

Membership Designation Levels – November 2009 Update



On July 1, 2009, the Association of Bridal Consultants rolled-out the new points system for membership designations, combining membership advancement and educational advancement into one track. The purpose was to have ABC titles reflect a member's education and professional development levels, as well as his or her real world experience and industry contributions. ABC feels both are important.

Remember, the higher your ABC designation, the more opportunities available to you. Bridal Consultant and Vendor designations must be pursued separately.

Cumulative Points Achieved

Membership Designation Earned

0 – < 25 points

Wedding Novice

0 – < 50 points

Vendor

If requested, be prepared to supply copy of DBA or Business License.

25 – < 50 points

Wedding Consultant

50 – < 75 points

Professional Bridal Consultant / Professional Wedding Vendor

75 – < 100 points

Accredited Bridal Consultant / Accredited Wedding Vendor

Essays and event portfolio required for Accredited level

100 points or above

Master Bridal Consultant / Master Wedding Vendor

Essays, event portfolio, and panel presentation/interview required for Master level

Membership Points System Guidelines

Don't worry. The process is simpler than it looks at first. So hang in there, continue to learn, and set goals to advance your membership level so you can enjoy the benefits. (If you choose not to advance to a higher level of membership during any particular year, you are only required to submit evidence of at least 6 hours continuing education with your membership renewal for all levels.) We want you to keep learning, no matter what. Also, here's some good news . . . no more proficiency exams. Once you have a designation, it is yours to keep but it only remains valid with a current ABC membership.

Here are some pointers when submitting your application to upgrade using the point system:

a) Print and complete the summary checklist found on pages 3, 4 and 5 of this document.

Accredited and Master applicants should also include pages 6 and 7.

b) Please supply "**copies only**" when presenting evidence of points earned.

Only submit originals if requested. Also, please keep a copy of whatever you submit, as ABC will not retain your original package.

c) Only your points checklist will be returned. Complete packages will only be returned at the Accredited and Master level.

Consultant and vendor members with real world experience can probably move up to Professional Bridal Consultant/Professional Wedding Vendor membership very quickly once evidence of education and industry experience is submitted. So again, enjoy the new system. Your credentials can now reflect both your education AND your wedding industry experience.

David M. Wood, President, Association of Bridal Consultants

Instructions

- The following Points Assignment List will be used for **Consultant, Professional Bridal Consultant, Professional Wedding Vendor, Accredited Bridal Consultant, Accredited Wedding Vendor, Master Bridal Consultant and Master Wedding Vendor** membership categories.
- Wedding portfolios and essays will be required at **Accredited** and **Master** levels.
- A panel presentation/interview is required for **Master** level.
- Letters of recommendation may be part of your points qualification documentation. **DO NOT** have individual clients or vendors mail recommendations to the office separately.
- The applicant is responsible for supplying proof of each item. ABC does not provide copies of certificates that have been issued previously, but may confirm attendance.
- When applying, print the pages and complete “Your Values” for the points you are using.
- Supply acceptable evidence/documentation – **please provide copies only – no originals!**

Education and Professional Development - appropriate documentation examples

- ✓ An existing certificate showing Professional Bridal Consultant will give you credit for all five parts of the PDP and gain you points.
- ✓ Copy of your college degree or transcript.
- ✓ Annual Conference/regional conference – copy of training certificate or letter from your State Coordinator validating your full attendance.
- ✓ ABC seminars and all other educational courses – provide copy of training certificate with course, date, and number of hours.

Professional Industry Experience - appropriate documentation examples

- ✓ Dated tax ID, DBA (to validate years of wedding/business experience)
- ✓ Business plan, marketing plan
- ✓ Signed and dated tax forms
- ✓ Copy of business telephone bills with dates (must have company name on the bill)
 - One month per year (same month) is sufficient
- ✓ Evidence of employment in wedding-related positions/business
 - W-2 forms, wage statements, or employment contract covering period of employment
- ✓ Planned, coordinated, directed or provided your product or services to a wedding or event evidenced by the following:
 - Signed contract OR
 - Signed letters of recommendation from client(s) AND another participating vendor

Leadership/Participation - appropriate documentation examples

- ✓ A copy of your State/Country Coordinator contract
- ✓ Letter from State/Country Coordinator indicating number of years as Local Networking Group co-director
- ✓ Mentor - letter naming apprentice(s) supervised and dates of apprenticeship(s)
- ✓ Other professional designation - copy of certificate or proof of designation
- ✓ Other appointed/elected ABC position - Letter from State/Country Coordinator, Director, or President

Professional Industry Contributions - documentation examples

- ✓ Copies of published articles you have written
- ✓ Book or media title, publisher, ISBN
- ✓ For paid engagements - copies of contracts or W-2 form
- ✓ For other guest speaking engagements– date, agenda, itinerary, brochure, letter of appreciation

Related Activities

- ✓ Current membership certificates or proof of payment in other professional organizations
- ✓ Letter of appointment or letter from board members confirming officer/board appointment
- ✓ Copy of award nomination/won

From:
Member Name _____ E-Mail Address _____ Date _____

Member Number (on your membership certificate) _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State ____ Zip Code _____

For Consultant/PBC/PWV, mail to:

Association of Bridal Consultants
56 Danbury Rd., Suite 11
New Milford, CT 06776

Direct questions to: mbrsvc@bridalassn.com

For ABC/AWV/MBC/MWV, mail to:

Association of Bridal Consultants
Elise Enloe, Director of Education
660 Neile Court
Oviedo, FL 32765

Direct questions to: EliseABCFL@aol.com

Subject: Request for Membership Designation

1. I request consideration for advancement to _____ in agreement with ABC's Standards of Membership and Code of Ethics. I have attached true, unaltered copies documenting my qualifications and my completed Points Assignment Checklist.

- 25 - <49.75 points Consultant Member
- 50 - <74.75 points Professional Bridal Consultant / Professional Wedding Vendor
- 75 - <99.75 points Accredited Bridal Consultant / Accredited Wedding Vendor
- 100 points or above Master Bridal Consultant / Master Wedding Vendor

	TOTAL	Your Total
Education and Professional Development	Minimum 10 points, Maximum 30 points	
Professional Industry Experience	Maximum 30 points	
Leadership/Participation	Maximum 30 points	
Professional Industry Contributions	Maximum 25 points	
Related Activities	Maximum 20 points	
TOTAL		

2. For application/advancement to Accredited Bridal Consultant or Accredited Wedding Vendor, I have followed the Accredited/Master application procedures and provided my essays and portfolio.

3. I have enclosed my non-refundable application fee in the amount of

- \$50 for advancement to Professional Bridal Consultant or Professional Wedding Vendor
- \$100 for advancement to Accredited Bridal Consultant or Accredited Wedding Vendor
- \$200 for Master Bridal Consultant or Master Wedding Vendor

For Novice members upgrading to Consultant level, once approved, your membership dues will be prorated and based on the date of membership upgrade. Once paid, you will receive your consultant membership materials.

Sincerely,
(Applicant Signature)

Member Name _____ E-Mail Address _____ Date _____

Member Number (on your membership certificate) _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____



**Association of Bridal Consultants
Membership Levels of Designation
Points Assignment Checklist
Updated November 2009**

Education and Professional Development	Minimum 10 points, Maximum 30 points	Your Values	Approved
* Professional Development Program (PDP) – Introduction	2		
*Professional Development Program (PDP) – Etiquette	2		
*Professional Development Program (PDP) – Sales & Marketing	2		
*Professional Development Program (PDP) – Wedding Day	2		
*Professional Development Program (PDP) – Related Services	2		
*Professional Development Program (PDP) – Planning & Consulting	2		
*Professional Development Program Final w/Projects	3		
Weddings as a Business (WAB) (2009 revision pending)	3		
Working from Home (available 2009)	2		
Penn Foster Program includes PDP, WAB and additional modules: Learning Styles (1), Setting Fees (1), Multimedia Marketing (1), Bridal Show Boothmanship (1)	24		
ABC Seminars: New Horizons, Expanding Horizons (all), Cultural Horizons	2		
ABC Far Horizons, Global Horizons and ABC FAMs (full attendance) 1 point per full day excluding arrival & departure days	Up to 3 per trip		
ABC Annual Conference (full attendance per year attended)	5		
ABC state or regional meeting or workshop (minimum 6 hours, 1 day)	1-2		
Vendors ONLY – submit relevant specialty education/training for evaluation/equivalency	as determined		
Other wedding certificate programs (submit transcript of topics and grades)	5		
Associate Degree or	1.5	} Only one applies	
Bachelor’s Degree or	3		
Master’s Degree or	5		
Doctorate Degree	6		
Industry-/business-related education 2 to 4 hour seminar	0.25		
Industry-/business-related education 5 to 8 hour seminar	0.5		
Industry-related conferences: Wedding MBA, Special Event, BizBash, ARA, WEVA, NACE, etc.	1		
Additional university/college or industry related course more than 8 hours (per course completed)	1		
Approved safety or medical course (First Aid/CPR)	0.5		
Education and Professional Development TOTAL			

**If joining with less than 25 points, the association strongly recommends that you successfully complete the full Professional Development Program (PDP).*

Member Name _____ E-Mail Address _____ Date _____

Professional Industry Experience	Maximum 30 points	Your Values	Approved
Intern/apprentice with recommendation from supervising ABC members	1 per wedding/event		
Experience in wedding industry (years in business)	1 per year		
Planned, coordinated, directed, or serviced wedding or event	1 per wedding/event		
Professional Industry Experience TOTAL			

Leadership/Participation	Maximum 30 points	Your Values	Approved
ABC membership (1 point per completed 6 months)	2 per year		
State/Country Coordinator (max 10 points)	2 per year		
LNG Co-Director (max 5 points)	1 per year		
Mentor/apprenticeship supervisor	1 per apprenticeship		
PBC/PWV	2		
ABC/AWV (do not count level you are requesting)	4		
Other professional designation (CMP, CSEP, CERP, etc.)	1 per designation		
Other appointed ABC position	1 per year or project		
Participate in ABC meeting committee	1 per local; 2 per state/regional; 4 per national/international		
Leadership/Participation TOTAL			

Professional Industry Contributions	Maximum 25 points	Your Values	Approved
Published article (author) in industry-related publication (per article)	1 per article		
University/college instructor of industry-related course	1 per course		
Industry or university/college guest speaker	0.5 per engagement		
Industry panelist, moderator, or roundtable leader	0.25 per engagement		
Published industry-related book or video (author)	5 per book or video		
Published industry-related book (co-author)	2 per book		
Published industry-related book (contributor)	1 per book		
Industry-related training presentation or audiovisual (author)	1 per presentation		
Professional Industry Contributions TOTAL			

Related Activities	Maximum 20 points	Your Values	Approved
Membership in other related professional association/organization (ISES, NACE, WEVA, ADJA, PPA, local wedding organization, etc.)	1 per membership		
Officer/board member in industry-related professional association/organization	1 per term		
Industry award (Miss Dorothy Scholarship, Miss Dorothy Heart, Rising Star, Esprit, Gala, etc.)	1 per award		
Industry award nomination/application (Rising Star, Esprit, Gala, etc.)	0.5 per nomination/application		
Community service project/contributions/volunteer	1 per project		
Related Activities TOTAL			

Accredited Bridal Consultant/Accredited Wedding Vendor Application™

To receive the designation of Accredited Bridal Consultant or Accredited Wedding Vendor, submit the following package for review in addition to your points qualifications. Your portfolio consists of two essay questions and a wedding portfolio. Your essays and portfolio will be combined with your points for a final determination. PLEASE package all the materials together in a binder **not more than two inches thick**. Your presentation for this level of achievement is as important as your presentation of materials to a potential client.

Answer **TWO** of the following essay questions in 250 words or less.

1. What is the greatest value of Association membership? How has ABC membership contributed to your growth, and how can the Association convey this to new members? (You agree to have your answer quoted/published on the ABC Website or in ABC Dialogue.)
2. There is a severe weather-related incident (blizzard, hurricane, whatever fits your situation) the day before a large wedding. Describe your plan of action for all concerned and, of course, how you deal with the bride/groom, and all other vendors. You can use an actual wedding incident if you have experienced something similar to this scenario.
3. Networking is essential to the wedding profession. Describe how and where you network and how it benefits your business and professional growth.
4. The wedding was less than “perfect” due to circumstances beyond your control. You did your best, but you have received a formal complaint against you/your business. Describe how you would handle the situation. You can use an actual wedding incident if you have experienced something similar to this scenario.

Submit to Director of Education a portfolio of a wedding you have done in the past **three** years.

Materials to include are:

- Initial contact information, welcoming letter, phone log, etc.
- Your promotional material
- Contract or agreement with the client
- Contract with vendors (if this was your responsibility) or how you coordinated with vendors
- Schedules – both long range planning and wedding day itinerary
- Any other “things” (invitations, décor, programs) you were responsible for
- Pictures from the wedding, preferably professionally taken
- Follow up evaluation from the client and/or vendor(s) (at least one is required)
- Your summary and evaluation of the event – the good, the bad, why this wedding was selected to present

Please keep your package submission to a 2-inch binder (fits in a USPS Priority or FEDEX “Medium” box). Don’t forget your application fee of \$100, payable to the Association of Bridal Consultants.

Master Bridal Consultant/Master Wedding Vendor Application™

To receive the designation of Master Bridal Consultant or Master Wedding Vendor, you submit the following package for review by the Master's Panel. In addition to your points qualifications, complete two of the following essay questions, and provide an outline or summary of your Master's wedding portfolio. Your points, essays, portfolio presentation and panel interview will be evaluated by a panel of three MBCs/MWVs for a final determination. Package all the materials together in a binder not more than 3 inches thick. Don't have individual brides or vendors mail letters to the office separately. Your presentation for this level of achievement is as important as your presentation of materials to a potential client.

Answer **TWO** of the following essay questions. Your answers should be between 250 and 350 words each.

1. You are applying for a title of prestige. Describe your role as a Master Bridal Consultant/Master Wedding Vendor and how you will fulfill it.
2. Describe one of your most difficult wedding/event challenges that required a "master" level of skills/expertise to solve/resolve. What was your solution?
3. Describe an ethical challenge you have encountered or were involved with. Describe the situation, your role/involvement, and how you handled it.

Finally, you must present a portfolio of a wedding or wedding-related project/event you have done in the past three years that demonstrates your industry contributions, leadership, and mastery to a panel of three Master Bridal Consultants/Master Wedding Vendors at annual conference. Your portfolio should be prepared in triplicate for the panel. Materials to include (as appropriate) are:

- Communications: initial contact, intake/needs assessment, proposal, meetings, phone log, etc.
- Contract or agreement with the client and contract(s) with vendors (if this was your responsibility) or how you coordinated with vendors
- Budget
- Schedules – both long range planning and wedding day itinerary
- Your role/responsibilities
- Pictures from the wedding/event
- Follow up evaluation from the client and/or vendor(s) (at least one is required) and/or evidence of event publication/media
- Your evaluation of the event, and how this wedding or event demonstrates "master" skill level
- Submit an outline of your portfolio presentation **with your application** for Master Bridal Consultant for distribution to the panel members prior to your presentation.

The Master Bridal Consultant panel meets on Sunday at the Annual Conference (or as arranged at upcoming regional seminars as applications dictate). Once your application for Master Bridal Consultant is received, you will be contacted to confirm panel presentation. Applications must be received by **October 1** annually to be considered for presentation at Annual Conference in November.

- You will be responsible for your travel to the panel presentation.
- Audio-visual equipment must be requested in advance. Visual displays and handouts for each panel member are an important part of your presentation.
- Candidates will have 15 minutes to present their portfolio to the panel.
- Panel members will have 15 to 30 minutes to ask questions about candidate's points, essays, portfolio and additional questions on other wedding-related topics.
- Candidates will get feedback from the panelists on their presentation, however, the decision of the panel is final and may not be contested. If not selected, candidates may reapply the following year without paying an additional application fee.
- The panel may award Accredited Bridal Consultant/Accredited Wedding Vendor to candidates who qualify for those designations.

Don't forget your application fee of \$200, payable to the Association of Bridal Consultants.