



# 2012 Exam Eligibility Requirements

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IBLCE in the Americas

## Educators are vital to IBLCE's certification program

- IBLCE's certification program has been continuously accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) since 1988.
- IBLCE has always complied with NCCA standards:
  - Certification agencies “**must not also be responsible** for accreditation of educational or training programs or courses of study leading to the certification.”
  - NCCA **does not prohibit** certification organizations from providing education programs.
  - IBLCE has **never** offered educational programs.
- Both IBLCE and exam candidates depend upon educators.

# Questions I will answer

- Why did IBLCE change the exam eligibility standards?
- When are the standards effective?
- Who must comply with the new standards?
- What are the new standards?
- How can educators facilitate the implementation of these standards?

# First a little history

- How have the IBLCE exam eligibility standards changed over the past 25 year?
- How often did they change?



- 1985-1987: No eligibility requirements
- 1988-1991: 3 eligibility categories

Pathway	Educational Background	Clinical Practice Hours	Lactation Education Hours
I	120 semester hours (4 years academic credit)	2500	30 hours within previous 3 years
II	60 semester hours (2 years)academic credit)	4000	30 hours within previous 3 years
III	30 semester hours (1 year academic credit)	6000	30 hours within previous 3 years

- 1992: Pathway IV added
  - Required completion of an academically accredited lactation consulting major of at least 15 semester hours
- 1993:
  - Abolished Pathway III
  - Allowed case by case exceptions to requirements based on country of practice

# 1994-1995: Standard and Alternate Pathways introduced

## Standard Pathways

Pathway	Educational Background	Clinical Practice Hours	Lactation Education Hours
A	At least 120 semester hours academic credit	2500	30 hours in previous 3 years
B	At least 60 semester hours academic credit	4000	30 hours in previous 3 years

## Alternate Pathways: Contact IBLCE for clinical practice and lactation education hours requirements

C	Baccalaureate or higher degree with accredited human lactation major
D	Doctor of Medicine
E	120 semester hours PLUS graduate of comprehensive lactation courses of 150 hrs or more
F	At least 60 semester hours academic credit PLUS at least 100 hours of supervised clinical practice provided by an established lactation education program
G	Relevant academic requirements for country of practice as approved by the IBLCE.
H	Exceptions based on individual cases with extensive clinical experience (minimum 6000-8000 hours), as approved by the IBLCE.

# 1996: Supplementary Pathways introduced

## Standard Pathways

Pathway	Educational Background	Clinical Practice Hours	Lactation Education Hours
A	At least 120 semester hours academic credit	2500	30 hours in previous 3 years
B	At least 60 semester hours academic credit	4000	30 hours in previous 3 years

## Alternate Pathways: Contact IBLCE for clinical practice and lactation education hours requirements

C	Baccalaureate or higher degree with accredited human lactation major
D	Doctor of Medicine
E	Relevant academic requirements for country of practice as approved by the IBLCE.
F	Exceptions based on individual cases with extensive clinical experience (minimum 6000-8000 hours), as approved by the IBLCE.

## Supplementary Pathways: Open to Pathway A & B candidates only

G	At least 150 hours lactation education from a single comprehensive lactation course; candidate credited with 500 hours toward the clinical practice hours requirement for their pathway
H	At least 100 hours of supervised clinical practice provided by an established lactation education program; candidate credited with 500 hours toward the clinical practice hours requirement for their pathway

# 1997-2002

- 1997: Stipulations on clinical practice introduced
  - no more than 25% of clinical practice hours could be obtained through group education
- 1998: Alternate Pathway D advertized as requiring 900 clinical practice hours
- 1999: Alternate Pathway E abolished
- 2002: Alternate Pathway C became a Standard Pathway

# 2003

- Lactation specific education requirement increased from 30 to 45 hours of education within past 3 years
  - except Pathway C (academic program in human lactation)
- All candidates must prove one of the following:
  - Be a licensed or registered health professional
  - Complete at least 4 contact hours of education in 6 background health disciplines

# 2004-2005: Pathway D becomes Standard; Trial Pathway F introduced

Standard Pathways				
Pathway	Educational Background	Clinical Practice Hours	Lactation Education Hours	Background Health Disciplines Education
A	At least 120 semester hours academic credit	2500	45 hours in previous 3 years	At least 4 contact hours in 6 health subjects <u>or</u> licensed health professional
B	At least 60 semester hours academic credit	4000	45 hours in previous 3 years	At least 4 contact hours in 6 health subjects <u>or</u> licensed health professional
C	Baccalaureate or higher degree in human lactation	900 (supervised by a preceptor)	Included in academic program	At least 4 contact hours in 6 health subjects <u>or</u> licensed health professional
D	Medical practitioner	900	45 hours in previous 3 years	At least 4 contact hours in 6 health subjects <u>or</u> licensed health professional

## Alternate Pathways: Contact IBLCE for clinical practice and lactation education hours requirements

E	Academic training in a country other than the one in which the candidate plans to take the exam			At least 4 contact hours in 6 health subjects <u>or</u> licensed health professional
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## Trial Pathway

F	None required	500 (directly supervised by a recertified IBCLC)	45 hours in previous 3 years	At least 4 contact hours in 6 health discipline subjects <u>or</u> licensed health professional
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## Supplementary Pathways: Open to Pathway A & B candidates only

G	At least 150 hours lactation education from a single comprehensive lactation course; candidate credited with 500 hours toward the clinical practice hours requirement for their pathway			
H	At least 100 hours of supervised clinical practice provided by an established lactation education program; candidate credited with 500 hours toward the clinical practice hours requirement for their pathway			

# 2006-2007

- 2006:
  - Pathway E listed as a standard pathway and required 6000 hours of clinical practice
  - Trial Pathway F was not available
- 2007:
  - Trial Pathway F becomes a Standard Pathway

# 2007-2008 in the Americas

# 2007-2009 in Europe and Asia-Pacific

## Standard Pathways

Pathway	Educational Background	Clinical Practice Hours	Lactation Education Hours	Health Disciplines Background Education
A	At least 120 semester hours <b>OR</b> a bachelor's degree or higher in any field	2500	45	At least 4 contact hours in all 6 subjects <u>or</u> be a licensed health professional
B	At least 60, but fewer than 120, semester hours <b>OR</b> an associate degree in any field	4000	45	At least 4 contact hours in all 6 subjects <u>or</u> be a licensed health professional
C	Bachelor's degree or higher in human lactation from an accredited institution	900 (supervised by preceptor)	45	At least 4 contact hours in all 6 subjects <u>or</u> be a licensed health professional
D	Medical practitioner (MD or DO only)	900	45	At least 4 contact hours in all 6 subjects <u>or</u> be a licensed health professional
E	Fewer than 60 semester hours <b>OR</b> no post-secondary education	6000	45	At least 4 contact hours in all 6 subjects <u>or</u> be a licensed health professional
F	No post-secondary education required	500 (directly supervised by recertified IBCLC)	45	At least 4 contact hours in all 6 subjects <u>or</u> be a licensed health professional

## Supplementary Pathways

G	At least 150 hours of lactation specific education; candidate credited with 500 hours of clinical practice experience
H	For every 10 hours of directly supervised clinical practice receive 50 hours credit toward fulfillment of clinical practice requirement

# September 2008

- IBLCE Board adopts a new set of eligibility standards that would go into effect in the Americas in 2009 and in Europe and Asia Pacific in 2010
  - Reduced the number of Standard pathways from 6 to 3
  - Abolished the Supplementary pathways
  - Notified that by 2011 candidates would be required to complete all exam eligibility requirements prior to applying for the exam
  - Allowed candidates to qualify under the former pathways through the 2011 exam

# 2009-2011: Current

Pathway	Educational Background	Clinical Practice Hours	Lactation Education Hours	Health Discipline Education
1	No specific prerequisites but candidate must be either a Health Professional <u>or</u> an Experienced Breastfeeding Support Counselor as defined by IBLCE	1000 (self-reported on-the-job)	45	Recommended
2	Complete an academic program in human lactation and breastfeeding	300 (directly supervised by IBCLCs and integrated into academic program)	90 (integrated into accredited academic program)	Must have at least one course that is at least one semester long in 6 identified subjects
3	None required	500 (directly supervised by recertified IBCLCs within a plan pre-approved by IBLCE)	45	Recommended

# 2011 Reminders

- Effective with the 2011 exam, IBLCE will be enforcing a change that was announced in 2009—all exam requirements must be completed prior to applying.
- Also, 2011 is the last year in which applicants may qualify through the former pathways in place in 2008 (Pathways A-F).

# 2011: No Incomplete Applications

- **For the 2011 exam and forward, all exam requirements must be completed prior to applying for the exam. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.**
- **Acknowledgement:** IBLCE application deadlines do not correspond with academic calendars. Accommodations for Pathway 2 (graduation from an accredited academic program in human lactation) applicants may be necessary.
  - **Only** Pathway 2 will be considered for these accommodations.
  - **If/when** the exam is offered more than once per year, such accommodations would expire.

# Why no incomplete applications?

- Incomplete applications are:
  - Administrative headache
    - Require more time and effort.
    - Must be tracked because the candidates involved cannot receive exam scores until they provide documentation of education completion.
  - Potential sources for eligibility and scoring appeals
    - Contrary to the qualification process
      - How can staff really say an applicant is eligible when they have not completed their education?
    - Could be construed as unfair
      - Do applicants who complete their education very close to exam day have an advantage over those that complete their education months earlier?



# 2011 Exam Application Deadlines

- February 28: lowest fee
- March 31
- April 30: highest fee
  
- **Note:** Plans are underway to offer computer-based testing (CBT) in the Americas' region for the 2011 exam.
  - CBT **may** allow for a somewhat later final deadline.
  - Paper and pencil examination **will NOT** permit later deadlines.
  - Final decisions have not been made. Stay tuned!

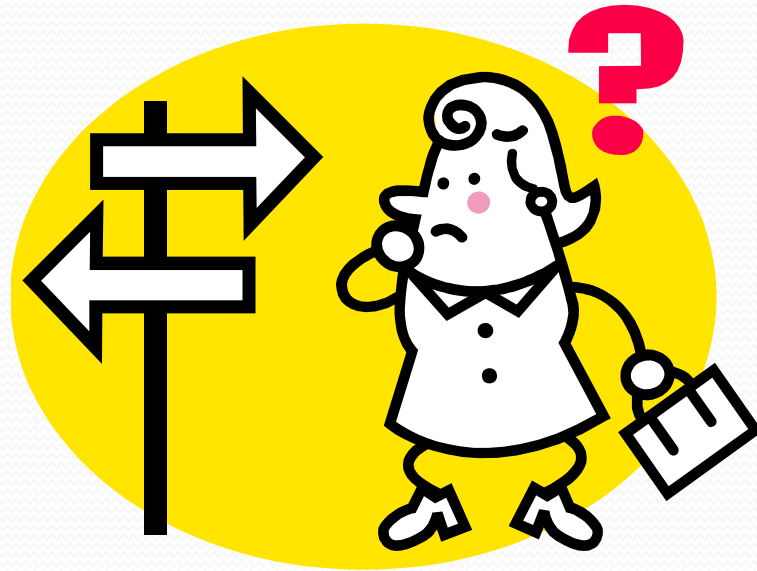
# Inform your course participants!

- For the 2011 exam:
  - All education and clinical experience requirements must be completed by no later than April 29
  - Paper exam applications must be postmarked by no later than April 30
- **Note:** Plans are underway to introduce online application in 2011. Online application is another factor that may allow IBLCE to extend the final application deadline beyond April 30.
  - Again, stay tuned. More information will follow!

# 2012 Requirements

Pathway	Educational Background	Clinical Practice Hours	Lactation Education Hours
1	Must be either a health professional <u>OR</u> complete higher education in 14 identified subjects	1000 (self-reported on-the-job experience obtained in an appropriately supervised setting)	90
2	Must be either a health professional <u>OR</u> complete higher education in 14 identified subjects <u>PLUS</u> complete an academic program in human lactation and breastfeeding; the program must be directed by a recertified IBCLC	300 (directly supervised by IBCLCs and integrated into accredited academic program)	90 (integrated into academic program)
3	Must be either a health professional <u>OR</u> complete higher education in 14 identified subjects	500 (directly supervised by recertified IBCLCs within a plan pre-approved by IBLCE)	90

# Why the changes?



# Affects of Educational Background and Language

- NCCA expects fairness in exam eligibility requirements.
- IBLCE data shows that candidates with less than 2 years of higher education are more likely to fail the exam
  - This was true under the former pathways (A-F) and continues to be true under the current pathways.
- IBLCE data shows that candidates whose first language is a language other than English have higher failure rates
  - More difficult for candidates who speak a language other than English to get the knowledge needed
  - Few lactation textbooks and resources are translated
    - Candidates rely upon the lactation education courses taught in their language, making your work as educators all the more important
- Would be irresponsible for IBLCE to leave the eligibility requirements unchanged and watch the failure rates for these candidate groups to rise

# Inequities in current requirements

- Pathway 2 is the only pathway that requires completion of courses in 6 background health disciplines; pathways 1 and 3 do not
  - Human Anatomy and Physiology
  - Nutrition
  - Psychology
  - Sociology
  - Medical Terminology
  - Child Growth and Development
- Pathway 2 requires more lactation specific education (90 hours) than Pathways 1 and 3 (45 hours)

# Lactation Consultant Profession Has Changed

- IBCLCs see and assist with more complex situations than were typical 25 years ago—even 5 years ago
  - IBCLCs are expected to function as members of a multi-disciplinary health care team
    - As a result the exam is more difficult
- Although the Exam Blueprint looks quite similar to the one developed in 1985, the depth of knowledge required is much greater
  - Unrealistic to teach the Exam Blueprint subjects in 45 hours
    - 90 hours will give educators more opportunities to integrate subjects like ethics, research and public health into the teaching of lactation physiology and breastfeeding management

# Raising the profile, credibility and value of IBCLC certification

- To be respected, valued members of the health care team, IBCLCs need to have:
  - Higher education in the life, social and mathematical sciences commonly studied by other health professionals
  - Knowledge, skills and attitudes that allows them to function, communicate and practice within the health care arena
  - Capability to critically read and interpret research so as to provide up-to-date, evidence-based care

# Moving IBCLC certification toward being a “stand-alone” rather than an “add-on” credential

- The revised pre-certification requirements that include prerequisite higher education and increased lactation specific education will:
  - Improve the employment odds and earning potential for IBCLCs who hold no other health professional credential
  - Increase the likelihood of success for licensure and reimbursement initiatives
  - Allow the IBCLC credential to be respected as THE indicator for competent practitioners in the UNIQUE profession of lactation consulting

# When and Who?

- Applies to first-time candidates for the 2012 IBLCE Exam
  - 2011 Exam is the last year for the current requirements
- Candidates who fail the 2011 exam will be required to meet the 2012 requirements
- Former IBCLCs will be subject to the new requirements if their certification lapses for more than a specified number of years
  - Contact IBLCE staff for details
- Does **not** apply to IBCLCs who remain continuously certified, i.e. recertify on time and successfully

# What about Pathway 3 Applicants?

- We have received numerous requests from individuals with approved Pathway 3 plans in place to be “grandfathered”
- They may be a “special consideration group”
  - Options are being considered and will be announced



# Details of 2012 Requirements



# 2012 Requirements

Pathway	Educational Background	Clinical Practice Hours	Lactation Education Hours
1	Must be either a health professional <u>OR</u> complete higher education in 14 identified subjects	1000 (self-reported on-the-job experience obtained in an appropriately supervised setting)	90
2	Must be either a health professional <u>OR</u> complete higher education in 14 identified subjects <u>PLUS</u> complete an academic program in human lactation and breastfeeding; the program must be directed by a recertified IBCLC	300 (directly supervised by IBCLCs and integrated into accredited academic program)	90 (integrated into academic program)
3	Must be either a health professional <u>OR</u> complete higher education in 14 identified subjects	500 (directly supervised by recertified IBCLCs within a plan pre-approved by IBLCE)	90

# Higher Education

- All candidates must meet one of the following requirements:
  - Provide documentation that they are a licensed, registered or practicing health professional
  - Provide documentation that they have completed higher education in 14 identified subjects that are typically studied by health professionals during their pre-service education and training
- This requirement applies to **all 3** exam eligibility pathways

# What is higher education?

- Beyond compulsory or secondary education
  - For example, beyond high school in the USA
  - Secondary education is usually completed between ages 16-18
- Sometimes called post-secondary or tertiary education
  - Might also be called “further education” in some places
- Can be either “academic” or “vocational”
- Educational systems around the world are different. Please contact your IBLCE regional office if this requirement is not clear.
- [www.americas.iblce.org](http://www.americas.iblce.org) Americas
- [www.iblce.edu.au](http://www.iblce.edu.au) Asia Pacific
- [www.iblce-europe.org](http://www.iblce-europe.org) Europe and the Middle East

# Health Professional

- Typical ones that qualify include:
  - Nurse
  - Midwife
  - Physician
  - Dietitian
- Others such as Dentist, Pharmacist, Physical , Speech and Occupational Therapist, etc. will qualify as well
- No standardized list due to worldwide variations.
  - Candidates must be able to supply a copy of license, registration or transcript—depends on country of practice—to show that they are authorized to practice as health professional and/or that they have completed study in the 14 higher education subjects.

# Required Academic Courses for Non-Health Professionals

- At least one course that is at least one academic term long in each of the following subjects:
  - Biology
  - Human Anatomy
  - Human Physiology
  - Infant and Child Growth and Development
  - Nutrition
  - Psychology or Counseling or Communication Skills
  - Introduction to Research
  - Sociology or Cultural Sensitivity or Cultural Anthropology

## Availability of the required academic courses

- We are aware that it may be more difficult for some candidates to get this education.
  - Variations in educational systems will affect availability and access to courses.
    - Some systems may not offer these courses outside of programs of study for health professionals; other systems will be more flexible.
  - Variations in geopolitical regulations already affect the ability for some candidates to practice as IBCLCs.
    - Some countries permit only those IBCLCs who are recognized health professionals in another area of expertise to practice.

# Online Colleges and Universities

- Academic programs offered as online courses or through distance learning are a good resource for candidates
  - Must be offered through an accredited college or university
  - Must be taken as a “for credit” course
  - Must receive a passing grade in the course
  - Continuing education or “not for credit” courses will not be accepted for the **8 specified subjects** listed earlier

# Documentation of Academic Study

- Candidates will be required to submit copies of transcripts which show successful completion of study in the 8 specified topics.
- How will candidates know if their coursework is acceptable?
  - We are receiving many questions about this and are working on developing tools that will assist candidates and educators. More on this at the next webinar.
- Does this education need to be recent?
  - There is no time limit on how long ago this coursework was completed.

# The other higher education topics

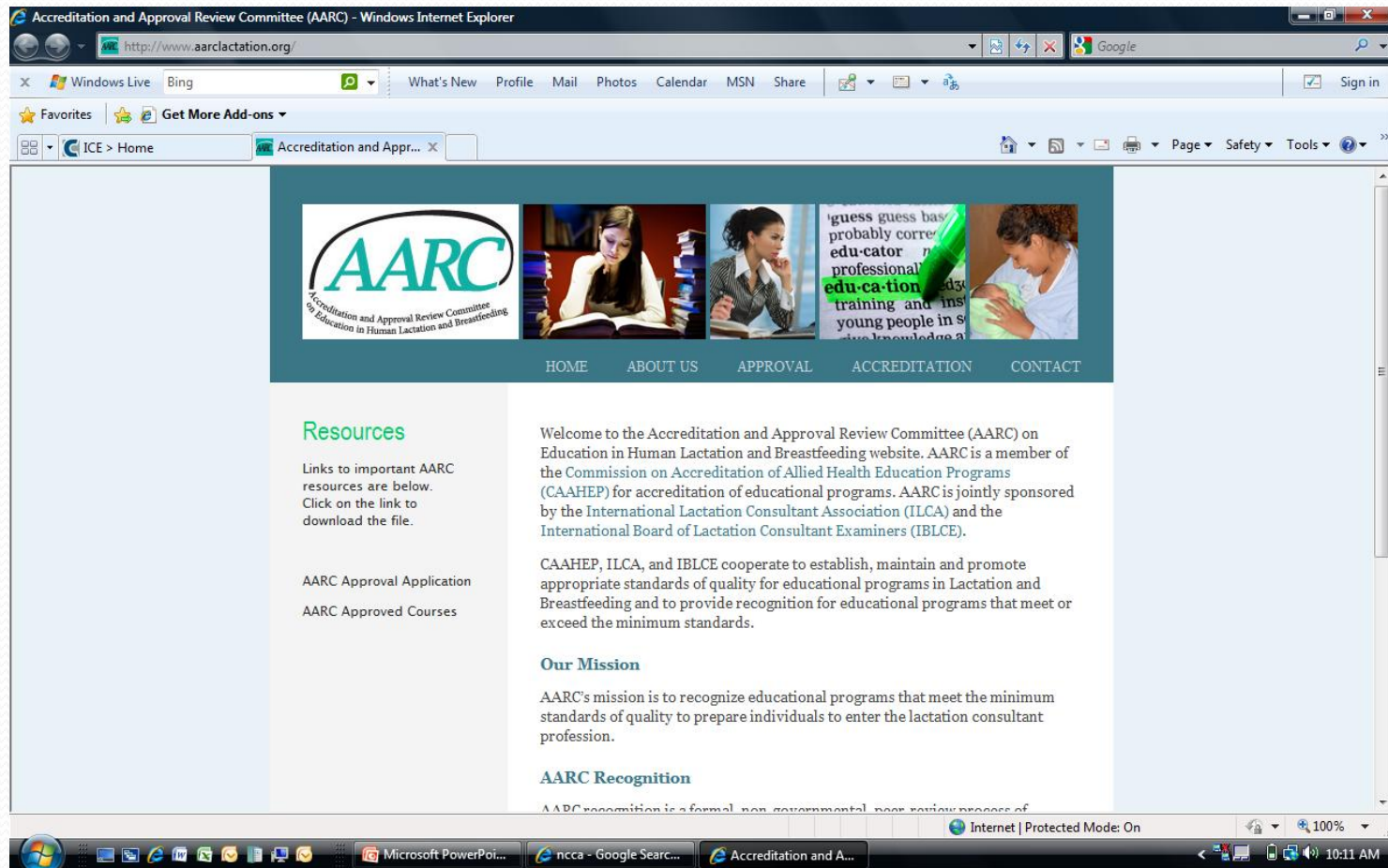
- There are 6 other topics that candidates who are not health professionals must study:
  - Basic life support (e.g. CPR)
  - Medical documentation
  - Medical terminology
  - Occupational safety, including security, for health professionals
  - Professional ethics for health professionals (e.g. Code of Ethics)
  - Universal safety precautions and infection control
- “For credit” not required.
  - Non-credit and continuing education are fine.
  - IBLCE **does not specify** a certain number of contact hours in these subjects.

# Lactation Specific Education

- All candidates must have 90 contact hours of education in the disciplines and chronological periods listed on the IBLCE Exam Blueprint
  - AARC approval of courses/programs in human lactation and breastfeeding is huge benefit for candidates and for staff.
  - Please consider seeking AARC approval of your courses!!
  - [www.aarclactation.org](http://www.aarclactation.org)



# IBLCE and ILCA co-sponsor AARC



The screenshot shows a Windows Internet Explorer browser window displaying the Accreditation and Approval Review Committee (AARC) website. The address bar shows the URL <http://www.aarclactation.org/>. The browser interface includes a search bar, navigation buttons, and a taskbar at the bottom with several open applications.

**Accreditation and Approval Review Committee (AARC) - Windows Internet Explorer**  
http://www.aarclactation.org/

Windows Live Bing | What's New | Profile | Mail | Photos | Calendar | MSN | Share | Sign in

Favorites | Get More Add-ons

ICE > Home | Accreditation and Appr... X

HOME ABOUT US APPROVAL ACCREDITATION CONTACT

### Resources

Links to important AARC resources are below. Click on the link to download the file.

- AARC Approval Application
- AARC Approved Courses

Welcome to the Accreditation and Approval Review Committee (AARC) on Education in Human Lactation and Breastfeeding website. AARC is a member of the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) for accreditation of educational programs. AARC is jointly sponsored by the International Lactation Consultant Association (ILCA) and the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE).

CAAHEP, ILCA, and IBLCE cooperate to establish, maintain and promote appropriate standards of quality for educational programs in Lactation and Breastfeeding and to provide recognition for educational programs that meet or exceed the minimum standards.

### Our Mission

AARC's mission is to recognize educational programs that meet the minimum standards of quality to prepare individuals to enter the lactation consultant profession.

### AARC Recognition

AARC recognition is a formal, non-governmental, peer-review process of

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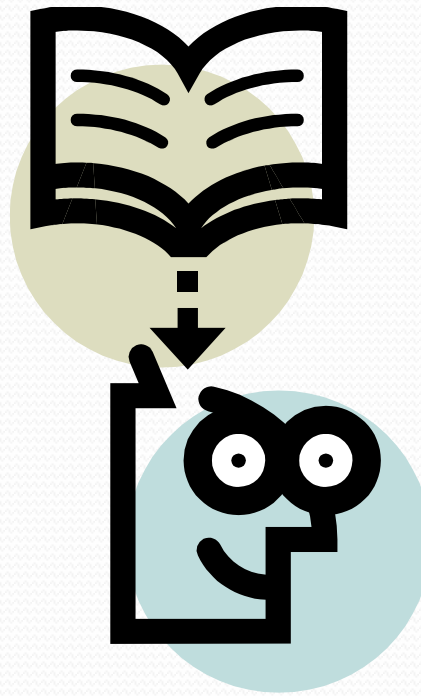
# AARC Approval & Accreditation

- Independent Educators
  - If AARC approval presents a challenge for you, please let us know. We can only address those concerns that we know about!
- Academic Programs
  - AARC is making good progress in drafting the accreditation standards for academic programs
  - Updates will be available in the next few months

# Clinical Practice Hours

- No change in this requirement
  - **Pathway 1:** At least 1000 hours of paid or volunteer, on-the-job experience that was obtained within an appropriately supervised setting
  - **Pathway 2:** At least 300 hours of directly supervised clinical practice that was obtained as part of an accredited academic program; program director must be a recertified IBCLC; direct supervision must be provided by currently certified IBCLCs.
  - **Pathway 3:** At least 500 hours of directly supervised clinical practice that obtained as part of an IBLCE-approved plan; direct supervision must be provided by currently certified IBCLCs who have recertified at least once.

So, how can educators help?





# Some Ideas

- Expand current lactation courses
  - Does not need to be all lecture
  - Incorporate other learning techniques—be dynamic
    - Interactive workshops
    - Supervised group work
    - Graded homework
    - Role play
    - Student presentations
    - Clinical observations—grand rounds—with follow-up discussion and/or graded student reports
- Expand online, distance learning and independent study modules
- Encourage/identify potential IBCLC-mentors who can assist with clinical observation and practice components
- Establish Pathway 3 mentoring program and integrate with didactic
- Align with institution of higher learning

# Great Opportunity

- Be innovative
- Review, redevelop and remodel your products.
- Give yourself an edge over those educators who do not keep up
- Going from 45 hours to 90 hours will give you so much more freedom in your courses
- Aim for offering at least 90 hours of education
  - Build it and they will come!
- Number of participants in your courses should rise
  - Will be more difficult for candidates to “piece together” their lactation specific education

# Public Protection and Safety

- Certification is all about public protection and safety
- Revised requirements are good for mothers and babies
- Better educated IBCLCs means improved services and care 
- Better outcomes for mothers and babies
- Improved breastfeeding rates and duration 
  - Improved public health
  - Realization of public health goals
  - Reductions in acute and chronic diseases...
- How can anyone argue with this?

# Join Us on June 29

## FAQs about the 2012 Exam Eligibility Requirements

Reserve your Webinar seat now at:

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/515822339>

Date: Tuesday, June 29, 2010

Time: 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM EDT (USA)

# Here are the IBLCE regional office website addresses again

- Americas: [www.americas.iblce.org](http://www.americas.iblce.org)
- Asia Pacific: [www.iblce.edu.au](http://www.iblce.edu.au)
- Europe: [www.iblce-europe.org](http://www.iblce-europe.org)

