



## Professional Practice and Ethics (PPE) Examination Scope and Syllabus

The 3.5-hour Ontario PPE examination is closed book and comprises 120 multiple choice questions (2.5 hours) and an essay question (additional 1 hour). The first 100 questions are based on categories A to G as shown in the syllabus below. The last 20 questions, in category H, are specific to Ontario – 8 questions on the Professional Geoscientists Act, 2000 (the “Act”), and 12 on various Ontario Acts and Regulations. The essay question is designed to test the applicant’s ability to communicate effectively and is not meant to test an applicant’s technical expertise. The PPE exam administered by PGO is based on the National Professional Practice Exam developed by the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta (APEGA).

The national PPE exam syllabus, as adopted by PGO, covers the major subject areas (excluding the essay question) as follows:

### **A. Professionalism (8%)**

1. Definition and interpretation of professionalism and professional status.
2. The roles and responsibilities of professionals in society.
3. Geoscience professions in Canada; definition and scopes of practice.
4. The value of geoscience professions to society.
5. The roles and responsibilities of professionals to management.

### **B. Ethics (17%)**

1. The role of ethics in society; cultures and customs.
2. Classical and modern ethical theories and principles.
3. Codes of ethics of Professional Geoscientists in Canada.
4. Ethical standards and codes and their relationship to the conduct of a Professional.
5. Common ethical issues and dilemmas; making ethical decisions.

### **C. Professional Practice (22%)**

1. Professional accountability for work, workplace issues, job responsibilities and standards of practice.
2. Relations with other professionals and non-professionals; business practices.
3. Statutory and non-statutory standards and codes of practice.
4. Insurance, risk management and quality management; due diligence.
5. Environmental responsibilities and sustainable development.

6. Use of software, computers and internet-based tools; liability for software errors.
7. Documentation authentication and control.
8. Duty to inform; whistleblowing.

**D. Communication (1%)**

1. Legal, ethical and practical aspects of communication.
2. The professional relationship.
3. Communication skills.

**E. Law for Professional Practice (19%)**

1. The Canadian legal system.
2. Contract law – elements, principles, and applications.
3. Tort law – elements, principles, and applications.
4. Civil code in Quebec and common law in the rest of Canada.
5. Business, employment, and labour law.
6. Arbitration and alternative dispute resolution.
7. Intellectual property – patents, trademarks, trade secrets, software issues, copyright.
8. Expert witness.
9. Construction liens.
10. International law.
11. Environmental law.
12. Workers compensation and occupational health and safety.
13. Human rights and privacy legislation.

**F. Professional Law (7%)**

1. The Acts, Regulations and Bylaws; Provincial and Territorial Acts.
2. Codes of ethics; conflicts of interest.
3. Admission to the Professions.
4. Illegal practice; enforcement against unlicensed practice and misuse of the title.
5. Professional and technical societies.

**G. Regulation and Discipline Processes (9%)**

1. Discipline and enforcement procedures.
2. Professional inspection; practice reviews of individuals.
3. Response to complaints.
4. Licensing corporations and practice review of firms.
5. Response to unethical or incompetent practice; consequences of unethical practice.
6. Canadian and international mobility.
7. Continuing professional development.
8. Use of seals and stamps.

**H. Geoscience Practice in Ontario (17%)**

1. Acts and Regulations governing major areas of geoscience practice in Ontario.