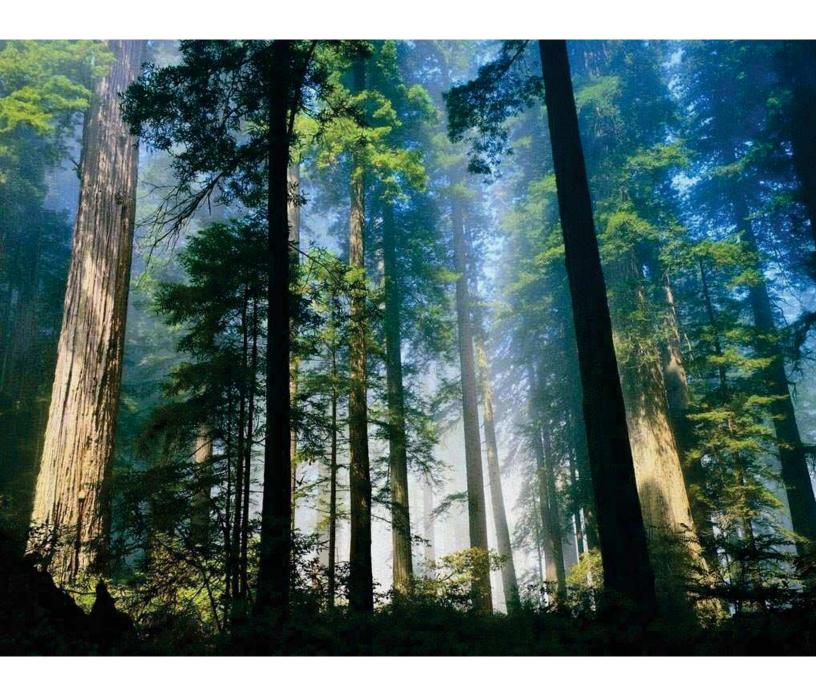
# **Assessors' Manual**

Credential Assessment for Foreign-Trained Applicants and Graduates of Non-Accredited Programs



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### Introduction

The following forestry regulatory bodies of the Canadian Federation of Professional Foresters Associations (CFPFA) have guided this process and gratefully acknowledge the support of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) for making this project possible:

- Association of British Columbia Forest Professionals
- Association of Registered Professional Foresters of New Brunswick
- Association of Saskatchewan Forestry Professionals
- College of Alberta Professional Foresters
- Ontario Professional Foresters Association
- Registered Professional Foresters Association of Nova Scotia
- Registered Professional Foresters of Newfoundland and Labrador

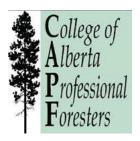














The support of the Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board and the Canadian Institute of Forestry has been central to the success of this project.





### **Foreword**

This manual is intended for assessors and explains the assessment procedures for enrolment and **registration** in professional forestry regulatory bodies across Canada. Those assessed under this process will not have graduated from Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board (CFAB)- accredited forestry programs in Canada. Pathways to registration and **competency** recognition are highlighted but should be placed in the context of the other process tools that can be accessed through the forestry regulatory bodies in each province.

This handbook includes a **Glossary (Appendix 1)**. The first use of a term is hyperlinked so that readers can immediately check the meaning of any words or phrases.

The following diagram outlines the two pathways to recognition as a suitable candidate for professional forester status that are supported by this manual:



Figure 1: Pathways to recognition for foreign-trained professionals or those who have not graduated from Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board (CFAB) accredited forestry programs.

### Pathway to registration:

· For applicants who fully demonstrate the required competencies.

### Pathway to skills upgrading:

- For applicants who must obtain additional, or must upgrade existing, competencies in order to practice.
- This pathway may involve skills upgrading, continuing education, and/or reassessment.

### Non-Recognition:

• Alternate Occupations - for those who do not appear qualified or are likely to become qualified with reasonable effort, the regulatory body may offer suggestions regarding alternative occupations. The extent of such support will vary among the provinces.

### Introduction

This manual describes the common, agreed procedures for assessment of competencies required for registration in professional forestry regulatory bodies<sup>1</sup> across Canada for individuals who have not graduated from Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board (CFAB)-accredited forestry programs.

To be accepted for registration, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- 1. Have graduated from a 4-year, science-based baccalaureate degree, or equivalent (see **Appendix 4: Notes on Equivalence**)
- 2. Meet the **Demonstrable Competencies** of the current **Certification Standards**
- 3. Demonstrate a commitment to professionalism
- 4. Have work **experience** as described in the Certification Standards.

This process assesses 1 and 2 above. Each **regulatory body** has its own processes and will advise and evaluate applicants regarding good character, professionalism, experience and local knowledge/jurisprudence requirements.

Applicants may come from a variety of educational and professional backgrounds. For example, they may:

- Be professionals who practice in another country,
- Have experience and training in a field related to forestry (such as geographic information systems (GIS), wildlife biology, hydrology, engineering, or others),
- Be graduates of non-accredited programs in Canada,
- Have sufficient education and related experience to meet the requirements of the assessment process.

#### See Appendix 2: Brief Applicant Profiles.

The assessment process provides a mechanism to verify knowledge, education, and competency for formal recognition by the forestry profession regulators.

Generally speaking, the process involves six main components. These are described in the following flowchart on page 6:

Applicants may begin the process of having their education and experience recognized under this process at any time. Initial contact with the appropriate regulatory body is encouraged as early as possible.

If applicants are practicing internationally and planning to immigrate to Canada, they may begin by contacting the regulatory body in the province where they wish to practice before coming to Canada. These applicants may need to collect and can then submit the required documentation while still abroad. This is particularly valuable when transcripts and educational documentation must be collected.

Significant effort will be required by the applicant to assemble relevant documentation, craft a clear and concise curriculum vitae (CV), complete all forms, matrices, and self-assessment tools, find witnesses who will attest to their education, experience, demonstrable competencies, and character, prepare an applicant declaration, and create a cogent application portfolio.

<sup>1</sup> Currently, Quebec is reviewing its certification standards and has deferred a decision in this regard



Figure 2: Flowchart showing the complete assessment process from pre-application to registration.

Note that process numbering is referenced in square brackets [#] throughout this document

Factors that will affect the duration of, and effort required in, preparing the portfolio includes the following:

Are transcripts and course outlines easily available from issuing institution(s) and do they require translation?

- Has an updated CV been prepared?
- Have witnesses been identified and have they committed to providing endorsements? Is the Applicant Declaration fully completed?
- Has the Applicant's self-assessment matrix been completed?
- Once an applicant has submitted a complete application portfolio, regulatory bodies will make every attempt to provide individuals with a competency decision within one year. Applicants who do not have the required competencies and who must complete supplemental work or training can expect the process to take longer than one year.

Professional forestry regulatory bodies are the key players in the process and are the first point of contact for interested applicants. The following are the forestry regulatory bodies and their websites:

- Alberta: College of Alberta Professional Foresters, www.capf.ca
- British Columbia: Association of British Columbia Forest Professionals (ABCFP), www.abcfp.ca
- New Brunswick: Association of Registered Professional Foresters of New Brunswick, www.arpfnb.ca
- Newfoundland and Labrador: Registered Professional Foresters of Newfoundland and
- Labrador, www.rpfnl.com
- Nova Scotia: Registered Professional Foresters Association of Nova Scotia, www.rpfans.ca
- Ontario: Ontario Professional Foresters Association (OPFA), www.opfa.ca
- Québec: Ordre des ingénieur forestier de Québec www.oifq.com<sup>2</sup>
- Saskatchewan: Association of Saskatchewan Forestry Professionals, www.asfp.ca

The process builds on the work of the Canadian Federation of Professional Foresters Associations (CFPFA) through the Inclusivity Project to develop Certification and **Accreditation Standards**. It also meets the intent of the federal and provincial labour mobility agreements and commitments. The process has sought, and will continue to seek, input from the Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board (CFAB) and the Association of University Forestry Schools of Canada (AUFSC). Lastly, the process meets and supports regulatory requirements and commitments to competency.

Participating in this process does not guarantee registration. Furthermore, having competencies recognized under this process, and eventually becoming registered, will not guarantee job placement.

<sup>2</sup> Currently, Quebec is reviewing its certification standards and has deferred a decision in this regard.

# **Guiding Principles**

The following principles were fundamental to developing this assessment process. They will continue to guide all those who participate in this assessment process.

#### **Fairness**

- The criteria used to determine competence are objective and reasonable, and free of bias.
- All applicants, regardless of country of education or training, are assessed to the same standards.
- The methods and materials used for assessing demonstrable competencies are both necessary and sufficient for determining whether occupational standards are met.
- Results of assessment will be stated clearly and include a rationale for the decision. Assessment processes are efficient and avoid duplication.
- What is learned is important not where or how it is learned. Formal education as well as learning from life and work experience will be considered equally.

### **Transparency**

- Requirements for applying, methods for assessment, and criteria for determining competency are fully described, easy to understand, and accessible.
- Applicants will be informed of all remaining options if full recognition does not initially occur.

#### **Timeliness**

- Assessment and recognition of demonstrable competencies, including communication of assessment decisions, are carried out promptly and efficiently.
- Regulatory bodies strive to provide enrolment/registration decisions to applicants within one year of the application submission deadline.

### Consistency

- Methods for assessment, including criteria used for recognition of demonstrable competencies, are accepted across all forestry regulatory bodies of the CFPFA (Québec excepted).
- Results of assessment are recognized nationally<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Currently, Quebec is reviewing its certification standards and has deferred a decision in this regard.

### **Timing and Timelines**

After the regulatory bodies and the CFPFA have tallied the total number of assessments required for each intake, volunteers for that year's assessments will be chosen from the national list. The Competency Assessment Authority (CAA) will notify volunteers of their expected time commitments and will provide a yearly schedule of activities. Volunteer assessors will form a national group that will undertake to assess applicants from all participating regulatory bodies. If assessors are unable to perform the assessments, alternate assessors on the list may be called upon. Assessors can expect to receive electronic files of applicants' complete application portfolios shortly after the application portfolio submission deadline.

## Assessments are conducted twice a year.

Deadlines for applications are January 1 and July 1. This is the date before which the applicant must receive written confirmation from the provincial regulatory body that your submission portfolio is complete.

Once at the assessment meeting, assessment panels will have three days (two nights) to complete all the assessments. They will have time to begin reporting during the meetings, but may have outstanding work to finish reports after the meeting. Within one month after the assessment meeting, all assessment reports should be complete and be sent to the relevant regulatory body for each applicant.

Regulatory bodies may require several months to process all the assessments and make competency decisions, depending on the number of applicants. Assessors may be contacted for clarification after they have completed their assessment reports. In the case of reassessments, assessors may be contacted again for clarification or to review additional information provided by the applicant.

## Roles and Responsibilities

## Compensation

If not otherwise compensated (e.g. through regular work allowances), a volunteer assessor will receive a \$300 honorarium for time and effort. All reasonable expenses related to the assessment process will be reimbursed. Reasonable expenses for travel, accommodation, and meals will be reimbursed with original receipts.

### The Professional Foresters Regulatory Bodies' Responsibilities



### Each regulatory body has the following responsibilities:

- Providing consistent levels of assistance to applicants by:
  - Acting as the point of contact for applicants [1/2].
  - Providing information and guidance on the required process, including internet webpage resources and answering specific questions about the assessment process [1/2].
  - Pre-screening whether the applicant's qualifications meet basic requirements [3-6].
- Providing applicants access to the database to upload portfolios [7].
- Collecting applicable fees [8].



- Acting as the receiving agent for all documents directly from an approved third party, such as official transcripts and credential assessment of foreign degree authenticity with Canadian equivalency level [9].
- Digitizing/scanning the documents received from third parties to become part of the applicant's portfolio
- Informing the applicant of any obvious deficiencies in the application portfolio [11b].
- Informing the applicant in writing of decision to proceed with assessment process [12]

### Each regulatory body has the following responsibilities:



- Providing assessors access to the database to download applicant's portfolios [13].
- Discussing assessment outcomes with the applicant [16].
- Making the final competency decision [16] and sending a written report to the applicant [17].



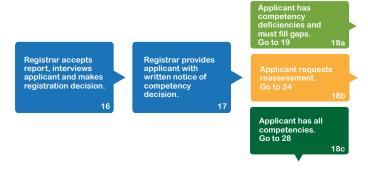
- Providing guidance about any supplemental learning or experience requirements that might be needed if competencies are not fully met [19].
- Administering an applicant's gap-filling phase, if needed [19-23] by:
  - Suggesting supplemental activities to help applicants complete the requirements [19].
  - Assessing whether supplemental education, training, and experience gained during the gap-filling phase are adequate to demonstrate competency [21].
- Reporting competency decisions, gap-filling requirements, and other relevant issues to the CFPFA to build consistency.
- Recruiting volunteer assessors to sit on a national pool that form annual assessment panels.
- Working with other regulatory bodies and applicant to identify a lead regulatory body if an applicant plans on applying and practicing professional forestry in more than one province.

### Applicants' Responsibilities



### Each applicant has the following responsibilities:

- Following the directions in the Applicants' Manual
- Providing translated (English or French) and properly formatted documents for the application portfolio [8]. For file formatting, see **Appendix 3: File Naming Protocol**
- Paying all applicable fees [8].
- Providing Witness Feedback Forms to witnesses and ensuring they are passed to regulatory bodies [9].
- Arranging for a formal credential assessment agency to review education and credentials and send a report directly to the regulatory body, if required by the regulatory body [9].
- Providing a clear, complete, concise, and truthful application portfolio [8].
- Arranging for official transcripts and any other third party reports to be sent directly from issuing institutions to the regulatory body [9].
- Arranging for translations of course outlines and other documents. Translated documents must be certified by
  acceptable translators at the cost of the applicant [9].
- Providing additional information and supporting documentation as requested [11b].



- Participating in the final applicant interview [16].
- Accepting the decision of the regulatory body or requesting reassessment [18a-c].



• Working with the regulatory body to fill any competency gaps within 5 years and reporting on all activities undertaken to fill competency gaps [19-23].



• Following the requirements for re-assessment, as required [24-27].

### **Assessment Panels' Responsibilities**

### Assessment panels are responsible for the following:

- Choosing a panel chair who will have these additional responsibilities:
  - Coordinating the assessment panel to strive towards a consensus regarding the adequacy of evidence presented to demonstrate each applicant's demonstrable competencies.
  - Coordinating the drafting of the assessment report by the panel.
  - Acting as the lead to ensure smooth communication and panel functioning with regulatory bodies.
  - Ensuring assessment reports are completed and regulatory bodies have no outstanding concerns.



- Download applicant's portfolio from the database. See Appendix 7: Assessor Database Users Guide
- Assessing applicant portfolios/credentials. [13-15] See Appendix 5: Notes on Assessment.
- Discussing applicant's competencies with other assessors and deciding whether the evidence presented is adequate to address each demonstrate competency [14].
- Consulting with other experts, if required, to perform a fair assessment.
- Conducting witness background checks as needed [14].
- Clarifying the applicant's competencies when needed. Panels may:
  - Communicate directly with applicants, or
  - Ask regulatory bodies to seek further clarification on their behalf.
- Keeping assessments completely confidential.
  - Assessors will not divulge any information about the outcome of the assessment or share possible competency strengths or deficiencies.
- Reporting the assessment findings to the regulatory body [15]. A hard copy of the Assessment Report Template
  is available from the website. Please note that the Assessment report will be completed online. See the
  Assessor's Database Users Guide in Appendix 7 for instructions on how to complete the Assessment Report
  directly on-line.
- Providing additional information as requested by regulatory bodies about assessment considerations.
- Avoiding situations of real or perceived conflict of interest where assessors know applicants personally and are involved in their assessment.

**NOTE:** Assessors do not make enrolment or registration decisions.

### **CFPFA's Responsibilities**

The CFPFA has the following responsibilities:

- · Setting and collecting assessment fees from regulatory bodies.
- Managing the finances of the national assessment process.
- Managing the list of volunteer assessors.
- Appointing a Competency Assessment Authority that will have the following, additional responsibilities:
  - Organizing assessment meetings.
  - Organizing assessment panels (suggested 3 members).
  - Allocating applicants to each assessment panel.
  - Determining assessment schedules, based on estimates of workload and commitments.

### Language

While this assessment process does not involve language proficiency criteria or testing, applicants must be able to complete the application process, communicate with regulatory bodies and assessors, and meet articling/experience requirements. Proficiency in the language(s) of the intended province will be a distinct asset. The application documents must be submitted in the language(s) of the regulatory body to which the application is being made.

### The Assessors

Assessment panels will be composed of respected and accomplished forest professionals. In some circumstances, panels may wish to call upon the assistance of other experts. As soon as possible individual assessors will complete the training available.

Assessors will be expected to serve three-year, renewable, overlapping terms. Volunteer assessors will form a national group that will undertake to assess applicants from all participating regulatory bodies. If assessors are unable to perform the assessments, alternate assessors may be called upon.

If not otherwise compensated (i.e., through regular work allowances), a volunteer assessor may request a \$300 honorarium for time and effort. All reasonable expenses related to the assessment process will be reimbursed. Assessors will submit receipts and will be reimbursed for the actual expenses associated with travel, accommodation, and meals.

### **Assessment Panels**

Panel meetings will be arranged in the most cost-effective locations. Meetings will normally last one to three days. They will be coordinated by the Competency Assessment Authority (CAA), which will arrange meeting facilities, organize assessment panels, allocate applicants to each assessment panel, and choose a panel leader to undertake the functions indicated above. If warranted, a number of panels may undertake assessments concurrently.

While initial meetings will be face-to-face while experience is being developed with this process, assessment panels may meet by conference call or other electronic means to decrease assessment costs in the future. Options around assessment frequency and mechanisms to increase efficiency and decrease costs will also be explored.

#### Witnesses

Two types of witnesses are required to sign off on an application portfolio. The first is a <u>character witness</u> who can attest to the character and repute of an applicant. Three character witnesses are required. The second type of witness, called a <u>competency witness</u>, is one who can attest to an applicant's ability to perform the indicators and demonstrable competencies defined in the **Self-Assessment Matrix**. Each demonstrable competency and, to the extent possible, each performance indicator within a demonstrable competency, which is validated with experience-based evidence (i.e., not validated by a course or course outline but instead by work or volunteer experience) is to be signed-off by at least one competency witness.

When documentation for education is not available (for acceptable reasons as defined by the regulatory body) competency witnesses may also sign-off on evidence for education-based competencies. Applicants are likely to have several competency witnesses.

Witnesses may act as both character and competency witnesses. Ideal witnesses are registered professional foresters/ ingénieurs forestiers or the equivalent forest professionals in other countries. Witnesses may come from other professions as well. However, a competency witness must be familiar with the competency for which he/she is attesting. (For example, a professional geologist is not the ideal witness to sign-off on a competency related to creating a forest management plan, although the geologist may have abilities in preparing certain parts of the plan.) Witnesses should not be spouses or family members. Witnesses must complete the confidential Witness Feedback Form and provide it directly to the regulatory body. If witnesses fail to provide completed forms, the applicant will be informed that his/her application is incomplete and the assessment will not begin until the required Witness Feedback Forms are provided.

Regulatory bodies and assessment panels will satisfy themselves that the witnesses are appropriate. This is a formal step for assessment panels when they conduct the witness background checks described below.

### The Assessment Process



The process starts when a potential applicant contacts the regulatory body to discuss his or her qualifications and the competency assessment process [1/2]. The formal assessment process starts on the periodic application submission deadlines, which may change from year to year depending on the number of applicants to be assessed and other factors.

Applicants must upload their digital application portfolios and pay their fees to regulatory bodies by the submission deadline [8]. Applicants will have arranged for their witnesses to provide the required Witness Feedback Forms [9].

The regulatory body confirms that the submission is complete and is ready to be assessed by the assessment panel [11a]. The regulatory body collects official transcripts, translations, credential assessment reports (if required) and witness forms and uploads these to the database to create the complete application package. If the submission is not complete or any information is deemed inadequate, the regulatory body will identify any obvious deficiencies to the applicant [11b]. It is the applicant's responsibility to supply the missing materials and it will be made clear to the applicant that his/her submission will not be assessed until all the missing information has been provided. When required information has not been provided, the provincial regulatory body may charge an administrative penalty to cover any extra costs.

After a portfolio is deemed adequate for assessment, the assessment panel will be provided access to the database [13]. See **Appendix 7**. At this point, the regulatory body will inform the applicant that the assessment panel may initiate subsequent contact regarding the portfolio if they have guestions or require clarification [14].

Assessment panels now conduct the competency assessment [14] (see Roles and Responsibilities for Assessment Panels for more information). There may be witness background checks. The goal of the background check is to provide evidence that the witness has adequate knowledge of the applicant's education and experience relative to the demonstrable competencies as identified in the Self Assessment Matrix. The process may be formal or informal, depending on the assessment panel and the witnesses. If the assessment panel has any concerns about the witness's ability to sign-off on the applicant's submission, the panel leader will immediately discuss this with the regulatory body. The regulatory body may choose to contact the applicant and ask for additional witnesses.

Because forestry consists of such a small professional community, assessors may know witnesses. If this is the case, a background check may consist of a simple phone call between an assessor and the witness to confirm the sign-off. If assessors do not know witnesses, the background check may be more formal and consist of conversations between other forest professionals and assessors.

Assessment panels will decide among themselves on the best approach for assessing applicants. One option is for each

submission to be divided into sections depending on the Competency Standards in the Self Assessment Matrix. Each assessor may then evaluate a particular section, depending on his/her area(s) of expertise. Alternatively, an assessor may review an applicant's entire portfolio. Whatever the case, each assessor must summarize the applicant's competencies to the other assessors and highlight any areas of concern. Regardless of the approach the assessment panel chooses to follow, each applicant's competencies require discussion. Assessment panels will reach consensus as to whether or not the applicant meets the required demonstrable competencies and standards.

After discussing an applicant's portfolio, the assessment panel will agree on one of the following outcomes and complete the associated next step [15] See **Appendix 7** on how to complete the Assessment Report on-line.:

- Portfolio demonstrates that the applicant adequately meets all demonstrable competencies. The assessment panel completes a final assessment report, which is sent to the regulatory body.
- Additional information is required from the applicant. The assessment panel reports back to the regulatory body
  and identifies what is missing. The regulatory body contacts the applicant directly with a request for the required
  information. Once the additional information is provided, it will be evaluated and the assessment completed.
   The panel sends the final assessment report to the regulatory body.
- Portfolio does not adequately prove that the demonstrable competencies have been met. An assessment report is sent to the regulatory body that details the deficient competencies. It may suggest appropriate training and experience required to overcome deficiencies.

The assessment panel's assessment report is considered confidential but may be provided to the applicant on request. The assessment report becomes part of the applicant's file with the provincial regulatory body.

After receiving the assessment report, the regulatory body conducts a final applicant interview [16]. The interview may be conducted in person, over the phone, or by using other conferencing tools. The final interview is informal and has no required structure or format. It is intended to provide the regulatory body with an overall impression of the applicant. Regulatory bodies may use the interview to seek clarification on any demonstrable competencies or experiences that were identified by the assessment panel. The interview is an opportunity for regulatory bodies to explain the steps to enrolment and/or registration with the provincial body, including any necessary experiential or educational requirements.

After reviewing the assessment report and conducting the applicant interview, the regulatory body makes an enrolment/registration decision [11a/b]. The applicant will be notified in writing of the decision, including an explanation of that decision, and any next steps [12].

Regulatory bodies will guide the applicant in completing the applicable articling period [28], or fulfilling any outstanding learning or experience requirements before full registration [19-22]. Regulatory bodies will also administer the gap-filling phase where applicants with competency gaps acquire additional education, training, or experience to address the deficiencies [19-22]. The applicant and the regulatory body will develop a strategy to fill the competency gaps [19], which will be supported by the assessment panel report.

After the additional learning, the applicant will submit a written summary of the strategies and outcomes used to address the deficiencies and the regulatory body will assess whether these were adequate [21]. The Competency Assessment Authority may be contacted to provide advice if regulatory bodies have concerns regarding the adequacy of gap-filling activities.

Regulatory bodies are expected to report competency assessment outcomes to the CFPFA.

# **Gap-Filling**



In situations where an applicant's demonstrable competencies are assessed and gaps are identified [18a], the applicant has five years from the date of the enrolment/registration decision to gain the missing demonstrable competencies. The regulatory body may lengthen this period at its discretion. The applicant must remain on the membership list of the regulatory body during this time. If the applicant decides to proceed, the regulatory body and applicant will develop a strategy to address the missing competencies [19], supported by the assessment panel. Applicants will stay in regular contact with the regulatory body to ensure the strategies and actions are appropriate and requirements are being met [20-23].

### Reassessments



If an applicant's qualifications, knowledge, skills, and abilities do not meet the requirements, the regulatory body will notify the applicant [17]. The applicant's written notice requesting reassessment must be provided to the regulatory body within 30 days of receiving the original written competency and enrolment/registration decision [24]. The notice must present the arguments in support of the reassessment (i.e., grounds for reassessment), clearly identifying evidence that may not have been taken into consideration. The notice must also indicate which of the two methods identified below is being requested for the reassessment.

**1. Targeted competency reassessment:** If an applicant supplies new or additional information in support of his/her reassessment, a targeted competency reassessment will be completed by the original assessment panel [25a/26a]. This reassessment costs \$200 and must be paid with submission of the written notice requesting reassessment.

The new or additional information must be received within 90 days of the original written competency decision.

**2. Complete competency reassessment:** If the applicant requests a complete reassessment, a new assessment panel may be assembled to do a second competency assessment [25b/26b]. The fee for "complete reassessment" is \$500, the same as for the initial assessment. The fee must be paid with submission of the written notice requesting reassessment. If a complete reassessment results in the decision that an applicant does indeed demonstrate all competencies, the reassessment fee will be refunded.

The applicant will be provided with written notice of the competency reassessment outcome as soon as practicable. All parties should note that reassessments may identify additional demonstrable competency deficiencies beyond those found in the initial assessment, which may affect the final outcome. The decision of the regulatory body on the reassessment is final and binding.

# **Acknowledgements**

This process is aimed at increasing the diversity of those practicing professional forestry in Canada by including professionals from a broad educational and experiential background. All those involved are optimistic that professional forestry in Canada will benefit greatly from this inclusion and look forward to the contribution of applicants who become registered professional foresters under this assessment process.

All those involved in developing this process, as well as those involved in using the assessment procedures, would like to acknowledge the generous efforts and contributions of assessment panels and assessors. Without your expert knowledge and contributions of untold volunteer hours, recognizing competencies under this process would not be possible. Our sincerest gratitude is extended to volunteers for helping to make this process possible.

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- Lorne Riley Executive Director, Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board;
- Randy Trerise Registrar, Association of BC Forest Professionals

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- John Cathro, RPF Cathro Consulting Ltd;
- · Gretchen, Prystawik, RPF
- Dan Trobak Brandcrafted Design





# **Appendix 1: Glossary**

The following definitions ensure consistent understanding among regulatory bodies, applicants, and assessors. Many definitions below have been previously defined by regulatory bodies, cross jurisdictional-teams, and other organizations for assessment, accreditation, or registration purposes.

### Α

**Accreditation:** a process of education assurance through which formal recognition of the quality and necessary curriculum content of a program of study is conferred by a responsible authority. In the professional forestry context in Canada, the CFAB is the responsible authority empowered to assess university level programs on behalf of the provincial professional forester/ingénieurs forestiers regulatory bodies and to determine whether they deliver the academic requirements for entrance into the profession. The CFAB conducts its accreditation assessments on a national basis for, and on behalf of, each of these regulatory bodies who have agreed, collectively, to abide by its decisions.

**Accreditation Standards:** criteria approved by the CFPFA member agencies (currently, l'Ordre des ingénieurs forestiers du Québec (OIFQ) is reviewing its certification standards and has deferred a decision in this regard) and used by the CFAB for assessment of university forestry programs. The Accreditation Standards are based on, and are fully harmonized with, the Certification Standards.

**Acronyms:** words formed from the initial letters or groups of letters of words in a set phrase or series of words, as in "RPF" from Registered Professional Forester.

**Allied program:** a course of study related to, or allied to, forestry. Allied programs include, but are not limited to, the following: biology, hydrology, environmental science, forest engineering, geography, and geographic information systems (GIS).

**Applicant Declaration:** a two-page, single spaced document (written by the applicant) that advocates for his/her demonstrable competencies.

**Application Portfolio:** the total package submitted by an applicant to demonstrate competency.

**Articling Period:** a period of internship required in some provinces where an enrolled member is mentored, sponsored, and/or supervised by a fully registered member who agrees to take responsibility for his/her training and development.

В																								
С																								

**Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board (CFAB):** an independently functioning body established in 1990 by the provincial professional forester/forest engineer associations of Canada and the Canadian Institute of Forestry. Its role is to provide a service to its member agencies (the CFPFA regulatory bodies) for the accreditation of forestry programs, at the baccalaureate level or higher, for the purpose of determining if the academic requirements for professional certification (registration) are being met.

**Canadian Federation of Professional Foresters Associations (CFPFA):** a body comprised of the provincial professional forester/forest engineer associations of Canada, the Canadian Institute of Forestry and the Canadian Forestry

Accreditation Board. Its mandate is to act as an advocate for, and as a forum for discussion on, matters identified by the member agencies as having national importance or consequence.

**Central Assessment Authority (CAA):** a sub-group of the Canadian Federation of Professional Foresters Associations charged with overseeing the credential assessment process for foreign-trained applicants and graduates of programs not accredited by the Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board.

**Certification:** the authoritative endorsement by a governing body that a person has attained occupational proficiency. In the professional forestry context, certification means that an individual's qualifications have been assessed by one or more of the professional bodies to determine whether the requirements for entry into the profession have been met.

**Certification Standards:** criteria approved by the CFPFA member agencies (currently, Québec is reviewing its certification standards and has deferred a decision in this regard) to determine whether the requirements for entry into the profession have been met. The Certification Standards were the basis for and are fully harmonized with the Accreditation Standards.

**Competency:** a standardized requirement for an individual to properly perform a specific job. It encompasses a combination of knowledge, skills, and behaviour utilized to improve performance. More generally, competence is the state or quality of being adequately qualified; having the ability to perform a specific role.

**Curriculum vitae (CV):** an overview of a person's life and qualifications and includes details on education, work experience, volunteer activities, and anything else that may provide insight into an individual's training and qualifications.

D

**Deadline date:** the last possible date that an application package will be received by the regulatory body. The submission deadline date for the application portfolio may change from year to year depending on the number of applicants to be assessed and other factors.

**Demonstrable competencies:** the listed skills, knowledge and abilities, organized into seven standards that form the core academic requirements in both the Certification Standards and the Accreditation Standards. The standards describe the principle, relevant components, demonstrable competency requirements, and performance indicators, arranged in a progression of understanding. For registration, demonstrable competencies are assessed at the entry level. This is the level of, or is equivalent to the level of, a new graduate of an accredited university forestry program.

E

**Education:** any formal learning experiences that have had a formative effect on the mind, character, or physical ability of an individual, relevant to the profession of forestry. Education can be in the realms of knowledge, skills, and values.

**Enrolled member:** an applicant who becomes a member of a professional association as a forester-in-training, provisional forester or the like, while completing the registration requirements to become a professional practitioner (RPF or ing.f). (The designation may not apply in all jurisdictions.)

**Equivalent:** equal in value, measure, force, effect, significance or corresponding in position or function. In this process, "equivalence" could be demonstrated by the applicant providing evidence of having taken, and passed, a number of technical and/or university courses, which in combination, can be considered to have covered the material to the same depth and breadth that the material would have been covered in a four-year science-based degree. Further, the evidence of equivalence, and thus competency, in a subject may be established by an applicant's detailed work experience and participation in the preparation of papers, articles and presentations.

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**Experience:** knowledge of, or skill in, or observation gained through practice in, or exposure to, a thing or event.

F
G
<b>Gap-filling activities:</b> the activities in which an applicant gains additional education or experience to meet identified competency deficiencies.
Н
1
<b>Ingénieur forestier (ing.f.):</b> an individual who, through membership in l'Ordre des ingénieurs forestiers du Québec (OIFQ), is entitled to use a protected title and is licensed to practice professional forestry in the province of Québec.
J
<b>Jargon:</b> the language, especially the vocabulary, peculiar to a particular trade, profession, or group.
K-L-M-N-O
P
<b>Performance Indicator:</b> a specific statement describing what a candidate will be able to do in a "measurable" way. It functions as a reference point in evaluating whether an applicant has met the evidentiary tests for a demonstrable competency requirement.
<b>Prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR):</b> a means of recognizing knowledge and skills that people gain from previous experience and education including academic study, work and other formal or informal learning activities. PLAR supports opportunities for individuals to have relevant learning recognized and counted towards a qualification. It is intended to treat applicants equitably, without discrimination based on the source of their learning.
Q
R
<b>Registered Professional Forester (RPF):</b> an individual who, through membership in one or more of the professional foresters associations in Canada (Québec excluded), is entitled to use a protected title and/or is licensed to practice professional forestry within a defined geographical jurisdiction (province).
<b>Registration:</b> the act of recognizing an individual's qualifications and entering them in the register of the profession.
<b>Regulatory body or regulatory authority:</b> an organization with authority to control the use of a restricted title (e.g. RPF) and/or license a person to practice the restricted trade or profession within a defined jurisdiction.

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**Science-based degree:** a program of study in which the majority of time is spent exploring the natural, physical, or social sciences.

**Self Assessment Matrix:** a spreadsheet that integrates the documents in an applicant's portfolio to demonstrate competencies. Each demonstrable competency and standard in the matrix must be addressed by the applicant and must be signed off by a witness.

T-U-V-W-X-Y-Z

# **Appendix 2: Example Applicant Profiles and Biographies**

The following typical biographies are provided as examples:

**Internationally trained forester who wishes to live and practice forestry in Canada** Graduated from a university forestry program outside of Canada.

- May have become registered as a professional forester in home country.
- Established a practice in home country, or in several countries.
- Wishes to immigrate to Canada and practice professional forestry.

**Allied-science professional who wishes to become a registered professional forester** Graduated from university with a 4-year, science-based degree in a discipline related to forestry (e.g., geographic information systems, wildlife biology, hydrology, engineering, agrology, ecology).

- May or may not hold graduate level degree(s) in forestry.
- May or may not be a registered professional in the natural resource field (e.g., Professional Agrologist, Registered Professional Biologist, Professional Engineer, Professional Geoscientist).
- Currently practices aspects of professional forestry or wishes to practice professional forestry.

**Non-accredited university forestry program graduate who wishes to become a registered professional forester** Graduated from a 4-year, science-based forestry program that is not currently accredited by the CFAB.

• Currently practices aspects of professional forestry or wishes to practice professional forestry.

**Graduate from a 3-year science degree program with a masters in forestry** Graduated from a 3-year, science-based degree in a discipline related to forestry (i.e., geographic information systems, wildlife biology, hydrology, engineering, agrology, ecology, or other)

- Completed a Master's degree in forestry
- Currently practices aspects of professional forestry or wishes to practice professional forestry.

**Graduate from a technical program with additional courses at post-secondary institution(s)** Considerable, diverse, and advanced forestry experience that supplements formal learning.

Others applicants with sufficient forestry-related education and experience to meet the requirements of the certification process but who do not fit in the above-mentioned categories are still encouraged to discuss their qualifications and interest with their regulatory body.

# **Appendix 3: File Naming Protocol**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to summarize the file naming protocol that applicants will use when submitting their portfolios. Consistent file naming is important because all documents are stored in a database.

### **General File Naming Protocol**

The general protocol is as follows:

### [APPLICANT NAME] + [DOCUMENT NAME] + [DATE].[SUFFIX]

To explain each of the these parts::

[APPLICANT NAME] is the last name and first initial only

[DOCUMENT NAME] is as indicated in the tables below

**[DATE]** is month year (March 2012) and refers to the date of submission

[SUFFIX] is the file type, either .doc, .docx, .xls, .xlsx, .pdf

Example: smithp application form March 2012.pdf. Note spaces between the words.

### **Specific Document Naming Protocol**

Regulatory bodies will ensure that documents are received in the following format with the specified naming protocol and then provide these digital files to assessment panels in the following order. PDF files should be bookmarked and zipped.

Number	Requirement	File Name
1	Applicant Declaration	[APPLICANT NAME] declaration [DATE].pdf
2	CV documenting relevant work history, with numbered lines	[APPLICANT NAME] cv [DATE].pdf
3	Transcript submitted directly to the Registrar by the issuing institution(s), in hard copy, verifying the 4-year science-based degree or equivalent	[APPLICANT NAME] transcript [DATE].pdf
4	A translation of the transcript, from certified translator, if applicable.	[APPLICANT NAME] transcript translation [DATE].pdf
6	Third party degree credential authenticity and equivalency check to Canadian university standards, if applicable	[APPLICANT NAME] transcript credentials [DATE].pdf
5	Course outline, provided by the education institution, with sufficient detail to support demonstrable competencies noted in the applicant's Self Assessment Matrix.	[APPLICANT NAME] course outlines [DATE].doc

Number	Requirement	File Name
6	A translation of course outline, from certified translator, if applicable	[APPLICANT NAME] course outlines translation [DATE].pdf
7	Authentic and citation-appropriate, original resources from the issuing institution (e.g., academic calendars, course syllabus)	[APPLICANT NAME] course syllabus [DATE].pdf
8	A translation, from certified translator, if applicable	[APPLICANT NAME] course syllabus translation [DATE].pdf
9	Three character witnesses forms submitted directly to Registrar by the witnesses	[APPLICANT NAME] character witness form [WITNESS NAME] [DATE].pdf
10	Competency Witnesses forms submitted directly to Registrar by the witnesses	[APPLICANT NAME] competency witness form [WITNESS NAME] [DATE].pdf
11	Specific performance indicators in the Self Assessment Matrix are validated with experience-based evidence (i.e., not education-based with proof by transcript, course outline, or other) have been signed off by one or more witnesses	Witness initials inserted in MS excel self-evaluation spreadsheet
12	Forms have been translated, if applicable	[APPLICANT NAME] character witness form translation [WITNESS NAME] [DATE].pdf  [APPLICANT NAME] competency witness form translation [WITNESS NAME] [DATE].pdf
13	Self Assessment Matrix fully completed and with witness sign-off	[APPLICANT NAME] self assessment [DATE].xls
14	Supporting documents such as published papers and management plans	[APPLICANT NAME] [DOCUMENT NAME] [DATE].pdf

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# **Appendix 4: Notes on Equivalence**

With respect to the equivalence of any combination of formal education to a 4-year, science- based degree, (for example, a baccalaureate degree or technical diploma plus a graduate degree or degrees, plus extensive experience), the Certification Standards should be used as a guide, as referenced below:

# **Equivalent:**

Equal in value, measure, force, effect, significance or corresponding in position or function. In this process, "equivalence" could be demonstrated by the applicant providing evidence of having taken, and passed, a number of technical and/or university courses, which in combination, can be considered to have covered the material to the same depth and breadth that the material would have been covered in a four-year science-based degree. Further, the evidence of equivalence, and thus competency, in a subject may be established by an applicant's detailed work experience and participation in the preparation of papers, articles and presentations.

### **Essential Elements for a Certification Standard**

This document describes the minimum common requirements for admission to the practice of professional forestry across Canada. They are comprised of the following four elements, each of which must be demonstrably present:

- (I) Academic credentials;
- (II) Core competency standards (of which there are 7);
- (III) Experience; and
- (IV) Commitment to professionalism.

### **Academic Credentials**

This element of certification describes the characteristics (rather than content) of the educational foundation a registrant must have upon entry into practice. Those characteristics include:

At a minimum, a four-year, science-based baccalaureate degree, or its equivalent;

Complementary studies, either within the degree (in the case of accredited programs) or through other qualification (in the case of applicants from non-accredited, recognized programs) which:

- Demonstrably and cogently broaden understanding of at least one aspect of the practice of professional forestry as defined in one or more Canadian jurisdictions.
- Demonstrably and cogently support exploration of core competency standards.

These studies can generally be considered to be the pre-or co-requisite studies that provide foundational knowledge for the core competency standard.

It is understood that, for accredited programs, the majority of the academic time will be dedicated to exploration of subject matter required by the core competency standards (core weighting). This statement is one of general intent. It will be up to an applicant for accreditation, i.e., the administrators of programs seeking accreditation, to demonstrate how they are meeting the core weighting requirements. As long as a program seeking accreditation meets the requirements of a four-year, science-based degree, meeting the core weighting requirements can be achieved either directly, i.e., within the program itself, or in the way students are granted entrance into the program from feeder institutions such as junior colleges, Collèges d'enseignement général et professionnel (CEGEPs), etc. In such cases, a school may have more time within its own degree program to deliver content that broadens and deepens understanding of the core requirements. (A school must be able to demonstrate that core requirements are covered appropriately in the time spent at the feeder institutions.

It is crucial to keep in mind that the knowledge and skills described in the core competency standards are not imparted to a candidate for certification in a vacuum. It is expected, in fact it is required, that the candidate will have graduated from a program of study that provides a science-based degree (or equivalent recognized by regulatory members) that is typically four years or more in length. In most cases, the core competency standards will be met through studies towards that science-based degree. <sup>4</sup> In most cases also, the candidate will obtain the requisite complementary and foundational studies in the course of their degree studies. <sup>5</sup>

However imparted, candidates for certification must be able to demonstrate that they have gained appropriate exposure to the foundational elements upon which the core competency standards rest and appropriate additional, related (complementary) studies to round out the educational experience.

The foundational studies element of a curriculum will include aspects of the arts, sciences and the humanities as described in [the Certification Standards], at the basic or introductory knowledge level and the societal context. There is no minimum level of exposure required for this component. However, exposure must be sufficient to impart an understanding of natural relationships and to ensure that students are able to undertake the work of the core academic requirements for certification.

The complementary studies element of a curriculum is comprised of those academic studies offered by the subject program that are over and above core and foundational requirements. They may occur individually as 'electives' or in structured curriculum groupings, generally identified as options, minors and majors. Complementary sciences and studies are to be used to provide an integrated, comprehensive academic experience that allows students to enhance and advance their forestry career interests. The component is intended to enable candidates to function at the highest levels of competence and effectiveness in the undertaking of professional activities demanded by the profession and society. There is no minimum level of exposure required for this component. However, exposure must have been sufficient to enable the candidate to fully complete the graduation requirements of the subject degree program or equivalent study.

<sup>4</sup> A person, while still needing the science-based degree, may be able to demonstrate that some of the core competency requirements were gained through other formal education or training.

<sup>5</sup> Again, while this is the expectation, a candidate may be able to demonstrate that this was gained in studies other than the science-based degree that they present to a registering body for registration. For example, they may have an undergraduate degree in terrestrial ecology, which covered some, but not all, of the core competency standard requirements and post-graduate studies through which they covered the remaining requirements.

# **Appendix 5: Notes on Assessment**

General considerations with respect to all demonstrable competencies:

- Assessors evaluate the proof of competency; regulatory bodies evaluate the competency of individuals using assessment reports, applicant interviews, and other tools.
- Equal weight should be given to competencies demonstrated through experience and education, providing evidence is adequate.
- Each demonstrable competency has been carefully worded to require a particular level of competency. See **Appendix 6: Bloom's Taxonomy**. Ensure that the evidence provided by the applicant can demonstrate competency to that level described in the indicator, as per the competency of a recent graduate of a CFAB-accredited forestry program.
- Ensure clear and convincing evidence exists to demonstrate that each demonstrable competency is adequately addressed. Even if a witness signs off competencies, deficiencies may be identified by the assessment panel or regulatory body due to experience at a level of competency too low to meet the requirement, or other reasons.
- Areas of competency strength and weakness are acceptable and to be expected:
  - Just as individuals can be experts and schools can specialize, so too can applicants have strengths and weaknesses under this process.
  - Significant areas of weakness should be highlighted and addressed by additional learning opportunities, at the discretion of the regulatory bodies.
  - Varying levels of competency exist and are acceptable:
  - Communication-level skills.
  - Practice-level skills.
  - Applicants must be able to demonstrate an ability to manage their own competencies (i.e., they must know what they don't know).
  - Applicants must be able to address all capstone demonstrable competencies.

#### Assessing formal education:

- Ensure applicant has the equivalent of a four-year, baccalaureate, science-based degree or equivalent. (Science-based degrees can be in the physical, natural, or social sciences and acceptable majors include, but are not limited to, the following: geographic information systems (GIS), geography, engineering, chemistry, physics, sociology, biology, hydrology, ecology, natural resource science, and others. Note that a baccalaureate degree is a minimum requirement. Those applicants with graduate degrees in forestry and related fields, along with experience and demonstrable competencies in forestry, should participate in this assessment process.)
- Examine transcripts for regulator's advice. Applicants (with input from regulatory bodies) will organize for their transcripts to be reviewed by an acceptable and recognized credential assessment agency. The credential assessment report will be provided to the regulatory body, reviewed, and passed to assessors.

- The regulatory body has confirmed that the transcript(s) is original. In exceptional cases, refugees may be unable to document qualifications or provide official transcripts for good reasons. In lieu, sworn statements should be adequate. The regulator will determine whether the exceptional cases have provided sufficient proof.
- The regulatory body has examined for evidence of tampering or misrepresentation (original documents and certified proofs of academic achievements should be examined to verify authenticity). The presence of fraudulent or altered documents leads to the refusal to issue a competency decision by the regulatory body. In such cases, verification by the issuing institution or authority would be requested.
- Regulator has confirmed that competent authorities formally recognize institutions and widely accepted by other institutions and agencies.
- Assess the content of the program(s) and institution(s) at which credentials were earned, including the credentials (transcripts and course outlines) of the applicant, to determine demonstrable competencies:
  - Review transcript content.
  - Courses should be recognized only if a competent authority also recognizes the related program. For
    example, a dendrology course offered by an institution with an internationally recognized forestry program
    should be recognized. However, recognition of an educational program or degree does not guarantee the
    recognition of all courses offered in that program or degree.
  - If only courses are to be relied upon for assessment of knowledge-based demonstrable competencies, credential assessment should be based entirely on normal entry and completion requirements.
  - Assessment should be based on entry and completion requirements in place when the credentials were completed. Pre-requisite and co-requisite evaluation may provide insight.
  - Evaluation should be based on the credentials presented for evaluation and should not cite the completion of pre-requisites if those pre-requisites are not presented for evaluation.
  - Credentials at the same level in different programs should not be added together to equate to credentials at higher levels of study.
  - The following additional criteria may assess the level and type of educational programs and experience:
    - Entrance requirements (normal admission requirements to program and their level of study).
    - Full-time duration of study program or experience (how many years or months).
    - Structure of program (vocational, academic, etc).
    - Contents (discipline of studies, courses, hours of study for lecture and lab).
    - Methods of student assessment.
    - Purpose of degree (professional qualification or pre-requisite to further studies).
    - Bridges to traditional degree (what access does program give to other programs in home country).
    - Qualifications of instructors.

### Assessing experience-based learning:

- Demonstration of some demonstrable competencies may be experience-based, even for competencies gained through courses taken at CFAB-accredited programs. Some demonstrable competencies cannot be 'taught' (i.e., professionalism and ethics).
- Examine the following to evaluate experience-based evidence of demonstrable competencies:
  - Duration of experience.
  - Level of responsibility.
  - Competence in practice vs. ability to communicate about practice determine at what level the applicant is practicing. Verbs used in CV could lend insight as per Bloom's Taxonomy below

# Appendix 6: Bloom's Taxonomy or Verbs to Specify Performance Indicators<sup>6</sup>

Bloom identified verbs that could be used for each of the categories of learning outcomes:

### For Knowledge

arrange	order	define	recognise	duplicate
label	recall	list	repeat	memorise
name	state	relate	reproduce	

### For Comprehension

classify	locate	describe	identify	discuss		
report	explain	restate	express	review		
translate	select	indicate				

### For Application

apply	operate	choose	practice	demonstrate
schedule	dramatise	sketch	employ	solve
illustrate	use	interpret	write	

### For Analysis

analyse	differentiate	appraise	discriminate	calculate
distinguish	categorise	examine	compare	experiment
contrast	question	criticise	test	

### For Synthesis

arrange	formulate	assemble	manage	collect
organise	compose	plan	construct	prepare
create	propose	design	write	

### For Evaluation

appraise	judge	argue	predict	assess
rate	attach	score	choose	select
compare	support	estimate	evaluate	

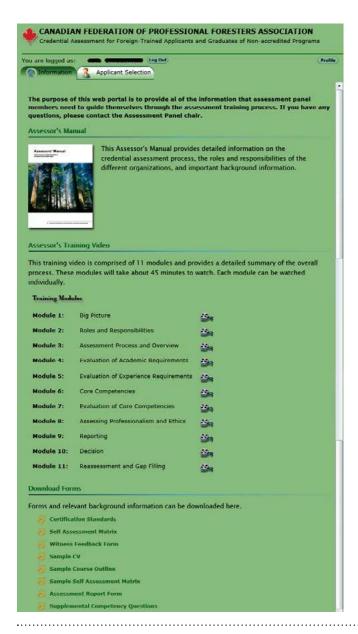
<sup>6</sup> From Jenkins A and D. Unwin. 2001. How to Write Learning Outcomes. http://www.ncgia.ucsb.edu/education/curricula/giscc/units/format/outcomes.html

# Appendix 7: Assessor's Database Users Guide



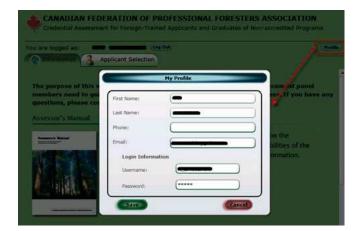
### 1. Login Screen

When Assessors are confirmed for a job, database access information will be provided. Enter this information on the login screen.



### 2. Main Page

The opening page contains the Assessors Manual, the Training Video and all related forms and background information. The Training Video can be viewed in single modules and takes approximately 45 minutes to watch in its entirety.



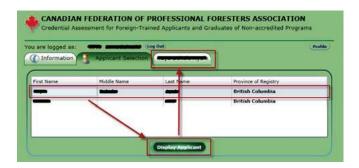
### 3. Profile Editing

Under the 'Profile' tab, Assessors can confirm their name and contact information, and customize their username and password. Hit 'Save' to upload this information to the database.



### 4. Applicant Selection

The 'Applicant Selection' tab allows Assessors to select individual candidates. Assessors will only have access to those candidates that have been assigned to them.



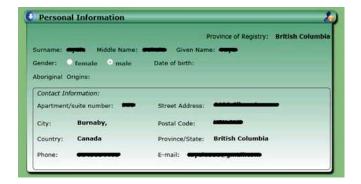
### 5. Applicant Selection Display Applicant

To review the detailed information for each applicant, click on the candidates tab, and hit 'Display Applicant'.



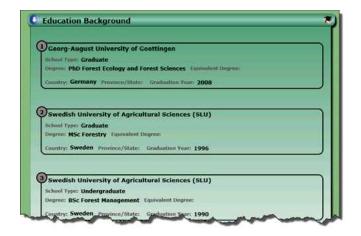
### 6. Displayed Applicant

For each candidate the following information is available: Personal Information', 'Eductaion', Digital Documents' and 'Assessment Process'.



### 7. Applicant Personal Information

The 'Personal Information' tab provides the candidate's name, contact information and related information.



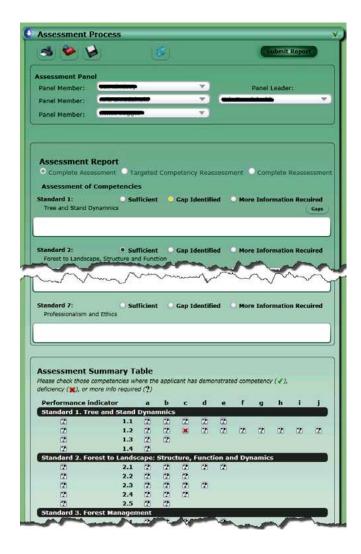
### 8. Applicant Education Background

The 'Education Background' tab provides the candidate's academic history including degree and institution. There is room here for information about more than one degree.



### 9. Applicant Digital Documents

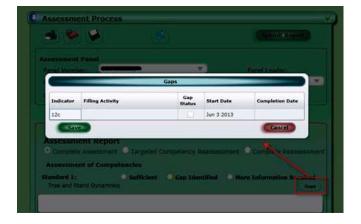
The 'Applicant Digital Document' tab provides the candidate's complete portfolio. These are the documents that support the candidates application and will be reviewed in detail during the evaluation process. Click on the document and hit 'Download Selection' to open each document.



### 10. Applicant Assessment Process

The 'Applicant Assessment Process' is used to record the results of the evaluation once the evaluation is complete and the Assessment Panel has agreed on the candidate's competencies. This includes filling in the Assessment Panel names including the Panel Leader. The 'Assessment Report' section allows for clicking 'Sufficient', 'Gap Identified' or 'More Information Required' for each Standard from 1 to 7. There is also room to provide additional comments for each competency as required. The 'Assessment Summary Table' provides for a detailed summary for each Performance Indicator.

- √ The green check mark means 'Sufficient'
- X Red X means 'Gap Identified'
- $\red{\red{\red{Section}}} \ The \ question \ mark \ means \ 'More \ Information \ Required'$



### 11. Applicant Assessment Process Gaps

If gaps are identified then click on the 'gaps' button, complete the fields with the appropriate information, and then hit 'Save'. This Assessor needs to identify the specific indicator where a competency gap has been identified, suggest a gap filling activity (such as additional supervised field experience of academic training). The Registrar will identify gap status (complete or outstanding) and the start and completion dates of the gap filling activity.