

THE ENGINEERING PROFESSION'S POSITION

- Engineers Canada supports international mobility for qualified engineers and a transparent and open process for admission into the engineering profession in Canada.
- All practising engineers, whether educated in Canada or abroad, must meet the requirements for licensure by one of the 12 provincial and territorial engineering regulators.
- Governments must consider the impact of immigration-related legislation, policies, and programs on the regulators' responsibility to protect the public.

The issue:

Approximately half of new applicants to Canadian engineering regulators have studied or have gained work experience outside of Canada. The Canadian public expects all engineers to meet the high standards for licensure in Canada, whether they were trained in Canada or abroad. The role of Engineers Canada is to facilitate dialogue towards consistency among the provincial and territorial engineering regulators in areas such as admissions practices.

How Engineers Canada has contributed

The engineering profession supports the federal government's vision that immigration is a key component of Canada's economic sustainability and innovative capacity. The engineering profession has been a leader in facilitating immigration of skilled professionals in the past eighteen years. Along with its member regulators, Engineers Canada works closely with federal departments to provide unbiased advice on how to integrate international engineering graduates into the Canadian engineering profession.

Engineers Canada also seeks to ensure that federal government requirements do not duplicate licensing processes that must be performed under the legislative authority of the provincial and territorial regulators.

For nearly two decades, Engineers Canada has implemented the recommendations developed through the project From Consideration to Integration (FC2I). The procedure developed therein ensures timely licensure for international engineering graduates from their first consideration of coming to Canada, until they are integrated into both the profession and the workforce in Canada. Many of our current initiatives were started as part of the FC2I project.

Competency-based assessment of engineering work experience

The Competency-Based Assessment Project developed a competency-based assessment system for the evaluation of an individual's engineering work experience. The assessment helps to simplify the licensure process by creating a nationally accepted core set of competencies for use by Canadian regulators.

Competencies are observable and are often viewed as a measurable set of skills, knowledge, abilities, motivations, or traits that are demonstrated by an individual's actions or behaviours to justify licensure. Several provincial and territorial engineering regulators across Canada have either already implemented or are actively moving towards a competency-based assessment (CBA) of an individual's engineering experience. To this end, Engineers Canada is funding the adaptation of a fully operational CBA system, developed by Engineers and Geoscientists BC (in place since 2012), such that it is available for use by all of Canada's engineering regulators. It is expected that transitioning to CBA will make the assessment process more objective, transparent, and consistent for individuals. It will increase the confidence of assessors and employers and will allow applicants to start the assessment process from anywhere in the international community.

The Canadian environment experience requirement

Fulfilling the current one-year Canadian experience requirement is sometimes seen as a barrier to integration into the Canadian workforce and engineering profession for immigrants. However, Canadian work experience is considered by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to be a key factor in successful integration. The national Canadian Environment Experience Requirement Project, led by Engineers & Geoscientists British Columbia, is working on potential alternatives for fulfilling the current time-based requirement.

Roadmap to engineering in Canada

Research by Engineers Canada has shown that international engineering graduates are dealing with multiple sources of information from which they may receive conflicting or inaccurate information. The Roadmap to Engineering in Canada is a one-stop online resource centre to help international engineering graduates navigate the process of becoming licensed in Canada. The portal offers an academic information tool that provides a comparison of an individual's undergraduate engineering education to Canadian undergraduate engineering education. The sole purpose of that tool is to provide newcomers with information about their undergraduate engineering

education to assist them in making a decision about immigrating to Canada. Engineers Canada is continuously working to enrich the information available in this online portal.

EngScape

Engineers Canada has developed EngScape, an online portal providing information about the engineering labour market across Canada. From employment rates and salary, to post-secondary enrolment and newcomer employment, this information is available by province and engineering discipline. Newcomers to Canada can browse the portal to determine where in the country their skills might be most needed, and they can use the site's job search tool to view hundreds of engineering job postings from across the country.

Engineers Canada Mobility Register

The Engineers Canada Mobility Register facilitates registration on the International Professional Engineers Agreement (IPEA) register and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Engineers Agreement (APEC EA) register.

By joining the Engineers Canada Mobility Register, Canadian engineers may use the APEC or IntPE designations to signify that they have met the standard of registration and are prepared to conduct engineering practices internationally.

Engineers Canada is also a signatory to two multi-national agreements that recognize "substantial equivalence" of professional competence in engineering. Engineers listed on the representative registers may experience more expeditious mobility between the participating countries. They are:

- The International Professional Engineers Agreement (IPEA): This 2013 agreement revised the 1997 Engineers Mobility Forum. It established the international standard of competence for professional engineering.
- The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Engineers Agreement (APEC EA): This agreement, specific to the member economies of APEC, was put in place in 2000. It shares the same purpose and standard of competence as the IPEA.

These agreements were ratified among countries looking to establish an international standard of competence for professional engineering. The standard is envisioned to enhance or streamline the review of professional credentials for engineers wishing to practise in another member country. Likewise, the agreements are intended to streamline the review for foreign engineers that meet the standard who wish to practise in Canada.

Recommendations to the federal government

The federal government must continue to work towards modernizing their immigration policy by introducing changes to the Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP) selection process to ensure applicants receive an open and comprehensive assessment of their experience and professional education credentials. A standard and reasonable time frame should be set for processing applicants without lowering national standards, and a level of efficiency should be in place to withstand fluctuations in volume. It is important to ensure that there is an adequate number of personnel available to file, review, and process applications to reduce waiting times and backlogs for applicant processing and to maintain efficiency.

The FSWP system should also facilitate and support the express entry of skilled and experienced immigrants to support industries and professions that are facing skills gaps. This will promote economic prosperity for domestic industries and support Canada's overall economy. Federal government policies, such as the Express Entry program, will most likely streamline the international migration of engineers to meet future workforce requirements.

The federal government must continue to engage with regulated professions, such as engineering, as they consider options and implement policies that could affect the ability of provincial and territorial regulators to protect the public and to integrate qualified internationally trained engineers into the Canadian profession.

How Engineers Canada will contribute

Engineers Canada will continue to work with the federal government to ensure that Canada's immigration system is rigorous, fair, and responsive to the economic needs of communities across the country.

Engineers Canada will continue to work with the engineering regulators to ensure that the licensing process is accessible, timely, monitored, transparent, objective, and impartial, while making sure that all applicants meet the high standards required to protect the public interest and to practise engineering in Canada.