



BOARD OF CANINE BEHAVIORISTS



CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

Board Certified Canine Behaviorist (B.C.C.B.) Certification

The Board's Highest Credential — Board Certification Pathway

Version 1.0

www.caninebehaviorists.org

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Welcome

Congratulations on pursuing the Board Certified Canine Behaviorist (B.C.C.B.) credential.

The Board Certified Canine Behaviorist certification represents the highest professional credential awarded by the Board of Canine Behaviorists.

Unlike certifications that focus primarily on dog training or behavior consulting, the B.C.C.B. recognizes professionals who possess an advanced understanding of canine behavior science, behavioral psychology, learning theory, rehabilitation, ethics, research literacy, and evidence-informed professional practice.

Candidates are expected not only to understand what behaviors occur, but why they occur, and to apply that understanding through ethical, scientific, and individualized behavior rehabilitation.

The B.C.C.B. is designed for experienced professionals who have demonstrated sustained excellence within the profession and who contribute to advancing canine behavior through scholarship, ethical leadership, and evidence-informed practice.

This handbook outlines eligibility requirements, examination procedures, thesis requirements, candidate responsibilities, renewal requirements, Board policies, and the standards expected of every Board Certified Canine Behaviorist.

The Candidate Handbook is not intended to serve as a textbook. Rather, it serves as the official governing document for the certification process.

On behalf of the Board of Canine Behaviorists, congratulations on reaching the highest level of our professional certification pathway.

Board of Canine Behaviorists

Scientia. Ethica. Compassio.

Section 1 About the Board of Canine Behaviorists

The Board of Canine Behaviorists was established to bring structure, consistency, and credibility to a profession that had long lacked a unified standard. As demand grew for qualified canine behavior professionals, so did the need for an independent body capable of setting benchmarks that the public, veterinary community, and profession itself could trust.

Our Mission

The Board's mission is to advance the canine behavior profession by establishing internationally recognized certifications that reflect scientific knowledge, ethical practice, and professional excellence.

Our Vision

The Board envisions a global profession in which every certified individual, regardless of geography or specialty, is held to the same rigorous, evidence-informed, and welfare-centered standard — and in which certification is a meaningful signal of competence to clients, employers, and veterinary partners alike.

An Independent Certification Body

The Board of Canine Behaviorists is an independent professional certification body. It is not affiliated with, nor does it endorse, any single training school, methodology, product line, or commercial organization. Certification decisions are made solely on the basis of published eligibility requirements and examination performance.

Science, Ethics, and Compassion

Every standard the Board sets is built on three pillars: scientific rigor, ethical accountability, and compassion for the animals and people that certified professionals serve. This commitment is reflected in the Board's motto, *Scientia. Ethica. Compassio.*, and is woven throughout the certification requirements, examination content, and Code of Ethics.

Evidence-Informed Practice

The Board's certification standards are grounded in contemporary behavioral science and are reviewed periodically to ensure they remain aligned with current research and professional best practice. Candidates are expected to demonstrate an understanding of evidence-informed principles rather than any single training philosophy.

Why Certification Matters

Professional certification provides a consistent, independently verified benchmark of knowledge and ethical commitment. For candidates, it offers a structured path toward professional growth. For the public, employers, and veterinary professionals, it provides confidence that a certified individual has met defined standards. For the profession as a whole, certification strengthens public trust and helps raise the standard of care provided to dogs and their families.

Methodological Neutrality

The Board does not endorse a single training methodology, tool, or equipment philosophy. Certification standards instead focus on the underlying science of how dogs learn, communicate, and respond to their environment, and on the humane, welfare-focused application of that knowledge in professional practice.

The Certification Pathway

The Board offers four progressive certification levels, allowing professionals to grow and formally recognize their expertise as their careers advance:

- Canine Behavior Assistant (CBA) — the foundation credential for those beginning their professional journey.
- Canine Behavior Consultant (CBC) — for professionals working independently and applying evidence-based practices.
- Senior Canine Behavior Consultant (SCBC) — recognizing experienced professionals with advanced knowledge and proven results.
- Board Certified Canine Behaviorist (B.C.C.B.) — the Board's highest credential, recognizing exceptional knowledge, ethics, leadership, and experience.

This handbook addresses the Board Certified Canine Behaviorist (B.C.C.B.) certification specifically. Requirements for the CBA, CBC, and SCBC credentials are described in their respective candidate handbooks.

Section 2 About the Board Certified Canine Behaviorist Credential

The Board Certified Canine Behaviorist (B.C.C.B.) is the fourth and final level within the Board's certification pathway — its highest credential. It recognizes professionals who have moved beyond advanced case management into professional mastery: the combination of exceptional clinical skill, scientific literacy, and leadership that defines the top of the profession.

Purpose of the Certification

The B.C.C.B. exists to recognize professional mastery of canine behavior — not only the ability to manage advanced rehabilitation cases, but the scholarly and ethical capacity to interpret research, contribute original work to the field, and lead other professionals. It is the Board's mark of highest professional distinction.

Who This Certification Is For

The B.C.C.B. is designed for professionals who have already demonstrated sustained excellence over the course of a long career and are ready to formalize that mastery at the Board's highest level, including:

- Senior behavior consultants who have demonstrated sustained excellence in canine behavior practice and are seeking the Board's highest credential.
- Behavior specialists managing advanced behavior assessment and complex behavior modification across diverse clinical settings.

- Educators, researchers, and mentors advancing the profession through education, research, mentorship, publications, or professional service.
- Clinical leaders directing canine behavior services, multidisciplinary teams, or specialized behavior programs.

A Credential Built on Mastery, Not Only Practice

The B.C.C.B. is built on a minimum of ten years of documented professional experience in canine behavior, together with a submitted Professional Case Portfolio and an Original Professional Thesis. It certifies mastery across four dimensions: advanced rehabilitation, behavioral science, professional leadership, and research literacy.

What the Certification Represents

Successful B.C.C.B. certification represents demonstrated mastery of advanced canine behavior science, sustained excellence in complex case management, ethical leadership within the profession, and the scholarly capacity to interpret and contribute to the field's research literature.

Contribution to the Profession

Because the B.C.C.B. represents the profession at its highest level, certified individuals are expected not only to practice at the highest standard but to actively contribute to the profession — through mentorship, education, research, publication, or professional leadership, in whatever form best suits their career.

The Board's Highest Credential

There is no higher credential within the Board's certification pathway. The B.C.C.B. represents the full expression of the standards the Board was established to uphold: science, ethics, and compassion, applied at a professional level of complete mastery.

Section 3 Eligibility Requirements

The B.C.C.B. certification requires extensive, verifiable professional experience, together with two independent professional recommendations. Eligibility is based on age, sustained documented experience, demonstrated management of advanced cases, integrity, and a commitment to ethical practice.

To be eligible to apply for B.C.C.B. certification, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Be at least 18 years of age at the time of application.
- Demonstrate a minimum of ten years of documented professional experience in canine behavior.
- Demonstrate management of advanced canine behavior rehabilitation cases.
- Submit a completed application.
- Submit a Professional Experience Declaration.
- Submit a detailed professional résumé or curriculum vitae.
- Agree to abide by the Board's Code of Ethics throughout the duration of certification.
- Submit two professional recommendation letters.

Recommendation Letter Requirements

Both required recommendation letters must:

- Be written by licensed veterinarians or board-certified veterinary behaviorists.
- Be written on official practice letterhead.
- Include the writer's professional credentials.
- Include current contact information.
- Be signed within the previous twelve months.
- Confirm familiarity with the applicant's professional work.
- Address the applicant's professional competence, ethics, clinical judgement, and suitability for Board Certification.

The Board reserves the right to independently verify all recommendations submitted. In addition to the requirements above, applicants must submit a Professional Case Portfolio, described in Section 4, as part of the eligibility process.

Section 4 Professional Case Portfolio

In addition to the application materials described in Section 3, every B.C.C.B. candidate must submit a Professional Case Portfolio demonstrating advanced professional work at a level consistent with the Board's highest credential.

The portfolio should include, across multiple advanced behavior rehabilitation cases:

- Complete case histories.
- Assessment procedures.
- Functional behavior assessments.
- Differential considerations.
- Veterinary collaboration, where appropriate.
- Rehabilitation strategies.
- Progress documentation.
- Outcome evaluation.
- Ethical considerations.

The Board reserves the right to request additional documentation supporting any submitted case.

Veterinary verification is required for submitted portfolio cases.

Portfolio Standard

- The portfolio exists to demonstrate, in the candidate's own documented casework, the same advanced rehabilitation competency that the Professional Competency Assessment tests hypothetically at the SCBC level. It should reflect real cases, real outcomes, and real professional judgment — not composite or illustrative examples.

Candidate Confidentiality

Candidates must remove identifying client information from submitted case materials unless written permission has been obtained. Names, addresses, contact information, and other identifying details should be anonymized whenever possible.

Portfolio Ownership

Candidates retain ownership of all submitted case material and intellectual property unless otherwise agreed to in writing.

Detailed portfolio requirements and formatting guidance are provided in Appendix D.

Section 5 Original Professional Thesis

In addition to the Professional Case Portfolio, every candidate must successfully complete an Original Professional Thesis before certification can be awarded.

The thesis should demonstrate advanced understanding of canine behavior science and contribute meaningfully to the profession. Candidates are encouraged to select highly focused topics rather than broad surveys of the literature. Examples of appropriately focused topics include:

- Resource guarding in recently adopted shelter dogs.
- Inter-litter social conflict (“Littermate Syndrome”) among dogs from separate litters.
- Fear-based aggression in adolescent herding breeds.
- Separation-related behaviors following rehoming.
- Trigger stacking within urban companion dogs.
- Rehabilitation of chronic anxiety disorders.

Required Thesis Sections

The thesis should include the following sections:

- Abstract.
- Introduction.
- Literature Review.
- Current Scientific Evidence.
- Behavioral Psychology.
- Learning Theory.
- Assessment Considerations.
- Differential Considerations.
- Veterinary Considerations.
- Rehabilitation Approaches.
- Welfare Considerations.
- Discussion.

- References.

Thesis Standards

- The thesis must be between 8,000 and 15,000 words, excluding references and appendices.
- Candidates are expected to support their work with a minimum of 60 scholarly references.
- Sources should primarily consist of peer-reviewed journal articles, academic textbooks, and veterinary or behavioral science literature.
- All theses must follow APA 7th Edition referencing.

Academic Integrity

- All submitted theses may be screened using plagiarism detection software. Any evidence of plagiarism, fabricated citations, falsified data, or other forms of academic misconduct may result in immediate application denial, examination failure, permanent disqualification, or revocation of certification.

Artificial Intelligence Policy

Artificial intelligence tools may be used for grammar, spelling, formatting, and language editing. However, all ideas, analysis, scientific reasoning, conclusions, and written work submitted must represent the candidate's own original intellectual work. Undisclosed AI-generated submissions may be treated as academic misconduct.

The Abstract

Every thesis must include a 250–500 word abstract summarizing the research question, background, key findings, and practical implications. The abstract may be published by the Board even when the full thesis is not.

Thesis Evaluation

All theses are independently reviewed by a minimum of two Board Assessors, using the following standardized evaluation criteria:

Evaluation Criterion	Weight
Scientific Accuracy	25%
Literature Review	15%
Behavioral Psychology	15%
Critical Thinking & Analysis	15%
Practical Application to Canine Behavior Rehabilitation	15%
Professional Writing & Organization	10%
Original Contribution to the Profession	5%

A minimum overall score of 80% is required for the thesis to be accepted. Candidates whose thesis does not meet the required standard may, at the Board's discretion, be invited to revise and resubmit their work.

Professional Research Library

With the candidate's written permission, exceptional theses may be published within the Board of Canine Behaviorists Professional Research Library. Selection for publication is considered a professional honor recognizing exceptional scholarship and contribution to the advancement of canine behavior science, and is entirely at the discretion of the Board — it is never required for certification.

Published theses are assigned a permanent Board Thesis Archive Number for citation and future reference. All published works remain the intellectual property of their respective authors unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Detailed thesis formatting and submission guidelines are provided in Appendix C.

Section 6 Certification Process

Certification at the B.C.C.B. level is earned through a more extensive process than the Board's other credentials, reflecting the depth of experience, scholarship, and documented casework the credential represents.

Step 1 — Submit Your Application

Applicants begin by submitting the online application, Professional Experience Declaration, and professional résumé or curriculum vitae, together with the non-refundable application fee. The Board's team reviews each application against the eligibility requirements described in Section 3.

- The application fee is \$100 USD and is non-refundable.
- If approved, the application fee is credited toward the total certification fee.
- Application review is generally completed within 72 business hours.

Step 2 — Recommendation Letters and Portfolio Review

Following application approval, candidates submit the two required recommendation letters described in Section 3 and the Professional Case Portfolio described in Section 4. The Board reviews the portfolio and recommendation letters before the candidate proceeds to examination payment.

Step 3 — Examination Payment and Thesis Submission

Once the portfolio has been reviewed and accepted, the candidate pays the remaining examination fee and submits the Original Professional Thesis described in Section 5.

- The examination fee is \$2,780 USD.
- The examination fee, combined with the application fee, brings the total certification cost to \$2,880 USD.
- The Official B.C.C.B. textbook is released once the examination fee has been paid.

Item	Amount	Notes
Application Fee	\$100 USD	Non-refundable; paid at Step 1
Examination Fee	\$2,780 USD	Paid at Step 3, following portfolio review
Total Certification Cost	\$2,880 USD	Application fee credited toward total

Step 4 — Scheduling the Examination

Once the thesis has been submitted, the candidate receives a scheduling code and may book Part One of the certification examination, followed by Part Two, as described in Section 7. Successful completion of both examination components, together with an accepted thesis and portfolio, results in the award of B.C.C.B. certification.

Section 7 Certification Examination

The B.C.C.B. examination consists of two separate components, completed approximately one week apart. Both components must be successfully completed for certification to be awarded.

Part One — Professional Knowledge Examination

Duration: four hours. Assessment includes advanced multiple-choice questions and short-answer questions.

Topics include:

- Behavioral psychology.
- Advanced learning theory.
- Neuroscience.
- Ethology.
- Welfare science.
- Veterinary behavioral medicine.
- Functional behavior assessment.
- Research interpretation.
- Statistics.
- Ethics.
- Professional standards.
- Risk assessment.
- Rehabilitation science.

Part Two — Professional Integration Examination

Duration: four hours. An essay-based assessment in which candidates demonstrate advanced professional reasoning through comprehensive written responses.

Assessment includes:

- Comparative analysis.
- Rehabilitation reasoning.
- Ethical decision-making.
- Clinical judgement.
- Scientific interpretation.
- Critical evaluation of evidence.
- Complex case analysis.
- Professional leadership.

Candidates are expected to justify recommendations using scientific evidence and professional reasoning throughout Part Two.

Examination Standard

- Passing score: 80% on each component. Both examination components must be successfully completed; a passing score on one part does not carry forward if the other is not also passed. Candidates who do not pass both components may retake the certification examination subject to the Board's standard retesting policies, including applicable waiting periods and retake fees.

Section 8 Remote Examination

Both components of the B.C.C.B. certification examination are completed remotely under live proctoring.

- Live remote proctoring is required for both Part One and Part Two.
- A functioning webcam is required throughout each examination component.
- A functioning microphone is required throughout each examination component.
- Candidates must present valid, government-issued photo identification for verification.
- Candidates will be asked to complete a room scan showing the full testing area before each component begins.

Examination Integrity

- Cheating, attempted cheating, or examination misconduct of any kind may result in immediate termination of the examination, forfeiture of the examination fee, denial or revocation of certification, and permanent disqualification from future Board programs.

Section 9 Preparing for the Examination

The purpose of examination preparation is to ensure candidates enter the certification examination with true mastery of advanced behavioral science, together with the scholarly and clinical reasoning the Board's highest credential represents — not to memorize isolated facts.

The Official B.C.C.B. textbook, current scientific literature, and professional journals form the foundation of preparation. Candidates are also expected to draw on their own case experience and the work completed during thesis preparation, both of which directly support the reasoning tested throughout the examination.

Because the B.C.C.B. examination integrates scientific knowledge, research interpretation, and professional judgment at an advanced level, preparation is best approached as a continuation of the candidate's existing professional and scholarly development, rather than a discrete study period undertaken separately from it.

As noted in the introduction to this handbook, the Candidate Handbook itself is not intended to serve as study material. It governs the certification process; the Official B.C.C.B. textbook, current research literature, and the candidate's own professional and scholarly work are the appropriate foundations for examination preparation.

Section 10 Recommended Reading

Required

Official B.C.C.B. Textbook.

Recommended

- A is for Aggression — Benjamin McGill.
- Clinical Behavioral Medicine for Small Animals — Karen Overall.
- Handbook of Applied Dog Behavior and Training — Steven Lindsay.
- Canine Behavior: A Photo Illustrated Handbook — Barbara Handelman.
- Canine Behavior: Insights and Answers — Bonnie Beaver.
- The Other End of the Leash — Patricia McConnell.
- How Dogs Learn — Mary Burch & Jon Bailey.
- Decoding Your Dog — American College of Veterinary Behaviorists.

Candidates are also expected to draw on additional peer-reviewed scientific literature relevant to their thesis topic and professional practice. Recommended reading is intended to deepen understanding and is not mandatory unless otherwise specified by the Board.

Section 11 Examination Blueprint

The certification examination is built from the following blueprint. Each domain is weighted according to its relative importance to professional mastery of canine behavior, and is assessed through Part One, Part Two, or both.

Examination Domain	Weight	What It Covers
Behavioral Psychology	8%	Advanced psychological principles underlying canine behavior and behavior change.

Learning Theory	6%	Advanced application of learning theory to complex, treatment-resistant cases.
Neuroscience	5%	Neurological foundations of behavior relevant to advanced case interpretation.
Ethology	5%	Species-typical behavior and its relevance to companion dog behavior assessment.
Comparative Psychology	3%	Cross-species behavioral principles informing canine behavior science.
Welfare Science	6%	Advanced welfare assessment across rehabilitation and quality-of-life decisions.
Functional Behavior Assessment	7%	Comprehensive functional assessment at an advanced clinical level.
Differential Considerations	5%	Distinguishing between overlapping or co-occurring advanced behavioral presentations.
Rehabilitation Science	8%	The scientific basis for designing and evaluating rehabilitation programs.
Advanced Aggression	7%	Assessment, risk management, and rehabilitation planning for complex aggression cases.
Fear & Anxiety Disorders	6%	Advanced assessment and treatment of fear- and anxiety-based disorders.
Veterinary Collaboration	4%	Effective, evidence-based collaboration with veterinary professionals.
Research Interpretation	6%	Critical interpretation and application of behavioral research.
Scientific Literature	4%	Engagement with current and historical scientific literature in the field.
Ethics	5%	Advanced ethical reasoning consistent with the Board's Code of Ethics.
Professional Leadership	4%	Leadership responsibilities associated with the Board's highest credential.
Mentorship	3%	Supporting the development of less experienced professionals.
Evidence-Based Decision Making	4%	Integrating scientific evidence into complex professional decisions.
Professional Communication	2%	Communicating advanced findings to clients, colleagues, and the profession.

Statistics & Research Literacy	2%	Foundational statistical literacy needed to interpret behavioral research.
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Section 12 Certification After Passing

Prior to certification, successful candidates affirm the Candidate Oath reproduced in Appendix F, formally accepting the responsibilities of Board Certification.

Candidates who successfully complete both examination components, and whose portfolio and thesis have been accepted, receive the following upon certification:

- A printable certificate.
- An official certification number.
- A digital badge for professional use.
- The official Board seal.
- A public certification listing.
- A lifetime listing within the Board directory.
- Digital certification materials.

Newly certified professionals should review the Certification Marks section of the Board's Terms & Conditions for guidance on the appropriate use of Board certification marks, logos, and titles.

Certification carries ongoing professional responsibilities, including adherence to the Board's Code of Ethics, accurate representation of the credential, and practice within the defined scope described in Section 14.

Section 13 Renewal

B.C.C.B. certification remains valid for three years from the date of issue.

Renewal requires:

- Thirty continuing education hours.
- Documentation submitted to the Board.
- A \$100 USD renewal fee.
- Continued agreement to the Board's Code of Ethics.

Continuing Education Requirements

Of the thirty required hours, a minimum of ten hours must relate directly to canine behavior. The remaining hours may include veterinary medicine, animal welfare, learning theory, psychology, neuroscience, research methods, ethics, or related professional subjects.

Random Audit Policy

The Board reserves the right to audit continuing education records, recommendation letters, professional experience declarations, portfolio documentation, or other certification materials at any time.

Certifications expired for one year or longer require successful completion of the current B.C.C.B. certification examination before reinstatement. The Board reserves the right to revise renewal requirements over time; the requirements published at the time of renewal shall govern.

Section 14 Scope of Practice

Board Certified Canine Behaviorists are recognized as professionals capable of independently assessing, developing, implementing, supervising, and evaluating advanced behavior rehabilitation programs, while contributing to the advancement of the profession through scholarship, mentorship, leadership, and evidence-informed practice.

Within Scope

B.C.C.B. professionals are expected to:

- Manage the profession's most advanced companion dog behavior cases.
- Apply behavioral psychology to rehabilitation.
- Interpret current scientific literature.
- Collaborate effectively with veterinary professionals.
- Mentor developing professionals.
- Promote ethical standards.
- Contribute to advancing canine behavior science.
- Recognize the limits of current scientific knowledge.

The Limits of Current Knowledge

- Even at the Board's highest credential, professional humility remains essential. Recognizing the limits of current scientific knowledge — and being transparent with clients and colleagues about genuine uncertainty — is itself part of the mastery the B.C.C.B. represents.

Veterinary Scope Statement

Board Certification does not authorize the practice of veterinary medicine, psychology, or any other licensed profession. Certified professionals are expected to recognize when referral to an appropriately qualified professional is necessary.

Use of the Credential

Only individuals holding an active Board Certification may use the titles:

- Board Certified Canine Behaviorist.
- B.C.C.B.

- Board Certified by the Board of Canine Behaviorists.

Improper use may result in disciplinary action and, where appropriate, legal action.

Section 15 Candidate Responsibilities

Every candidate is responsible for upholding the standards of the certification process, both during the application, portfolio, thesis, and examination process, and afterward, as a certified professional. Candidates and certified professionals agree to:

- Conduct themselves professionally throughout every stage of the certification process.
- Practice ethically, consistent with the Board's Code of Ethics.
- Uphold academic integrity throughout portfolio and thesis submission.
- Ensure the thesis represents original work.
- Submit honest, accurate applications.
- Uphold examination integrity at all times.
- Maintain the confidentiality of all examination and assessment materials.

Candidate Professional Conduct

Throughout the certification process, candidates are expected to conduct themselves professionally and respectfully toward Board staff, Board Assessors, volunteers, fellow candidates, and members of the public. Harassment, intimidation, abusive conduct, or behaviour inconsistent with the Board's Code of Ethics may result in suspension or termination of the certification process.

Certification Suspension or Revocation

Certification may be suspended or revoked for:

- Fraud or misrepresentation.
- Submission of false documentation.
- Plagiarism.
- Examination misconduct.
- Serious violations of the Board's Code of Ethics.
- Criminal animal cruelty offences.
- Misuse of Board certification titles, seals, or badges.
- Falsified continuing education documentation.

Section 16 Appeals

Candidates who believe an error occurred during the application, portfolio review, thesis review, or examination process may submit an appeal to the Board within 30 days of the relevant decision or event.

Appeals are accepted only for the following:

- Administrative issues.
- Technical issues.
- Thesis procedural review.

Appeals are limited to procedural or administrative matters and do not include disagreement with examination answers, thesis grading, portfolio evaluation, or academic judgement.

All appeals are reviewed by the Board. The Board's determination following this review is final.

Section 17 **Contacting the Board**

The Board is available to assist candidates with questions at every stage of the certification process. To ensure the fastest response, please direct your enquiry to the appropriate contact below.

- General enquiries: info@caninebehaviorists.org
- Certification enquiries: certification@caninebehaviorists.org
- Technical support: support@caninebehaviorists.org
- Appeals: appeals@caninebehaviorists.org
- Website: www.caninebehaviorists.org

The Board aims to respond to all enquiries within two to three business days. As a global certification body, the Board does not maintain fixed office hours; enquiries are processed by staff across multiple time zones on an ongoing basis.

Appendix A **Board Code of Ethics**

All B.C.C.B. candidates and certified professionals agree to uphold the Board's Code of Ethics, which governs animal welfare, professional competence, scientific integrity, honesty, respect for clients, professional responsibility, collaboration with other professionals, conflicts of interest, continuing professional development, and public trust.

The complete Code of Ethics is published as a standalone Board document and is available on the Board's website and upon request. Agreement to the Code of Ethics is a condition of both initial certification and every subsequent renewal.

Appendix B **Candidate Agreement**

By submitting an application for B.C.C.B. certification, the candidate acknowledges and agrees to the following:

- I have read and understood the contents of this Candidate Handbook.
- All information provided in my application, including my Professional Experience Declaration, professional résumé or curriculum vitae, and Professional Case Portfolio, is accurate and truthful to the best of my knowledge.

- My Original Professional Thesis represents my own original work.
- I agree to abide by the Board's Code of Ethics throughout the duration of my certification.
- I understand that application, examination, certification, and membership fees are non-refundable except as described in this handbook or as required by applicable law.
- I understand that certification is awarded solely at the discretion of the Board in accordance with its published policies and procedures.
- I agree to maintain the confidentiality of all examination materials and to refrain from any form of examination misconduct.
- I understand that providing false information, submitting a falsified recommendation letter, submitting non-original thesis work, or engaging in examination misconduct may result in application denial, examination failure, permanent disqualification, or revocation of certification.

Appendix C Professional Thesis Guidelines

This appendix supplements Section 5 with additional guidance for preparing the Original Professional Thesis.

Candidates should select a highly focused topic within canine behavior science, rather than a broad survey of the field — the examples given in Section 5 illustrate the appropriate level of focus. The thesis should follow the required section structure described in Section 5: Abstract, Introduction, Literature Review, Current Scientific Evidence, Behavioral Psychology, Learning Theory, Assessment Considerations, Differential Considerations, Veterinary Considerations, Rehabilitation Approaches, Welfare Considerations, Discussion, and References.

The thesis must be between 8,000 and 15,000 words, excluding references and appendices, and supported by a minimum of 60 scholarly references drawn primarily from peer-reviewed journal articles, academic textbooks, and veterinary or behavioral science literature, formatted in APA 7th Edition style. The abstract should be 250–500 words and summarize the research question, background, key findings, and practical implications.

Artificial intelligence tools may be used for grammar, spelling, formatting, and language editing. However, all ideas, analysis, scientific reasoning, conclusions, and written work submitted must represent the candidate's own original intellectual work; undisclosed AI-generated submissions may be treated as academic misconduct.

Theses are independently reviewed by a minimum of two Board Assessors against the standardized evaluation criteria set out in Section 5, covering scientific accuracy, literature review, behavioral psychology, critical thinking and analysis, practical application, professional writing, and original contribution to the profession. A minimum overall score of 80% is required for acceptance. Candidates whose theses do not meet the required standard on first submission may be given the opportunity to revise and resubmit, at the Board's discretion.

All submitted theses may be screened using plagiarism detection software; evidence of plagiarism, fabricated citations, falsified data, or other academic misconduct is treated as a serious violation under Section 15 (Candidate Responsibilities).

Candidates retain copyright over their thesis unless they agree otherwise in writing. Publication within the Board's Professional Research Library, with an assigned Board Thesis Archive Number, is offered only with the candidate's written permission and is never a condition of certification.

Appendix D Professional Case Portfolio Requirements

This appendix supplements Section 4 with additional guidance for preparing the Professional Case Portfolio.

Each case included in the portfolio should be documented with sufficient detail for a Board Assessor to independently evaluate the candidate's professional reasoning, including the complete case history, the assessment procedures used, the functional behavior assessment, any differential considerations weighed, evidence of veterinary collaboration where relevant, the rehabilitation strategy implemented, ongoing progress documentation, the eventual outcome, and the ethical considerations navigated throughout the case.

Cases should reflect the candidate's own independent professional work. Veterinary verification is required for submitted cases, consistent with the eligibility requirements in Section 3, and the Board may request supporting documentation for any case at its discretion.

Candidates must remove identifying client information from submitted case materials unless written permission has been obtained; names, addresses, contact information, and other identifying details should be anonymized whenever possible. Candidates retain ownership of all submitted case material and intellectual property unless otherwise agreed to in writing.

Appendix E Board Certification Pathway

The Board's certification pathway is designed to support professional growth over the course of a career. Candidates may progress through the following levels as their experience and expertise develop:

Canine Behavior Assistant (CBA)

The foundational credential for those beginning their journey in canine behavior.

Canine Behavior Consultant (CBC)

For professionals working independently and applying evidence-based practices to a broader range of behavioral concerns.

Senior Canine Behavior Consultant (SCBC)

Recognizes experienced professionals with advanced knowledge and a proven record of professional results.

Board Certified Canine Behaviorist (B.C.C.B.)

The Board's highest credential, recognizing exceptional knowledge, ethics, leadership, and experience within the profession. Addressed in full by this handbook.

Requirements, fees, and examination details for the CBA, CBC, and SCBC credentials are described in their respective candidate handbooks, available on the Board's website.

Appendix F Candidate Oath

Prior to certification, successful candidates affirm the following oath, formally accepting the responsibilities that accompany the Board's highest credential:

I affirm that I will practice canine behavior in accordance with the principles of science, ethics, and compassion.

I will place the welfare of animals and the trust of the public above personal gain.

I will continue to learn, to question, and to contribute to the advancement of canine behavior science.

I accept the responsibility that accompanies Board Certification and will conduct myself in a manner worthy of the designation Board Certified Canine Behaviorist.

Scientia. Ethica. Compassio.

Board of Canine Behaviorists

Scientia. Ethica. Compassio.