

Professional GEOSCIENTISTS of Ontario

2023 Fair Registration Practices Report

Prepared for the Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC)



FAIRNESS COMMISSIONER
COMMISSAIRE À L'ÉQUITÉ

Content

1. Background
 2. Organization information
 3. Registration requirements
 4. Third party assessments
 5. Accomplishments, risks and mitigations
 6. Changes to registration practices
 7. Membership and application data
 8. Changes Related to New Legislative and Regulatory Requirements
- Glossary of terms

1. Background

Under section 20 of the Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act, 2006 (FARPACTA), which is substantially similar to section 22.7(1) of Schedule 2 of the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 (RHPA),

“A regulated profession shall prepare a fair registration practices report annually or at such other times as the Fairness Commissioner may specify or at such times as may be specified in the regulations”.

Section 23 of FARPACTA and Section 22.9 of Schedule 2 of the RHPA then go on to indicate that the Fairness Commissioner shall specify the form in which these reports shall be prepared, along with the required filing dates. This section also stipulates that a regulator must make these reports public.

It is pursuant to these authorities that the Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC) has required that each regulator complete its 2023 Fair Registration Practices Report (FRP).

Please note that this report covers the time-period from January 1 to December 31, 2023.

The FRP:

- Collects information about the organization, applicants to the profession and current membership.
- Provides information to the public about how the organization has implemented fair registration practices during the reporting period.
- Helps the OFC to successfully undertake the education and compliance activities which include monitoring, applying a risk-informed compliance framework, assessing performance, and sharing best practices.
- Determines whether the regulator is complying with recently enacted legislative and regulatory provisions designed to reduce barriers for domestic labour mobility and internationally trained applicants.
- Identifies trends across regulated professions and regulated health colleges.

Please note that the 2023 version of the FRP has changed from the previous version in terms of both form and content as the OFC's enabling statutes have evolved and as the office migrates to a more permanent portal-enabled database solution.

2. Organization information

Organization name	Professional GEOSCIENTISTS of Ontario
--------------------------	---------------------------------------

For questions about this report, please contact:

Name	Eilidh Lewis
Job Title	Registrar
E-mail	elewis@pgo.ca

3. Registration requirements

Applicants to the regulated professions and compulsory trades must fulfil registration requirements to practice their profession or use a professional title. This section summarizes registration requirements for each profession or trade regulated by Professional GEOSCIENTISTS of Ontario

Licensing requirements (brief description for each requirement listed):

Profession/ Trade Name	Geoscientist
Academic requirement	Four-year B.Sc. degree in an area of geoscience, covering 27 courses from the following categories: Section 1A: foundation science courses (3). Section 1B: additional foundation science courses (6). Section 2A: foundation geoscience courses (4). Section 2B: additional foundation science courses (5). Section 2C: other geoscience courses (9).
Experience requirement	Geoscientist-in-Training (GIT): no experience necessary. Professional Geoscientist (P.Geo.): minimum of four years of geoscience work experience. Limited Professional Geoscientist (P.Geo.(Limited)):

	minimum of 10 years of geoscience work experience, with at least two most recent years in the area that the limitations will apply.
Language requirement	No language proficiency requirements, but English is the language that is used by PGO staff and for our application forms.
Additional information on licensing requirements (may include links to appropriate page on regulator website):	More information on registration requirements can be found at https://www.pgo.ca/registration/registration-types .

4. Third party assessments

Third party organizations that assess qualifications on behalf of the regulator.

Organization name	Function
World Education Services	Academic credential evaluation

Fair access legislation requires regulators to take reasonable measures to ensure that any third parties undertake assessment of qualifications in a way that is transparent, objective, impartial and fair.

Professional GEOSCIENTISTS of Ontario takes the following measure(s) to ensure fair and timely assessments:

World Education Services (WES) provides a course-by-course evaluation for Canadian equivalency. This is directed by the applicant, PGO has limited contact with WES. They do not assess qualifications with regards to the geoscience knowledge requirements, they only provide an equivalency report for internationally trained applicants.

5. Accomplishments, risks and mitigations

Key accomplishments and risks pertaining to fair registration practices during the reporting period are summarized below.

A. Accomplishments

1	In October 2023, PGO removed the Canadian work experience requirement from the list of registration requirements.
2	In July 2023 PGO began the transition from the traditional work experience record, used to evaluate work experience, to a competency-based assessment system.

B. Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation Measure
That PGO maintains the standards of practice once the Canadian work experience requirement is removed.	Integration of the competency-based assessment system with work experience competencies to show understanding of the Canadian work environment.

6. Changes to registration practices

During the January 1 to December 31, 2023 reporting period, Professional GEOSCIENTISTS of Ontario has introduced the following changes impacting its registration processes. Changes, anticipated impacts, and risk mitigation are summarized below.

A. Registration requirements and practices

Registration process	Changes Made (Yes / No)	Description
----------------------	-------------------------	-------------

Registration requirements either through regulation, by-law or policy	Yes	During 2023 PGO changed the registration requirements for those applying for their practising designation by implementing a competency-based assessment (CBA) system to evaluate their work experience. The adoption of this new system allowed for PGO to approve the removal of the Canadian work experience requirement as the CBA system allows for the evaluation of Canadian equivalent competencies.
New or consolidated class of certificates or licenses	No	
Assessment of qualifications, including competency-based assessments and examinations	Yes	PGO implemented a new competency-based assessment (CBA) system for all applicants for the practising designation.
Documentation requirements for registration	Yes	With the implementation of the competency-based assessment system, PGO no longer uses the previous work experience record, but instead relies on the online system.
Timelines for registration, decisions and/or responses	No	
Registration and/or assessment fees	Yes	Annual dues were increased for the 2023 reporting period, and application fees were increased in late 2023. Please see https://www.pgo.ca/uploaded/Forms/APGO-fees-dues.pdf for a full list of the application fees and annual dues.

Changes to internal review or appeal process	No	
Access by applicants to their records	No	

B. Training, policy and applicant supports

Registration process	Changes Made (Yes / No)	Description
Training and resources for staff who deal with registration issues	No	
Resources or training to support applicants to move through the licensing process	No	
Anti-racism and inclusion-based policies and practices	No	

C. System partners

Registration process	Changes Made (Yes / No)	Description
Steps to increase accountability of third-party service provider(s)	No	

Accreditation of educational programs	No	
Mutual recognition agreements	No	

D. Responsiveness to changes in the regulatory environment

Registration process	Changes Made (Yes / No)	Description
Emergency registration plans	No	
Technological or digital improvements	Yes	Implementation of the online competency-based assessment system in place of the traditional work experience record.
Steps to address labour shortages in the profession or trade	No	
Other	No	

7. Membership and application data

The Office of the Fairness Commissioner collects membership and application data from regulators through annual Fair Registration Practices Reports, which are also made available to the public. Information is collected for the purpose of discerning statistical changes and trends related to a regulator's membership, application volumes, licensure/certification results, and appeals year over year.

A. Race-based data collected

	Race-based data collected? (Yes or No)
Members	No
Applicants	No

Additional description:

--

B. Other identity-based or demographic data collected

	Other identity-based or demographic data collected? (Yes or No)
Members	Yes
Applicants	Yes

Additional description:

We ask for country of birth and citizenship information.
--

C. Languages of service provision

Professional GEOSCIENTISTS of Ontario makes application materials and information available to applicants in the following languages.

Language	Yes / No
English	Yes
French	No
Other (please specify)	

D. Membership Profile

Profession Name	Total Number of Members
Geoscientist	3542

Class of License	Total Number of Members	Total Number of Internationally Educated Members
Full practising	2478	523
Limited practitioner	89	19
Non-practising registrants	325	75
Geoscientists-in-Training	650	165

Gender	Number of Members
Male	2550
Female	992

Jurisdiction of Initial Training	Number of Members
Ontario	2121
Other provinces and territories	639
United States	89
Other International	693

Country of Initial Training	Number of Members
Albania	7
Algeria	1
Argentina	5
Armenia	1
Australia	27

Austria	3
Bangladesh	10
Bolivia	2
Brazil	45
Bulgaria	2
Burkina Faso	3
Cameroon	6
Chile	3
China	44
Colombia	18
Costa Rica	3
Cuba	5
Czechia	1
Democratic Republic of the Congo	1
Ecuador	3
Egypt	5
Eritrea	4
Ethiopia	2
Finland	2
France	21
Germany	21
Ghana	10
Greece	1
Guyana	1
Hong Kong	2
Hungary	2
India	48
Indonesia	1
Iran	46
Iraq	4
Ireland	7
Israel	1
Italy	5
Jamaica	6
Jordan	1
Kazakhstan	2
South Korea	2
Lebanon	6

Malaysia	1
Mexico	5
Morocco	2
Nepal	2
Netherlands	4
New Zealand	4
Nigeria	17
Pakistan	20
Peru	5
Philippines	24
Poland	6
Portugal	1
Romania	14
Russia	22
Saudi Arabia	1
Serbia	6
Slovakia	1
Somalia	1
South Africa	43
Spain	4
Sri Lanka	3
Sudan	7
Switzerland	4
Syria	3
Trinidad and Tobago	1
Tunisia	1
Turkiye	6
Uganda	1
United Kingdom	79
Ukraine	5
United States of America	89
Venezuela	4
Zambia	1
Zimbabwe	4
Myanmar	1
Canada	2760

Official language of preference	Number of Members
English	3542

Racial identity (optional)	Number of Members
Not collected	3542

E. Data Notes

I have one registrant who was trained in Sierra Leone, and one who was trained in Surinam, but those country are not listed, so I added them to the total for South Africa.

F. Applicant Profile

Profession Name	Total Number of Applicants
Geoscientist	347

Gender	Number of Applicants
Female	108
Male	238
X (includes trans, non-binary, and two-spirit people)	1

Jurisdiction of Initial Training	Applications received in 2023	Applications with decisions pending
----------------------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------------------------

Ontario	142	45
Other provinces and territories	72	24
United States	8	2
Other International	125	43

Country of Initial Training	Number of Applicants
Canada	214
United States of America	8
Algeria	2
Australia	2
Bangladesh	1
Brazil	11
Burkina Faso	2
Cameroon	3
Chile	2
China	5
Colombia	6
Costa Rica	1
Croatia	1
Czechia	2
Democratic Republic of the Congo	1
Ecuador	2
Egypt	1
France	3
Germany	3
Ghana	7
Guyana	1
Honduras	1
Hong Kong	2
India	8
Indonesia	1
Iran	8
Ireland	1
Japan	1
Libya	1

Nepal	1
New Zealand	1
Nigeria	4
Pakistan	5
Peru	1
Philippines	7
Portugal	1
South Africa	7
Sweden	1
Switzerland	1
Trinidad and Tobago	1
Turkiye	6
Uganda	1
United Kingdom	8
Venezuela	1

Official language of preference	Number of Members
English	347

Racial identity (optional)	Number of Members
Not collected	347

G. Data Notes

1 applicant from Suriname was added to South Africa because Suriname is not listed in your list of countries.

H. Application Decisions

The table below summarizes the outcome of registration decisions finalized in 2023. Some applications may have been received in the previous year.

Jurisdiction of initial training	Successful	Unsuccessful	Withdrawn
Ontario	86	8	0
Other provinces and territories	75	3	0
United States	5	1	0
Other International	66	13	0

I. New Registrants

For the 2023 reporting year, the breakdown of new registrants by class of registration is provided below:

Class of registration	Total new registrants by class	Number of internationally educated registrants
Full / General/ Independent Practice	71	22
Limited Practising	1	0
Geoscientist-in-Training	126	45

J. Data Notes

--

K. Reviews and Appeals

Applicants for registration may appeal a registration decision. An **internal review or appeal** involves formal reconsideration of a registration decision further to an application and submissions by the applicant.

Jurisdiction of initial training	Number of internal reviews and appeals processed	Number of decisions changed following internal review or appeal
Ontario	0	0
Other provinces and territories	0	0
United States	0	0
Other International	0	0

An **external review or appeal** involves review of a registration decision by an external appeal tribunal or court, such as the Health Professions Review and Appeal Board or Divisional Court.

Jurisdiction of initial training	Number of applicants who sought external review or appeal	Number of decisions changed following external review or appeal
Ontario	0	0
Other provinces and territories	0	0
United States	0	0
Other International	0	0

Issues raised in reviews and appeals can point to challenges in the registration process. The table below summarizes top issues or reasons that applicants raised during these appeal proceedings.

Issue or reason raised	Number of appeals

Internationally trained applicants face additional challenges in the registration process. The table below summarizes top reasons for not registering internationally trained individuals.

Reason for not registering	Number of internationally trained applicants
1. Did not meet the education requirements	14

L. Data Notes

--

8. Changes Related to New Legislative and Regulatory Requirements

By Ontario law, regulated occupations must provide registration practices that are transparent, objective, impartial and fair. Non-health occupations are governed by the *Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act, 2006 (FARPACTA)*, while health professions are governed by the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 2011 (RHPA)*.

In 2021, both statutes were amended to incorporate substantive provisions to:

- A.** Eliminate the use of Canadian experience requirements except under prescribed circumstances.
- B.** Streamline language proficiency testing requirements.
- C.** Provide for the continuity of registration processes during emergency situations.
- D.** Set registration time limits. (FARPACTA only)

Professional GEOSCIENTISTS of Ontario has made the following changes to comply with these new legal obligations:

A. Canadian Experience

Change required: Yes

Professional GEOSCIENTISTS of Ontario has taken the following measures to comply with legislative requirements on eliminating Canadian experience requirements unless an exemption is granted or an alternative is identified that meets criteria prescribed in regulations (non-health regulators) or the exceptions in legislation are met (regulated health colleges).

PGO implemented a competency-based assessment (CBA) system which is now used as an alternative to the Canadian experience requirement.

B. Language Proficiency Testing

Change required: No changes required

Professional GEOSCIENTISTS of Ontario has taken the following measures to comply with recent legislative changes requiring that regulators accept language proficiency testing results derived from any of the tests accepted for immigration purposes to satisfy their language proficiency requirements:



Professional GEOSCIENTISTS of Ontario offers applicants the following options to demonstrate language proficiency.

C. Emergency Registration

Change required: Yes

Professional GEOSCIENTISTS of Ontario has taken the following measures to comply with requirements to establish an emergency class (health colleges) or develop an emergency registration plan (non-health regulators).

PGO is currently developing an emergency response plan.

D. Registration timelines (FARPACTA Regulators only)

Profession: Geoscientist

i. Domestic Labour Mobility Applicants

9.1 (4) of FARPACTA prescribes that regulators must make a registration decision within 30 business days from the time that they receive a complete application “and everything required by the regulated profession in respect of the application.”

Professional GEOSCIENTISTS of Ontario requires the following documentation before beginning to count the 30-day registration time-period. This would be the starting point of the registration process for the purpose the data summarized below.

- Completed application form
- Letter of standing / good character
- Payment of fee
- Other (please specify) Redacted photo ID

For domestic labour mobility applications received between January 1, 2023 and November 30, 2023, registration timelines and outcomes are summarized below:

Registration decisions	30 days or less	More than 30 days
Full registration granted	58	1
Alternative registration granted	0	0
No registration granted	0	2

ii. Internationally Trained Individuals

Sections 5 and 6 of Ontario Regulation 261/22 made under FARPACTA establish two-time standards for ITIs:

- **A six-month time limit** for a regulator to make a registration decision following receipt of everything that it requires in respect of an application for registration. (This time limit must be met in 90% of all cases.)
- **A 12-month standard** for the regulator to report on its ability to register ITIs, who are eligible for registration without condition, from the earlier of the date that:
 - (a) the regulated profession receives everything it requires in respect of the individual's application for registration, or
 - (b) any third-party that assesses the individual's qualification on behalf of the regulated profession, receives everything it requires for this purpose.

Section 6 of the regulation further stipulates that the regulator's annual Fair Registration Practices Report shall include data on a regulator's compliance with the six-month standard, and its ability to meet the 12-month standard and, where the regulator has been unable to meet this one-year standard, the steps that the regulator is taking to meet this target.

Professional GEOSCIENTISTS of Ontario requires the following documentation before beginning to count the six-month registration time-period for internationally educated individuals.

- Completed application form
- Credential assessment report
- Payment of fee
- Other (please specify) Submission of competency-based assessment by validators, redacted photo ID

Measures undertaken to date to comply with new registration time limits for internationally trained individuals are as follows:

No change to the PGO process, PGO staff communicate regularly with all applicants and ensure that timelines are met.

Please note that new legal time limits came into effect as of July 1, 2023. Because of longer time periods for internationally educated applicants, regulators will only be required to report publicly on achieving these requirements in the 2024 Fair Registration Practices Report.

Glossary of terms

Applicant: An individual who has applied for membership in a regulated profession or compulsory trade, with the associated rights to practice their profession / trade or use a professional title.

Domestic labour mobility: Applications subject to the Canadian Free Trade Agreement, which stipulates that a certificate issued by one province or territory should be recognized by all others unless there is an exception due to public health, safety and security reasons.

Internationally educated / trained: An individual whose initial professional education was not from a Canadian educational institution, or who is applying for trade certification based on experience gained outside Canada. This category includes individuals with education / training in the US and other countries. It also includes individuals who completed their initial professional education outside Canada and later addressed gaps with courses or a bridging program based in Canada.

Jurisdiction of initial training: For professions, the jurisdiction in which an applicant obtained their initial professional education used in full or partial fulfilment of registration requirements. For trades, the jurisdiction of initial trade experience listed on a Trades Equivalency Assessment (TEA) application.

Member: An individual who has satisfied the conditions for registration in their profession / trade and has been granted the right to practice and/or the right to use a professional designation or title. Members may hold a full license to engage in independent practice, or they may hold an alternate class of registration.

Racial identity: Voluntary self-report data of racial identity as a social description. Follows categories identified in the Ontario Anti-Racism Directorate Data <<https://www.ontario.ca/document/data-standards-identification-and-monitoring-systemic-racism>> .

Registration requirements: the entry-to-practice requirements that that an applicant must meet to be granted full membership in a regulated profession or trade, with the associated right to practice or right to use a professional title.

- **Academic requirement:** The formal education, or equivalent, that is required for licensing or certification in a particular regulated profession or trade.
- **Experience requirement:** The experiential training or work experience that is required for licensing or certification in a particular regulated profession or trade.
- **Language requirement:** The level of language proficiency that is required for licensing or certification in a particular regulated profession or trade, and the language proficiency tests accepted in fulfillment of this requirement.

Third party service provider: An external organization that assesses applicant qualifications on behalf of the regulator.