



Addendum to The Framework for an Experience-Based Certification (EBC) Program: Specific Program Guidelines

Introduction

Experience-based certification (EBC) programs provide an alternate route to certification through an approved Pennsylvania education program provider (EPP). The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) aims to decrease the time for EPPs to develop and deliver new EBC programs. While this document has been created to support the work of EPPs, providers should continue to consult existing guidelines for establishing new post-baccalaureate programs. Furthermore, this document does not address the Career and Technical Experience-Based Certification as discussed at the [Career and Technical Certification | Department of Education | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#) website.

The first half of this document highlights key elements of delivering an EBC program and offers general insights for EPPs, local education agencies (LEAs), and EBC candidates. The second half of the document aids EPPs in better understanding the approval process when establishing experience-based certification programs.

Furthermore, throughout this document the department clarifies terminology associated with EBC preparation programs.

What is an EBC?

- An EBC issued in accordance with 22 Pa. Code § 49.91 and §49.92 is a type of certificate (Type 51) qualifying a person to teach (Section 1201 and 1203). Therefore, an EBC preparation program must prepare a candidate to teach. The candidate will teach in the area for which the candidate has passed a content test prior to admission into the EBC preparation program.
- An EBC is valid for five years of service.
- The EBC is a professional certificate that may be issued only to an applicant who is a graduate of an accredited four-year college or university.
- During the first year, the applicant shall complete all tests and enroll in an authorized program.
- The certificate requires continuing enrollment in a state-approved EBC program.
- This certificate cannot be renewed.

- The EBC will be issued for the period necessary for the candidate to complete the approved EBC program, but this period will not exceed five years of service.

What are the benefits of an EBC over an Emergency Permit?

While PDE offers LEAs two options with educational obligations to staff classrooms – Experience-Based Certificate (EBC) and Emergency Permit – LEAs, candidates, and EPPs are better served when an EBC option is used over an Emergency Permit (01) and (04).

- **For LEAs**, the EBC provides an assurance that the vacant position will be filled by an individual who has subject matter competency, and the individual is enrolled in a certification program that leads to an Instructional I certificate. The LEA does not pay for the EBC every year as it does for the Emergency Permit.
- **For candidates**, the EBC provides an assurance that upon successful completion of the EBC program, the EBC can be converted to an Instructional I certificate for an additional fee. Additionally, the courses completed to maintain an EBC are a component of an approved program unlike the courses required to maintain an Emergency Permit with educational obligations. Moreover, the EBC remains valid for five (5) years of service.
- **For EPPs**, the EBC provides a mechanism for monitoring course enrollments of post-baccalaureate students. This monitoring allows EPPs to plan for known needs versus an Emergency Permit holder's educational need.

Key Program Elements

The EBC program is an alternate route to certification through an approved Pennsylvania EPP.

- As the EPP delivers an EBC program to prepare candidates to meet Pennsylvania Instructional I certification requirements, candidates must already possess a bachelor's degree and have successfully passed an appropriate subject matter test.
- EBC programs only prepare individuals for instructional subject areas and are not applicable to preparing individuals seeking certification as educational specialists, administrators, or supervisors.
- EPPs are reminded that at the conclusion of an EBC program, successful candidates receive the same Instructional Level I certificate as traditional post-baccalaureate candidates.
- Therefore, EBC programs should demonstrate how candidates have acquired the same competencies acquired by candidates in a traditional post-baccalaureate preparation program.
- However, the EPP must provide EBC programs that are tailored to the specific and unique needs of the highly qualified candidates who enter these programs and who have demonstrated competency in a subject area.

An EBC educator must successfully complete the subject matter test in the area of certification for which they plan to complete their Stage 4 Field Experience prior to enrolling. Additionally, unlike those enrolled in a traditional post-baccalaureate program, the candidate of an EBC program is the teacher of record.

- As such, EBC programs should provide flexible and accelerated pedagogical training to experience-based educators who have demonstrated competency in a subject area (22 Pa. Code 49.91(c)).
- Furthermore, candidates in an EBC program may require different supports from those in a traditional post-baccalaureate program both during and upon graduation from the program. Section 49.91(a) provides that an EBC program may include an induction (22 PA. Code §49.91(a)) and for these reasons, EBC preparation programs are encouraged to develop and maintain a support program for their new teacher candidates.
- An additional role of the EPP delivering the EBC program is to provide access to professional networking, resource information, and job placement services.

PDE Review and Approval Process

To accelerate the approval process for a EBC program, an EPP must have an approved and operating traditional post-baccalaureate program in the content area and grade levels of the intended EBC program. Post-baccalaureate programs are programs beyond the undergraduate level. Therefore, to obtain approval to establish and deliver an EBC program through this process, EPPs must use one of the following options as the foundation of the new program:

- **Option 1 – Traditional stand-alone post-baccalaureate program:** Use the approved post-baccalaureate program in the content area that leads to certification only.
- **Option 2 – Degree-embedded program:** Use the approved post-baccalaureate program in the content area that leads to a master's degree or doctoral degree.
- **Option 3 – Re-open an EBC program:** EPPs can create an EBC program by reopening an EBC program on moratorium or using an active EBC program that is not being used.

Assurance Form

Options 1 or 2 - Providers using Option 1 or Option 2 as the foundation for establishing a new EBC program must complete and submit the Assurance Form A (Appendix A).

Option 1 and Option 2 – The form assures:

1. The new EBC program utilizes the same competencies as the approved post-baccalaureate program used to create the new EBC (*methodology and pedagogy courses should be delivered in the beginning of the EBC program*).

2. The program follows all new Chapter 49 and Act 55 guidelines.
3. The program includes the **Advising Sheets**:
 - EPPs should provide candidates with guidance on how to successfully complete an educational preparation program. The advising sheet should function as a tracking document to promote conversation between the EPP and candidate. The advising sheet should provide an individual plan for the candidate to complete the EBC program.
 - Therefore, to receive approval of an EBC program, EPPs will submit the advising sheet of the approved traditional or degree-embedded post-baccalaureate program that was used to create the EBC program **and** submit the advising sheet that will be used in the EBC program. The EBC program advising sheet should be different from the post-baccalaureate program used to create it.
 - The EBC advising sheet must include a space to indicate when the candidate passed the content test and applied for the EBC. These items should be placed at the beginning of an advisement sheet.
 - The advisement sheet should reflect when the student will complete necessary educational coursework (professional core, assessment, methods, and other pedagogy related courses). Note: Candidates in the EBC program should not be required to enroll in content only courses because the candidate has passed the relevant content test(s).
 - EPPs provide insights on when the candidate will be advised to convert the EBC to an Instructional I Certificate.
 - EPPs indicate the timing of the EPP Observation. Note: EPP should observe the candidate at least once per month during the Stage 4 Field Experience and complete the PDE 430 at least twice.
4. The program includes candidate and new teacher supports: Describe how the program provider will provide a range of high-quality supports during and following the program.
5. If established after August 2025, the program has a matrix that includes the new Chapter 49 competencies (if a new matrix already exists due to submission of the new competency assurance forms, then no matrix needed with this assurance form).

Option 3 - For providers to create a new EBC program using the third option (Re-open an Experience-Based Certification Program), the EPP must submit the Assurance Form B (Appendix B).

Option 3 – The form assures:

1. EBC programs on moratorium are reapproved by the IHE.
2. A reapproved EBC program includes 18-24 credits.
3. The program includes a new advising sheet.
4. If established after August 2025, the program has a matrix that includes the new Chapter 49 competencies (if a new matrix already exists due to submission of the new competency assurance forms, then no matrix needed with this assurance form).

EPPs should understand:

- Currently, the PDE review of Assurance Forms comes at no cost to the EPP.
- Each approved experience-based certification program will be subject to the provider's Major Review process as defined by PDE.
- PDE may request a copy of the program design, ask for additional information beyond what is outlined within this document, and/or request a site visit at any time for review and verification of program assurances.

Approval

After submission of the EBC program assurance form, PDE will review and extend approvals (or communicate any issues) within 4-6 weeks (unless otherwise communicated).

Upon the review of all documentation, PDE will issue initial approval for the program. The program provider may then begin to enroll students.

Additional Information

Individuals reading this document should consult the existing [Experience-Based Certification \(EBC\) Program Guidelines](#) (PDF) for further information applicable to EBC programs. This section provides additional insights for EPPs, LEAs, and teacher candidates.

Final Note to EPPs

- If an EBC candidate cannot find a position at a school entity, the EPP must convert the candidate's enrollment to a traditional post-baccalaureate program and find the student a placement for the 12-week minimum supervised teaching experience. If an EBC candidate is ready for student teaching but not working for a school entity, then the student cannot be enrolled in an EBC program and will be a traditional post-baccalaureate candidate.

Contact Information

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Appendix A



Pennsylvania
Department of Education

Experience-Based Certification (EBC) Program Assurance Form A for Program Approval – Options 1 and 2

College/University Name:

Contact Person's Name:

Contact Person's Title:

Email:

Phone:

Indicate the title of the new EBC program and level: Indicate degree awarded:

Certification track only Master's degree Doctoral degree

Program competencies: Does the new EBC program utilize the same competencies as the approved post-baccalaureate program used to create the new Stage 4 Field Experience program?

Yes No

Does the new EBC program comply with all current Chapter 49 and Act 55 requirements?

Yes No

Submit advising sheets:

Copy of new EBC program **and** Copy of approved post-baccalaureate program used to create the new EBC program.

Candidate and new teacher supports: Describe how the program provider will provide a range of high-quality supports during and following the program.

If established after August 2025: Include the new Chapter 49 competencies (if a new matrix already exists due to submission of the new competency assurance forms, then no matrix is needed with this assurance form).

Signature: By signing this assurance statement, I _____, as a representative of the above-mentioned program provider, agree to develop and implement the certification program (name) based on the (program name) guidelines. The program provider understands that each approved program will be subject to the provider's Major Review process as defined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). The program provider also understands that PDE may request a copy of the program design or request a site visit at any time for review and verification of program assurances.

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B



Pennsylvania
Department of Education

Experience-Based Certification (EBC) Program Assurance Form B for Program Approval – Option 3

College/University Name:

Contact Person's Name:

Contact Person's Title:

Email:

Phone:

Indicate the title of the re-opened EBC program and level: Confirm degree to be awarded:

Certification track only Master's degree Doctoral degree

Institution approval: Did the college/university approve re-opening and using the previously approved EBC program?

Yes No

Does the reopened EBC program comply with all current Chapter 49 and Act 55 requirements?

Yes No

Submit program competencies matrix.

Submit advising sheets:

Copy of new EBC program **and** Copy of approved post-baccalaureate program used to create the new EBC program.

Candidate and new teacher supports: Describe how the program provider will provide a range of high-quality supports during and following the program.

If established after August 2025: Include the new Chapter 49 competencies (if a new matrix already exists due to submission of the new competency assurance forms, then no matrix is needed with this assurance form).

Signature: By signing this assurance statement, I _____, as a representative of the above-mentioned program provider, agree to develop and implement the certification program (name) based on the (program name) guidelines. The program provider understands that each approved program will be subject to the provider's Major Review process as defined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). The program provider also understands that PDE may request a copy of the program design or request a site visit at any time for review and verification of program assurances.

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____