



The Association of Professional  
Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta

## **Registration Services**

# **APEGA Competency-Based Assessment Guide**

**For Professional Geoscience Applicants**

V1.0

April 11, 2026

The images in this document may differ slightly from the current version of the software, but the application and reference processes remain the same.

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## Introduction

This guide will help you apply for registration as a professional geoscientist in geology, environmental geoscience, or geophysics. It outlines what to expect during the application process.

The competency-based assessment process does not apply if you are seeking a professional licensee or member-in-training designation. For those, refer to the guidance in the Apply section of the APEGA website.

## Before Starting Your Application

Before beginning your application with APEGA, complete the following steps to help avoid delays.

1. Compile all [required documentation](#). Ensure your full name (including middle names) appears on all documents. If your name has changed, include legal documentation to support the change.
2. Confirm your employment dates with current and previous employers.
3. Discuss your work experience with your references and validators to confirm they can support your application before you submit.
4. Ensure your references and validators are aware of timelines and requirements, and that their contact information is correct. Delays in contacting them may delay your application.
5. Understand that the experience section involves two components that must be completed: the Competency-Based Assessment Tool and the Work Experience Record.

## Competency-Based Assessment Overview

The competency-based assessment is used to evaluate your work experience by assessing your ability to perform fundamental geoscience tasks safely and reliably.

To apply for registration as a professional geoscientist, you must complete two forms to confirm your work experience: the [Work Experience Record](#) (WER), which requires references, and the [Competency-Based Assessment Tool](#) (CBAT), which requires validators.

## Work Experience Record

The [WER](#) is part of your online application experience submission (Step 6a). It details your geoscience work experience.

For each employment period, you must provide a reference who can confirm your role and employment dates. We encourage you to choose references here who can also serve as your validators in the CBAT.

Each WER page must include the:

- employer name and position held
- country where the work was performed
- start and end dates, and total time worked

You must provide at least 48 months of geoscience experience supported by references. Include any periods of unemployment, education, parental leave, or non-geoscience work. You should include all relevant geoscience experience.

If you have not gained at least two years of geoscience experience in the last seven years, [APEGA's Board of Examiners](#) (BOE) may require additional experience.


When completing the WER, explain any overlapping time periods, as these are generally not accepted. Indicate whether each role was full- or part-time. If part-time, include the number of hours worked. This will help avoid application delays.

**NOTE:** Your descriptions should reflect your specific work, not the general job description. You must clearly explain how your role relates to geoscience practice, or credit may not be granted.

### Completing the Work Experience Record

Before you begin, read the instructions on pages 1 and 2 of the WER. For each work record, you must provide the following:

1. **Work Record:** Enter the company name, position, work period dates, country, and a brief overview of your role.
2. **Reference:** Identify someone who can confirm your work experience for that period. Your references will be asked to complete a Reference Questionnaire.



The Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta

Instructions
Save
Submit to APEGA
View Status

□

## WORK EXPERIENCE RECORD

■


Applicant Name	<b>1</b>	Application Type	APEGA ID	Date	2026-01-23
PLEASE FILL IN POSITIONS IN REVERSE CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER FROM THE MOST RECENT.					
Employer		Country where work was performed	Canada	Region	
		Supervisor First Name		Last Name	
Position		Professional Designation			
		Reference First Name		Last Name	
		Professional Designation			
Start Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	- -	Reference E-mail			
Finish Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	- -	Reference Mailing Address	<b>2</b>		
Total Months					
Please provide a brief overview of your position					

Maximum length is 400 characters. Any text exceeding the character limit will not be captured.  
Text that exceeds the area provided will not be readable upon submission.

<b>PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER/GEOSCIENTIST LEVEL</b>	<b>MONTHS CLAIMED</b>
<p style="font-size: small; color: gray;">Maximum length is 4,000 characters. Any text exceeding the character limit will not be captured. Text that exceeds the area provided will not be readable upon submission.</p>	
<b>TECHNOLOGIST LEVEL</b>	<b>MONTHS CLAIMED</b>
<p style="font-size: small; color: gray;">Maximum length is 1,400 characters. Any text exceeding the character limit will not be captured. Text that exceeds the area provided will not be readable upon submission.</p>	

Applicant Name	
Applicant E-mail	

Add Work Experience Record



Form #: 0109  
Version #: 4.2.1

Tracking Number:

When completing the WER, click:

- **Save** at the top of the form to save the current page information
- **Add Work Experience Record** at the bottom of the form to add another page

**APEGA recommends that you complete the WER before the CBAT.**

## References

A [reference](#) is a manager, human resources staff, or other individual who can confirm your employment history. A professional designation is not mandatory. In most cases, your reference may also serve as your validator for the CBAT.

You must list at least one reference for each position. If you are using the same employer for multiple work records, you need only one reference to confirm your employment period.

References are responsible for:

- confirming your employment at the organization during the specific time period through the Reference Questionnaire (RefQ)
- confirming the duration of your role
- completing and returning the RefQ

The RefQs will be sent to your references when APEGA staff has processed your WER.

Family members and relatives are not acceptable as references.

Acceptability of your references is at the discretion of APEGA's BOE.

## Competency-Based Assessment Tool

The [CBAT](#) is used to evaluate your suitability for registration by verifying and reviewing your ability to perform fundamental geoscience tasks.

You must provide examples that show you can practise independently at a professional level and hold paramount the public interest. For each competency, you will assess your level and support it with examples from your work experience. These examples must reflect geoscience work, as defined in the [Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act](#), and will be validated by individuals who have worked closely with you. APEGA's BOE will assess whether you have demonstrated these competencies at a professional level.

The CBAT is organized into four competency categories that reflect the areas of expertise required to practise geoscience effectively and safely:

1. Professionalism
2. Scientific Methods
3. Areas of Geoscience Practice
4. Complementary

Each category includes key competencies. In total, there are [29 competencies](#) that represent the skills and knowledge required for professional geoscience practice. They are based on your decisions, behaviours, and application of skills and knowledge in

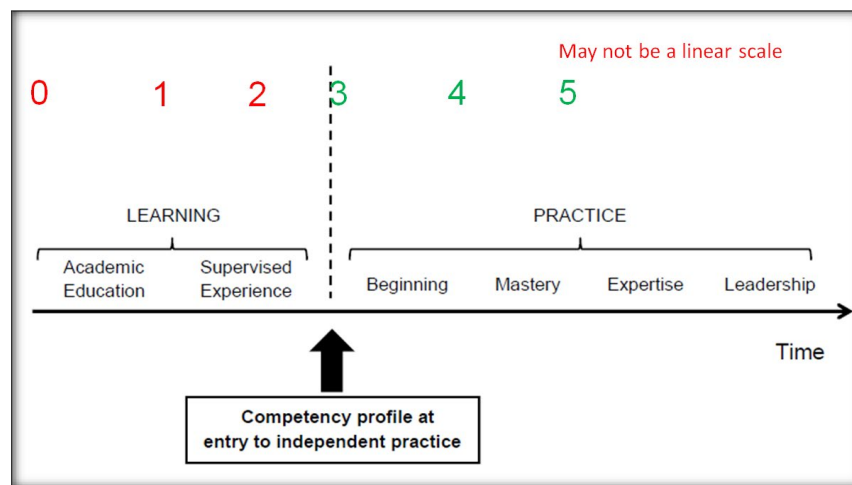
different geoscience situations. Each competency includes indicators that you must address in your examples.

### Levels of Competency

You and your validators independently assess your level of competence in each key competency using a rating scale from 0–5. This scale is used to evaluate both individual competencies and overall competency categories.

The rating reflects your overall level of competence, not the success of a specific example. Your examples are used to support and illustrate the rating you select.

As shown in the schematic below, you are expected to demonstrate entry-to-practice competence, meaning you can carry out geoscience tasks independently without supervision.



The minimum competency levels for each category are as follows.

Category	Required Category Score* <i>In a Canadian context</i>	Required Category Score* <i>Not in a Canadian context</i>
1. Professional	3	1
2. Scientific Methods	3	1
3. Geoscience Practice	3	1
4. Complementary	3	1

\* Minimum average score across all category competencies.

## Scoring

There are five levels of scoring for each key competency. A score of three indicates a readiness to take on professional geoscience responsibilities for independent practice. A score of five is typically achieved by those with several years of experience and a strong depth and breadth of professional judgement. Most applicants will not achieve this level.

Each competency category has a required overall level of competence, set at either two or three. The average of your key competency scores within each category must meet or exceed this required level.

The scoring system for technical competencies is as follows:

**Level 0:** No exposure to the competency.

**Level 1:** A general awareness of the competency and its significance in practice.

**Level 2:** Application of the competency, or components of the competency, with considerable supervision, in situations of low complexity and low risk.

**Level 3:** Application of all components of the competency with limited supervision in situations of moderate complexity and moderate risk. This may include situations in which the candidate supervises others in application of aspects of the competency while maintaining accountability for their work.

**Level 4:** Applications of the competency with minimal supervision in situations of considerable complexity and moderate risk. This may include situations in which the candidate supervises others in application of aspects of the competency while maintaining accountability for their work.

**Level 5:** Application of the competency with minimal supervision in situations of significant complexity and high risk. This may include situations in which the candidate supervises others in application of aspects of the competency while maintaining accountability for their work.

If your self-assessment score is lower than the minimum score for any key competency or doesn't meet the required overall average for a competency category, you will not meet APEGA's eligibility requirements and will be unable to submit the CBAT.

Under the *Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act*, the BOE makes the final decision on all applications. It considers your academic credentials, relevant work experience, demonstrated competencies, and validator feedback when making its decision.

## Indicators

Indicators are general examples of skills or behaviours you can use to help illustrate a specific competency.

They can help you identify which parts of your work experience are relevant and may also highlight any gaps you need to address.

## Completing the Competency-Based Assessment Tool

For each key competency, you must describe examples of recent geoscience activities that best demonstrate how you meet the competency. When completing each entry, include the name of the company the work was completed for, along with your validator's name, email, and position. You will then describe the situation, actions, and outcome, and assign a self-assessment score for that competency.

Each competency page must include:

1. **Situation:** A brief overview of the specific situation or problem you are presenting for the competency.
2. **Action:** Your contributions, including the knowledge or skills you applied.
3. **Outcome:** The solution, product, process, or other outcome that resulted from your actions.
4. **Applicant Self-Assessed Competence Level:** The score (0–5) you believe you demonstrated.
5. **Company Name at the time of Competency:** The organization with which you gained the experience.
6. **Validator Information:** The validator's name, email, and position held at the time the competency was demonstrated. This person will review and provide feedback on your self-assessment and must have direct knowledge of and have supervised your work.

Competency Based Assessment Tool (CBAT) - P.Geo

Instructions 1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4 1.5 1.6 1.7 2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4 2.5 3.1 3.2 3.3 3.4  
3.5 3.6 3.7 4.1 4.2 4.3 4.4 4.5 4.6 4.7 4.8 4.9 4.10 Summary Page Submission Page

Key Competency

### Professional Competence 1.1: Canadian-equivalent professional knowledge of relevant legislation, regulations, and statutory reporting requirements

This work example is intended to demonstrate your knowledge of Canadian-equivalent national, provincial, territorial and municipal regulations, codes, and standards, as well as Indigenous knowledge, rights, and treaties. This includes local (Canadian) geoscience procedures and practices as applicable.

Note: This is a mandatory Canadian work environment competency. The minimum required level for this competency is 3.

Writing in first person, describe your contribution to the work in 2-3 paragraphs (max 1,800 characters). Achieving all the indicators is not necessary, but your example must demonstrate your competency in this area. For example, you might describe how you:

1. Apply for licenses and permits.
2. Undertake stakeholder consultations.
3. Consider and incorporate Indigenous "local" knowledge, rights, and treaties in decision making.
4. Use appropriate standards in decision making.
5. Complete and file reports and notifications according to statutory and regulatory requirements.

Situation

Character count: 0 / 400

Action

Character count: 0 / 1800

Outcome

Character count: 0 / 400

Required Category Average

3

Applicant Self-Assessed Competency Level

Select

Company Name at the time of Competency

Validator Full Name
Validator Email
Validator Position at the time of Competency

## Validators

A [validator](#) is an individual who assesses your competence and confirms that your work descriptions are accurate and were completed by you.

Your validator must have direct knowledge of your work and must have provided appropriate professional supervision during the period being validated. They may be a supervisor, manager, mentor, client, or colleague, but **must** have reviewed and be familiar with the details of your work. An indirect manager providing a high-level review may not have adequate familiarity with your work.

### You need at least three validators for each application.

A validator is expected to be a professional geoscientist who has reviewed your *technical* work in the following categories:

1. Professionalism
2. Scientific Methods
3. Areas of Geoscience Practice

If your competencies were demonstrated through work in Canada, they must be validated by a P.Geo. or a professional engineer (P.Eng.).

If your competencies were demonstrated through work outside Canada, they must be validated by an equivalent practitioner to a P.Geo. Your validator may be asked for proof of credentials.

A validator may be a geoscience or engineering practitioner with qualifications comparable to a P.Geo. or a P.Eng. in Canada. This is typically someone with an undergraduate degree in a relevant field and at least four years of acceptable professional experience at the time of validation.

If your validator for categories 1–3 is not a registered P.Geo. with a Canadian geoscience or engineering regulator, they must provide a current, detailed résumé containing their:

- relevant education, including dates of program completion or graduation
- work history, including dates of employment, duties, and responsibilities
- applicable professional designations, past and present

For Category 4: Complementary competencies, a P.Geo. or geoscience practitioner is preferred but not required. The validator must still have direct knowledge of your work.

Family members and relatives are **not acceptable** as validators. You must identify any validator who is a family member.

The acceptability of your validators is determined by the BOE.

Validators are responsible for:

- confirming they have directly observed and supervised the work described in your examples, including technical components requiring geoscience analysis, knowledge, and judgement
- providing competency scores in the Validator Response Form (VRF), which they will receive once APEGA has processed your CBAT. A validator may be required to assess multiple competencies, requiring more than one VRF, potentially covering up to 27 competencies
- completing and submitting all assigned VRFs
- providing an overall assessment of your readiness for registration using the Validator Overall Reference Form (VORF), which they will receive once APEGA has processed your CBAT
- completing and submitting the VORF to APEGA
- providing their professional designation and jurisdiction of registration, if required

### **Providing Examples**

Be as specific as possible when filling out each key competency. The competency descriptions and indicators show what the BOE is looking for, but copying a job description or simply repeating the indicators is insufficient. Use clear, specific examples from your own work.

Focus on your personal contributions—what you did, how you did it, and why. If your example involves a team, clearly describe your individual role, your thought process, and the knowledge you applied. Write in the first-person (using “I” statements instead of “we”), even when describing team-based work, to show ownership and responsibility.

Your examples should demonstrate your ability to practice independently. Where possible, highlight situations where you led the work or were responsible for key decisions.

Use a different example for each competency to demonstrate breadth and depth of your experience. Each competency entry should include only one strong, well-explained example, not multiple brief ones. Examiners rely on the information you provide, so ensure your example includes enough detail to support your assessment.

In some cases, you may choose to reflect on how you would approach the situation differently. You are encouraged to draw from a range of roles and experiences.

Focus on your contributions rather than general project details (such as location or budget). Show how you applied professional geoscience judgement in your work.

## The Assessment Process

### Application Submission

Once you have completed all application submission requirements, your application is submitted for a multi-stage regulatory review administered by APEGA's Registration department in support of the Board of Examiners (BOE), which makes all final decisions.

You will receive the BOE's decision by email to your primary address on file by the end of the month following the board meeting. BOE meetings typically occur monthly.

### Application Status Tracking

You can track the status of your application by logging in to the [myAPEGA portal](#). Throughout the process, APEGA staff will contact you by email if additional documents are required.

You may be asked to revise a competency description if the example provided is insufficient. If you make changes, the updated competency must be revalidated and rescored by your validator.

If you need to request changes to your application, you must do so by email. Changes are only accepted before your application is reviewed and evaluated by examiners. Multiple revisions will delay processing.

Once a decision has been made, you may challenge it through the reassessment or reconsideration process. Find more information about [application decisions](#) on our website.

Ensure your contact information in the myAPEGA portal is current. All email communication will be sent to your primary email address on file. If APEGA is unable to reach you, your application may be flagged for withdrawal.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **My work is confidential. How do I submit my competency-based assessment?**

Examiners do not need detailed confidential information. They need enough evidence to determine that you can practise competently as a professional geoscientist. You can demonstrate this by describing the nature of your work and its complexity without disclosing confidential details, such as proprietary solutions or internal business processes.

All APEGA examiners are bound by confidentiality.

### **I have only worked on two major projects over my four years of experience. Do I need to use a different project for each key competency?**

No. You may use the same project across multiple key competency examples as long as you describe the specific actions you took to demonstrate each key competency.

You may repeat parts of the Situation section for context, but each example must be distinct. Entire examples must not be reused. The Action section should be specific to each key competency.

### **Do I need to spread out my examples across all four years of my work experience, or can I focus on the most recent and highest-level experience?**

You do not need to cover all four years of experience through your competency examples. You are encouraged to select your strongest examples for each key competency, and focusing on more recent experience is acceptable. However, including a range of examples may strengthen your overall assessment by showing greater breadth and depth of experience.

### **How long should my examples be?**

The Situation and Outcome sections should be concise. Each has a maximum of 400 characters, including spaces, with no overflow.

The Action section has a maximum of 1,800 characters, including spaces, with no overflow. Use this section to clearly describe your contributions and demonstrate the competency. Point form is acceptable.

In addition to the examples provided for the Communication – Written competency, examiners may also consider the overall quality of writing throughout your application.

### **Can I use the same situation to fulfil multiple competencies?**

Yes. The same situation can be used for multiple competencies.

However, the Board of Examiners looks for progression through your career, including depth and breadth of situations and experience. While using the same situation will not result in refusal, relying on it too heavily may weaken your overall demonstration of readiness for independent practice.

### **How detailed must my examples be for each competency?**

Provide enough detail to clearly demonstrate your contribution, leaving enough room in the Action section to explain what you did.

Each competency should include only one example—your strongest—rather than listing multiple examples. A list of brief overviews is not sufficient.

Focus on your decisions, actions, and the steps you took. Copying a job description is not sufficient, as examiners are assessing your individual contributions.

Examiners have no prior knowledge of your work and can only assess what you provide. Use your judgement to determine the appropriate level of detail. Complex, long-term projects may require less detail to stay within limits, while smaller projects may need more explanation to show their importance.

### **What if I don't have any specific examples for one or more competencies?**

You are required to prove competence in all 29 competencies.

If you do not have professional experience that meets one or more competencies, consider gaining additional experience before submitting your application.

### **What if I can't complete a section?**

You must be able to provide satisfactory examples for all competencies.

If you are unable to do so, you should wait until you have gained the necessary experience before applying. Applications submitted with fewer than 48 months of experience will be declined.

### **What if I have fewer than 48 months of experience but I can still complete all my competency requirements?**

A minimum of 48 months of acceptable experience is a legal requirement under the [Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act](#) and APEGA's [General Regulation and](#)

[Code of Ethics](#). You cannot apply for registration until this requirement is met.

Applications submitted with fewer than 48 months of experience will be declined without further processing, even if you believe you have met all competency requirements.

In most cases, new geoscience graduates will not yet have the experience needed to demonstrate all competencies at the required level. Forty-eight months represents the minimum experience needed to be considered for registration, and many applicants are only beginning to demonstrate independent practice at this stage.

Be mindful when assessing your competencies—new applicants may overestimate their level. Experienced geoscientists often assess themselves at Level 3 or Level 4 even after many years of practice.

### **How many references do I need?**

You must provide at least one reference for each organization at which you worked. The reference must be able to confirm your work history.

A single reference can verify multiple work periods with the same organization but must be included on each Work Record entry.

### **How many validators do I need?**

You must provide a minimum of three validators for your application. Validators must have direct knowledge of, and have reviewed, the technical work described in your competency examples.

Using a range of validators across different work situations is recommended, as it helps demonstrate your overall ability to practice independently.

Ensure at least three validators are assigned in your Competency-Based Assessment Tool. Applications submitted with fewer than three validators will be declined, and you will need to reapply.

### **Do I need a different validator for every competency?**

No. The same validator may be assigned to multiple competencies, as long as you provide at least three validators overall.

Each validator must be used at least once. Because there are 29 competencies, you could use one validator for up to 27 competencies, assigning your other two validators only one competency each.

## **What will my validators receive?**

Your validators will receive an email notifying them that they have been identified to validate one or more of your geoscience competencies.

The email includes a link to a dashboard where they can access all outstanding Validator Response Forms (VRFs) and the Validator Overall Reference Form (VORF) that require their attention.

Validators will receive a single email regardless of how many forms they are assigned. All required VRFs and the VORF will be available on their dashboard.

## **What will my references receive?**

Your references will receive an email asking them to confirm the employment timelines for each work period you have listed. This can be someone in an HR department or a manager who can verify your employment history for each organization.

## **How will I know which competencies I did not meet?**

After the Board of Examiners reviews your application, you will receive an official decision letter. This letter will identify any competencies that did not meet the minimum requirements and must be resubmitted.

## **What happens if I do not meet a competency, and how do I address it?**

If the Board of Examiners decides that your application does not meet the academic or experience requirements, your application may be deferred and the BOE may assign you additional experience. You will have a certain amount of time to show progress or complete the requirements. Failure to do so within the timeline will result in the withdrawal of your application.

Once you have completed your assigned experience, you may submit a [Request to Update Application](#) within the timeframe provided in your decision letter.

If you believe the Board of Examiners' decision was based on incomplete information, you may apply for a [reassessment](#). If you believe there was an error in the decision, you may apply for a [reconsideration](#). Requests for reassessment or reconsideration must be submitted within 90 days from the date of your application notification.

Refer to your decision letter for more information.