out to the candidate and asks the candidate to submit a request form and third-party documentation. Such third-party documentation must directly link the requested reasonable accommodation(s) to the verified health condition(s).
To allow sufficient time for making reasonable accommodations, candidates must notify IBLCE of their requests at the time they apply for the examination. If an issue arises after submitting the examination application, candidates should report the request to IBLCE as soon as possible.

**H. Special Note for Pregnant Candidates**

Candidates who experience health difficulties that may interfere with their ability to take the examination must notify IBLCE as soon as possible. In some circumstances, due to health complications, candidates may need to cancel or withdraw from the exam.

There are financial implications for cancelling/withdrawing from the examination. The IBLCE office staff can assist candidates in making informed decisions.

**I. Breast/Chestfeeding During Examination Administration**

The International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE) is devoted to lactation and breast/chestfeeding care. Therefore, it is appropriate for IBLCE to provide the opportunity for examination candidates who are breast/chestfeeding to breast/chestfeed or express milk during the IBCLC examination while at the same time maintaining examination security. It is necessary that these allowances meet all the requirements for ensuring IBLCE examination security while at the same time offering reasonable solutions that will allow test takers to breast/chestfeed or pump during the examination appointment. Therefore a break will be permitted for breast/chestfeeding or expressing milk after the first part of the examination, but no additional examination seat time for testing will be permitted. Additionally, all examination candidates, inclusive of those breast/chestfeeding or expressing milk, may not return to the first part of the examination after its completion.

Candidates requesting a breast/chestfeeding break during the examination should read the *Procedures for Breast/Chestfeeding During Examination* found on the IBLCE website.

**J. Non-Primary Language**

The IBCLC examination is translated into a wide range of languages. For candidates or certificants whose primary language, as attested to on the IBCLC application, is not among those into which the IBCLC examination is translated, IBLCE will provide extra examination time of 30 minutes.

**VII. Confidentiality Policy**
A. Commitment to Confidentiality

IBLCE is committed to protecting confidential and/or proprietary information related to applicants, candidates, certificants, the examination development process, and examination content. IBLCE will not disclose any confidential applicant, candidate, or certificant information unless authorised in writing by the individual or as required by law.

B. Examination Results

Individual examination results are considered confidential. Examination scores are released only to the individual candidate unless a signed release is provided in advance. Results are not released by phone or fax. Personal information submitted by applicants, candidates, and certificants with an application for initial certification or recertification is considered confidential.

C. Application Status

An individual’s application status is considered confidential. IBLCE does not disclose information regarding whether or not an individual has applied for certification or has taken the examination. Current certification status is published and verifiable as noted in the Credential Verification section of this policy.

D. Credential Verification

The names of certified individuals are not considered confidential and may be published by IBLCE. Published information may include name, city, state, country, and certification status. An online Registry of certificants is provided to the public. Employers may also receive written verification provided that IBLCE has received a signed release from the certificant.

E. De-Identified Data

To promote and support research within the human lactation and breastfeeding field, IBLCE will, upon approval by the IBLCE Research Committee, provide aggregated and de-identified data. To achieve these goals and aims, IBLCE reserves the right to use a combination of de-identified data, including but not limited to examination results, to evaluate performance, testing, and administration strategies for research and evaluation purposes. IBLCE may also disseminate approved surveys and questionnaire-type requests to its constituents to complete at their own will.

F. Examination Candidates

IBLCE examination candidates are prohibited from transmitting information about
IBLCE examination questions or content in any form to any person or entity at any time, either prior to, during, or following the examination, and failure to comply with this prohibition, or failure to report any information about suspected violations of such prohibitions or otherwise about any possible examination irregularities by themselves or others, may result in their scores being cancelled or their certification being revoked in accordance with IBLCE policies and procedures and/or legal action against the candidate, including criminal prosecution.

VIII. Initial Candidate and Recertification Audit Policy

IBLCE audits initial applications and recertification applications. These audits are conducted on a standardised and randomised basis. If selected for such an audit, the applicant or certificant must furnish the complete, accurate information in a timely manner. Failure to do so may result in a delay or denial to sit the IBCLC examination and/or disciplinary action pursuant to the Code of Professional Conduct and/or suspension or revocation of the opportunity to reapply for certification.

In addition to the randomised and standardised audit process set forth above, IBLCE specifically further reserves the right to require any applicant or recertificant to provide proof of education, employment, coursework, or proof of any of the initial eligibility or recertification requirements in a timely manner and be complete and accurate. Such failure to do so could also result in a delay or denial to sit the IBCLC examination and/or disciplinary action pursuant to the Code of Professional Conduct and/or suspension or revocation of the opportunity to reapply for certification.

IX. Notification of Examination Eligibility

Applicants who successfully meet all requirements will be notified by email of their eligibility to take the examination. This eligibility notification will include information about examination centre locations and examination day procedures. Applicants who do not meet the examination eligibility requirements will be notified by email and will be eligible for a partial refund of examination fees paid.

X. Policy for Appealing an Eligibility or Recertification Decision

IBLCE will review appeals of adverse certification eligibility or recertification decisions from IBCLC certificants and applicants. An adverse decision may be appealed for the following reasons: 1) IBLCE did not apply certification or recertification criteria correctly or 2) a factual error impacted the underlying decision.

A missed deadline may be appealed only due to substantiated and verified extraordinary circumstances. Certificants or applicants who wish to do so should submit the Appeals
Form. The requirements associated with this process are described below.

Extraordinary circumstances are exclusively serious illness or severe injury of the candidate/certificant or immediate family member, death of an immediate family member, experiencing unavoidable natural disaster, or changes related to active military duty.

Certificants or applicants who are determined to be ineligible to take the examination or ineligible to recertify by CERPs will be notified by IBLCE. All appeals must be submitted to IBLCE within 30 days of the date of the notification of ineligibility.

Appeals are evaluated by the IBLCE Appeals Committee, which considers the executed appeals form together with information submitted in support of the appeal. In signing the appeals form, the certificant or applicant acknowledges that the decision of the IBLCE Appeals Committee is final.

XI. Examination Withdrawal/Cancellation

If a candidate must withdraw from the IBCLC examination for which s/he has applied and is accepted, and/or cancel her/his appointment to take the IBCLC examination, the candidate MUST notify IBLCE in writing by the posted deadlines to be eligible for a partial refund. After the posted deadlines, no partial refunds will be given to candidates who withdraw/cancel from the IBCLC examination. Only documented extraordinary circumstances will be accepted as reasons for IBLCE to consider a request for the fees paid to be deferred to a future examination. Review the IBCLC Examination Withdrawal/Cancellation Policy on the IBLCE website for further details.

XII. Examination Rescheduling Policy

Examination candidates who must reschedule their appointments may do so by the posted deadlines on IBLCE’s website. After these dates, candidates will not be allowed to reschedule their appointments. Only under extraordinary circumstances will examination candidates be considered to reschedule. IBLCE must be notified if an appointment needs to be rescheduled after these dates. Such decisions on rescheduling are determined solely by IBLCE.

Once you have successfully rescheduled your appointment, you will receive a rescheduling confirmation e-mail. Failure to show up to your testing centre will result in loss of examination fees. Examination candidates can only be rescheduled for the examination for which they have been accepted.
XIII. Examination Admissions Procedures and Candidate Conduct

To gain admission to the examination, candidates must present TWO (2) forms of identification. The primary ID must be a valid, unexpired government-issued identification that includes the candidate’s name, current photograph and signature, and the secondary ID must have either their name and signature or their name and current photograph.

The FIRST form of identification MUST be one of the following government-issued IDs:
- driver's license with photograph
- state identification card with photograph
- passport with photograph
- military identification card with photograph
- green card permanent residence card or visa with photograph

The SECOND form of identification MUST display the candidate’s name and signature or name and current photograph. Candidates may bring one of the following:
- credit card with signature
- social security card with signature
- employment/student ID card with signature

Please Note: Candidates who do not have these two forms of identification must contact IBLCE before the examination day to learn of their options. The names on the IDs must match and must be the same name as the one on file with IBLCE. Candidates who need to update or make changes to their name MUST contact IBLCE with these changes and such updates/changes can be made up to 72 hours prior to the scheduled examination appointment; however, the IDs must match at the time of examination check-in.

Candidates should allow adequate time for arrival at the examination site. Candidates are encouraged to arrive at the test centre 30 minutes prior to the scheduled appointment. This should give candidates adequate time to complete the necessary sign-in procedures.

Candidates who arrive more than 15 minutes late for their appointment will be refused admission and examination fees will be forfeited (for 2020 examinations and beyond, this applies for candidates arriving more than 30 minutes late). Likewise, candidates who fail to register at the examination site on the day of the examination will forfeit all rights to any refund of examination fees. Failure to make an appointment by the posted deadlines will result in the forfeiture of the examination fees paid.

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

Candidates may not leave the test centre during the examination administration or breaks. Leaving the test centre will result in an immediate dismissal from the exam. You will not be allowed to use your mobile/cell phone or electronic devices during the examination or during any breaks that you take during the examination administration. Candidates found in possession of and/or using such devices during the examination or during breaks will be dismissed and their examinations will not be scored. Candidates who bring their cell phones or other electronic devices to the examination site must power them off (putting them on silent/mute is not sufficient) and store them in the place designated by the test centre administrator/IBLCE Examination Proctor. [Please note: Neither the test centre administrators/IBLCE Examination Proctors nor IBLCE are responsible for candidates’ personal property.]

Talking to another examination candidate is not permitted during the exam. Questions regarding the examination administration will be answered by the test centre administrator/IBLCE Examination Proctor during orientation. Questions concerning the examination content are not permitted. Test centre administrators/IBLCE Examination Proctors are not allowed to provide interpretation or clarification of examination questions. Cheating will not be tolerated and if found cheating, it will result in a candidate’s scores being cancelled or her/his certification being revoked in accordance with IBLCE policies and procedures and/or legal action against the candidate, including criminal prosecution.

Additionally, candidates may not discuss any examination questions after the examination with anyone, even those who also took the examination, as indicated in the Confidentiality Policy located in this Guide.

Please note: candidates will be asked to agree to Test Centre Regulations upon arrival to the test centre. If a candidate does not comply with these regulations, then they may be dismissed from the examination with forfeiture of the examination fees paid, including invalidation of the test score and/or pursuit of civil or criminal charges.

The examination will be administered in multiple-choice format 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 examination questions will be provided in a booklet, together with a photo booklet, and answers must be recorded on an answer sheet using a pencil.
XIV. Examination Results Notification

Official examination results will be mailed to candidates two to three months following the exam. Candidates who pass the examination will also receive their IBCLC certificate and identification card, along with their examination score report. For examination security reasons, IBLCE does not make individual questions available following the examination.

XV. Policy on Requesting a Hand Score

If taken as a paper and pencil examination, scoring of the IBLCE examination is based on optical scanning of candidates’ answer sheets. For computer-based testing, the candidate’s response is electronically evaluated against the answer key provided by IBLCE. Candidates who believe that their exams were not scored correctly may request hand verification of their answer sheets or a re-scoring of their computer-based testing responses.

All hand score requests must be submitted within 30 days following the date that the examination results were disseminated. The Hand Score Request Form can be downloaded from the IBLCE website. There is a fee associated with a Hand Score Request. This fee will be refunded if it is determined that the candidate’s examination was scored incorrectly.

XVI. Policy for Appealing an Examination Outcome

IBLCE will review appeals of adverse certification decisions from examination candidates. An adverse decision may be appealed for the following reasons: (1) alleged inappropriate examination administration procedures, (2) environmental testing conditions severe enough to cause a major disruption of the examination process and/or other irregularities. Appeals regarding the following will NOT be accepted: (1) the determination of the passing score, (2) the examination or individual test items, or (3) test content validity. Any examination outcome appeal should be as specific as possible, detailing the basis of the appeal.

The Examination Outcome Appeals Form should be submitted to initiate this request. All Examination Outcome Appeals must be submitted within 30 days following the date that the examination results were disseminated.

In evaluating an appeal, IBLCE considers the executed appeal form and supporting documentation filed with the appeal as well as additional relevant information. In signing the appeals form, the candidate acknowledges that the decision of the IBLCE Appeals Committee is final.
A favourable appeal results ONLY in the deferral of the examination fees to a future examination arranged with adequate future notice.

XVII. Examination Retest Policy

There is no limit to the number of times an unsuccessful candidate may apply to retest the IBCLC certification exam. Applicants who plan to retest the examination should carefully review their examination score report and consider completing education in those areas of the examination in which their performance was poor. To be eligible to take the examination again, a candidate must meet current eligibility requirements, submit an application for the applicable examination, and pay the relevant examination fee. The rationale for the retesting policy is that candidates are encouraged to affirmatively address areas of deficiency prior to retaking the examination.

If a candidate fails the IBCLC exam, then they are eligible to receive a 50% discounted examination retest fee for the next three exams attempts or up to three years following the first time they do not pass. Both initial and recertification examination candidates are eligible for the discounted rate.

XVIII. IBCLC Registry

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

XIX. Nondiscrimination Policy

IBLCE does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, religion, sect, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, sex, ethnicity, age, national origin, ancestry, political persuasion, ability/disability, marital status, geographic location, or socioeconomic status in any of its activities or operations or any other basis prohibited by the laws of the United States of America or of the Commonwealth of Virginia. IBLCE is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of the IBLCE community, as well as all seeking access to the IBLCE community.

XX. IBCLC Trademark Use Policy

The International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (“IBLCE”) owns certain names, trademarks, and logos, including the certification marks International Board Certified Lactation Consultant and IBCLC Logo (the “Marks”). Only those individuals who have met the IBLCE eligibility requirements, passed the IBLCE examination, and maintained the IBCLC certification may use the Marks. Use of the Marks may only be made in accordance with the IBCLC Trademark Use Policy and its terms and conditions which can be found on the IBLCE website.
XXI. Pathway Checklist if Randomly Selected for Audit

The following checklist outlines the requirements and the documentation that will be required if the application is selected for audit.

A. Pathway 1: Recognised Health Professionals and Recognised Breastfeeding Support Counsellors

- Health Sciences Education Courses: complete all 14 required courses
  - Individuals educated in one of the Recognised Health Professions may submit a copy of their license, registration, transcript, diploma, or degree as evidence of completion of the 14 courses.
  - Individuals who are not Recognised Health Professionals may submit copies of their transcript(s) and certificates as evidence of completion of the 14 courses.

- Lactation Specific Education: complete 90 hours of education
  - Certificates or a transcript may be submitted as evidence of completion of the required 90 hours of instruction.
  - If applying for the April 2021 examination or beyond, certificates or a transcript may be submitted as evidence of completion of the additional required five (5) hours of education focused on communication skills.

- Lactation Specific Clinical Experience: complete a minimum of 1000 hours
  - Provide information about the number and timeframe of the hours and settings in which the clinical hours were earned. Candidates may complete the Lactation Specific Clinical Practise Calculator from the website as proof of practise hours.

B. Pathway 2: Accredited Lactation Academic Programmes

- Health Sciences Education Courses: complete all 14 required courses
  - Individuals educated in one of the Recognised Health Professions may submit a copy of their license, registration, transcript, diploma, or degree as evidence of completion of the 14 courses.
  - Individuals who are not Recognised Health Professionals may submit copies of their transcript(s) and certificates as evidence of completion of the 14 courses.

- Complete an accredited lactation academic programme (specifically listed on the IBLCE website as a recognised Pathway 2 Programme) that integrates the following in the curriculum:
  - 90 hours of Lactation Specific Education
  - 300 hours of directly supervised Lactation Specific Clinical Experience
A copy of your transcript, certificate, or a letter from the lactation academic programme director may be submitted as evidence of completion from the academic programme.

If applying for the April 2021 examination or beyond, certificates or a transcript may be submitted as evidence of completion of the additional required five (5) hours of education focused on communication skills.

C. Pathway 3: Mentorship with an IBCLC

- Have a verified Pathway 3 Plan on file with IBLCE.
- Health Sciences Education Courses: complete all 14 required courses
  - Individuals educated in one of the Recognised Health Professions may submit a copy of their license, registration, transcript, diploma, or degree as evidence of completion of the 14 courses.
  - Individuals who are not Recognised Health Professionals may submit copies of their transcript(s) and certificates as evidence of completion of the 14 courses.
- Lactation Specific Education: complete 90 hours of education
  - Certificates or a transcript may be submitted as evidence of completion of the required 90 hours of instruction.
  - If applying for the April 2021 examination or beyond, certificates or a transcript may be submitted as evidence of completion of the additional required five (5) hours of education focused on communication skills.
- Lactation Specific Clinical Experience: complete a minimum of 500 directly supervised hours as outlined in your Pathway 3 Plan
  - Provide information about the number and timeframe of the hours and settings in which the clinical hours were earned. Candidates may use the logs and time sheets provided in the Pathway 3 Plan Guide.
XXII. 2020 Fee Schedule

A. IBLCE 2020 Fee Schedule for Initial Certification for Tier 1 Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 1 Andorra, Aruba, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Belgium, Bermuda, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Cayman Islands, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Falkland Islands, Finland, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, Greenland, Guadeloupe, Guam, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macau, Malaysia, Malta, Martinique, Monaco, Netherlands, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Qatar, Reunion, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Maarten, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Virgin Islands (British), Virgin Islands (US)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*If your country is not listed, please contact IBLCE at iblce@iblce.org.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Initial/Lapsed Examination Fee</th>
<th>Examination Retest Fee</th>
<th>Pathway 3 Plan Submission</th>
<th>Hand Score Fee</th>
<th>Refund for Initial Examination Candidates who are ineligible or withdraw by the specified deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USD</td>
<td>$660</td>
<td>$330</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$330</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please visit iblce.org for up-to-date information about application deadlines.

The online examination application system requires USD and the rate is based on the exchange rate for that day. The system accepts credit cards and prepaid credit cards.
### B. IBLCE 2020 Fee Schedule for Initial Certification for Tier 2 Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Initial/Lapsed Examination Fee</th>
<th>Examination Resit Fee</th>
<th>Pathway 3 Plan Submission</th>
<th>Hand Score Fee</th>
<th>Refund for Initial Examination Candidates who are ineligible or withdraw by the specified deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albania, Algeria, American Samoa, Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Colombia, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Curacao, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Fiji, French Polynesia, Gabon, Georgia, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kosovo, Laos, Lebanon, Libya, Macedonia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Montserrat, Morocco, Namibia, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Serbia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, St. Lucia, St. Martin, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uruguay, Venezuela</td>
<td>USD</td>
<td>$400</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$75</td>
<td>$90</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If your country is not listed, please contact IBLCE at iblce@iblce.org.

Please visit iblce.org for up-to-date information about application deadlines.

The online examination application system requires USD and the rate is based on the exchange rate for that day. The system accepts credit cards and prepaid credit cards.
**C. IBLCE 2020 Fee Schedule for Initial Certification for Tier 3 Countries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 3 Countries</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Initial/Lapsed Examination Fee</th>
<th>Examination Resit Fee</th>
<th>Pathway 3 Plan Submission</th>
<th>Hand Score Fee</th>
<th>Refund for Initial Examination Candidates who are ineligible or withdraw by the specified deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan, Angola, Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia,</td>
<td>USD</td>
<td>$255</td>
<td>$127.50</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$70</td>
<td>$127.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Cote D’Ivoire,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Federated States</td>
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<tr>
<td>of Micronesia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Kenya,</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Marshall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Islands, Mauritania, Moldova, Mozambique, Myanmar (Burma), Nepal, Nicaragua,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Niger, Nigeria, North Korea, Pakistan, Palestine, Papua New Guinea, Republic</td>
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<tr>
<td>of the Congo, Rwanda, Samoa, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia,</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Togo, Tonga, Tuvalu, Uganda, United</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Western Sahara, Yemen,</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia, Zimbabwe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If your country is not listed, please contact IBLCE at [iblce@iblce.org](mailto:iblce@iblce.org).*

Please visit iblce.org for up-to-date information about application deadlines.

The online examination application system requires USD and the rate is based on the exchange rate for that day. The system accepts credit cards and prepaid credit cards.
XXIII. IBCLC Detailed Content Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Development and Nutrition</th>
<th>26</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Infant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Feeding behaviours at different ages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Food intolerances/allergies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Infant anatomy and anatomical/oral challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Introducing complementary foods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Low birth weight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Milk banking – formal and informal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Normal infant behaviours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Nutritional requirements - preterm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Preterm development and growth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Skin tone, muscle tone, reflexes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Term development and growth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. WHO growth charts with gestational age adjustment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Maternal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Breast development and growth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Breast surgery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Composition of human milk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Maternal anatomical challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Maternal nutritional status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Nipple structure and variations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II. Physiology and Endocrinology</th>
<th>24</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Diabetes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Infertility Issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Maternal metabolic and hormonal disorders (e.g., thyroid, Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Maternal autoimmune disorders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Multiples</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Newborn hypoglycemia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Pregnancy and breastfeeding – tandem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Relactation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Stooling and voiding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>III. Pathology</th>
<th>31</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Infant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Allergies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ankyloglossia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cleft lip and palate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Congenital anomalies (e.g., gastrointestinal, cardiac)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Items</td>
<td>Detailed Content Outline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|           | International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBCLE)  
|           | International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® (IBCLC®)  
|           | Candidate Information Guide  
|           | Updated September 2019  

### B. Maternal

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Abscess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Milk ejection reflex dysfunction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Maternal acute disease (bacterial, viral, fungal, systemic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Maternal chronic disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Maternal disability (physical and neurological)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mastitis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Milk supply, low or over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Nipple and breast conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Nipple pain and trauma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Post-partum hemorrhage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Pre-eclampsia / pregnancy induced hypertension</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### IV. Pharmacology and Toxicology

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Alcohol and tobacco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Contraception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Drugs of abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Galactogogues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Gel dressings/nipple creams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Medication (prescription, over-the-counter, diagnostic and therapeutic procedures)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Medicinal Herbs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### V. Psychology, Sociology, and Anthropology

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Transition to parenthood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Birth practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Foods to eat/avoid that affect lactation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Employment – returning to work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Family lifestyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Identifying support networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Maternal mental health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Maternal psychological/cognitive issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mother-baby relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Safe sleep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Weaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Cultural competency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### VI. Techniques

1. Effective milk transfer (including medically-indicated supplementation)
2. First hour
3. Latching
4. Managing supply
5. Milk expression
6. Positioning
7. Refusal of breast, bottle
8. Skin-to-skin (Kangaroo care)
9. Test-weighting

### VII. Clinical Skills

#### A. Equipment and Technology

1. Feeding devices (e.g., tubes at breast, cups, syringes, tests)
2. Handling and storage of human milk
3. Nipple devices (e.g., shields, everters)
4. Pacifiers
5. Pumps
6. Scales
7. Communication technology
8. Websites

#### B. Education and Communication

1. Active listening
2. Anticipatory guidance
3. Care plan development and sharing
4. Documentation
5. Educating mothers and families
6. Educating professionals, peers, and students
7. Extending the duration of breastfeeding
8. Emotional support
9. Empowerment
10. Group support

#### C. Ethical and Legal Issues

1. Breastfeeding in public
2. Clinical competencies
3. Code of Professional Conduct (CPC)
4. Principles of confidentiality
5. WHO code—advocacy and policy
### D. Research

1. Apply research in practice
2. Appraise and interpret research results
3. Use research to help develop policies and protocols

### E. Public Health and Advocacy

1. Advocate for Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI)
3. Advocate for mother / baby in healthcare system
4. Develop breastfeeding-related policies

Total Number of Items: 175

Approximately half of the items will include images, and these will be administered in the afternoon session; items without images will be administered in the morning session. As supported by the practice analysis results, examination items should generally relate to the key tasks associated with developing a care plan, which include:

1. Assessment
2. Develop a plan
3. Document
4. Evaluate
5. Help mother determine goals
6. History taking
7. Work with other medical providers

Except for those items addressing general principles, items are classified according to the chronological period, using the following guidelines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHRONOLOGICAL PERIODS</th>
<th>Target # of Items*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Prenatal - maternal</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Labor - maternal / birth - perinatal</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Prematurity</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 0 - 2 days</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. 3 - 14 days</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. 15 - 28 days</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. 1 - 3 months</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. 4 - 6 months</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. 7 - 12 months</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Beyond 12 months</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. General principles (including preconception)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>175</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Appropriate flexibility will be allowed surrounding these targets.