

Getting Started on National Board Certification During COVID

As a National Board candidate, you may be figuring out the best place to start or what component(s) to do next given your context. As always, each candidate will make individual choices about how to collect the best evidence possible to meet component requirements at this particular time, including the order in which components will be completed.

You can pick components based on the number of students that must be featured, the kind of evidence that's required, or that match to the parts of your practice that you're focusing on now. Here is a summary of Component requirements to aid you in your selection. You should also refer to the component instructions for your [certificate area](#).

In addition to reviewing the [standards for your certificate area and component instructions](#), we encourage you to read the [Guide to National Board Certification](#) to familiarize yourself with important dates, deadlines, and policy information. We will continue to update our [COVID-19](#) page with related information and resources for candidates pursuing National Board certification during the pandemic.

Component 1: Content Knowledge	
Description	A computer-based assessment to demonstrate your understanding of content knowledge and pedagogical practices for teaching your content area. You must demonstrate knowledge of developmentally-appropriate content, which is necessary for teaching across the full range and ability level of your chosen certificate area.
COVID Considerations	Component 1 is a computer assessment and does not require the candidate to collect evidence from students. Candidates can start registering for assessments late Spring 2021.
Advice to you from NBCTs*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “C1 is perhaps the easiest one to pursue since the shutdown does not prevent them from scheduling their assessment and the centers are open with social distancing procedures and safety measures in place.” • “Anticipate possible disruption [to your scheduled appointment time] from the testing site and plan to be flexible.”

Component 2: Differentiation in Instruction	
Description	This portfolio entry requires that candidates gather and analyze information about individual students' strengths and needs and use that information to design and implement instruction to advance student learning and achievement. You will submit selected student work samples that demonstrate the students' growth over time and a written commentary that analyzes your instructional choices.

COVID Considerations	In most certificate areas, candidates will feature student work from 1-2 students. Candidates can submit student work collected from virtual classrooms. Video evidence is not required for most certificate areas. You should refer to the component instructions for specific requirements and additional details.
Student Work Samples	You are allowed to submit evidence collected online; however, you should carefully consider the extent to which the transition of your classroom to an online environment due to the COVID-19 pandemic allows you to demonstrate the principles in the rubrics for components.
Advice to you from NBCTs*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Plan how and when student work is collected and feedback is provided.” • “[I think this is the] portfolio component that would be least affected by distance learning since we are doing so much differentiation in distance learning by the nature of the circumstance. It’s also more likely that teachers will be able to do a deep dive into their practices with one or two students who are able to participate in distance learning.” • “Even though it may be a challenge to get all students online for whatever reasons, the component only requires them to submit work for 1 or 2 of their students, not the entire class.”

Component 3: Teaching Practice and Learning Environment

Description	This portfolio entry requires video recordings of interactions between you and your students. You will also submit a written commentary in which you describe, analyze and reflect on your teaching with students.
COVID Considerations	Only consider this component if you are teaching in-person or you are teaching via a video-conferencing platform that allows you to submit a video in which you and your students can be seen and heard.
Videos of Interactions between Candidate and Their Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wearing a mask during the taping of an in person lesson is allowed. It is important to briefly explain why in the Instructional Context or Written Commentary. • Videos of virtual classrooms can now be split screen recording or videoed with a camera that captures the teacher at the computer with students on the screen. Regardless of the way in which a candidate chooses to film a virtual classroom, it will be important to show interaction between the teacher and students, as well as interaction among the students. If this interaction is not clearly seen in the video, the result will be more limited evidence for assessors to score. • You and your students must be seen and heard in videos, or the submission cannot be scored. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Exception:</i> For Music candidates completing Component 2, the instructions do not require you to be visible in the video segments. Music candidates should follow instructions in Recording Your Video Segments. • Additional details are included here, and all candidates should review instructions and tips on recording in the General Portfolio Instructions and Component 3 instructions.

Advice to you from NBCTs*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Confirm you have permission to record virtual instruction. Consider how you will capture engagement and collaborative conversations. Consider using breakouts, chat to capture questions, Jamboard for collaborative brainstorming, FlipGrid for engagement, etc. I would urge them to deeply understand what evidence they need to gather, not to lower their standards because it is virtual, and [you may want to] consider waiting until students are in the class.” • “Video or record online learning as much as possible and begin early. Jot ideas in a journal. Reflect on your standards and the rubric for Component 3.”
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Component 4: Effective and Reflective Practitioner	
Description	This portfolio entry requires you to demonstrate evidence of your abilities as an effective and reflective practitioner in developing and applying knowledge of your students; your use of assessments to effectively plan for and positively impact your students’ learning; and your collaboration to advance students’ learning and growth.
COVID Considerations	As you plan teaching and learning during COVID-19, you may find it helpful to create a professional learning plan, identify new ways to learn about your students at the start of the school year, and collect assessment data to assess student learning. Component 4 would support that work.
Assessments and Assessment Data Collected Over Time	You are allowed to submit evidence collected online; however, you should carefully consider the extent to which the transition of your classroom to an online environment due to the COVID-19 pandemic allows you to demonstrate the principles in the rubrics for components.
Advice to you from NBCTs*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “[G]et really clear about accomplished use of assessments. Think through what different types of assessment tools to use: FlipGrid now has rubrics, Kahoot!, Pear Deck are some great online tools.” • “It can be hard to make assessments authentic during distance learning, but this should be a focus. Use every digital tool available to push students’ thinking and demonstration of their learning; don’t just rely on Google Forms alone. Because typing can have an effect on a student’s ability to really demonstrate what they know (at lower levels in particular) consider video conferencing with students for assessments or think through other ways to have students use voice-to-text to supplement any typing to demonstrate learning.” • “I recommend you read C4 carefully to see how you will be able to collect the necessary data and information to complete this component.”

** This advice is from Board-certified teachers. Following their advice does not guarantee success on Board certification. This advice is not intended to replace cohort support or coaching.*

Whether you’re a candidate with a specific question, or are just looking for more information about Board certification, we’re here to help. Contact our Customer Support team [online](#).