

CBGC Application Pathway Updates

The following changes to the CBGC Certification Pathways were approved by the CBGC Board of Directors on January 12, 2025.

Changes to Pathway C are effective immediately. Changes to Pathways B and D will be effective for the application window for the 2028 examination. Pathway E will come into effect after regulation is enacted for the first time in any Canadian province.

The CBGC reserves the right to alter these policies as necessary for future cycles of the examination. Please read this information carefully.

Application Pathways

A candidate can certify through the pathway that applies to their situation. Applicants through pathways A, B and C must submit their first application within 5 years of graduation. Any candidate who fails to achieve certification after 3 attempts within 5 calendar years may re-apply; a new logbook will be required.

Pathway A

Candidates who are graduates of a Master's program in Genetic Counselling accredited by the Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling (ACGC)

Pathway B

Candidates who are graduates of a Master's program in Genetic Counselling that is accredited by an international accreditation body other than the ACGC

Pathway C (Pre-approved Canadian programs)

Candidates who are graduates of a Canadian Master's program in Genetic Counselling that is not ACGC accredited but has CBGC pre-approval status

Pathway D

Candidates who are graduates of a Master's program in Genetic Counselling and have a current certification from a genetic counsellor credentialing body

Pathway E

Candidates who hold the Certified Genetic Counselor (CGC) credential from the American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC) on the date that regulation requiring Canadian certification is introduced for the first time in any Canadian province.

Pathway E is a pathway to provide legacy credential verification to genetic counsellors who were working in Canada with ABGC certification (i.e., the CGC credential) prior to the enactment of provincial regulation. This pathway is not available to a genetic counsellor who obtains ABGC certification or board eligibility status after regulation is enacted for the first time in any Canadian province.

Re-Examination

Candidates who were unsuccessful the last exam cycle and are applying to write the exam this cycle.

Recertification by examination

Canadian certified genetic counsellors who choose to recertify by writing the examination (See Recertification Protocol).

Pathway A

Pathway A candidates have a Master's degree from an ACGC (Accreditation Council for Genetic Counselling) accredited program or will graduate from an ACGC accredited program by June 1st of the exam year (for August exams) or December 1st of the previous calendar year (for February exams). Candidates who will have completed all program requirements by the examination date may also be eligible. The training program must have been ACGC accredited for the entire duration of the candidate's training. Candidates applying through Pathway A must submit their first application within 5 years of graduation. Candidates who completed their training at programs without ACGC accreditation must apply through Pathway B, C, or D.

There are several categories of Pathway A applicants:

A-1: Candidates who graduated within the last 5 calendar years and are applying to write the examination for the first time

(A-2: This pathway was retired in January 2020)

(A-3: This pathway was retired in January 2020)

A-4: Candidates who previously held Canadian certification through any pathway but allowed their certification to lapse

A-5: Candidates who previously applied for certification through Pathway A but failed to achieve certification after 3 attempts within 5 calendar years

All Pathway A candidates are required to submit the following documentation and pay all appropriate fees by the application deadline. Detailed descriptions of the required documentation can be found on the CBGC website ("Description of Required Documents" and "Logbook Instructions" tabs).

1. Online Application Form
2. Official Transcript (and Program Director statement for student applications)
3. Letters of Recommendation (two)
4. *Case Logbook (for pathway A-5 only)*
5. Fees

Pathway B

Pathway B candidates have a Master's degree from a program established for the training of genetic counsellors that is accredited by an international accreditation body other than ACGC that meets the criteria below* or will graduate from such a program by June 1st of the exam year (for August exams) or December 1st of the previous calendar year (for February exams). Candidates who will have completed all program requirements by the examination date may also be eligible. The program must have been accredited over the candidate's entire course of study. Graduates from a program that is not accredited by any professional body are not eligible to write the CBGC examination through Pathway B.

To be eligible, the respective accreditation body must meet the following criteria*:

- 1) The accreditation process includes a review of an educational program's documentation, facilities, and resources
- 2) Accreditation standards are publicly published and relate to the following:
 - Requirements of the educational institution;
 - Administrative structure of the educational program;
 - Goals and objectives of the educational program;
 - Expected outcomes of the educational program;
 - Requirements for financial, human, technical, learning, and non-academic resources, and information technology, including, for example, the use of artificial intelligence and social media;
 - Evaluation mechanisms of both students and the educational program
- 3) Time-defined accreditation status and requirements to maintain the status are publicly available
- 4) Publicly published recognition of accredited programs is in place
- 5) The accreditation agency and its processes are autonomous from the educational programs under accreditation review
- 6) The accreditation agency has representatives and/or appointees from relevant interested and/or affected parties

*Adapted from the Association of Accrediting Agencies of Canada Guidelines for Good Practice (2024)

Candidates applying through Pathway B must submit their first application within 5 years of graduation. Each application to write the CBGC examination through Pathway B will be assessed on an individual basis. All Pathway B candidates are required to submit the following documentation and pay all appropriate fees by the application deadline. Detailed descriptions of the required documentation can be found on the CBGC website (“Description of Required Documents” and “Logbook Instructions” tabs).

1. Online Application Form
2. Official Transcript (and Program Director statement for student applications)
3. Letters of Recommendation (three)
4. Case Logbook
5. Request for Special Consideration
6. Program Accreditation Checklist
7. One page CV/Resume
8. Fees

Pathway C

Pathway C candidates have a Master's degree from a Canadian program established for the training of genetic counsellors that is not ACGC accredited or will graduate from such a program by June 1st of the exam year (for August exams) or December 1st of the previous calendar year (for February exams). Candidates who will have completed all program requirements by the examination date may also be eligible. The institution must have received pre-approval from the CBGC. Candidates applying through Pathway C must submit their first application within 5 years of graduation.

Only programs that provide training to individuals from an under-represented Canadian population will be considered for pre-approval for their graduates to apply through Pathway C. Programs must also be in good professional standing and have a documented history of candidates that were deemed eligible for examination through Pathway B. Before a candidate applies through Pathway C, their institution's Program Director must apply for Pathway C status by submitting the following via email to CBGCoffice@cbgc-cccq.ca.

Descriptions of Course Content: For each course required for the Master's degree, please provide a one-paragraph description of course content. Links to websites will not be reviewed, but descriptions copied directly from websites and course catalogues are acceptable. Descriptions longer than one paragraph will not be reviewed. Course content should include medical human genetics, human biology and behavioural sciences (e.g., counselling theory, crisis intervention, psychological assessment, grief/bereavement counselling, interviewing and counselling techniques, ethical/cultural issues, etc.).

Description of Student Population: Please provide a one-paragraph description of the population the program trains. The program must demonstrate a focus on training individuals from an under-represented Canadian population (e.g., French-speaking individuals).

The above documentation must be received from the institution by 11:59pm on July 1 prior to the examination year. Institutions will be notified of their Pathway C status by September 1. Once approved by the CBGC, graduates of pre-approved programs may apply through Pathway C. Pre-approval designation will be valid for three examination cycles and will only be valid for candidates that graduated within that time period. Pre-approval is invalidated if there are significant changes to the program, such as the

duration of the program, the number of required courses, or the number of clinical rotations.

All Pathway C candidates are required to submit the following documentation and pay all appropriate fees by the application deadline. Detailed descriptions of the required documentation can be found on the CBGC website (“Description of Required Documents” and “Logbook Instructions” tabs).

1. Online Application Form
2. Official Transcript (and Program Director statement for student applications)
3. Letters of Recommendation (three)
4. Case Logbook
5. Fees

Pathway D

Pathway D is intended for certification of experienced, certified genetic counsellors intending to practice in Canada. Pathway D candidates have a master's degree from a program established for the training of genetic counsellors, have a current and valid certification from a genetic counsellor credentialing body, and are currently in good standing with the corresponding organization. Verification of certification and the applicant's current standing with the credentialing body is required. Although clinical experience in a genetic counselling role in Canada is strongly encouraged, it is not a requirement to apply through Pathway D.

Candidates who apply through Pathway D and fail the certification exam can re-apply at the next examination cycle through the "Re-Examination" pathway. Candidates who fail to achieve certification after 3 attempts within 5 calendar years will no longer be eligible for Pathway D.

All Pathway D candidates are required to submit the following documentation and pay all appropriate fees by the application deadline. Detailed descriptions of the required documentation can be found on the CBGC website.

1. Online Application Form
2. Request for Special Consideration
3. Letters of Recommendation (three)
4. Proof of Certification (e.g., credential verification) from the credentialing body
5. Letter from the credentialing body indicating that the applicant is in good standing
6. Fees

Pathway E

Pathway E serves to provide recognition and verification of the ABGC Certified Genetic Counselor (CGC)® credential by the CBGC-CCCG should provincial regulation require Canadian certification. This pathway allows current ABGC diplomates to apply for Canadian credential reciprocity with the CBGC-CCCG. Pathway E is not available to a genetic counsellor who becomes board-eligible or certified with ABGC after the date that regulation requiring Canadian certification is introduced for the first time in any Canadian province. Successful applicants will receive a document acknowledging that reciprocity has been granted by the CBGC. This reciprocity will expire on the same date as their ABGC certification expires.

This pathway does not allow individuals to achieve the Canadian Certified Genetic Counsellor (CCGC) nor the “Conseiller(ère) en génétique agréé(e) du Canada” (CGAC) credentials. Successful applicants become Class C members of the CBGC-CCCG and are limited to this membership as denoted in the CBGC-CCCG bylaws. Individuals wishing to obtain the CCGC/CGAC credential and become CBGC-CCCG Class A or B members must apply to write the CBGC certification examination through Pathway D.

Cost:

- ABGC certification is five years and CBGC certification is ten years, therefore the following formula will be used to estimate the cost of CGC credential reciprocity:
 - First reciprocity application
 - $(\text{Cost of pathway B}) / 2 * \text{prorated to the number of months left of ABGC certification}$
 - Subsequent reciprocity applications
 - Regular recertification costs every five years

* Early-bird prices do not apply to Pathway E

All Pathway E candidates are required to submit the following documentation and pay all appropriate fees. Detailed descriptions of the required documentation can be found on the CBGC website.

1. Online Application Form
2. Letter of Recommendation (one)
3. Proof of Certification (i.e., copy of certificate) from the ABGC along with a letter confirming the applicant is in good standing
4. Fees