

THE TEST

Examinations of the Board for Certification of Genealogists are portfolio based and standards based. All candidates submit numerous work samples to demonstrate their skill levels in four major areas:

- **Document Work**—demonstrating their ability to transcribe (and/or translate), abstract, analyze, interpret, and develop work plans for a variety of record types.
- **Research Reports**—demonstrating their ability to plan research projects tailored to the needs of individual clients, as well as their knowledge of a wide range of sources, and their skills in analyzing and reporting their findings in a professional manner.
- **Case Studies**—demonstrating their ability to resolve difficult research problems when no direct evidence can be found, when records are flawed, or when various records yield conflicting evidence.
- **Kinship Determination Projects**—demonstrating their ability to prove relationships and assemble family units in historical and social context.

In addition, candidates for **Certified Genealogical Lecturer (CGL)** submit a separate portfolio of recorded lectures, with corresponding outlines, visual aids, and handout materials—demonstrating their ability to communicate and their knowledge of subject matter.

Each portfolio is carefully examined by at least three judges, following rubrics based on the 72 standards defined in the *BCG Genealogical Standards Manual*. All serve pro bono. To ensure impartial consideration, judges act independently and anonymously.

Genealogists certified by the Board are entitled to use their credentials for a period of five years. To retain certification, they must submit renewal portfolios that satisfactorily demonstrate continued quality and professional growth.

THE CREDENTIALS

The Board for Certification of Genealogists offers credentials in two categories: a core research credential and a supplemental teaching credential available only to those who pass the core exam.

Research:

- **Certified Genealogist (CG)**: one who is proficient in all areas of genealogical research and analysis. Those who carry this credential conduct broadly based projects whose goals are to find and interpret evidence, assemble proof of identity and relationships, and prepare sound reports and historical accounts of families, past and present.

Teaching:

- **Certified Genealogical Lecturer (CGL)**: one who gives public addresses of an educational nature on specific genealogical topics or related subjects pertinent to establishing identity and tracing kinships. To hold this credential, one must also pass all requirements for Certified Genealogist (CG).



BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION OF GENEALOGISTS®

<http://www.bcqcertification.org>

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Why HIRE

A
BOARD-
CERTIFIED
GENEALOGIST?



BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION OF GENEALOGISTS®

Since 1964
The hallmark of
QUALITY • PROFESSIONALISM • SERVICE

Why Hire A BOARD-CERTIFIED GENEALOGIST?

The BCG Mission

Since 1964, the Board for Certification of Genealogists has set the standards for competence and ethics in genealogical research, both personally and professionally. It conducts many educational workshops, cosponsors institutes, administers qualifying tests, and maintains an online register of certified persons. Its credentials are universally recognized. Those who hold them frequently serve as expert witnesses in courts of law.

The BCG Code

All genealogists certified by BCG must sign a 21-clause code of conduct. Violation of the code can be grounds for decertification. The full code is available to the public at <http://www.BCGcertification.org/aboutbcg/code.html>.

The BCG Administration

BCG, since its creation, has been an independent board administered by national and international leaders of the field. The Board consists of fifteen trustees, a professional executive director, and a panel of approximately forty-five judges. Trustees are elected by the certified associates themselves and serve three-year terms. Officers (president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and executive committee member-at-large) are elected annually by the trustees. All trustees and officers are certified, and all serve without compensation.

Mediation & Arbitration Services

Genealogy as a profession is free from governmental testing or regulation in most locales. For consumer protection, BCG offers a mediation and arbitration service. Should a problem ever arise with the performance of a Board-certified genealogist, BCG will assist the consumer in achieving a satisfactory resolution.

All Board-certified genealogists agree to submit to the Board's dispute resolution process to resolve complaints from clients who choose to use the service. The process starts with mediation, but can proceed to final arbitration that is binding on certified individuals.

The Board-Certified Professional

Board-certified genealogists demonstrate excellence in research, evidence analysis, problem solving, and communication. They are thorough, analytical, and innovative.

As researchers: They know the records available within their specialties. They are proficient in reading the handwriting of earlier eras. They know and follow sound practices in abstracting and transcribing records, compiling data, and documenting all work they produce.

As analysts: They are well grounded in the laws, customs, and terminologies of past societies in order to properly interpret the records they find. They understand the principles that differentiate sources, information, and evidence, and they apply these principles critically. They soundly weigh all findings and exercise caution in reaching conclusions.

As communicators: They are articulate. They present problems clearly, identify their resources thoroughly, and provide the rationales for all their conclusions. Their research reports, narratives, and presentations are professional in construction and well targeted to each client or audience and purpose.

Your Peace of Mind

Choosing a Board-certified genealogist provides you with quality assurance in four important areas:

- Your genealogist offers *proved expertise*, established through rigorous exams that focus on problem-solving skills.
- Your genealogist offers *continued professional learning and growth* to stay abreast of new resources and techniques.
- Your genealogist ascribes to a *rigorous Code of Ethics*, backed by BCG's mediation and arbitration services.
- Your genealogist is part of an *international network* that can assist you wherever your family may have lived.

Costs?

Fees charged by Board-certified genealogists vary according to the same factors that influence all professions—including locale, experience, and type of assignment. BCG does not set a fee scale. Many of its certificants offer websites that detail their fees, services, and contracts. Visiting their sites is an excellent approach to market research before making any decision as to the best genealogist for your needs.

Identifying Board-Certified Genealogists

Genealogists certified by the Board for Certification use two distinct credentials. Both are service marks to which BCG has held proprietary rights since 1964:

- Certified GenealogistsSM (CGSM)
- Certified Genealogical LecturerSM (CGLSM)

For more detail see back panel, "The Credentials."

Finding a Board-Certified Professional

BCG maintains a directory of Board-certified genealogists at its website (<http://www.BCGcertification.org>). The directory may be searched by name, location, or special interests and offers e-mail and website links.

Consumer Education

Many individuals who employ researchers are uncertain as to the nature and quality of the work product they should expect. BCG offers free guidance at its website in the form of articles on skills and standards and sample client reports and genealogies.

Additionally, *The BCG Genealogical Standards Manual*, a ground-breaking work issued in 2000 under the Ancestry.com imprint, codifies genealogical standards for data collection, evidence analysis, and reporting. It, too, offers models that demonstrate research reports, case studies, and narrative family histories.