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## The IEG — Pre-immigration

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It is assumed that IEGs considering immigration conduct research to see if their credentials might qualify them to practice engineering in Canada — at the same time as they are investigating Canadian culture, the labour market and language requirements. As immigrant support agencies confirm, immigrants' research directly affects their experience once they arrive.

Some IEGs may wish to begin the engineering licensing process before they immigrate. Certain jurisdictions permit this and additional information is provided in Section 7 of this report.

Information about Canada is available to prospective immigrants in a number of forms — in print, over the phone, via the web or from Canadian embassies, consulates and missions. Based on consultations with immigrant support personnel who indicate that highly skilled immigrants such as IEGs use the web significantly and have access in their home countries,<sup>21</sup> it is assumed that most IEGs obtain their information about Canada online. For those IEGs who do use the web as their main source of information, data sources are diverse, inconsistent and, in many cases, inaccurate.

A prospective immigrant researching Canada on the web may access any of hundreds of thousands of websites detailing the immigration process, the credential assessment process (for immigration), language training opportunities, and job market information. Many of these sites are out-of-date, and none of them details the whole immigration-to-employment process from start to finish. The potential for confusion is great.

IEGs may have an incomplete or confused understanding of the expectations of the job market and the engineering licensing process. For example, the CCPE provides credential

21 D. Wolfe from discussions with Maytree Foundation and CIC mid-2002.

assessments relating to immigration requirements but is not a licensing body; or the fact that while employers are unlikely to “take a chance” on an IEG without a P.Eng., an engineering graduate can in fact work in an engineering environment without one, or that a full year of Canadian experience is required to earn a P.Eng., or that only credential assessments done by the engineering regulatory bodies contribute toward licensing.

## **THE CCPE WEBSITE**

IEGs who are able to access the CCPE website will find considerable information about the engineering profession in Canada, foreign credential assessment and licensure. A detailed overview of the information presented on the site is provided in Appendix A.

## **REGULATORY BODY WEBSITES**

Many of the regulatory bodies have detailed websites outlining what an IEG must do to become licensed in Canada. More information about these sites — and their addresses — is provided in Section 7 of this document.

## **EQUIVALENCY ASSESSMENT**

Several educational assessments exist that prospective immigrants may consult to assess how the education they’ve received in their home country aligns with the education of Canadians in the same profession. This assists with their employment search but does not apply to their ability to become licensed. Appendix A offers a listing of assessment websites IEGs may come across when conducting a web search. It should be noted that this is a partial list only; it contains government sites only and none of the many private sites that exist.

Beyond these web sources, IEGs may also gather skill requirement information by examining the curricula and academic requirements from Canadian training institutions; for example, from university websites.

What may be unclear to IEGs, however, is that only certain assessments — those conducted by the provincial and territorial engineering regulatory bodies — are valid for engineering licensure. Other services assist with the immigration process and employment.

## **JOB MARKET DATA**

A clear sense of job prospects is critical for anyone considering immigration to Canada. Yet gaining a thorough understanding of the labour market is not straightforward. Vast amounts of information on the Canadian job market exist on the web. For this reason, an IEG’s web search for labour information would yield an unwieldy listing of information sources. More information on the general labour market situation in Canada facing IEGs is detailed in Section 10 of this report.

## **LANGUAGE TRAINING**

In investigating Canada before immigrating, IEGs may find it difficult to identify language training programs. The appropriate websites may not appear within their first ten results when they conduct a web search. A more intensive search may be necessary as may some prior knowledge about Canada’s policy on language training support for newcomers.

Language training is widely available to newcomers, however, through several outlets.

Newcomers to Canada can access language training through a federally funded program called *Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada* (LINC). *Cours de langue pour les immigrants au Canada* (CLIC) is the French equivalent. LINC and CLIC are free with eligibility to permanent residents and those to whom Canada intends to grant permanent residence, on a part-time or full-time basis. The programs are offered through colleges, school boards and private organizations in most urban centres. In smaller centres, many private companies, public school boards and community colleges offer language training but these programs are not subsidized.

LINC does not bring newcomers' language skills up to the levels required in the complex knowledge-based work environment, but provides the linguistic foundation upon which more advanced language skills may be built.

Information about LINC is available on the CIC website ([www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomer/welcome](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomer/welcome).) IEGs may also find the information on provincial government websites such as [www.settlement.org](http://www.settlement.org) for Ontario or [www.gov.mb.ca/labour/migrate/english/learning\\_english/](http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/migrate/english/learning_english/) for Manitoba.

English language training is available through several other schools and programs across Canada. Short-term study programs for temporary residents also exist, as do English as a Second Language (ESL) programs ([www.eslincanada.com](http://www.eslincanada.com)).

Language proficiency requirements and assessment tools are available from the CIC website ([www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomer/esl-e.html](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomer/esl-e.html)).

## **AREAS OF DISCUSSION FOR PHASE II**

- Information on the Canadian licensing system and on the job market for engineers is not widely available and even IEGs who access the CCPE's or its members' websites prior to immigrating may not fully appreciate the licensing system since few countries share Canada's approach. A discussion of how to make this information more widely available and easier to understand, would be valuable. An examination of the practices of provincial jurisdictions currently working through these issues would contribute to this discussion.
- Foreign credentials may be assessed differently by different groups and for different reasons. A discussion around how best to clarify which assessments are for licensing purposes and which are for immigration purposes would be valuable.
- It would be worthwhile to discuss what can be communicated to an IEG about licensure steps that can be taken before they leave their home countries. (Following the lead of some provincial jurisdictions.)
- The project team should investigate the possibility of linking CCPE's EIEAP website with the licensing process in each jurisdiction as well as to job information.
- Assess how frequently IEGs conduct research prior to coming to Canada and if that research assists them in settling in Canada and obtaining meaningful engineering employment.

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# APPENDIX A

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## Foreign Credential Assessment for Employment

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These credential assessment services are **not** linked to obtaining an engineering license.

### NATIONAL

#### Canadian Council of Professional Engineers

##### Ottawa, Ontario

[www.ccpe.ca](http://www.ccpe.ca)

CCPE offers the *Engineering International Education Assessment Program* (EIEAP) which assesses the educational qualifications of individuals who were educated and trained outside of Canada, by comparing their education to Canadian engineering education. If an IEG were to access CCPE's website, one of the choices available is a link to the *Engineering International Education Assessment Program*. By accessing this link, IEGs can obtain a full explanation of the process involved to have their educational credentials assessed prior to immigrating to Canada.

The EIEAP assessment provides applicants with information about how their education compares to a Canadian engineering education. This is important, as the definition of engineering varies from one country to the next. Work and training that is called Engineering with the job title Engineer in some countries may fall into a different job category in Canada. The EIEAP assessment allows people to make an *informed choice* about immigrating to Canada as *skilled workers* or in the *family class*.

The EIEAP provides:

- An assessment of the engineering education credentials of people trained outside of Canada,

- Verification of educational documents,
- A statement comparing the applicant's education to a Canadian engineering education,
- Information about the engineering profession in Canada, how to get an engineering licence, and tips on getting work in Canada, and
- Toll free access to the EIEAP "Help Desk," where applicants can request more information and referrals after their arrival in Canada.

The assessment is easy to understand and provides useful information for employers, universities and other officials. Applicants also receive practical information about working as an engineer in Canada.

The Engineering International Education Assessment Program is not part of the registration process to become a licensed professional engineer in Canada. That process usually begins after immigrants have arrived in Canada, and applied for registration and licensure to the engineering licensing body in the province or territory where they wish to work. The licensing body evaluates the academic and professional qualifications of licensure applicants to determine whether they are qualified to be licensed professional engineers in Canada, and whether examinations will be required. Information on the steps individuals must take to register with an engineering licensing body and obtain an engineering license are available on this site in Adobe Acrobat™ PDF format. Information on these areas is available in Arabic, Classical Chinese, Simplified Chinese, English, Farsi, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Russian and Ukrainian.

DETAILS ABOUT OTHER INFORMATION ON THE CCPE WEBSITE ARE  
AT THE END OF THIS APPENDIX.

### **Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials**

[www.cicic.ca](http://www.cicic.ca)

The CICIC collects, organizes, distributes information, and acts as a national clearing house and referral service to support the recognition and portability of Canadian and international educational and occupational qualifications. It was established in 1990 after Canada ratified the *UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees concerning Higher Education in the States belonging to the Europe Region* to assist in carrying out this country's obligations under the terms of the convention. The convention promotes international mobility by advocating wider recognition of higher education and professional qualifications.

CICIC provides advice to individuals on what they need to do to have their academic or professional credentials assessed in Canada. CICIC refers individuals to the appropriate institutions and organizations for specific assistance but does not grant equivalencies or assess credentials. The CICIC also acts as the Secretariat to the Alliance, which is outlined below.

### **Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services in Canada**

[www.canalliance.org](http://www.canalliance.org)

The Alliance ensures that individuals have access to fair and credible credential assessment services. Members of the Alliance follow the *Principles for Good Practice in the Assessment of Credentials* that are consistent with international standards. The overarching principles are that: assessments should be performed without any form of racial, religious, political, or

sexual discrimination; holders of foreign qualifications should have adequate access, upon request, to an assessment of their foreign qualifications; the procedures and criteria used in the assessment of foreign credentials should be clear, rational, and reliable; procedures for the evaluation of foreign credentials should be periodically reviewed with a view to increasing clarity and eliminating, when possible, requirements leading to undue complications in the procedure; the general approach to foreign credentials and how they are compared to a particular system should take into account the diversity of educational traditions in the world; and the same basic methodology should apply whether the statement is for general employment purposes, entry into secondary and postsecondary institutions, and entry into a regulated occupation.

The following organizations belong to the Alliance:

- International Credential Evaluation Service (ICES)
- International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS)
- Service des équivalences (SDE), Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'Immigration du Québec
- World Education Services (WES)
- Academic Credentials Assessment Service (ACAS) Manitoba

Members of the Alliance undergo a rigorous self-evaluation process including a review of assessment procedures, experience, file management, personnel qualifications, documentation methods and reference material base. To qualify for Alliance membership, an assessment service must demonstrate that it complies with established quality standards and must agree to maintain those standards.

## **PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL**

### **International Credential Evaluation Service (ICES)**

#### **British Columbia**

[www.ola.bc.ca/ices](http://www.ola.bc.ca/ices)

The International Credential Evaluation Service (ICES) was established in 1995 with start-up funding from the provincial government of British Columbia, to help people gain the recognition they need to pursue their career and educational goals in Canada.

According to the ICES website, they evaluate the credentials of people who have studied in other provinces or countries, and determine comparable levels in British Columbia and Canadian terms. They describe their evaluation reports as objective, consistent, and reliable.

Licensing bodies, educational institutions, employers, government services immigration organizations and individuals who have completed their education outside of B.C. and/or Canada all benefit from ICES evaluation reports. They save organizations time and money by eliminating the need for extensive resources and research time to complete their own evaluations.

## **International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS)**

### **Alberta and Saskatchewan**

[www.aecd.gov.ab.ca/iqas/](http://www.aecd.gov.ab.ca/iqas/)

The International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS) was established by the Alberta government to help individuals educated outside of Canada. IQAS provides an advisory service that assesses and compares educational qualifications from other countries to the provincial educational standards of Alberta and Saskatchewan. IQAS issues certificates which indicate how an educational credential received in another country compares to an educational program in Alberta or Saskatchewan. IQAS certificates may help immigrants enter the labour market, gain membership to professional licensing bodies and admission into post-secondary institutions since they are recognized by employers, professional licensing associations and educational institutions to understand foreign educational programs. The site provides a list of more than thirty national and provincial professional bodies that use the assessments prepared by IQAS.

The site points out that many professional associations and post-secondary institutions conduct their own educational assessments and because of this, IQAS emphasizes that it is an immigrant's responsibility to ensure that the post-secondary institution or professional association they wish to enter will accept the IQAS assessment certificate. Questions concerning the specific requirements or procedures for registration or licensure, employment or admissions should be directed to the appropriate professional association/licensing board, employer or post-secondary institution.

## **The Manitoba Academic Credentials Assessment Service**

### **Culture, Heritage and Citizenship**

#### **Immigration Credentials**

Winnipeg, Manitoba

[www.gov.mb.ca/labour/immigrate/newcomerservices/7a.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/immigrate/newcomerservices/7a.html)

The service provides a report on foreign educational credentials obtained by individuals from recognized educational institutions, and who are new to this province. This report will:

- assist immigrants in obtaining formal recognition of their education and training;
- increase stakeholders' understanding of the immigrants' education and training;
- assist immigrants with career planning and job search activities.

The main page explains that academic credentials reports are advisory in nature and do not replace or supersede the assessments required by professional and trade licensing bodies or associations, or for admission to educational institutions. In very clear wording, it is stated that individuals who wish to meet the requirements of a regulated profession or trade (e.g., medicine, machinist, teaching, etc.) or want to be admitted to a post-secondary institution are advised that such bodies have their own requirements for admission. The site goes on to explain the documents that clients must provide and the process for the evaluation.

**Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities**  
**Access to Professions and Trades Unit**  
**Ontario**

[www.equalopportunity.on.ca](http://www.equalopportunity.on.ca)

Through this Ontario government site, immigrants are referred to World Education Services for information on how to have foreign education credentials assessed and compared to Ontario education standards.

**World Education Services (WES)-Canada**

[www.wes.org/ca/index.html](http://www.wes.org/ca/index.html)

WES is the authorized provincial evaluation service operating on behalf of the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. World Education Services operates the largest foreign credential evaluation service in North America, preparing evaluations for approximately 50,000 individuals annually in addition to providing evaluation reports to hundreds of professional licensing and certification boards and government agencies each year.

**Settlement in Ontario**

[www.settlement.org](http://www.settlement.org)

Sponsored by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, this site is available in both official languages and is designed to provide newcomers destined for Ontario with information on settlement issues such as housing, education and health. The site offers several important links in terms of language and employment, and uses a question and answer format. Sample questions are: How can I improve my English? Where can I go to get my English assessed? How can I find information about salaries? Why should I get help to find a job?

The main challenge is finding the site. While using the key term 'immigrants' allows one to find the site, slight variations such as 'immigration' or 'immigrating' do not have the same result.

**Service des équivalences**

**Direction des équivalences et de l'administration des ententes de sécurité sociale, Immigration Québec**

**Québec**

[www.immq.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.immq.gouv.qc.ca)

The evaluation report provided by this service compares the education received outside of Quebec to that which would have been received within the Quebec education system. The *Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'Immigration* advises people on the usefulness and limitations of a comparative evaluation. It provides information on applicable fees, the procedure for applying for the evaluation, which documentation and translations are required and the time delays involved.

There are no educational assessment services in Atlantic Canada or the north.

## CCPE WEBSITE CONTENTS

### The process and equivalency assessment

Comprehensive information is provided about the engineering profession in Canada, the steps required to become licensed, and the process for having foreign credentials assessed for Canadian equivalency. Equivalency assessment information is presented in Arabic, Classical Chinese, Simplified Chinese, English, Farsi, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Russian and Ukrainian.

### Jurisdiction rules

The *Engineering in Canada* section of the website offers an overview of the profession in Canada. It explains that, by law, no one can take responsibility for engineering work without a licence and that licensing is the responsibility of the 12 provincial and territorial regulatory bodies which set standards and regulate the profession in their respective jurisdictions under the authority of their provincial or territorial legislation. One can do engineering work in Canada without a licence but all of that person's work must be reviewed and approved by a licensed engineer. This section also clarifies that while an engineering licence is valid only within the jurisdiction that issues it, a mobility agreement exists among the provinces and territories facilitating the transfer of licences.

### P.Eng. (ing.) title

The site specifies that, once registered or licensed as a member of a provincial or territorial association, engineers become known as professional engineers and are authorized to use the title P.Eng. after their name (ing. in the province of Quebec). It also emphasizes that “[Those applying for licensure] can work as engineers only if a licensed professional engineer takes responsibility for the work.<sup>44</sup> In this way, an engineering graduate can gain experience as he or she pursues a licence.

### Criteria for earning a licence

The site outlines the criteria candidates must meet to earn their licence — namely:

#### RESIDENCY

Candidates must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents. Citizenship or permanent resident status is required to obtain licensure although in certain provinces, one can apply for licensure before immigrating to Canada. In Quebec, citizenship or permanent residency is not a requirement for earning a licence.

In certain cases, application for a licence can be obtained prior to immigration. An IEG seeking to immigrate to Ontario, for example, can apply for a licence, have his or her academic qualifications assessed, write the qualifying exam and earn a provincial licence all prior to immigration.

#### POSTSECONDARY DEGREE

Candidates must possess an undergraduate (Bachelor's level) degree in engineering from an accredited Canadian university program, or possess an otherwise recognized engineering degree *and* complete an assigned technical exam program. Recognition of degree equivalency

44 CCPE website, Immigration and Assessment, Engineering in Canada, May 2003.

by a Canadian university or other organization is unrelated to recognition of the candidate's degree by the CCPE and its constituent members.

#### WORK EXPERIENCE

Candidates must complete three or four years of engineering work, depending on the provincial or territorial association. Experience obtained outside Canada may be acceptable if sufficient documentation is provided and the candidate demonstrates that he or she has satisfactory engineering experience. A minimum of 12 months experience must be gained in a Canadian environment, however, under the supervision of a professional engineer to ensure the candidate is familiar with Canadian codes and standards of practice.

#### EXAM COMPLETION

Candidates must write and pass an examination on professional practice, ethics, engineering law and liability.

#### CHARACTER

Candidates must be of good character and reputation.

#### LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Finally, candidates must be proficient in English — French in Quebec, English or French in New Brunswick.