

# BACB Newsletter



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## International Development Update

In December 2019, the BACB [announced](#) that new BACB certifications would no longer be available to those outside of the US and Canada beginning in 2023<sup>1</sup>. The rationale for this substantial change was multifaceted, including numerous legal and practical considerations, as well as the recognition that a country’s steady-state system for regulating applied behavior analysis (ABA) practitioners would likely need to originate within the country rather than be based on a private certification system originating in a different country. Toward this end, since the 2019 announcement, the BACB has liaised with colleagues in more than 70 countries and has allocated resources (e.g., staff, financial) to assist a number of national behavior analysis associations around the world in developing their professional infrastructure, including new local certification programs. What follows is a summary of some of these developments.

### National Association Development

A key element of a profession’s infrastructure within a country is a national behavior analysis association (or a regional association of closely aligned countries). Such local associations are critical for organizing and connecting the professional community, disseminating information to behavior analysts and the public, and spearheading efforts to develop additional professional infrastructure such as certification and regulatory systems. Since the BACB’s 2019 announcement, the following associations have been created or become more active, and the BACB provided consultative and/or financial support for many of these efforts at the request of the organization.

- Pan **African** Association for Behavior Analysis (PAABA)
- **China** Credentialing Committee for Applied Behavior Analysis (CCCABA)
- Hrvatska Udruga iz Bihevioralne Analize (**Croatian** Association for Behavior Analysis; HUBA)
- **Dutch** Association for Behavior Analysis (DABA)
- L’Organisation Nationale des Professions de l’Analyse du Comportement (National Organization of the Professions of Behavior Analysis – **France**; ONPAC)
- Applied Behavior Analysis Association of **India** (ABAA India)
- Ikatan Profesi Analis Perilaku Indonesia (**Indonesian** Association for the Profession of Behavior Analysis; IPAPI)

<sup>1</sup> Residents in the United Kingdom (UK) were subsequently granted a 3-year extension (through 2025) and Australia subsequently rejoined the BACB’s jurisdiction.

- **Irish** Society for Behavior Analysis (ISBA)
- **Israeli** Organization for Behavior Analysis (IOBA)
- **Malaysia** Association for Behavior Analysis (MABA)
- Organización Mexicana de Practicantes del Análisis Conductual Aplicado (**Mexican** Organization of Applied Behavior Analysis Practitioners; OMPAC)
- The Society of Behaviour Analysis Aotearoa **New Zealand** (SBAANZ)
- **Nordic** Association of Behavior Analysts (consortium of national associations from **Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway,** and **Sweden**; NordicABA)
- Professional Behavior Analyst Association of the **Philippines** (PBAAP)

## Recognition, Regulation, and Local Credentialing Programs

For the ABA profession to be recognized within a country (either explicitly as a profession or by regulating its members), there generally needs to be a sufficient number of professionals to justify formal recognition, as well as a national professional association to lead such efforts. Since the BACB's 2019 announcement, multiple national associations have been engaged in activities to have their country recognize the profession of ABA or its professionals. The BACB provided consultative and/or financial support for many of these efforts at the request of the organization.

- The Association for Behaviour Analysis **Australia** (AusABA) has developed a certification program and will self-regulate behavior analysts through the Australian National Alliance of Self Regulating Health Professions
- The **China** Credentialing Committee for Applied Behavior Analysts (CCCABA) formed from existing organizations that both offered Verified Course Sequences in the past and is an umbrella organization of the China Disabled Persons' Federation. CCCABA is in the process of developing a multitier certification program
- The new association in **France** (ONPAC) has developed its own three-tier certification program
- Ongoing efforts by the **Indian** association (now ABAA India) have led to 'Behavioural [sic] Analyst' as a recognized Behavioural Health Sciences Profession (along with psychologists, social workers, medical health workers, etc.) by the Indian parliament
- The **Indonesian** association (IPAPI) has developed a qualification/credential associated with completion of the new postgraduate program offered by a university in Jakarta (Lembaga Psikologi Terapan Universitas Indonesia, LPTUI)
- The new **Malaysian** association (MABA) is developing a multitier certification program
- The Romanian association (Institutul ABA **Romania**) has been pursuing professional recognition and has achieved some initial goals
- The **UK** has gained professional recognition through a successful application to the UK's Professional Standards Authority to accredit the UK Society for Behaviour Analysis' (UK-SBA) register of UK behavior analysts. In addition, the UK-SBA has developed a certification program for behavior analysts and is also developing certification programs for lower tiers

## Other Developments

Another critical aspect of a profession's infrastructure within a country, and perhaps the most important aspect, is the existence of local postgraduate university training programs in behavior analysis. It would seem inconceivable that a profession would be recognized and regulated at a national level if there were no opportunities for one to access the prerequisite academic training required to pursue that career locally. In addition to the efforts above, with which the BACB has been involved, we are aware of numerous ongoing local efforts to start postgraduate training programs in a number of countries: **Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, India, North Macedonia,** the **Philippines,** and **Portugal** (among others). In addition, there have been two new postgraduate programs started in Southeast Asia: Applied Behavior Analysis Supervisory Certification<sup>2</sup> program offered by LPTUI – a psychology institution associated with the University of **Indonesia** – and

<sup>2</sup> The term 'certification' in this program's title denotes recognition of supervisory competence rather than national personnel certification.

a Master of Applied Behavior Analysis degree program which has been approved by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency to be offered at Sunway University in Kuala Lumpur, **Malaysia**. Both programs are collaborative efforts between the institution/university and national associations in Indonesia and Malaysia, respectively.

As this update illustrates, there has been substantial national professional infrastructure development by behavior analysts in multiple countries in just the past few years, with other efforts underway. We commend our international colleagues for these tremendous foundational accomplishments, which will undoubtedly benefit the profession in their countries for years to come.

The BACB remains committed to assisting national behavior analysis organizations (or organizations that represent the consensus view of the behavior analysis community within a country) in the development of their professional infrastructure, including new national credentialing programs. Assistance might include in-person or remote consultation, resource development, or small grants. Interested parties may request support from the BACB by submitting an [International Support Form](#).

## Changes to BACB Certification in Australia

The Association for Behaviour Analysis Australia (AusABA) was approved in 2023 as a qualifying member of Australia's National Alliance of Self Regulating Health Professions. Under this affiliation, AusABA has developed a revised membership and certification system to self-regulate ABA providers. At the request of the AusABA Executive Board of Directors, the BACB Board of Directors agreed to discontinue offering new BACB certifications in Australia effective January 1, 2027. To obtain BACB certification before then, Australian residents must submit an approvable application to the BACB by December 1, 2026, and those with active examination authorizations must pass their examination by December 31, 2026. As with other countries where the BACB no longer issues new certifications, the BACB will continue to allow Australian certificants to recertify. We respect AusABA's autonomy and the organization's diligent efforts to establish professional infrastructure in Australia and congratulate them on their recent successes.

## Considerations for Using Artificial Intelligence in ABA Practice

Artificial intelligence (AI) involves applications that perform complex tasks like humans. AI is a part of our everyday personal lives (e.g., movie recommendations, medical imaging analysis, semi-autonomous cars) and professional activities (e.g., recruiting and hiring practices, editing software). Advances in technology permit AI applications to process large amounts of data, learn from experience, make judgments and predictions, and communicate with others. Recently, generative AI built on large language models (e.g., ChatGPT) has raised awareness about the possibilities of AI for service delivery. Generative AI applications require users to enter prompts, feed content, and clarify expectations to generate requested information. For instance, a user could enter a series of prompts to generate and refine a task analysis for a life skill, such as toothbrushing or driving a car. AI may also be used to predict clinical outcomes. Collectively, these tools have the potential to help plan, deliver, and evaluate services. Despite their strengths, these applications have risks; BACB certificants must be aware of these risks to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements (e.g., HIPAA), ethics requirements (e.g., Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts), and state and federal laws. Risks include privacy threats, given that the information entered into generative AI applications may be used as learning material for the software and be exported to other users. There may be additional legal risks associated with false or biased content, errors, and information leakage. Given the sensitive nature of the data handled in the delivery of ABA services, the BACB encourages its certificants to obtain legal and technical guidance to help establish clear policies and procedures for using AI during their professional activities. Regardless of which AI application is used within their ABA practice, BACB certificants are required to adhere to their relevant [BACB ethics code](#).

# Accurately Representing your Legal Name in the BACB Registry

The [BACB Certificant Registry](#) provides the public with a way to verify that a person holds an active BACB certification. For that reason, BACB certificants are required to:

1. Keep their BACB account updated with their full legal name as it appears on their government-issued identification, *AND*
2. Use their full legal name when representing themselves with their certification (e.g., on reports, company websites) so employers, consumers, funders, colleagues, and others can find them in the BACB registry and verify their certification status.

We understand that certificants may prefer to use their maiden name or a nickname, or have other preferences; however, this requirement is vital for consumer protection as it allows the public to verify a person's qualifications. This requirement also helps facilitate and optimize the efforts of licensing boards to verify active certification status.

As a reminder, certificants must notify the BACB within 30 days if they change their name by submitting a Name Change Request in their BACB account. To learn more about representing BACB certification status, check out the [How to Represent Your BACB Certification Status](#) blog.

## Protecting the BACB's Certification Marks to Avoid Genericide

In trademark law, genericide is the process by which a registered trademark (e.g., BCBA<sup>®</sup>) becomes generic through frequent improper use of the term. For example, the BACB has increasingly encountered instances of "BCBA" being used in job titles by organizations to refer to behavior analysts who are not certified by the BACB. This practice seems to be especially prevalent in school district job titles. If a trademark becomes generic (think trampoline, escalator, and granola), the trademark owner loses their rights to the trademark. If this happens, all behavior analysts, whether certified or not, could call themselves BCBA's and the BACB's certification marks would lose value—an unfortunate outcome for certificants and consumers. Please provide feedback to any organizations using "BCBA" (or other BACB certification marks) when they should be using a more generic term, like "Behavior Analyst" or "Behavior Specialist."

On a related note, university training programs should not use the BACB's certification marks in their degree or certificate program names. Consumers could easily be misled into thinking that a graduate of a "BCBA Certificate" program is certified by the BACB. For this reason, as well as the risk of genericide, it is more appropriate to name such a program "Behavior Analysis" or "Applied Behavior Analysis."

## Artificial Intelligence and BACB Materials

The BACB recently made an important update to its website [Terms of Use](#). The Terms of Use web page now explicitly states that the BACB's copyrighted materials may not be used to train AI software applications (especially large language models). This update protects the BACB's intellectual property rights and helps ensure accurate information about the BACB and its activities. For example, information seekers could rely to their detriment on erroneous answers about ethics and BACB requirements provided by third-party AI-based applications.

# Recent and Upcoming Changes to BACB Requirements

The following table summarizes important changes to certification requirements that have been announced in BACB newsletters.

Effective Date	Area	Change	Source
September 29, 2023	BCBA Pathway 1 Update	Applicants who receive a master's degree from an APBA-accredited university program can apply under BCBA Pathway 1.	<a href="#">September 2023 Newsletter</a>
January 1, 2024	BCBA and BCaBA Reinstatement Period	The BCBA and BCaBA reinstatement period for recertification will be reduced to 30 days.	<a href="#">September 2023 Newsletter</a>
	BCBA and BCaBA Coursework Expiration Policy	A rolling 10-year expiration date will be placed on coursework submitted as part of a BCBA or BCaBA certification application.	<a href="#">March 2022 Newsletter</a>
	RBT Initial Competency Assessment	The responsible assessor, assistant assessor(s), and RBT applicant must be employed at (or all have a contractual relationship with) the same organization where the client is receiving services. This requirement applies to the entire assessment.	<a href="#">September 2023 Newsletter</a>
July 1, 2024	RBT and BCaBA Certification in Ontario	Ontario residents will no longer be able to apply for RBT or BCaBA certification. Those holding RBT and BCaBA certification in Ontario will have their certification placed on voluntary inactive status.	<a href="#">Upcoming Changes to BACB Certification in Ontario</a>
January 1, 2025	Multiple Certifications Policy	BACB certificants may only hold one BACB certification at a time.	<a href="#">September 2023 Newsletter</a>
	BCBA Examinations	The BCBA examination will be based on the BCBA Test Content Outline (6th ed.).	<a href="#">February 2022 Newsletter</a>
	BCaBA Examinations	The BCaBA examination will be based on the BCaBA Test Content Outline (6th ed.).	<a href="#">February 2022 Newsletter</a>
January 1, 2026	BCBA and BCaBA Verified Coursework	All Pathway 2 certification applications will require that a VCS Coordinator Coursework Attestation is completed by a designated program contact.	January 2023 announcement to VCS Coordinators
	Noncertified RBT Supervisors	Noncertified RBT Supervisor role eliminated. RBT Supervisors must hold BCaBA or BCBA certification.	<a href="#">September 2023 Newsletter</a>
	RBT Eligibility and Maintenance Requirements	Revisions to core RBT eligibility and maintenance requirements, including training, competency assessments, and professional development. Recertification cycles will change from 1 to 2 years.	<a href="#">December 2023 Newsletter</a>
	RBT Examination	The RBT examination will be based on the RBT Test Content Outline (3rd ed.).	<a href="#">December 2023 Newsletter</a>
	BACB Certification in the UK	Residents of the United Kingdom (UK) will no longer be able to apply for BACB certification. Those holding BACB certifications in the UK will be able to maintain their certification.	<a href="#">International Development and Support</a>

Effective Date	Area	Change	Source
July 1, 2026	BCBA Certification in Ontario	Ontario residents will no longer be able to apply for BCBA/BCBA-D certification. Those holding BCBA/BCBA-D certification in Ontario will be able to maintain their certification.	<a href="#">Upcoming Changes to BACB Certification in Ontario</a>
January 1, 2027	BCBA Eligibility and Maintenance Requirements	Revisions to core certification requirements, including degree, coursework, supervised fieldwork, continuing education, and ongoing supervision. Pathways 3 and 4 discontinued.	<a href="#">March 2022 Newsletter</a>
	BCaBA Eligibility and Maintenance Requirements	Revisions to core certification requirements, including degree, coursework, supervised fieldwork, continuing education, and ongoing supervision.	<a href="#">March 2022 Newsletter</a>
	BACB Certification in Australia	Residents of Australia will no longer be able to apply for BACB certification. Those holding BACB certifications in Australia will be able to maintain their certification.	July 2024 Newsletter
January 1, 2032	BCBA Eligibility Pathways	Pathway 1, which requires a degree from an accredited university training program, will be the only eligibility pathway for BCBA certification.	<a href="#">March 2022 Newsletter</a>