



PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION

INTRODUCTION

EBTA Professional Membership is a higher level of membership open to existing Full members of the Association. It is important to note that the qualification is **not** about teaching advanced bridge, but rather is intended to recognise the **better teacher** of bridge at any level from beginners onwards.

In order to obtain the qualification, satisfactory performance is necessary in five key areas that are seen as crucial to the effectiveness of an EBTA teacher, as follows:

- **Communication skills** - undoubtedly *the* most important thing is the ability to get things across so that people understand and learn, whilst maintaining motivation and enthusiasm in students.
- **Subject knowledge** - it is not necessary to be able to play bridge at a high level, to hold a particular master point rank or have knowledge of obscure conventions, etc. What is important is an understanding of basic principles, how bids fit together, and so on.
- **Knowledge of techniques for teaching bridge** - such as MiniBridge, CDL (student centred learning), use of visual aids, questioning techniques, etc
- **On-going support for students.** The Professional teacher does not just abandon his students on completion of formalised training courses but should aim to facilitate improvement through supervised practice sessions, novice clubs, creating student facilities within established clubs, or whatever.
- **Willingness to support other bridge teachers.** This does **not** mean that teachers have to encourage competition on their home patch - there are various other ways in which encouragement and support may be given. The Professional may become involved in the assessment of other teachers, or help with teaching at workshops/training events, etc, or perhaps act as a 'mentor' to another teacher, maybe in another geographical area.

REQUIREMENTS

The Professional qualification is gained by the successful completion of a number of 'modules', which cover the following areas:

Training

Professionals are expected to have attended at least one EBTA workshop or conference. This will ensure they are aware of the various practical approaches recommended by EBTA, they have seen demonstrations of student-centred learning and other techniques and are committed to learning and improvement as teachers.

Teaching experience

There is a requirement to have five years' teaching experience of some kind, of which at least two years must be bridge teaching. Practical experience is seen as very important – there really is no substitute

for *doing* in order to acquire proficiency (as we tell all our students, don't we!). The type of teaching experience is not critical – each case is judged on its merits.

Teaching skills

In addition to length of experience, a measure of effectiveness is needed. There is a requirement for a satisfactory assessment to be obtained from the teacher's place of employment or, where all teaching is private, from the students themselves.

Bridge Knowledge

Professionals do **not** need to acquire a particular Master Point ranking, win a major competition or solve a double-dummy problem, but they must have a sound understanding of bidding and play principles in order to be able to answer questions and help their students to learn effectively. This is evaluated in two ways: teachers complete a written test in their own time prior to the final assessment; and a short, timed test is conducted as part of the final assessment process, which aims to check teachers' ability to respond to their students' questions at the table.

Student Development

Professional teachers are expected to encourage their students towards competitive bridge and therefore, from time to time, they need to run duplicates, small tournaments, etc. They should also have a working knowledge of the Laws of Bridge and are therefore expected to have attended at least the Preliminary Club Director training course. In addition, Professionals are expected to facilitate their students' bridge progress in some way – perhaps by referring beginners on to others providing 'improver' training, or by running supervised practice sessions, by introducing them to bridge clubs, etc.

Development of other teachers

EBTA is very much a supportive organisation and Professional members are expected to 'do their bit' in encouraging the development of other members. Thus, they might become involved in helping to run workshops and other training events, participate in the assessment processes, develop, review or promulgate training material, act as mentors to another teacher, or undertake any of many other activities, which could assist others in acquiring bridge teaching skills (some of which could be fee earning).

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT LOG

To help with the process of ascertaining that these criteria have been met, teachers are asked to create a **Personal Development Log**. This important document comprises an outline 'bridge CV' together with a record of the teacher's activities in all spheres related to his or her bridge teaching over at least a six month period. The idea of the Log is to record all activities which are relevant to the modules described above, though it need only be in note form in, for example, an office diary. Thus, it might include:

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| Training: | Details of courses or workshops attended; other relevant training. |
| Teaching Experience: | Details of courses taught, including course objectives, class size, frequency, level, etc. Topics covered week by week, techniques used, problems and solutions, changes made to teaching approach, etc. There should be some evidence of analysis and evaluation of the teaching provided, indicating self development on the teacher's behalf. |
| Bridge Knowledge: | Playing experience (maybe with more experienced players, in challenging tournaments, etc); books/magazines read; seminars attended; etc |
| Student Development: | Tournament organisation, duplicate sessions played with students, supervised play arranged, partnerships found, club contacts established, etc |

Teacher Development: Details of any activities, which might be relevant, from production of teaching materials through mentoring of other teachers.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Once the Personal Log is complete and a teacher feels ready to do so, he or she may apply for the final stage of assessment. There are two written components, which can be done when the teacher feels ready to do them: the written test of bridge knowledge (longer questions on teaching topics) and a shorter test of bridge general knowledge (bidding and play). Finally, we have to arrange by a one-to-one interview with an EBTA Assessor, which lasts about 30 minutes. Teachers need to have their Personal Log and some samples of their teaching material available at the interview.

Those who satisfy all the criteria will be confirmed as Professionals following this assessment. If they fail to reach the required standard in one or more modules, they will usually be able to work at completing the modules in their own time and may be able to obtain the qualification subsequently without needing a further interview.

REGISTRATION

Those working towards obtaining the Professional qualification are required formally to register their intent, to ensure their progress is properly recorded. Anyone who wishes to be included in this Register should complete and return the slip below. They will then be provided with working documents etc. Note that registration does not imply a commitment to assessment at any particular time - module completion may be at each individual's own pace.

To apply for progression to EBTA Professional grade:

Please contact:

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Please include your full contact details and EBU number