



Call for BCEN[®] Item Writers for the CEN[®], CFRN[®] and CTRN[™] Exams No Item Writing Experience Necessary

Item writers are a key element to certification. It is the item writers that have clinical expertise in a specialty and use that expert knowledge to initiate items (test questions) specifically for certification in their specialty. BCEN takes the position that if the item writer has the clinical expertise, we will provide them with the item writing expertise.

Approximately every two years, the Board of Certification for Emergency Nursing (BCEN) puts out a call to CENs, CFRNs, and CTRNs that are interested in writing items for the certification exams. Interested nurses complete the application process and if chosen, attend an item writing workshop. At this time, BCEN is taking requests for item writing applications. Those chosen will attend the next item writing workshop, with expenses paid by BCEN, which tentatively will be held in July 2009.

Item Writing Assignments

Item writers are given two - three assignments per year with each assignment being 10-12 items. BCEN makes every effort to make sure that item writers represent the various areas of the United States as well as rural, urban, and suburban hospitals (large and small).

Items – From Creation to Exam

Item writers are the first step in the development of an item. Once the item writer writes the question, the item is then sent to the item writer's mentor who is also a member of the Exam Construction Review Committee (ECRC). The ECRC member works with the item writer, if necessary, and submits an item to BCEN which then forwards it to the testing company to be placed in the item bank. When the ECRC meets, these items are then reviewed and if approved, are placed on an exam as a pretest question. During a future ECRC meeting, the statistics reflecting the performance of the question are reviewed and the question is reviewed to make sure that it still reflects current practice. At that time, the item may be revised, approved for testing, or deleted from the bank. If the item is revised, it goes on a future exam for pretesting once again.

Item Writer Criteria

Item writers, that meet the criteria, have the opportunity to progress to the Exam Construction Review Committee (ECRC) as openings occur and potentially to the BCEN Board of Directors. Item writing terms are for approximately two years.

Criteria for participation as a BCEN item writer includes:

- Current CEN, CFRN or CTRN status;
- Current emergency nursing, clinical flight nursing and/or clinical transport nursing experience; and
- Minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing.

Submission Information – What to Submit

Part I: If interested in being an item writer, please submit:

- A cover letter expressing your interest in being an item writer, which exam you are interested in writing for, your current position, and a brief demographic description of where you work (rural, urban, teaching, large, small, etc.); and
- A current curriculum vitae

Part II: Once BCEN receives this information and determines that you meet the criteria, you will be sent a packet to complete. This packet includes guidelines in item writing and two different types of item writing exercises. This packet must be completed in its entirety.

Submission Information – Where to Send

Both parts of the submissions should be sent to Lillian Dejesus at:

E-mail: lidejesus@ena.org Or

BCEN
Item Writing Workshop
915 Lee St.
Des Plaines, IL 60016

Phone: 847/460-2630
Fax: 847-460-2631

For further information or to ask questions, please call 800/900-9659, ext. 2629.

Deadlines

All submissions to BCEN must be received by the due date in order to be considered. The deadlines are:

Part I: February 15, 2009

Part II: April 30, 2009

Evaluation Process

Once BCEN has received all packets, three individuals (2 from the appropriate ECRC) evaluate each packet and score it based on a scoring guide. Performance scores as well as the demographic needs of BCEN are considered when choosing the new item writers for 2009.

