



**UK Society for
Behaviour Analysis**

**THE STANDARDS OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND
EXPERIENCE FOR BEHAVIOUR ANALYSIS**

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Part 1: Introduction

With an increasing recognition of behaviour analytic interventions world-wide and in particular in UK health, education and social care policies and guidance (see *Behaviour Analysis: From Science to Profession*, UK-SBA, 2019) there is a growing demand for qualified and competent practitioners in the field of Behaviour Analysis.

In response to this demand and in recognition of the need to provide consumers with confidence in services provided, behaviour analysts have long been engaged in addressing the challenge of how to identify and ensure that quality services – practical and ethical – are delivered to the increasing number of consumers requesting such services. For the past 20 years this has been the focus of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board® (BACB)®. Founded in the United States in 1998 to develop educational, technical and ethical standards for professionals and trainees providing such services, its organisational mission is twofold: 1) to protect consumers of behaviour analysis services worldwide by systematically establishing, promoting, and disseminating professional standards and 2) to solve a wider variety of socially significant problems by increasing the availability of qualified behaviour analysts around the world (see <https://www.bacb.com/about/#Accreditation>). For a history of the BACB and its role in the development of the profession of Behaviour Analysis see *Behaviour Analysis: From Science to Profession* (2018, UKSBA).

Based on extensive input from specialists in the field and accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (see below), the BACB® has developed education and training standards and an international credentialing process which has been adopted by practitioners worldwide. These developments now provide consumers of behaviour-analytic services and potential employers a means of identifying practitioners who meet standards set by the profession and validated by an international accrediting organisation.

The standards for the UK outlined below have been developed by the UK Society for Behaviour Analysis (UK-SBA) in line with international standards for the field of Behaviour Analysis set by the BACB®, as well as the requirements of the health, education and social care sectors within the UK. The overarching purpose, in keeping with the UK-SBA's strategic objectives, is to act in the public interest, to keep the public safe and to enable proper and public accountability for the behaviour analysts who work to improve the well-being and quality of life of children, young people and adults suffering disadvantage or disability because of behavioural difficulties.

The UK-SBA is committed to maintaining the availability of high-quality evidence-based professional Behaviour Analysis practice in the UK. The Society also promotes and supports the academic field of Behaviour Analysis within the UK, in terms of university-based training, research and practice.

In addition to these standards of education, training and experience for behaviour analysis the UK-SBA has published a Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct (2019) which all practising behaviour analysts listed on the UK-SBA Register are required to sign up to.

Part 2: Professional Standards

This section describes the overall professional standards that we recommend for training programmes.

- Training programmes should support safe, evidence-based, person-centred values-driven practices
- Training programmes should include content on ethical, professional, and business practice as outlined in the UK-SBA Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct
- Within clinical training environments service users should not be exposed to undue risk from learning and teaching activities
- Equality and diversity policies should be in place, implemented and monitored in all settings for all training programmes, fostering equality of opportunity and respecting diversity
- Training programmes should make explicit the nature and extent of knowledge, skill and experience required to provide service users and the public with good quality care
- The delivery of the curriculum should remain relevant to current scientific and clinical practice
- Professional aspects of practice should be integral to training programmes and should be clearly visible in assessment procedures
- Quality assurance processes should be in place for all parts of training programmes
- Training programmes should promote self-development, accountability and the personal qualities required of any professional working on issues of importance to society
- Training programmes should promote effective leadership and professional development appropriate to the level of the programme
- Approaches to teaching and learning should foster independent, learner-centred learning and should develop evidence-based practice in learners
- Learners', employers' and service users' views should be considered in the design, delivery and evaluation, and development of training programmes
- Training programmes should support the development of the learner in a multi-professional team setting, and programmes are expected to include opportunities for effective interprofessional teaching and learning wherever possible.
- The delivery of the curricula should be relevant to the needs of service commissioners, employers and service users
- Knowledge, skills and work-based components of training programmes should be integrated
- Training programmes should be effectively managed, with sufficient infrastructure, to ensure delivery of the required outcomes of training.

Part 3: Standards of Education and Training

The standards for education and training describe in detail the expectations of the UK-SBA in respect of the minimum criteria that members need to satisfy to ensure that they are likely to have the knowledge and ability to meet technical competencies, personal attributes and business practices required of the profession of behaviour analysis.

In addition to the standards detailed below:

- All members agree to adhere to the UK-SBA Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct
- All practising members evidence relevant Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks
- All practising members evidence indemnity cover
- All practising members evidence appropriate safeguarding training, as is appropriate for their respective work settings

Full member

There are four categories of full membership

1) Board Certified Behaviour Analysts® (see below)

- Board Certified Behaviour Analyst® – Doctoral (BCBA-D®)
- Board Certified Behaviour Analyst® (BCBA®)
- Board Certified Assistant Behaviour Analyst® (BCaBA®)

Requirements are

Completion of an academic degree including a BACB®/ABAI Verified Course Sequence (PhD, MSc and BSc respectively) either entirely or mainly composed of Behaviour Analysis content (including ethics), that meet the UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) requirements (or equivalent) and taught by experts in the field

Coursework and Supervised Practice: behaviour-analytic coursework and supervised practice under the guidance of a certified Behaviour Analyst

BCBA®: 1500 supervised hours independent field work or 1000 hours university course placement or 750 hours intensive university course placement

BCaBA®: 1000 supervised hours independent field work or 670 hours university course placement or 500 hours intensive university course placement

BACB® Exam: successful completion of academic and practice requirements provides eligibility to take an examination, psychometrically sound and including a range of theoretical, practice-based and ethical issues covered in academic and practice experience

Commitment to adherence to the BACB®'s Professional and Ethical Compliance Code.

Commitment to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) over a 2-year cycle:

BCBA-D®: 32 hours of CPD of which 4 hours are in respect of ethics

BCBA®: 32 hours of CPD of which 4 hours are in respect of ethics

BCaBA®: 20 hours of CPD of which 4 hours are in respect of ethics

2) Comprehensive Application of Behaviour Analysis to Schooling (CABAS®) Teacher 1

Minimum of a degree at undergraduate level and minimum of 18 months full time teaching in a CABAS® School/Centre. Teachers demonstrate competencies consistently and reliably across three areas (Theory, Practice and Research) assessed through a scientifically calibrated observation system, leading to CABAS® Professional Advisory Board conferral as a CABAS® Teacher 1.

Minimum of 18 months supervised full time teaching in a CABAS® School/Centre. Teachers receive supervision by individuals with a CABAS® Master Teacher rank or higher and are required to meet criterion referenced targets for the presentation of instruction and management of classroom and behavioural contingencies. Observations are calibrated to set standards and subject to periodic Inter Observer Agreement

Commitment to 6 hours of CPD annually

3) Postgraduate Diploma, MSc or PhD in Behaviour Analysis

Completion of an academic degree including a BACB®/ABAI Verified Course Sequence, meeting QAA requirements (or equivalent) and taught by experts in the field

1000+ hours relevant experience verified by a letter from a supervisor or employer.

Commitment to 6 hours of CPD annually

4) MSc or PhD in Psychology or Education with focus on behaviour analysis

Completion of an academic degree including a BACB®/ABAI Verified Course Sequence, meeting QAA requirements (or equivalent) and taught by experts in the field.

1000+ hours relevant experience verified by a letter from a supervisor or employer.

Commitment to 6 hours of CPD annually

Associate Member

There are 2 categories of associate member

1) Postgraduate Diploma, MSc or PhD in Behaviour Analysis

Completion of an academic degree including a BACB®/ABAI Verified Course Sequence meeting QAA requirements (or equivalent) and taught by experts in the field

Commitment to 6 hours of CPD annually

2) ABA Practitioner

Practitioner with at least 1000+ hours Behaviour Analytic experience. Required to provide:

a) Employer evidence of ≥ 2 years (approximately 1000+ hours) experience in the field

AND

b) Letter of support from Full member or equivalent (e.g. a BCBA[®] who is not a member of the UK-SBA) verifying the Practitioner's experience.

Commitment to 6 hours of CPD annually

Affiliate Member

Affiliate members are working in the field of Behaviour Analysis but do not meet requirements for other membership categories.

Affiliate members are required to provide a letter of verification from a supervisor who is either a Full Member of the UK-SBA or equivalent (e.g. a BCBA[®] who is not a member of the UK-SBA) stating their work has been supervised in the previous six months.

Commitment to 6 hours of CPD annually

Student member

Student members are currently enrolled on a UK undergraduate or postgraduate course or module in Behaviour Analysis with a BACB[®]/ABAI Verified Course Sequence. Applicants on non ABAI Verified Course Sequences taking a module or course in Behaviour Analysis will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Student members are required to provide a letter from a university, college, school staff member verifying their course or module enrolment.

Part 4: External validation

1) BACB[®] certification

The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) standards for the accreditation of certification programmes were the first standards developed for professional certification. They were developed to help ensure the health, welfare and safety of the public when accessing professional services. The validity of training, practice and ethical content of certification programmes is the outcome of a comprehensive job analysis conducted and analysed by experts in the field and includes data gathered from stakeholders in the occupation. Accreditation by the NCCA

of professional standards provides impartial, third-party validation that certification requirements meet recognised national and international credentialing industry standards.

Organisations with standards accredited by the NCCA should submit annual reports documenting continued compliance with NCCA standards and every five years (accreditation is valid for a period of five years) are required to submit re-accreditation applications. In these ways, the NCCA maintains oversight of the organisations and certification programmes it accredits. For further information see <http://www.credentialingexcellence.org/ncca>

For renewal of BACB® accreditation, the NCCA requires that independent subject matter experts (SMEs) review all of the BACB® standards and make recommendations to the BACB® board. Briefly, this involves the following process:

- Standards (e.g. defined body of knowledge, degree requirements, supervision requirements, CPD requirements) are reviewed every five years
- Research is conducted and/or information collected about the organisation and related issues
- An SME workgroup is convened. The SME workgroup composition is carefully constructed to represent equitable mixes of SMEs across position (e.g. faculty versus practitioner), years of experience, geographical location, gender etc.
- The SME workgroup reviews the research, other information and current standards and debates the standards.
- The SME workgroup makes recommendations to the BACB® board about revisions to the standards
- The BACB® board votes to accept the recommendations, or not.
- The BACB® board cannot modify the recommendations.
- If the board vote not to accept the recommendations, the process begins again and another SME workgroup is convened

Through this process education, training and certification standards are set by the field rather than by the BACB®. And through this process the BACB®'s education, training and certification standards are accredited by an independent body, the NCCA.

2) CABAS® Certification

The Comprehensive Application of Behaviour Analysis to Schooling (CABAS®) is a teacher training programme developed from several decades of research in Experimental and Applied Behaviour Analysis. Originally developed by experts in the field of Behaviour Analysis at the Teachers College of Columbia University New York, CABAS® teacher training is now part of the core curricula of both Teachers College Columbia University and Nicholls State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. CABAS® Teacher qualifications are widely recognised by national and state authorities in the USA responsible for overseeing and certifying the training of teaching personnel.

Behaviour Analytic teacher training programmes at Teachers College Columbia University are accredited by the Association for Behaviour Analysis International (ABAI). Founded in 1974, ABAI only considers accreditation for academic programmes recognised by the US Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. Eligible to apply for CABAS® Board Certification, graduates of the Teachers College Programme are eligible to hold New York State (and

other US states) Licensed Teacher certification across four areas: Early Childhood Regular and Special Education, and Childhood Regular and Special Education. They are also eligible to take the BACB Board Certified Behaviour Analyst exam and the New York State exam for Licensed Behaviour Analyst (a protected title).

Behaviour Analytic teacher-training programmes at Nicholls State University, Louisiana, have Accredited Provider Status conferred by 1) the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), 2) the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and 3) the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Graduates are eligible to apply for CABAS® Board Certification. In addition to a Bachelor's or Master's degree from a regionally accredited college or university, CABAS® Certification is one of Louisiana's two eligible Behaviour Analytic qualifications for state certification as, respectively, a Certified Assistant Behaviour Analyst and Certified Behaviour Analyst – both of which are protected titles.

The CABAS® credentialing process is essentially a professional performance evaluation system. Teacher training takes place in CABAS® Board Accredited training centres, either in whole school settings or dedicated classrooms within larger schools. Involvement of a university-based CABAS® consultant (Teachers College or Nicholls State) is an inherent element of the CABAS® process. There are currently five CABAS® Board Accredited training centres in the USA and one in the UK. To achieve accreditation, each training centre should have (among other criteria) university linkage to a CABAS® programme and be directed by specialists with advanced CABAS® Teacher qualifications. Following initial accreditation as a CABAS® training centre, application to maintain accreditation should be made on a three-yearly cycle and includes site inspection by representatives of the CABAS® Board.

In addition to New York State and State of Louisiana formal recognition (see above), CABAS® training centres are also approved by (among others) the State of New Jersey Department of Education, Rockland County (New York) Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), Virginia Association of Independent Specialized Education Facilities (VAISEF) whose accreditation process has been approved by the Virginia Council for Private Education (VCPE) and authorised by the Virginia State Board of Education.

These examples of government and state approval provide impartial, third-party validation that CABAS® training and certification requirements meet recognised standards for teacher preparation.