

Who's Who in Breastfeeding Support and Lactation in the UK

	International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC)	Breastfeeding Counsellor	Peer Supporter	Baby Friendly
Also known as	Only IBCLC certified lactation consultants are listed on IBLCE registry . Role and Impact of the IBCLC	Breastfeeding Counsellor (ABM, NCT) Breastfeeding Supporter (BFN) La Leche League Leader (LLLGB)	Peer Counsellor, Mother Supporter, Breastfeeding Buddy etc	BFI Baby Friendly accredited hospitals and communities listed here
Accreditation	IBCLC is the only internationally recognised professional breastfeeding qualification. Awarded by IBLCE (exam body)	Awarded by the voluntary organisation. Some have university accreditation	Certificate from accrediting organisation Some receive college qualification	UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative
Who	Health professionals (HP) and accredited breastfeeding counsellors. For other routes see IBLCE pathways	Experienced breastfeeding mothers	Usually women who have breastfed	Usually health professionals and allied workers
Prerequisites	HP and breastfeeding counsellors need extensive clinical experience and advanced lactation education to sit IBCLC exam.	Breastfed own baby for at least 6-12 months	Ability and motivation to take on voluntary role. Usually has breastfed own baby	None
Clinical Hours Prerequisite	1000 hours helping breastfeeding families in a supervised setting (after accreditation as breastfeeding counsellor or HP)	None	None	None required
Breastfeeding Education	90 hours minimum after qualifying as a breastfeeding counsellor or HP. Exam blueprint	Average 2 years, part time	16-36hrs	Ideally, about 18 hours over several days
Counselling Skills	Covered in depth for all breastfeeding counsellors; HP training may vary	Extensive	Basic communication and listening skills	Short introduction to counselling skills.
Standards of Practice	Professional Standards of Practice, Scope, and Disciplinary Procedures	Each voluntary agency has own policies and procedures	Accrediting charity and the agency who supervises have appropriate procedures	Baby Friendly accreditation audits
Recertification	Recertify every 5 years with an average of 15 hrs/yr of continuing lactation and ethics education. Every 10 yrs must resit exams	Continuing education required	Continuing education should be provided	Annual update (1-6 hours) offered by some employers. Institution regularly audited by BFI
Work	Employed in health service (hospital/ community), infant feeding lead roles, NICUs, training HPs/peer supporters, research, policy or in private practice (fees payable)	Volunteers in mother support groups, antenatal classes, helplines etc. Some roles may be paid but breastfeeding counselling service is free to mothers	Usually volunteers, expenses may be paid. Community, children's centres, breastfeeding drop-ins, hospitals. Service free to mothers	Hospitals and community. NHS service free to mothers
Scope	Any breastfeeding issues including complex situations , high-risk babies , oral assessment , etc.	Support with common breastfeeding problems. Referral to further professional advice as needed. Supervision within accrediting body	Encourage and support basic breastfeeding issues under supervision. Refer complex problems on to specialist	Health service staff work within their existing employment scope