

Advising Worksheet

This worksheet will help you understand the requirements of our [Certificate in Human Lactation](#) and evaluate what requirements you have already met. It will also help you select an [IBLCE Pathway](#) for your lactation specific clinical experience.

In order to become an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant, all applicants need to meet the [IBLCE certification requirements](#):

Step 1) Be a [Recognized Health Professional](#) OR complete the [IBLCE Health Sciences Education requirements](#).

-Yes, you are a Recognized Health Professional, then go to Step 2.

-No, you are not a Recognized Health Professional. You will need to complete the eight topics that must be taken as college credit courses plus a course in medical terminology before starting our Lactation Education courses. Our [webpage](#) reviews the prerequisites and lists the courses you can take at [PSU](#) and [PCC](#) to meet these requirements. You can complete these courses at any college or university that meets the PSU requirements for transfer credits. Our [Advisors](#) can help you evaluate that.

-Have you completed a college degree or some college education? You may have met some or all of these requirements. There is no time limit on how long ago you completed these courses. We can help you assess what courses you need to take. Complete the [Prerequisite Checklist](#) and/or obtain unofficial transcripts, then email that information to lactation@pdx.edu and/or schedule an [advising appointment](#) so a faculty member can review your transcripts and answer your questions to help you decide what your next step is. If you don't have a degree and would like to obtain one, [degree options](#) are available.

-If you need guidance about what courses to take to meet the prerequisite requirements, email us (lactation@pdx.edu) with the name of the community college or university where you would like to complete these courses, and we will send you a list of courses we would recommend that you complete, or schedule an [advising appointment](#) to discuss your questions with a faculty member. Consider working toward a [bachelor's degree](#) while completing your lactation training.

Step 2) Complete 95 hours of [Lactation Specific Education](#). This must be completed within five years prior to applying for the certification exam.

PSU offers 100 hours of Lactation Education. All of our courses are college credit courses and available via online. All students who meet our [prerequisite requirements](#) are welcome to take our Lactation Education courses no matter which [IBCLC pathway](#) they plan to use to complete their clinical experience. In order to obtain clinical experience in our Pathway 2 Lactation Practicum, students must obtain their Lactation Education in our program or another Pathway 2 program. Lactation Education courses completed as continuing education courses cannot be accepted by Pathway 2 programs.

We offer two different [Lactation Education course formats](#) so students can select the course format that works best for them.

-Fall/Winter/Spring terms - [Live distance learning class environment](#) - In these weekly live distance learning classes, students will have the opportunity for lots of interaction with the instructors and other students. Students should plan to spend 8-15 hours per week on coursework outside of class. While regular attendance is highly encouraged to get the most out of these courses, they do not have attendance requirements and are recorded so students can view the recorded class if they miss a live class.

-Winter/Spring terms - [no live classes](#) - Students will view recorded content and complete assignments and quizzes. There will be optional weekly opportunities for some interaction with the instructors and other students. Students should plan to spend 20-25 hours per week on coursework. These courses have no attendance requirements.

Step 3) Select an [IBCLC Pathway](#) to obtain the required Lactation Specific Clinical Experience. This must be completed within five years prior to applying for the certification exam.

Pathway 1 –

- **Hours required** – 1,000 hours of clinical experience
- **Who uses this pathway?**
 - [Recognized health professionals](#) who are providing lactation care for breast/chest feeding families in their work setting. Example: RN working on a Family Birth Center, in an out-patient clinic or doing home visits.
 - Trained Breastfeeding counselors** such as breastfeeding peer counselors or WIC staff who are providing breast/chest feeding support through a [Recognized Breastfeeding Counselor Support Organization](#) in a paid or volunteer capacity.
- **What supervision is required?** Appropriate supervision such as a manager, supervisor or charge nurse. IBCLC supervision is not required for this pathway.

Pathway 2 –

- **Hours required** – 300 hours of clinical experience
- **Who uses this pathway?** Students admitted to a college credit Pathway 2 program. In the [PSU Pathway 2 Lactation Practicum](#) or any other IBCLC Pathway 2 program students will obtain their clinical experience through that academic college credit training program. Pathway 2 programs are required to provide a variety of clinical experiences for their students under direct IBCLC supervision.
- The [PSU Pathway 2 Lactation Practicum](#) is a limited entry part of our Lactation Training program, and students must complete their Lactation Education in our program or another Pathway 2 program before they can apply and be accepted in to our Pathway 2 Lactation Practicum.

- **What supervision is required?** Pathway 2 clinical experience programs must be overseen by IBCLCs, and all preceptors who provide direct supervision must be IBCLCs.

Pathway 3 -

- **Hours required** – 500 hours of clinical experience
- **Who uses this pathway?** Students who can make a mentorship agreement with an IBCLC mentor to provide supervision and clinical experience. The student and IBCLC mentor must review the [Pathway 3 Plan Guide](#) and complete a mentorship agreement that must be verified by the IBCLC Commission before any clinical experience begins. Some mentor IBCLCs will require payment of some form for the contracted clinical experience hours. PSU does not provide mentor IBCLCs for Pathway 3.
- **What supervision is required?** The IBCLC mentor provides direct supervision for the student.

Step 4) [Apply for](#) and pass the IBLCE certification exam. When students have completed the first three steps they are eligible to apply for the IBLCE certification exam. Students must meet the three certification requirements (Step 1, 2 & 3) before they can apply for the IBLCE certification exam, and the application deadline is typically 3-4 months prior to the exam. The exam is offered in September and April each year. Exam results are available within 3-4 months after the exam. There is a fee for the certification exam and some scholarships are available for those who need support paying for the exam. Talk with one of our Lactation faculty for more information about scholarships. Email lactation@pdx.edu if you have questions.

You can view videos about IBCLC certification and what our program offers on our [YouTube channel](#).