



Candidate Handbook



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Candidate Handbook

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All general questions and requests for information regarding BCEN exams should be directed to:

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This Candidate Handbook will describe the examination process as well as give you other important information regarding the Board of Certification for Emergency Nursing (BCEN®) certification exams. Please familiarize yourself with the information in this booklet.

Nondiscrimination Policy

BCEN and its test development and test delivery vendors endorse the principles of equal opportunity and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as Amended. Eligibility criteria for BCEN examinations are applied equally to all applicants regardless of race, color, creed, gender, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status, age, marital status, or gender identity. All testing sites comply with all federal, state, and local laws regarding use of public buildings, ensure accessibility required under the ADA, and accommodate applicants with disabilities on an individual basis without additional cost. For the complete text of BCEN's nondiscrimination policy, consult the BCEN website at www.BCEN.org.

How BCEN Exams are Developed

BCEN recognizes the importance of producing psychometrically sound examinations, emphasizing three principal processes:

Test Construction

BCEN conducts Role Delineation Studies (RDS) every 4-5 years to ensure the content on its exams reflects the most current and relevant practice.

As part of the RDS, survey instruments are distributed to nurses in the content area of each exam (emergency, flight, transport, trauma, and pediatric emergency) throughout the United States. This survey data guides the RDS committee in creating the content outline that molds the exams.

The integrated concepts, cognitive level distribution, and number of questions specified within each content area for each BCEN exam program are developed via unanimous agreement from the exam committee.

Item Development

Content experts who write items for BCEN exams represent various aspects of emergency, flight, transport, trauma and pediatric emergency nursing. BCEN strives to screen applicants to ensure geographic, demographic, and practice diversity. Qualifications of individuals involved in item development are documented, consistent with the stated level and purpose of BCEN examination(s), and representative of the clinical practice skills and amount of experience representative of the certificant population. Item writers are trained in the fundamentals of sound item writing and are advised about the purpose and identified structure of BCEN examinations, including their intended audience.

Analysis

Item analysis is a continuous quality process in which performance statistics are collected on each item. Summary statistics are calculated regarding the reliability of each exam, difficulty indexes, performance indexes and discrimination levels.

All examination questions and test forms are the copyrighted property of BCEN. It is forbidden under federal copyright law to copy, reproduce, record, distribute or display these examination questions by any means, in whole or in part. Doing so may subject you to disciplinary action by BCEN and/or severe civil and criminal penalties. For more information about BCEN's policies regarding test development, consult the BCEN website at www.BCEN.org.

Eligibility Requirements

Required:

To qualify for a BCEN certification exam, you must hold a current, unrestricted Registered Nurse license in the United States or its Territories. A nursing certificate that is equivalent to a Registered Nurse in the United States is also acceptable.

Recommended:



Two years' experience in the ED



Two years' experience as a flight nurse



Two years of full-time experience in pediatric emergency nursing care. Pediatric emergency nursing care as defined by BCEN includes providing direct care, health care facilitation, education, and advocacy for pediatric emergency patients and their families.



Two years' experience as a ground transport nurse



Two years of trauma nursing experience at an average of 1,000 practice hours per year across the trauma care continuum (trauma nursing practice defined as providing direct care, supervision, education, and advocacy for trauma patients and their families).

Additionally, twenty (20) to thirty (30) hours of trauma specific coursework across the trauma continuum.

How to Apply for a BCEN Exam



Create or Log In to your [BCEN Account](#)



Locate the “My Certifications” section on the left-hand side of the screen. Here you will see all five of our certification logos. Click Create New Application next to the appropriate logo to open it. Answer the required questions.



Choose your payment method. Credit card and voucher payments will be processed immediately. Check payments may take up to 4 weeks to process.



Once payment has been processed, you will receive an exam eligibility email from BCEN. This contains important information on your 90-day testing window, how to schedule your exam with BCEN’s test delivery provider, Pearson VUE, and other helpful information.

How to Schedule



To Schedule online:

- Click on Schedule Exam found in the left-hand sidebar next to the appropriate logo on your BCEN account dashboard.
- You will be redirected to Pearson VUE’s website.
- Under Pre-approved Exams, click on the applicable exam link to select your testing center, exam date and time.

To Schedule by phone:

- Contact Pearson VUE customer service at 866-751-6589. For International candidates, please click [here](#) for the list of international phone numbers.
- After you schedule your exam, Pearson VUE will send a confirmation email listing your exam date, time, and address, along with directions to the Pearson VUE TestingCenter.

Rescheduling

If you are within your 90-day testing window AND still have at least one business day before the exam (based on the time zone of the testing center where you have an exam scheduled), you will be able to reschedule with Pearson VUE with no reschedule/cancellation fees.

When rescheduling, you must pick a new exam time that also falls within your 90-day window.



You can contact Pearson VUE online at www.pearsonvue.com/bcen, or speak to a customer service representative at 866-751-6589, Monday – Friday, 7am-7pm CST.

Candidates who fail to reschedule within these guidelines or do not show for their exam appointment will forfeit the full exam fee. Fees are applicable for new testing windows.

We strongly recommend scheduling your new test day promptly, as test center seat availability is on a first-come, first-served basis.

Failing to Report for a Scheduled Exam

If you do not report for a scheduled exam appointment, you will forfeit all paid fees. A new application and payment will be required for a new exam appointment.

Exam Refunds

A written request for a refund of an exam fee can be submitted to BCEN prior to scheduling an appointment with a BCEN test delivery provider and prior to the close of your 90-day testing window date as outlined in your eligibility notification from BCEN. Once an exam appointment has been scheduled, refund requests will not be accepted.

Testing Accommodations

If you require accommodations in order to sit for your exam, please contact BCEN at bcen@bcen.org for more information before completing the application.

Testing Facilities

Testing centers have been selected to provide accessibility to the largest number of candidates in all states and major metropolitan areas. Exams are delivered by computer at Pearson VUE testing centers. A current listing of testing centers, including addresses and driving directions, appears at www.pearsonvue.com/bcen. If you cannot find a Pearson VUE testing center in your area, contact the BCEN office.

In the event of inclement weather or unforeseen emergencies on the day of an examination, Pearson VUE will determine whether circumstances warrant cancellation and subsequent rescheduling of an exam.

On the day a testing site is closed, Pearson VUE will send one email and make one telephone call (if testing center workload allows) to notify you of the site closure. On the day after the site closure, Pearson VUE will send a follow-up email verifying that the site was closed and that your exam will need to be rescheduled.

Exams usually are not rescheduled if testing center personnel are able to open the testing center.

If power to a testing center is temporarily interrupted during exam administration, testing center staff will attempt to restart the exam so that you may continue.

Identification Requirements

To gain admission to the testing center, you must present two forms of original (not photocopied), valid (unexpired) IDs, one form as a primary ID (government issued with name, photo, and signature) one form as a secondary ID (with name and signature or name and photo). The first and last names you use to register must match exactly with the first and last names on the ID you present at the testing center. Failure to supply proper ID at the time of the exam is considered a missed appointment. There will be no refund of your exam fee.

All IDs must be issued by the country in which you are testing. If you do not have the qualifying ID issued from the country in which you are testing, a passport from your country of citizenship is required, along with a secondary ID.

PRIMARY

- International Travel Passport
- Driver's license
- Military ID
- State/national/province ID card (w/photo)
- Green card, permanent resident, visa
- Local language ID (from country you are testing in)

SECONDARY

- Any ID containing at least name and signature, or name and photo, that meets primary ID requirements

Admission Procedures

You should arrive at the test center 30 minutes before your scheduled appointment time. This will give you adequate time to complete the necessary sign-in procedures.

Note: If you arrive more than 15 minutes after the scheduled testing time, you may not be admitted. If you are not admitted because you are late and the testing center cannot accommodate your appointment, contact BCEN during regular business hours 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Central Time.

Upon arrival and before you can sit for your exam, you will be asked to do the following:



- Review and accept the Examination Rules and Regulations agreement.
- Submit two valid, correct forms of ID.
- Create a digital signature to verify that it matches the signature on your IDs.
- Have your palm vein pattern captured (at most testing centers).
- Have your photograph taken.*
- Store your belongings.

*You must agree to have your photograph taken as part of the admission procedure; if you don't agree, you will not be admitted for the exam.

You will be provided with an erasable note board to use as scratch paper during the exam. You must return the note board to the testing center staff at the completion of the exam.

Security Procedures During Admission

BCEN and its test delivery partner maintain strict exam administration and security standards designed to ensure candidate safety and that all candidates are provided the same opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. The testing center is continuously monitored by audio and video surveillance equipment for test security purposes.

Testing center staff will monitor you on admission to ensure no unauthorized materials are taken into the testing room. The integrity of the test and BCEN's copyright require that candidates be precluded from duplicating or recording any part of the examination by any means, including copying or photographing.

Randomly assigning seating, separating candidates, and using table dividers decreases the chance of any irregular behavior. Failure to comply with the following regulations will result in dismissal from the testing center and forfeiture of all fees.

Regulations

- No personal belongings are allowed in the testing center. This includes but is not limited to cellphones, PDAs, watches, wallets, purses, firearms or other weapons, hats (and other nonreligious head coverings), bags, coats, books and/or notes, pens or pencils.
- Use of a cell phone, or other electronic devices is strictly prohibited and will result in dismissal from the exam.
- No questions concerning exam content may be asked during the exam.
- Eating, drinking, chewing gum, or smoking is not permitted in the testing center.
- No documents or notes of any kind may be removed from the exam room.
- No guests, visitors, or family members are allowed in the testing room or reception areas.



What to Expect

Before you begin taking your BCEN exam, you will be asked to confirm the name of the exam you are taking and then asked to agree to the BCEN Examination Rules and Regulations agreement regarding exam confidentiality. Total seat time for the exam is 180 minutes (3 hours). Seat time begins when you are presented with the BCEN Examination Rules and Regulations agreement screen. You will have 4 minutes to review and agree to the BCEN Examination Rules & Regulations, and 176 minutes to (1) take or skip the optional tutorial and (2) take and complete the exam. You can view a tutorial on the computer-based testing procedures [here](#).

Security Procedures During the Exam

Testing areas are monitored by testing center staff during the exam. Individuals who engage in any of the following behaviors during the exam will be dismissed from the testing area and asked to leave the testing center. Their scores will not be reported and all exam fees will be forfeited without a refund.

- Creates a disturbance, is abusive, or otherwise uncooperative.
- Displays and/or uses electronic communications equipment such as pagers, cell phones, PDAs.
- Gives or receives help, or is suspected of doing so.
- Attempts to record exam questions or make notes.
- Attempts to take the exam for someone else.
- Is observed with notes, books, or other aids.



Taking Breaks During the Exam

You may take a break whenever you wish, but you will not be given additional time to make up for time lost during breaks. During any break, you are not permitted to access personal items other than medication required at a specific time (unless you receive prior permission). You must receive permission from the testing center staff prior to accessing personal items that have been stored.

You will need to show ID and/or have your palm vein captured when leaving and entering the testing room. Testing center staff will escort you to your assigned workstation when you return to the testing room.

Comments

During the exam, you may make comments about specific questions by clicking on the Comment button on the screen.

Comments will be reviewed by the BCEN Exam Construction Review Committee, but individual responses will not be provided.



Exam Results and Personal Information

Confidentiality

Maintaining candidate and certificant confidentiality is of primary importance to BCEN. Individual scores and personal information are not released to anyone other than the candidate/certificant. For the complete text of BCEN's confidentiality policy, consult the BCEN website at www.BCEN.org.

BCEN publishes aggregate information about the performance of candidate groups on the BCEN website on an annual basis to comply with Accreditation Board for Specialty Nursing Certification (ABSNC) accreditation requirements, which may include but not be limited to pass/fail data and exam performance data. Any data published are based on a sufficient number of candidates to ensure that the data are meaningful to report but do not compromise individual candidate confidentiality, as determined by the BCEN Board of Directors in collaboration with its test development vendor. Studies and reports that include test scores and other exam data do not contain information identifiable with any candidate or certificant, unless authorized by the candidate or certificant.

Maintenance of Records

Candidate and certificant information is maintained within your secure BCEN Account. Within your account you can edit your profile to update your address, phone number, email address, opt in or out of BCEN communications, publish your credential, change your account password and login name. Candidates and certificants can also view their detailed account history which includes information about certification status, exam application status and recertification activities.

Cancellation of Candidate Scores

Candidate misconduct occasionally may cause a score to be suspect, at which time BCEN's test delivery partner would report the incident to BCEN. BCEN reserves the right to void or withhold exam results if violation of testing regulations is discovered upon investigation.

Any of the following actions can void an exam score or result in the denial, suspension, or revocation of BCEN certification:

- Falsification of information on the certification application.
- Falsification of any material information requested by BCEN.
- Any restrictions such as revocation, suspension, probation or other sanctions of professional RN license by a nursing license authority that limits a nurse's ability to function in an emergency care setting and perform those tasks normally associated with in emergency nursing specialty practice.
- Misrepresentation of certification status.
- Cheating or collusion with others to cheat, including distributing exam content orally, digitally, or in writing on the certification exam.

Note: BCEN investigates all instances of alleged misconduct, misrepresentation, and/or noncompliance to ensure due process and to protect candidates' rights. BCEN policies on misconduct, the disciplinary process, and candidate appeals process appear in full on the BCEN website at www.BCEN.org.

How Exam Results are Reported

Once you have completed the exam, you will be instructed to report to test center staff to receive your score report. Scores are reported in written form in person at the testing center, or by email on request.

The score report will indicate your test results as pass or fail, which is determined by your raw score. A raw score is the number of questions you answered correctly. There is a specific breakdown of the major content areas of the exam and how you scored within each area.

Pass/Fail Result Determination

BCEN uses the Angoff technique as the procedure for estimating pass/fail decisions for its exams. Passing scores may vary slightly for each form of the exam. To ensure fairness to all candidates, a process called statistical equating is used. The equating process then considers the difficulty level of each question selected for each form of the exam, attempting to match the difficulty level of each form as closely as possible. To ensure fairness, slight variations in difficulty level are addressed by adjusting the passing score up or down, depending on the overall difficulty level statistics for the group of scored questions that appear on a particular version of the exam.



In the event of an error on the part of BCEN or its agents which results in an incorrect pass or fail score, BCEN reserves the right to correct any score.

If you Pass...

If you pass the exam, you are certified for four (4) years and can use the designated credential after your licensing title with no punctuations. A certificate and wallet card will be delivered within 15 business days after passing the exam.

Contact BCEN if your certificate or wallet card is not received within this timeframe.

If you Don't Pass...

If you do not pass the exam, you will be given your raw scores (i.e., number correct) in each area of the content outline. You must reapply and submit all applicable fees and documentation to retake the exam.

There is a 90-day waiting period between exam attempts.

How to Prepare

Visit our [How to Study Page](#) for the following resources:

Preparation Checklist

Content Outlines

Sample Questions

Reference Lists

Practice Exams

Review Course Search

Exam Tutorial

Pearson Professional Center Tour and Guide