

International Genetic Counselling Credentialing: a Working Group of the TAGC

Template for Comparing Credentialing/Registration

Country	United States
Date of completion	3/22/2016
Name of Credentialing Body/Registration Board	American Board of Genetic Counseling
Website/Address	www.abgc.net
Is there a separate credentialing/registration process for nurses? If yes, please give details of nursing credentialing group	No. Nurses are not eligible to sit for the ABGC certification exam.
Eligibility criteria to apply for certification/registration	Graduation from an ACGC accredited master's degree training program and verification of clinical training completion by program director.
Required criteria to apply for a Masters degree in Genetic Counseling	Varies by program but generally includes a BA degree from an accredited university; GRE exam and pre-requisites of some courses such as genetics, statistics, psychology, etc.
If there is a Masters Degree in Genetic Counseling, is this accredited? If so, by whom?	There are 35 ACGC accredited programs that are located in the United States and Canada. All ACGC accredited training program must reside in institutions that are regionally accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education or comparable provincial accreditation in Canada
Minimum length of time between completing the training requirements and applying for certification/registration	The examination is offered twice per year during the months of February and August and graduates can apply upon graduation from an accredited program. Generally, the waiting period is between application and administration is approximately 3-6 months. However individuals can apply in the month the exam is administered in a late application process. Eligible candidates have a five year window with a limited number of attempts in which to become certified following graduation.
Number of cases used in Masters in Genetic Counseling course that can also be used in registration	The ACGC Standards of accreditation require that each training program include 50 core cases as a minimum base of clinical training. Cases will include various roles in which the GC student is providing management. The Standards are located here . Training programs average 130 cases per student.
Is there a written examination? Yes/no, please give details	Yes. Application information is included in the Examination Bulletin .

Who is examination assessed and ratified by? Please give details or say if not applicable	The ABGC Certified Genetic Counselor examination is developed by a committee of subject matter experts guided by a measurement professional. In conjunction with a testing service, the examination is administered by ABGC. ABGC's CGC examination is accredited by the National Commission of Certifying Agencies .
Portfolio of work submitted for certification/registration? yes/no (n.b. this question relates to certification/registration and not to a portfolio of work needed to complete a Masters degree in Genetic Counseling)	no
Portfolio assessed by independent assessors? yes/no/not applicable	n/a
Portfolio ratified by the Registration Board? yes/no/not applicable	n/a
Candidate has an interview as part of the credentialing/registration process? yes/no	no
What work is done for certification/registration?	The only criteria for eligibility is graduation from an ACGC accredited master's degree program.
Core competencies for practice as a genetic counselor, these are the skills that are assessed in the certification/registration process (and not only in the MSc course)	ABGC's examination is based on a national practice analysis survey. This survey results in a detailed content outline and these are the areas that are tested on the examination. The national practice analysis is conducted approximately every 5 years. Additionally, the ACGC accredited program's curriculum must address the Practice Based Competencies .
Is Genetic Counseling Supervision required, post-MSc completion, in order to obtain certification/registration? Please see Clarke et al (2007) ¹ for a definition of Genetic Counseling Supervision (i.e. this is different from clinical supervision with a geneticist, or peer supervision with another GC or manager, counseling supervision is	no

1

Clarke A, Middleton A, Cowley L, Guilbert P, Macleod R, Clarke A, Tran V (2007) Report from the UK and Eire Association of Genetic Nurses and Counsellors (AGNC) supervision working group on genetic counsellor supervision. J Genet Couns. 16(2):127-42

with a counseling therapist/psychologist and focuses on counseling issues)	
Are certified/registered genetic counselors regulated? If so, by whom?	There are currently 22 states that require a license to practice genetic counseling. In these states, the profession is regulated by the state board that issues licenses. In all states, the licensure applicant must be currently certified by ABGC.
What requirements exist to maintain certification/registration? How frequently is certification/registration maintained?	ABGC requires individuals to recertify every 5 years by submitting documentation of 12.5 Continuing Education Units or by taking and successfully completing the examination.
Do you have an international policy on registration of genetic counselors trained outside your country? If so, please provide a link to this	Not at this time. ABGC has engaged a taskforce to look at this issue, but at present there is no way to qualify for the examination for individuals who have not graduated from an ACGC accredited program.
Please briefly summarise what is required of international genetic counselors wanting to register/certify in your country	