



COMPETENCY-BASED ASSESSMENT

APEGNB GUIDELINES

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Guideline

This manual is intended to assist users of APEGNB's Competency-Based Assessment system, which evaluates engineering and geoscience work experience. It aims to assist Applicants for professional engineering (P. Eng.) and professional geoscience (P. Geo.) licenses in completing their Competency-Based Assessment application, as well as to guide Validators and Assessors in verifying and evaluating these applications.

The contents are intended to enhance the reader's understanding of engineering and geoscience competencies and how they should be met and presented in a Competency Self-Assessment. Only engineers and geoscientists licensed with APEGNB have a legal right to practice engineering or geoscience in New Brunswick. As such, the P. Eng. or P. Geo. designation can only be used by professional members licensed to practice engineering or geoscience in the province or territory where the license was granted. APEGNB's Competency-Based Assessment system is intended to ensure persons granted licensure by APEGNB have met the rigorous requirements necessary to preserve the valued reputation, responsibility, and professionalism of the P. Eng. and P. Geo. designations.

The Competency Framework comprises the required proficiencies for entry to the professions and provides clear guidance on the path to registration for Applicants, Validators, Assessors, and employers alike. Competency-Based Assessment is conducted in order to determine whether applicants have progressed to a professional level of competency in their field through their engineering or geoscience work experience.

To achieve registration as a Professional Engineer (P. Eng.) or Professional Geoscientist (P. Geo.), applicants must also meet a set of requirements including acceptable academic qualifications, English or French language proficiency, successful completion of the National Professional Practice Exam (NPPE), and demonstration of good character. The full list of requirements can be found on [APEGNB's website](#).

1.2 Definitions

Act *Engineers and Geoscience Professions Act of New Brunswick*

Applicant Person applying for registration as a professional engineer or geoscientist

Assessor Professional member (P.Eng. or P.Geo.) who reviews the Applicant's submission and Validators' feedback to make a recommendation on the Applicant's readiness for professional registration.

CEAB Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board

Competency is defined as the ability to perform the tasks and roles of an occupational category to standards expected and recognized by employers and the community at large. The Engineering Competency Framework consists of seven Competency Categories. The Geoscience Competency Framework consists of four Competency Categories.

Competency Rating Scale is the scale by which the quality of examples submitted for Key Competencies are evaluated.

CWEC Canadian Work-Environment Experience Competency

Discipline A specific field of practice within the professions governed by the Act (e.g., civil engineering, electrical engineering, geology, environmental geoscience, etc.).

Indicator An indicator is an example of activities, actions, skills or behaviours that would be appropriate to use as examples for Key Competencies.

Key Competency Key Competencies are areas in which applicants for Professional licensure should have an appropriate level of skills or knowledge.

Professional Member An engineer or geoscientist entitled to engage in the practice of engineering or geoscience under the Act.

Validator A professional engineer or geoscientist (or international equivalent) - typically the Applicant's direct supervisor - who confirms the work experience information of which they have personal knowledge.

1.3 Competency-Based Assessment System

APEGNB has adopted the Competency Based Assessment (CBA) model to evaluate the experience qualifications of those applying to become licensed. The CBA framework assesses if the applicant has achieved the necessary competencies for professional licensure while obtaining the required 48 months' experience. This includes a self-assessment by the applicant, followed by validator (supervisor) review and then evaluation by independent professional assessors.

The framework has been adopted by regulators across the country as a way to improve transparency and fairness for applicants, as well as ensuring protection of the public.

The Competency-Based Assessment System is an efficient, easy-to-use online system that enables APEGNB Members-in-Training and Applicants to save their work experience information, monitor their progress towards meeting the competency requirements, and submit this information for validation and assessment.

1.4 When to begin the CBA Process

Applicants can create an account for the Competency Assessment Reporting System and start using the system when their application is approved by APEGNB and are then invited to submit their work experience.

Access the system via www.CompetencyAssessment.ca/ and begin setting up an account it in one of the following circumstances:

- 1 You are approved as a Member-In-Training with APEGNB; or
- 2 You apply for a professional license (P.Eng. or P.Geo.).

Applicants will have a unique ID (MIT number, or Application in Process (AIP number) which **must be** used when establishing your account.

Once applicants have followed the instructions to set up an account, APEGNB Registration staff will be notified automatically to approve the account, and the applicant will be notified by e-mail when it is possible to start entering their information.

2.0 Competencies- Engineering

2.1 Competency-Based Overview - Engineering

The Competency Framework outlines the common competencies related to work experience that are essential for professional engineers in all disciplines to ensure effective practice and public safety.

Competency is a measure of ability, and thus examples drawn from actual work experience are required. When assessing the competency of an Applicant for professional engineering licensure, it must be clear that they have not only performed well in the circumstances they have encountered, but they also demonstrate the capacity to handle situations likely to be encountered in the future. Thus, a competency-based assessment system requires Applicants to demonstrate the ability to apply their engineering knowledge reliably and safely across different circumstances; to recognize their professional limitations; and to be prepared when necessary to either extend and develop their expertise or to call for assistance from other sources.

Providing detailed examples as part of a Competency Self-Assessment allows APEGNB's Assessors to have a clear picture of an Applicant's knowledge and experience in all areas essential to safe and effective engineering practice.

2.2. Engineering Competency Categories

The Engineering Competency Framework consists of seven Competency Categories, which are categorical groupings of competencies or skills:

1. Technical competence
2. Communication
3. Project and financial management
4. Team effectiveness
5. Professional accountability
6. Social, economic, environmental and sustainability
7. Personal continuing professional development (CPD)

The seven categories represent the essential areas in which professional engineers of all disciplines must demonstrate competence in order to verify they are qualified to practice independently. Each Competency Category contains a list of competencies required in that area. Applicants must meet the required average level of competence in each Competency Category in order to meet the overall competency requirements.

2.3 Competency Rating Scale - Engineering

The Competency Rating Scale is used to determine whether a candidate has achieved the required level of competence to gain registration as a professional engineer. A successful application for registration will require that a candidate attains the minimum defined average competence level of competence in all Competency Categories.

The Competency Rating Scale outlines six levels of competence, ranging from 0 to 6. For each Key Competency, the minimum score is 1. Also, each applicant must meet a minimum average score of 2 or 3 in each Competency Category, depending on the category. The CBA Rating Scale can be found [here](#) for engineering.

2.4 Canadian Environment Competencies- Engineering

The Canadian Environment Competencies are a subset of 8 competencies that have been identified to best demonstrate knowledge and experience of Canadian regulations, codes, standards, quality control, safety awareness, professional accountability and communication.

For the Canadian Environment Competencies- Engineering, there is a higher minimum rating required. See Table 1 for the Canadian Environment Competencies and their minimum ratings. If you have not worked in a Canadian environment, it is your responsibility to provide sufficient examples to establish equivalency. Using international experience does not guarantee the competencies will be met.

Competency	Minimum Rating
1.1 Regulations, Codes & Standards	3
1.9 Demonstrate Peer Review and Quality Control	3
2.1 Oral Communication (English/French)	3
2.2 Writing (English/French)	3
2.3 Reading and Comprehension	3
5.1 Code of Ethics	3
6.2 Engineering and the Public	2

TABLE 1

For more information, please refer to the [Guide to Canadian Environment Competencies](#).

If there is any conflict of ambiguity between this document and the Guide to Canadian Environment Competencies, this document shall govern.

Work experience obtained outside of Canada is accepted if an applicant demonstrates a good understanding of local Canadian engineering laws, practices, standards, codes, conditions or climates. “Equivalent” experience is determined through a detailed review and is accepted at the discretion of the regulatory bodies/committees.

If the applicant does not satisfy the Canadian environment competency requirement or the overall competency requirement, assessors may assign units of the [Working in Canada Seminar](#) and/or additional experience.

2.5 Indicators- Engineering

Indicators are examples of activities, actions, skills or behaviours that would be appropriate to use as examples for Key Competencies. The CBA Indicators Report can be viewed [here](#) for engineering.

3.0 Competencies- Geoscience

3.1 Competency-Based Overview- Geoscience

Competency can be defined as the ability to perform the tasks and roles of an occupational category to standards expected and recognized by employers and the community at large. The Competency Framework outlines the common competencies related to work experience that are essential for professional geoscientists in all disciplines to ensure effective practice and public safety.

Competency is a measure of ability, and thus examples drawn from actual work experience are required. When assessing the competency of an Applicant for professional geoscience licensure, it needs to be clear that they have not only performed well in the circumstances they have encountered, but they also demonstrate the capacity to handle situations likely to be encountered in the future. Thus, a competency-based assessment system requires Applicants to demonstrate the ability to apply their geoscience knowledge reliably and safely across different circumstances; to recognize their professional limitations; and to be prepared when necessary to either extend and develop their expertise or to call for assistance from other sources.

Providing detailed examples as part of a Competency Self-Assessment allows APEGNB's Assessors to have a clear picture of an Applicant's knowledge and experience in all areas essential to safe and effective geoscience practice.

3.2 Geoscience Competency Categories - Geoscience

The Geoscience Competency Framework consists of four Competency Categories, which are categorical groupings of competencies or skills:

1. Professionalism
2. Scientific method
3. Area of geoscience practice
4. Complementary

The four categories represent the essential areas in which professional geoscientists of all disciplines must demonstrate competence in order to verify they are qualified to practice independently. Each Competency Category contains a list of the competencies required in that area. Applicants must meet the required average level of competence in each Competency Category in order to meet the overall competency requirements.

Work experience obtained outside of Canada is accepted if an applicant demonstrates a good understanding of local Canadian engineering laws, practices, standards, codes, conditions or climates.

“Equivalent” experience is determined through detailed review and is accepted at the discretion of the regulatory bodies/committees.

If an applicant does not satisfy the Canadian environment competency requirement or the overall competency requirement, assessors may assign units of the [Working in Canada Seminar](#) and/or additional experience.

3.3 Competency Rating Scale - Geoscience

Achievement of each category is measured through a Competency Rating Scale that outlines six different levels of competence (0-5). Each category has a required overall level of competence of three (3), and the average of an Applicant’s scores within each category must meet or exceed the required minimum level. The CBA rating scale for geoscience can be found [here](#).

3.4 Canadian Environment Competencies - Geoscience

All geoscience Applicants must demonstrate Canadian environment competencies under the direct supervision of a Canadian professional geoscientist (or equivalent). The Canadian Work-Environment Experience Competencies (CWECs) are a subset of 7 of the existing 29 competencies that best demonstrate knowledge and experience of Canadian regulations, codes, standards, quality control, business culture and practices, safety awareness, professional accountability, and communication.

The seven Canadian Work-Environment Experience Competencies are:

1. Professional Competencies

- 1.1 Comply with relevant legislation, regulations, and statutory reporting requirements
- 1.4 Maintain constructive working relationships
- 1.5 Apply ethical principles for Applicants, Validators and Assessors
- 1.6 Respond to obligations and responsibilities to the public, to the natural environment, to clients and to employers
- 1.7 Contribute to health and safety in the workplace

4. Complementary Competencies

- 4.1 Deliver and comprehend oral communication
- 4.2 Deliver and comprehend written communication

In addition to achieving the required average level of each competency category, each of the Canadian environment competencies must be achieved at a minimum category level in order to satisfy the Canadian Work-Environment Experience Competency (CWEC) requirement.

Additional guidance for Applicants who may not have experience in Canada but wish to use their experience from international environments to partially, or fully, satisfy the CWECs. This guidance provides suggestions on how Applicants can provide the necessary information and detail to assist Assessors in determining whether the example could be deemed equivalent. For more information, please refer to the [Guide to Canadian Environment Competencies](#).

If there is any conflict of ambiguity between this document and the Guide to Canadian Environment Competencies, this document shall govern.

3.5 Indicators – Geoscience

Indicators are examples of activities, actions, skills or behaviours that would be appropriate to use as examples for Key Competencies. While indicators do not provide examples of every acceptable example for a Key Competency, they do provide a basis by which applicants can judge the quality of their example.

[The CBA Indicators Report can be viewed here for geoscience.](#)

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Overview

The following is an overview of the roles and responsibilities of each participant in the Competency-Based Assessment system.

APPLICANT	VALIDATORS <i>(Supervisor/Employer/Colleague/Client who is registered as a P. Eng./ P.Geo. or international equivalent)¹</i>	ASSESSORS <i>(Qualified APEGNB professional volunteers, ideally in the Applicant's area of practice)</i>
Provides work experience details through the Competency Assessment System, including work experience chronology and specific examples to address each competency	Confirms the work experience information of which they have personal knowledge	Reviews Applicant's submission as well as Validators' feedback
Provides a self-assessed rating for each competency according to the Competency Rating Scale	Provides ratings for competencies to which they are assigned by Applicants (if applicable)	Provides scores for each competency
Provides contact information for a minimum of four (4) individuals to act as Validators to verify and provide feedback on their competency self-assessment	Provides overall feedback on the Applicant's readiness for registration.	Makes a recommendation on Applicant's readiness for registration.
Provides further information as requested.		

TABLE 2

4.2 Choosing Validators

An applicant is required to name at least 4 validators. For competency examples in a Canadian context, it is expected that validators are a Professional Engineer (P.Eng.), a Professional Geoscientist (P.Geo.) or limited licence holder who was registered with a Canadian engineering or geoscience regulator during the work period they are validating.

It is preferred that any validator who is not a P.Eng. /P.Geo. and is validating international experience, be a senior engineering practitioner and licensed as an engineer/geoscientist in their jurisdiction. Any validator who is not a P.Eng. or P.Geo., must explain how they are a practitioner in their field. This information will

¹ Ideally, all validators will be professional engineers/geoscientists or international equivalent who have direct knowledge of your work. If you are unable to find professional registrants to validate each of your competencies, please consult with your regulator. One validator **must be** your supervisor and share the same or related discipline of practice that you are applying for.

be requested from the validator by APEGNB during processing and may include proof of academic and engineering / geoscience credentials.

Acceptability of the validator is at the discretion of APEGNB. Family members and relatives **are not acceptable** as validators.

More information on for Validators and Assessors [can be found here](#).

4.3 Validator information

It is expected that applicants will provide a valid business email address for all validators. In situations where it is not possible to provide a business email address for a validator, the applicant must provide justification. APEGNB staff and/or assessors may request additional information in such cases, including but not limited to a video call with the validator.

A professional engineer can validate geoscience experience and a professional geoscientist can validate engineering experience if the experience falls within the field of practice of the professional. For example, geological engineers may validate geoscientists since there is overlap in the profession.

4.4 Validation Process

The online validation process proceeds as follows:

1. Validators identified by the Applicant receive a link by email with login information to complete their validation through the online system. This email will only be sent when an Applicant submits an example through a completed Competency Self-Assessment. It is recommended that the Applicant contact the Validator(s) before or immediately after releasing the completed submission for validation to confirm they received their link. *Note: If the Validation email was not received, check the spam filter. The domain name of the email is competencyassessment.ca*
2. Following the link, the Validator will enter the Competency-Based Assessment System.
3. The Validator will first view the Applicant's education and employment history. No input is required from the Validator in these sections, but they provide the Validator with the opportunity to review chronological summaries of the Applicant's education and experience.
4. Validators then have an opportunity to decline to complete the process if they are not willing or able to verify the Applicant's experience. A reason must be provided if the validation is declined, and a comment box is provided. The reason, along with all Validator feedback, is confidential and is not visible to the Applicant.
5. The Validator is asked to review the Applicant's Competency Self-Assessment and provide feedback on any examples that the Applicant has assigned to them. Applicants select the appropriate Validator for each example they provide. The selected Validator provides a rating on the Competency Rating Scale and is given the option to provide a comment. Validator comments on the examples are encouraged and help to provide feedback and information to Assessors.
6. Validators will be asked to provide overall feedback on the Applicant's readiness for licensure. If a Validator is not assigned to a specific competency example, they are asked to complete the overall feedback section only.

4.5 Assessors

Assessors rate each example in an Applicant's Self-Assessment for each competency according to the Competency Rating Scale. An Assessor's role is to examine the examples provided for each competency and determine the Competence Level that has been demonstrated. Applicants must meet the required average Competence Level for each category to be recommended for licensure.

Based on the evidence provided in the examples, the Assessor will assign a score on the Competency Rating Scale for each Competency in the category – in this case, the ten key competencies under Technical Competence (Engineering) or the seven competencies under Professional Competencies (Geoscience).

Assessors consider the following criteria when reviewing submissions:

- Examples must be related to unique problems without obvious pre-determined solutions.
- The candidate must have had full or partial responsibility for delivering the outcome.
- Examples must be clear and specific examples that demonstrate the candidate's competence in a particular area. Assessors cannot rely on implied evidence.

It is recommended that applicants use the first-person ("I" voice) when writing their examples.

4.6 Assessment Process

Each competency submission is reviewed by two Assessors, ideally in the Applicant's field of practice.

The online assessment process proceeds as follows:

1. Assessors are assigned by APEGNB staff and are notified by email once the submission is ready for review. This happens once the Applicant has completed all APEGNB data entry and all Validators have completed their reviews. Assessors will log in to the Competency-Based Assessment system and perform their reviews independently.
2. The Assessor will examine the Applicant's education and employment history. No input is required from the Assessor in these sections, but they provide the Assessor with the opportunity to review chronological summaries of the Applicant's education and experience. The employment history section also provides Assessors with an opportunity to identify a progression of responsibility in the Applicant's experience.
3. The Assessor will then review the Applicant's Competency Self-Assessment and determine for each Competency whether the example(s) provided represent sufficient evidence that it has been met. While reviewing each example, Assessors will note the competence level claimed by the Applicant and validated by the Validator for each competency. Based on the breadth, depth and quality of the example provided, the Assessor will determine the competence level demonstrated. Assessors also have the option of providing a comment for each Competency for review by the Internship Committee; these comments are confidential to the assessment process and cannot be viewed by the Applicant or Validators.
4. The system calculates the average Competence Level achieved for each category according to each Assessor.

5. In the “Supporting Documents” section, Assessors may review any supporting documents uploaded by the Applicant. Supporting documents are optional, except for the CVs of any Validators who are not professional engineers or geoscientists.
6. In the “Validator Overall Feedback” section, Assessors will review the feedback of the Applicant’s Validators.
7. The Assessor will then confirm their final recommendation on whether the Applicant has met the competencies at the required level for registration.

4.7 Finishing the Assessment

When a file has been approved by two assessors, the individual will be notified by APEGNB staff via email. It is the applicant’s responsibility to proceed with the remaining steps in the licensure application process.

Note that the regulator may perform an audit by contacting the validators and that any suspicious activity, such as the misrepresentation of information or the impersonation of a validator, may result in an investigation that could impact the application for registration.

If the applicant has not met the CBA minimum ratings or if the assessor does not feel the applicant is ready for licensure, the assessor may choose to either request more information or to decline the application. Additional information will be provided to the applicant in these situations.

5.0 Documentation and Instructions

5.1 How to complete the Competency-Based Assessment

All applicants must first complete the Employment History section. This section is meant to act as a high-level overview of the applicant's work experience, including brief descriptions of the responsibilities of each position. The Employment History should show career progression over time. Applicants are also expected to explain any gaps or overlaps in their Employment History.

Applicants must then complete the Competency Self-Assessment. To complete the Competency Self-Assessment, applicants must submit one example that demonstrates each Key Competency and rate themselves using the Competency Rating Scale.

Finally, applicants must submit their file for validation by their validators and assessment by two APEGNB appointed assessors.

A successful submission requires that an applicant attains, at a minimum, the required average level of competence in all competency categories, with no rating lower than level one for any competency.

5.2 Employment History

All applicants must complete an employment history summary through the Competency Assessment Reporting System. The employment history section creates a chronological, short form overview of the experience, including brief additional detail regarding responsibilities in each position. The summary can be edited at any time before an applicant submits their final competency self-assessment.

This section is meant to act as a high-level overview of the applicant's work experience, including brief descriptions of the responsibilities of each position. The Employment History should show career progression over time. Applicants are also expected to explain any gaps or overlaps in their Employment History.

5.3 Competency Self-assessment

Competency self-assessments allow individuals to reflect on how their competencies (knowledge, skills and abilities) align with the requirements.

The Competency Self-Assessment section is divided into either engineering or geoscience categories. Under each category heading – such as Technical Competence – the required competencies are listed. One example must be provided for each competency prior to final submission. Each competency must be achieved at a minimum level of one on the competency rating scale, while achieving the required average level for each category.

For each example, identify a self-assessed competence level demonstrated.

Competencies are demonstrated following the outline below:

1. **Situation:** Describe the situation that was presented before any action took place.

2. **Action:** Describe the actions taken and judgements made.
3. **Outcome:** Describe the outcomes of the actions taken and judgements made.

The examples selected should reflect activities or projects the applicant had responsibility for. Detail is encouraged; applicants need to be specific in describing how they have met the competency. The indicators/workplace examples are useful to help in identifying typical evidence for submission.

As applicants complete the Competency Self-Assessment, each example will be assigned to a Validator having first-hand knowledge of the work described. This Validator will be asked to provide a competence level score for the example and will have the option of providing a comment. All Validators are also asked to provide overall feedback on your experience and readiness for registration.

5.4 Confidential Information

If applicants provide project details that must be kept confidential, this must be indicated with a statement to that effect in the appropriate box within the reporting system where the information is being provided. Applicants are urged to provide as much detail as they are permitted, with the goal to provide sufficient evidence that they can practice competently as a professional engineer or professional geoscientist. This could be demonstrated by documentation that describes the nature of your work and its complexities without disclosing confidential details about solutions, business processes, client names, or locations. Note that although all APEGNB assessors are bound by confidentiality, it is wise not to disclose proprietary or confidential information because assessors may work in the same industry or sector.

5.5 Re-Submission of Insufficient Competencies

In cases where one or more competencies are assessed as insufficient, the applicant is informed with specific comments and is given an opportunity to re-submit. The specific competencies are made available in the competency assessment reporting system for the applicant to re-enter information. Once completed, those competencies are released for the validator(s) and assessors to review again using the same process as before.

5.6 Types of Eligible Experience

Under the APEGNB by-laws, there is a requirement that an applicant must obtain at least four years of acceptable work experience prior to becoming registered as a professional member. The Competency-Based Assessment does NOT replace the need for this requirement.

It is the responsibility of the Applicant to apply for professional licensure when they feel that the work experience requirement has been met. A candidate's Competency Self-Assessment will not be accepted for assessment until a minimum of 45 months of the 48 month (4 - year) required work experience has been obtained.

5.6.1 Pre-Grad or Co-op Experience

Up to a maximum of 1 year of pre-graduation or co-op experience may be accepted if it:

- a) was gained after completing at least half of your engineering or geoscience degree but before graduation;
- b) was supervised by the appropriate professional; and if it otherwise satisfies all experience criteria detailed by APEGNB.

5.6.2 Postgraduate experience

Applicants with postgraduate degrees may receive credit for engineering or geoscience experience gained as part of their postgraduate studies. Up to a maximum of 1 year of credit will be granted for a Master's degree with a thesis component, and up to 2 years of credit will be granted for a PhD. A maximum of 2 years credit will be given for a combination of a Master's and PhD.

You should submit a copy of your thesis abstract(s) with your application.

5.7 What to do if you do not have a professional to validate your competencies?

APEGNB recognizes that the availability of professional supervisors is industry, project, and company-dependent, and understands that sometimes applicants have difficulty finding appropriate professional supervisors for their engineering or geoscience work. To comply with the *Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act* and to obtain acceptable experience for registration, we offer recommendations such as:

- Ask your employer to engage the services of a New Brunswick registered professional engineer or professional geoscientist in your discipline to provide regular oversight and to take professional responsibility for your work. This will be a definite asset when counting your experience towards registration. It also allows your employer to comply with the *Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act*.
- Consider asking for supervision from New Brunswick registered professional engineers or professional geoscientists who are affiliated with your employer and who have detailed knowledge of your work or can review your work on a regular basis. This can include branches of your company in other provinces, research associates in academia, subsidiaries, etc.
- Seek out the support of professional engineer or professional geoscientist clients or colleagues who have a detailed knowledge of your work and ask them to act as references.