

PROFESSIONAL ISSUES



Biofeedback Certification Institute of America Update

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The Biofeedback Certification Institute of America has revised the certification process for general biofeedback and neurofeedback. The revisions include a simplified and updated blueprint of knowledge for these two areas, new exam questions and revalidation of the exams, allowance for an independent study option for the anatomy and physiology requirement, and simplified practitioners to certify either in general biofeedback or in neurofeedback by means of prior experience.

The Biofeedback Certification Institute of America (BCIA) has carefully listened to certificants and educators and has completed three initiatives to increase the relevance and ease of the certification process while maintaining professional standards. These initiatives include an overhaul of the general biofeedback and electroencephalography (EEG) exams, the addition of an independent study option to fulfill the anatomy and physiology requirement, and the creation of a certification by prior experience (CPE) for experienced professionals.

New General Biofeedback and EEG Biofeedback Exams

BCIA is excited to report our successful revision and validation of the general biofeedback and EEG biofeedback certification exams. In response to candid and informative feedback from our certificants, we have extensively improved the blueprint of knowledge, reading list, and exam items for each test.

We've simplified both blueprints and updated their content and terminology. The new blueprints emphasize current practical knowledge and focus on the learning objectives that our certificants and educators consider important for professional practice. The blueprint, in turn, helped us select the core reading list that teaches its content.

We have completely overhauled the recommended reading lists and reduced each to a core list of 10 sources. We chose references that are widely available, affordable, and relevant to clinical biofeedback and neurofeedback. The amount of reading involved is now the equivalent of a 3-hour advanced college course.

New applicants will see the most dramatic change in the exam items. We reviewed all previous items and solicited hundreds of new items from educators who teach the BCIA blueprint. We selected questions that test current entry-level knowledge and are easily answered by 1 of our 10 sources. Then, we assessed these questions through a psychometric validation process to ensure that they are fair and reward the careful preparation of our applicants.

These are comments from recent certificants about the general biofeedback and EEG biofeedback exams: "I thought it was a fair exam, with plenty of time to work through it and finish it without stress," and "The EEG exam was a good overview of general concepts involved in neurotherapy."

Independent Study in Anatomy and Physiology

The BCIA board believes that anatomy and physiology knowledge is an important foundation for training in biofeedback and neurofeedback. We also recognize that this requirement can be difficult for professionals to complete because of cost, time investment, and class availability.

BCIA has developed an independent study option to increase our applicants' options. Professionals who choose this option will purchase a widely used, BCIA-approved anatomy and physiology textbook, read specific chapters, and complete a multiple-choice exam over learning objectives relevant to biofeedback and neurofeedback.

Anatomy and physiology exams will be offered on the same dates and locations as the certification exams. If one chooses, both exams may be completed on the same day. To collect psychometric data to build a fair and representative test, we will provide the exam on a no-fail basis for the first 30 people who take it, and we will honor their completion of the anatomy and physiology requirement for certification.

BCIA will continue to support traditional university-based and distance learning courses. Please access www.bcia.org for further information on all of the options for the anatomy and physiology requirement for certification.

Certification by Prior Experience

When many of you achieved certification, biofeedback and neurofeedback were emerging fields. The profession has grown, and this is largely because of your pioneering spirit. You helped to set the entry-level requirements and worked hard for the recognition of professional standards.

The BCIA certification program is the gold standard of excellence in training and education for the delivery of clinical biofeedback and neurofeedback services and has been certifying entry-level clinicians for 25 years. But what about those experienced professionals who have already gone far beyond entry-level training? Is there a certification option for them?

BCIA is pleased to announce the launch of Certification by Prior Experience (CPE). This opportunity is reserved for a select group of professionals who can demonstrate extensive training and experience and have been leaders through their various contributions to the field. We recognize that these professionals have earned the right to a streamlined certification process.

Only those professionals who can demonstrate the following may apply:

- a current license/credential, issued by the state in which you practice, in a BCIA-approved clinical health care field;
- a minimum of 60 hours of accredited postprofessional education in one or more BCIA blueprint areas; and

- 3,000 patient/client hours over 5 years of relevant experience using clinical biofeedback and neurofeedback modalities.

Applications will be considered by the Certification Review Committee and recommended to the BCIA Board of Directors for final approval.

Conclusion

The overhaul of the general biofeedback and EEG exams, independent study option for the anatomy and physiology requirement, and the CPE program are three of BCIA's most visible initiatives. Behind the scenes, we have also engaged in advocacy on behalf of certificants and the field, simplified all of our application forms, and added several new exam sites so that there will be more options available. In addition, we have enhanced the BCIA Web site to include a zip code search for practitioners and a global search function to assist visitor navigation.

Please contact the office at (303) 420-2902 or bcia@resourcenter.com for more information about these new BCIA initiatives or to provide input and suggestions to us. Service to our stakeholders is our highest priority. We want you to be proud of your membership in an elite group of biofeedback professionals who are "More than qualified—BCIA Certified!"



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