

PATHWAYS TO BECOMING AN IBCLC



			Pathway 1	Pathway 2	Pathway 3
	Time Limits	Applicable to	Health Professionals & Lactation Specialists	Accredited Lactation Academic Programs	Mentorship with an IBCLC
Lactation Specific Education¹	Complete in the five years prior to applying for the exam	Everyone	90 hours min (e.g., Childbirth International Lactation Counselor course)	90 hours min with an accredited organization (accredited by CAAHEP or similar)	90 hours min (e.g., Childbirth International Lactation Counselor course)
Communication Skills²	Complete in the five years prior to applying for the exam	Everyone	5 hours min (e.g., Childbirth International Effective Communication module)	5 hours min with an accredited organization (accredited by CAAHEP or similar)	5 hours min (e.g., Childbirth International Effective Communication module)
Health Science Courses³	None	Recognized health professionals ⁴	None required		
	Complete before applying for the exam	Others	8 health science courses of one academic credit session (e.g., one semester) from an accredited institution of higher learning 6 health science courses from an accredited institution of higher learning or continuing education program (e.g., Childbirth International Safety and Infection Control course)		
Lactation Clinical Experience⁵	Complete in the five years prior to applying for the exam	Everyone	1000 hours in a supervised setting (e.g., hospital, primary care practice or community clinic) - supervision from someone who is knowledgeable about lactation but does not need to be an IBCLC	300 directly supervised hours as part of the Lactation Education program (supervised by an IBCLC)	500 directly supervised hours with an IBCLC mentor (must be pre-approved by IBLCE)
Notes	<p>1. May include in-person presentations, online education, independent study modules. May be from an IBLCE verified Continuing Education Recognition Points (CERP) provider, but not essential. Topics must be specific to lactation. IBLCE does not endorse or approve providers of education.</p> <p>2. A minimum of five hours studying communication skills is required for all applicants applying after November 2020. The provider can be a continuing education organization.</p> <p>3. The 8 health science courses for one academic credit session are: Biology; Human Anatomy; Human Physiology; Infant and Child Growth and Development; Introduction to Clinical Research; Nutrition; Psychology or Counseling Skills or Communication Skills; Sociology or Cultural Sensitivity or Cultural Anthropology. The IBLCE have advised that courses taken through online learning platforms (e.g., EdX and Coursera) are acceptable provided they are one semester long and are facilitated by an accredited institute of higher learning who also issue the certificate as evidence of completion. The 6 courses that can be taken as continuing education include: Basic Life Support; Medical Documentation; Medical terminology; Occupational Safety and Security for Health Professionals; Professional Ethics for Health Professionals; Universal Safety Precautions and Infection Control. The health science courses do not need to be specific to lactation but will be accepted if they are. DSST and CLEP exams may qualify for credits towards these courses. IBLCE does not endorse or recommend any courses. The courses can be taken online or in-person but the content should match the content outlined in the IBLCE Health Sciences guide.</p> <p>4. Recognized health professionals include dentists, dieticians, midwives, nurses, physician or medical doctors, occupational therapists, pharmacists, physical therapists or physiotherapists, speech therapists, and speech pathologists.</p> <p>5. Lactation clinical experience may include in-person consultations, telephone consultations, online lactation support, lactation education to families or professionals. The IBLCE are unable to provide guidelines on how many hours can be achieved from non face-to-face consultations but have advised the majority of experience should come from in-person consultations. Observation and shadowing does not count as clinical experience.</p>				
Source: IBLCE website (2 May, 2020)					