



# **Overview of the Application Process for Board Certification as a Specialist in Child Language**



## Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Board Certified Specialist in Child Language (BCS-CL). A BCS-CL is a speech-language pathologist who has advanced knowledge, skills, leadership, and experience in child language and language disorders and is certified as such by the American Board of Child Language and Language Disorders (ABCLLD). This document summarizes the application process, eligibility, and procedures.

## Application Process

To demonstrate your advanced knowledge, skills, leadership, and experience in child language, you are required to submit a portfolio that showcases your advanced knowledge, skills, leadership, and experience in child language and language disorders.

The application portfolio occurs in two phases:

Phase 1: Eligibility Verification

Phase 2: Case Study (Clinical or Academic-Administrative)

### Phase 1: Eligibility Verification

To be eligible to apply to the ABCLLD to become a Board Certified Specialist in Child Language, you must be in compliance with the following:

1. Hold a current Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP) or an equivalent certification from a country having a mutual recognition agreement with ASHA.
2. Have been employed as an ASHA-certified speech-language pathologist within 10 years of applying for Board Certification in Child Language, for either of the following:
  - Full-time (defined as a minimum of 32 hours a week) for five years, or
  - Part-time for the equivalent of five years.
3. Verify an equivalent of five years of clinical experience after obtaining the CCC-SLP with an emphasis on child language (birth to age 21). Clinical experience is defined as direct provision of clinical services and/or preparation of individuals to provide direct clinical services.
4. Demonstrate completion of 100 clock hours of intermediate or advanced continuing education within 10 years of submitting the first phase of the application process. The continuing education must be related to child language (birth to age 21), including typical and atypical

language learning, children at-risk for language disorders, language differences, and oral and written language. You should have a balance among the topics covered within child language rather than a significant number of hours within a particular topic, such as a specific approach to language treatment or a specific diagnosis. Your continuing education should reflect your effort to continue to advance your knowledge, skills, leadership, and experience for all competencies in the areas of child language. [See this link for examples of acceptable continuing education versus unacceptable.](#) The [Continuing Education in Child Language spreadsheet](#) is provided for documenting your continuing education.

## **Phase 2: Case Study**

Phase 2 requires developing a Case Study that demonstrates specific application of your advanced knowledge, skills, leadership, and experience. You are able to choose from two types of Case Studies: 1) a Clinical Case Study, or 2) an Academic-Administrative Case Study. To choose the type of Case Study you will complete, review the [Competency Framework in Child Language](#). The Competency Framework identifies the advanced competencies exemplified by Board Certified Specialists in Child Language as they perform their work responsibilities effectively. You are encouraged to select at least four competencies from one or more Domains that are most relevant to your daily work. Consider the types of competencies you selected to help you decide which type of Case Study you will complete. If you would like to view more detail regarding expectations for Phase 2, see [Phase 2: Case Study — Clinical Portfolio](#) or [Phase 2: Case Study — Academic-Administrative Portfolio](#).

Throughout your discussion of the Case Study, you will demonstrate your philosophy of typical and atypical language and literacy development in children and how you apply it to assessment and intervention. You will describe the underlying principles that drive your decisions. These principles will include how you adjust for cultural variations in children. Your statements need to be supported with appropriate and current evidence-based references from the professional literature.

## **Advisor**

Once you complete the application form and submit your (nonrefundable) \$250 application fee, the application process begins. The ABCLLD assigns an advisor to you. Your Advisor may be a current or former member of the Board who is available to answer questions and to clarify procedures in the application process. See the [Advisor-Advisee and Review Process Guide](#) for more.

## **The Review Process**

Two Reviewers are assigned by the ABCLLD to review each phase of your portfolio. The review is blinded so Reviewers are not aware of who you are. Each Reviewer reads and scores each phase of the application portfolio separately using a scoring rubric developed by the ABCLLD. Following each phase review, the two independent Reviewers compare notes to determine whether or not that phase of the application portfolio meets criteria. If any section of your portfolio does not meet criteria, you are notified and provided with notes regarding the areas not meeting criteria and/or requiring improvement, clarification, or revision. Typically, you are given one chance to revise and resubmit. However, if your portfolio falls significantly below expectations of a Board Certified Specialist in Child Language (i.e., significantly lacking in advanced knowledge, skills, leadership, and experience), the Reviewers could also reject it with no opportunity to revise and resubmit. See the [Advisor-Advisee and Review Process Guide](#) for more. A denial decision by the Reviewers can be appealed by contacting the ABCLLD.

## **Length of Application Process**

The amount of time required to complete the application process can vary from 6 months to 1 year depending upon the revisions required and/or the amount of time your schedule allows. Refer to the [Application Process Flowchart](#) for a general overview of the application timelines.

## **Are You Ready to Apply?**

If you decide you are ready to apply, you will be given more detailed information on completing each phase of the process. [To begin the application process, complete the Application Form and submit the application fee.](#) The \$250 application fee is nonrefundable so you will want to wait to apply until you are ready to start the process.

If you feel you do not meet the standards at this time or have not quite achieved advanced knowledge, skills, leadership, and experience in child language and language disorders status, use this information as a stepping stone to achieve advanced levels. Seek out leadership opportunities. Focus your continuing education in child language (see the [ABCLLD Advanced Learning Center](#) for options).