

Accreditation Requirements and Process

International Association of Business Communicators

To begin the accreditation process, candidates must have:

- a minimum of five years of experience in the profession and a bachelor's degree, or
- a total of nine years of combined post-secondary education and/or experience.

Despite meeting these basic qualifications, many communicators wonder if they are professionally ready to become accredited – or if they should make it a part of their career plan.

Accreditation is for you if:

- You plan to stay in the profession.
- You are in – or plan to join – the ranks of middle management in the next few years.
- Your experience in organizational communication has been varied and demonstrates your ability to manage the communication function.
- You have completed a body of work (portfolio samples) that display quality and diversity. Award-winning projects often are a great start for a portfolio sample. Last year's Gold Quill winners are able to use their award-winning project as one of their portfolio submissions.

The accreditation process is a four-step process. Each candidate must:

- Meet the qualifications outlined above.
- Take a self-directed ethics assessment to further understand the ethical dilemmas we are exposed to every day in our line of work.
- Submit a portfolio of two communication projects demonstrating your knowledge and expertise in strategic communication management.
- Take a 4½-hour exam with written and oral components.

The written exam has three sections:

- The technical (general) knowledge section uses essay and short-answer questions to test your general knowledge of communication concepts, tools and technology, and your ability to write or perform professional communication activities based on actual assignments completed during the examination period.
- The case study section outlines a scenario and asks four questions to test your ability to think through and develop a complete communication program for a specific organizational or case problem.
- The philosophy and ethics section tests your understanding of the ethics of organizational communication and of management principles related to communication and of the communicator's role in their application.

For the oral exam, you will be given 15 minutes to review written materials outlining a crisis communications scenario, then asked to make an informal, seven- to 10-minute oral presentation to the examiners describing the problem as you see it, the general solution you'd propose and your supporting rationale.

For more information, visit the accreditation section of the iabcc.com Web site.