



Policy 2.2 Item Writer Selection

Policy

Content experts who write items for BCEN® examinations are selected to represent various aspects of emergency, pediatric emergency, transport (both ground and flight), and trauma nursing. Additionally, BCEN strives to screen applicants to ensure geographic 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 found in the certificant population. Eligibility requirements include (1) current status as a registered nurse, (2) a minimum of a BSN, (3) current CEN, CFRN, CPEN, CTRN or TCRN certification and (4) currently employed in a clinical practice setting as an emergency nurse, pediatric emergency nurse, flight/transport nurse or trauma nurse.

BCEN chooses new item writers for its programs at least every two (2) years. A 2-day item-writing workshop is conducted for new writers and provides basic instruction in sound item-writing and item review principles, including bias and sensitivity training. New item writers are required to attend this workshop. The workshop also includes both didactic and interactive activities in which item-writing principles, the structure of the test blueprint, confidentiality and security issues, and timelines are presented and discussed. Exam Construction Review Committee (ECRC) members also participate in the workshop and serve as mentors to new item writers. All new item writers are assigned an ECRC mentor.

New item writers must also sign a nondisclosure and confidentiality agreement and assign copyright to BCEN for all materials they create during their item writer term. Item writers' work is evaluated by ECRC mentors each item-writing cycle to determine if additional instruction is needed. New item writers serve an initial 2 (two) year term and may serve for no more than 3 consecutive terms (6 years).

Procedure

1. A call for item writers is published on BCEN's website and in other communication vehicles at least 6 months prior to the item-writing workshop.
2. Interested applicants who meet the eligibility criteria are sent an item-writing packet. Applicants complete the packet and submit it within the published deadline.

3. Utilizing specific criteria about performance and diversity needs, the corresponding certification program ECRC Chair, a senior member of the respective ECRC, and the BCEN Certification Manager evaluate and discuss each application.
4. New item writers are selected based on their item writing performance, and on demographic and geographic needs.
5. New item writers are notified of their selection and supplied with details about the item-writing workshop.
6. New item writers are required to attend the 2-day item-writing workshop.
7. New item writers are assigned, meet and work with an ECRC mentor on writing items.
8. New item writers serve an initial 2-year term that may be renewed based on their performance. Item writers may serve for no more than 3 consecutive terms (6 years).

Approved: June 2016

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