

CBAP® Certification: *7 Steps for Managing the Application Process*

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Overview

Are you interested in applying to become a CBAP® (Certified Business Analysis Professional) or a CCBA™ (Certification of Competency in Business Analysis)? If you are like many business analysts who would like to become certified, the exam is not the only major hurdle. The application process itself is challenging and complicated. The IIBA® (International Institute of Business Analysis) intended the application process to screen out candidates who are lacking in experience to become a CBAP or CCBA. The background of a BA is nearly (or even equally) as important as passing the exam.

This brief article is intended for anyone who is contemplating applying for the CBAP or CCBA exam, but has postponed it because of the application. IIBA improved its application submission process and has made the online process easier, but the requirements are still strenuous. We lay out the steps in the application process to help candidates manage their application, to be able to concentrate on studying to pass the exam.

To take either exam, your application must be pre-approved. The professional development hours must also be complete before applying. This latter requirement has prevented more than a few otherwise-qualified applicants from being allowed to sit for the exam. Make sure you can document your education hours with a certificate or other written proof. See our [CBAP-CCBA FAQs page](#) for answers to the most common questions.

Steps

1. Visit the [CBAP Application page](#) as your “home” for applying for the CBAP. Use the [CCBA application page](#) if you are going for that credential. It has links to the online application and other useful information. Download the appropriate **Certification Handbook** to read an overview of the process for your credential. The Application page has a link to get the handbook.
2. **Start your online application.** We suggest you complete the **Candidate Reference** section first.
 - You need to add two references who can attest to your BA knowledge and skills. They could be managers, peers, clients, or other CBAPs or CCBAs.
 - They will receive an email form to be completed and returned electronically to IIBA. Your application can't be completed until your references return their forms, so we advise starting with this step.
3. Complete the **Personal Information** and **Education** sections. These are both simple and self-explanatory. You need a high school or higher education, and be prepared to produce a transcript to prove it. You may be audited as I (Rich) was and you will need the transcript.
4. The **Work Experience** section is extensive. Click “Add New Work Experience” to start it.
 - **Before you start**, create an electronic record of your projects so you can copy and paste into the online application. Your session may time out if you are interrupted, and you may lose what you entered (there is no intermediate save function). [Check our CBAP Resources page](#) for a CBAP or CCBA template to use.
 - You will need to demonstrate 7,500 hours of BA experience over the past 10 years for CBAP.
 - You will need 3,750 BA hours over the last seven years for the CCBA.
 - You need 900+ hours of experience in 4 out of the 6 core Knowledge Areas (KAs) and 900+ hours in two KAs or 500+ hours in four KAs for the CCBA.

- You need to list the projects you've worked on BA activities. IIBA does not count work done on roles other than a BA: meaning, if you managed projects, did testing, or product training, etc. Do not list those hours or specify any non-BA tasks from the list in the application. List only BA work, such as requirements elicitation, analysis, planning and managing, etc.
 - IIBA asks for your project contacts. List them, even if your contacts are no longer employed at the organization you did the work for. Hopefully you have their email address for IIBA to contact. They do audit this, so be as complete as you can.
 - By project, you need to select the BA tasks from the list given in the “BA Activities” area. Some of the tasks are not BA-related (such as “Identified project risks”) and if you select them, the IIBA will deduct a proportionate number of hours from your total. To be safe, we suggest you list as many projects as you worked on as a BA, and only report your BA hours on those projects.
5. Your application for either exam requires a **\$125 USD fee** for applying and it is non-refundable. There is also an exam fee of **\$325 USD** (for members and \$450 USD for non-members of IIBA). The IIBA will collect the application fee online when you apply. You will need to send them a check later or pay by credit card for the exam once your application has been accepted.
 6. You will need to agree to the **IIBA Code of Conduct** during the application process.
 7. Submit your application, pay your fee, and then wait for approval. The current wait time is down to 21 days with the online application. Some students tell us their applications have been questioned, so you may be asked to provide more information. We can help you through this if yours gets questioned. Send us a note to info@WatermarkLearning.com if you would like our help.

Summary

Getting your CBAP certification is a worthwhile and rewarding experience. True, it can be frustrating at times, but the IIBA has improved the process with their online application. Entering your information through the web site takes much of the drudgery out of the steps, but the requirements are still rigorous. Good luck in getting your CBAP!

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About Watermark Learning

Watermark Learning helps improve project success with outstanding business analysis and project management training and mentoring. We foster results through our unique blend of industry best practices, a practical approach, and an engaging delivery. We convey retainable real-world skills, to motivate and enhance staff performance, adding up to enduring results. With our academic partner, Auburn University, Watermark Learning provides Masters Certificate Programs to help organizations be more productive, and assist individuals in their professional growth. Watermark is a PMI Global Registered Education Provider, and an IIBA Endorsed Education Provider. Our [CBAP Certification Preparation](#) class and [CBAP Certification Study Guide](#) have helped numerous people already pass the CBAP exam. For more information, contact us at 800-646-9362, or visit us at www.WatermarkLearning.com/CBAP.