

# WHICH PATHWAY IS RIGHT FOR ME?

## Determining if Pathway 1 or Pathway 2 is Appropriate



This document will answer many questions you may have on becoming a Lactation Consultant through UC San Diego Division of Extended Studies. You will find information on the following topics:

- **How to Become a Lactation Consultant**
- **What are the Eligibility Requirements – Who can take the IBLCE Exam?**
- **Pathway 1 and UC San Diego Extended Studies: Who is Eligible to Apply to the Program?**
- **Pathway 2 and UC San Diego Extended Studies: Who is Eligible to Apply to the Program?**

### How to Become a Lactation Consultant

The path to becoming a lactation consultant and realizing your dream to work as a professional with moms, babies, and families may seem confusing. Following are the pathways as determined by the International Board of Certified Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE) for certification via exam. To take the IBLCE exam, which is given twice a year in October and April, you will need three things: **College, Class & Clinical.**

**College:** An RN, RD, MD, OT, SLP and other health professions satisfy this requirement. If you are not already in the healthcare industry, you need 8 college courses and 6 CEU courses ([online at UC San Diego Extended Studies](#)).

**Class:** All candidates need a minimum 95 hour class in breastfeeding dyads, preferably from an approved program such as UC San Diego Division of Extended Studies, which has three formats:

- **In-Person:** Pathway 2 program that is offered in the fall. Students will complete clinical hours in-person at a hospital, outpatient facility or private practice in their home city. This course meets the 95+ hours of didactic and the 300 clinical hour requirements.
- **Hybrid:** Pathway 2 program that is offered in the fall. Students will complete some clinical hours in-person at a hospital, outpatient facility or private practice in their home city. They will also complete some clinical hours online via our immersive simulation laboratory. This course meets the 95+ hours of didactic and the 300 clinical hour requirements.
- **Online:** Pathway 2 program that is offered in the fall and spring. Students will complete the 95+ hour didactic and 300 clinical hours online via our immersive simulation laboratory.

The Pathway 1 course (education only – no clinical hours) is also offered online every quarter.

**Clinical:** Depending on the Pathway, the clinical requirement will vary:

- **Pathway 1:** Student already has or plans to complete 1000 clinical hours within a 5 year period, working with breastfeeding dyads.
- **Pathway 2:** Student needs 300 supervised clinical hours. These hours will be part of the UC San Diego Division of Extended Studies Pathway 2 program.

### What are the Eligibility Requirements – Who can take the IBLCE Exam?

We offer two Pathways to be eligible to take the IBLCE exam. These are described on the [IBLCE.org](http://IBLCE.org) website. UC San Diego Extended Studies supports Pathway 1 as a LEAARC approved program and Pathway 2 as a LEAARC accredited program. UCSD students will be required to have completed the following education prior to start of the UC San Diego course.

### Pathway 1 and UC San Diego Extended Studies: Who is Eligible to Apply to the Program?

**Candidates *must have completed the steps below* before the start of UC San Diego Lactation Consultant Program:**

#### 1. General Education Requirement:

##### **Licensed, registered or recognized health professional**

When you apply for our program you will be required to identify your health profession and will be required to submit a copy of your license, registration, diploma or transcript.

Recognized health professionals include: physicians, nurses, midwives, dietitians, occupational, physical and speech therapists, physician assistants, dentists, pharmacists and chiropractors. If your profession is not on this list, please [click here](#) for more information about whether or not your professional training will satisfy the General Education requirements.

#### 2. Clinical Hours Requirement:

Currently working in a paid or volunteer job in which you provide care to breastfeeding families or if you have worked in this type of job during the past 5 years AND can **document a minimum of 1000 hours working directly with moms and babies and breastfeeding**. Documentation must be verifiable by a supervisor. For more information about how to calculate the clinical practice hours required by Pathway 1, please review the Pathway 1 Hours Calculation form (PDF) and the directions to fill out the form (PDF).

### Pathway 2 and UC San Diego Extended Studies: Who is Eligible to Apply to the Program?

**Candidates *must have completed step 1 and 2 of the following* before the start of UC San Diego Extended Studies Lactation Consultant Program:**

#### 1. General Education Requirement:

##### **Have completed following requirements in an academic/college setting:**

When applying for the course, candidates must demonstrate completion of these courses by submitting documentation of completion from accredited colleges or universities.

Each course must be at least one academic term in length and candidates must have received a passing grade in each course.

##### **Licensed, registered or recognized health professional**

When you apply for our program you will be required to identify your health profession and will be required to submit a copy of your license, registration, diploma or transcript.

Recognized health professionals include: physicians, nurses, midwives, dietitians, occupational, physical and speech therapists, physician assistants, dentists, pharmacists and chiropractors. If your profession is not on this list, please [click here](#) for more information about whether or not your professional training will satisfy the General Education requirements.

If you are not a health professional, candidates must demonstrate completion of these courses by submitting documentation of completion from accredited colleges or universities.

**The 8 college subjects:**

- Biology\*
- Human Anatomy\*
- Human Physiology\*
- Infant and Child Growth and Development\*
- Nutrition\*
- Introduction to Research\*
- Psychology or Counseling or Communication Skills\*
- Sociology or Cultural Sensitivity or Cultural Anthropology\*

**The 6 continuing education subjects:**

When applying for the course, candidates must submit documentation of completion of continuing education in the following 6 topics.

- American Heart Association Basic life support (CPR)
- Medical Documentation\*
- Medical Terminology\*
- Occupational Safety and Security for Health Professionals\*
- Professional Ethics for Health Professionals\*
- Universal Safety Precautions and Infection Control\*

\*UC San Diego Extended Studies offers courses that meet these requirements

**2. Other UC San Diego Extended Studies prerequisites for program admission:**

Pathway 2 Program Only: Completion of a minimum 45 hour lactation education training program, preferably the UC San Diego Extended Studies Foundations of Lactation Education class, within the last 5 years