



RECOGNITION OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS TO WORK IN REGULATED PROFESSIONS IN CANADA

The following document contains guiding principles concerning the recognition of qualifications for people who wish to work in regulated professions in Canada.

CNNAR members acknowledge the importance of recognizing the credentials, competencies and experiences of people who wish to work in a regulated profession in Canada. Regulators are charged via the provincial and territorial governments with the statutory responsibility of regulating professions and occupations. This responsibility is mandated through the lens of public protection. Based on the collective experience of its members and with the objective of ensuring the safety of the public, CNNAR has identified six principles of credential review. The six principles are:

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| (1) public protection | (4) competencies and credentials |
| (2) consistency | (5) disclosure and, |
| (3) fairness and access | (6) multiple responsibilities and collaboration. |

Each of these principles is described in more detail below:

Principle #1 Public Protection: *The primary objective for recognition of qualifications of people who wish to work in a regulated profession in Canada should be to ensure that the needs of the Canadian public are met through a workforce that has the appropriate skills and knowledge while maintaining the protection of the public.*

To ensure that the needs of the Canadian public are met through a workforce that has the appropriate skills and knowledge, qualifications must be fairly reviewed to promote the entry of safe, ethical and competent workers.

Principle #2 - Consistency: *Recognition of qualifications of people who wish to work in a regulated profession in Canada should be consistent and/or substantially equivalent across Canada for each professional or occupational group of workers.*

The development of a consistent and/or substantially equivalent approach and standards is necessary to ensure the stability of the work force. This principle of consistency allows for consideration of world-wide endeavors, for example, seeking guidance and alignment with international standards and strategies.

Principle #3 - Fairness and Access: *The process of recognition of people who wish to work in a regulated profession in Canada should be fair, timely, predictable, and transparent. The processes must provide and must be seen to provide just treatment. People who wish to work in a regulated profession in Canada are entitled to information as to the status of their application and the basis for decisions related to their qualifications.*

An honest and open process requires that objective measurements are used and that people who wish to work in a regulated profession in Canada are treated fairly in a timely fashion. Methods of evaluation for eligibility for entry into a profession or occupation should be fair, transparent and accessible. There ought to be encouragement of communication and an opportunity to appeal decisions.

Principle #4 - Competencies and credentials: *Recognition of qualifications of people who wish to work in a regulated profession in Canada should include recognition of competencies and relevant experience as well as educational credentials.*

Assessment of educational training is one criterion to be used to determine entry into a regulated profession or occupation. There are other factors. One factor is the competencies of the applicant. Competencies reflect the knowledge, skills, judgment and personal attributes. Canadian regulatory agencies prescribe the competencies required to practice safely, ethically and competently in a designated role. The public must have confidence in the ability of each individual licensed to practice in Canada – whether they were educated in Canada or elsewhere – to perform work safely.

Principle #5 - Disclosure: *People who wish to seek work within a regulated profession in Canada are entitled to information on Canada's employment policies and practices, as well as on applicable regulatory requirements they need to meet. This information should be available to them prior to coming to Canada or when seeking to work in other provinces or territories.*

A few professions are regulated nationally, but the vast majority are regulated by the provincial or territorial governments, because the courts have interpreted the Constitution of Canada so as to put professions under provincial or territorial law-making power. These governments in turn have established regulatory bodies under statute to whom they have delegated their work. The immigrating individual must be first selected for immigration. Once selected as an immigrant and where the immigrant wants to practice in a regulated profession, the immigrant must meet professional regulatory requirements. Information on regulatory requirements should be made available prior to arrival so that immigrating individuals can make informed decisions.

Principle #6 - Multiple responsibilities and collaboration: *The successful integration of people wishing to work in a regulated profession in Canada requires collaboration amongst numerous parties – the individual seeking work in Canada (e.g.: immigrant), the federal/provincial/territorial governments, employers, educators, regulatory bodies and the public (including immigrant serving agencies).*

Regulators must have frameworks in place that maintain public protection. At the same time, people seeking to work in a regulated profession in Canada must be provided with the best opportunity to achieve their full potential in terms of practicing their chosen work in Canada. That is why it is essential that tools and resources be available to assist with the regulatory process and integration into the Canadian workforce, and that collaboration occurs to provide the infrastructure necessary to facilitate this process. We all need to make a sustained commitment to support those seeking recognition into the Canadian workforce.