

# **2016 Registration Review Report**

## **Certified Technicians and Technologists Association of Manitoba**



OFFICE OF THE MANITOBA FAIRNESS COMMISSIONER

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## Executive Summary

The Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner (OMFC) 2016 Registration Review Report examines the Certified Technicians and Technologists Association of Manitoba's (CTTAM) state of progress with regard to the fair consideration of internationally educated technicians and technologists (IETTs).

CTTAM has a history of progressive registration practice. The registration process is timely and affordable with a variety of dedicated supports in place for IETTs. A Technical Report Writing Course is available that provides IETTs an opportunity to meet a key Technologist qualification requirement. Professional work experience is recognized and strong support and assistance is provided to IETTs throughout the registration process. Since the 2012 review, CTTAM improved its registration information on its website and introduced a preparation seminar for its Law and Ethics Exam.

CTTAM is considering two new progressive assessment strategies, the Competency Report assessment and Professional Certification Exams. The Competency Report assessment consists of an innovative prior learning assessment involving applicants, employers and the regulator. Professional Certification Exams are discipline-specific competency assessments that provide an alternative to academic upgrading for applicants seeking technologist level certification.

The Fairness Commissioner identifies several progress opportunities: adopt Competency Report assessments and Professional Certification Exams, review CTTAM's technical report requirement, deliver CTTAM's Professional Practice Seminar, consider exemptions for CTTAM's mandatory one year of Canadian work experience for applicants with relevant, Canadian-like professional experience, and re-introduce CTTAM's 'Steps to Registration' and 'Document Checklist' items to the IETT registration information.

In response to the progress opportunities identified by the Fairness Commissioner, CTTAM has committed to:

- Implement Competency Report assessments for applicants work experience;
- Integrate competency exams, training seminars and exam handbooks;
- Re-evaluate the Technical Report requirement;
- Schedule Professional Practice Seminar Sessions; and
- Redesign CTTAM's webpage to allow online registration and access to application documents and records.

The Fairness Commissioner sees CTTAM's Action Plan as a positive, constructive response to the review. CTTAM continues to show leadership improving a progressive registration process.

## Context of the Profession in Manitoba

Applied science technicians and technologists work in a broad range of disciplines and occupations. Technicians and technologists may use, test, repair, design, analyze and problem solve in a range of applied science and engineering areas. Technologists are distinguished from technicians by their ability to produce technical reports, with a greater ability for independent work and analysis.

The engineering and applied science technician and technologist designations or titles are found in provinces and territories across the country (with the exception of Quebec). Technicians and technologists can work in Manitoba without being registered, but require certification to represent themselves as designated technicians and technologists.

Provincial regulators rely on one of two national organizations – Canada Council of Technicians and Technologists or Technicians Profession of Canada. Differences in the accreditation and certification models of these national bodies may pose some challenges ensuring labor mobility is supported as required by the *Agreement on Internal Trade*.

Canada is one of the few countries in the world to regulate the technician and technologist professions and designations. Canada is the only country represented by two regulatory bodies, the Canadian Council of Technicians and Technologists (CCTT) and Engineers Canada at the International Engineering Alliance (IEA). Internationally, technicians and technologists may have dedicated academic diplomas, degrees and certifications but often work in environments where only professional engineering activity is regulated.

The profession is closely related to professional engineering and many internationally educated engineers certify with CTTAM. This provides valuable recognition and allows for alternative professional employment in the individual's area of expertise; a benefit to the individual and Manitoba's economy alike.

With over 3,000 registered members, the Certified Technicians and Technologists Association of Manitoba (CTTAM) is one of Manitoba's larger regulated professions. Currently, as of September 2016, 16% of CTTAM's active members and 21% of its applicants are internationally educated (Source: CTTAM). In the 2011-2015 period, 702 internationally educated engineering technicians and technologists landed in Manitoba (Source: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship as prepared by Manitoba Education and Training).

Internationally educated technicians and technologists (IETTs) bring a diverse range of professional experience and technical skills to Manitoba and represent an important resource to meet the demands of Manitoba's skilled, applied science labour market.

## **Step 2: Apply to CTTAM for Assessment of Academic Qualification**

For IETTs, the first step is to apply to CTTAM. Applicants must complete an application form, pay a \$140 application fee and supply education documents, including original transcripts and syllabus (optional). Application forms detail the applicant's work history and require a signature from former supervisors or employers. Three professional references are needed.

CTTAM's Panel of Examiners and Certification Board reviews applications at scheduled meetings in September, November, January, March and May. Applicants are informed in writing of their assessment results 8 to 20 weeks upon completed application.

CTTAM may assess the applicant as academically qualified for either the Technician or Technologist designation. Applicants may also be granted Associate membership and advised of the steps required for academic qualification as a technician or technologist.

CTTAM will assess the applicant's professional work experience for the purpose of determining academic qualification.

## **Step 3: Write CTTAM's Law and Ethics Exam**

Applicants must pass CTTAM's Law and Ethics Exam. This is an open book exam that tests for professional jurisprudence knowledge. It is written at scheduled times at CTTAM's office or at out of town sittings. A Professional Practice Manual that covers the material is provided with the application. No fees are involved.

## **Step 4: If necessary, provide a Technical Report**

The ability to write a technical report is one of CTTAM's key qualification requirements for the technologist designation.

Applicants academically qualified for the Technologist designation but who do not meet CTTAM's technical report requirement may either:

- a) Develop and submit a technical report according to CTTAM's guidelines. Applicant's often need suitable employment to be able to produce a technical report and have up to a year to provide a completed report upon proposal approval. No fees are involved.
- b) Complete the Technical Report Writing Program at Red River College. The 10 week, 80 hour course costs \$650 (fee can increase with fewer participants) and provides instruction and guidance for applicants to produce a report.

## State of Progress

The Certified Technicians and Technologists Association of Manitoba (CTTAM) are committed to the fair assessment and recognition of internationally educated technicians and technologists (IETTs).

CTTAM's assessment and registration practice for IETTs is progressive. IETTs benefit from a timely, affordable process that offers a variety of supports. Key strengths of the licensure process include:

- Work at the national level by Canada Council of Technicians and Technologists (CCTT) has resulted in a strong articulation of standards in the National Technology Benchmarks and an extensive International Qualifications Database. This is a real achievement in a profession as broad and diverse as technicians and technologists and lays the foundation for rational regulation.
- Numerous mutual recognition, accords and reciprocity agreements are in place that allow for membership transfers and the recognition of academic qualifications from several international jurisdictions.
- CCTT's Canadian Technology Immigration Network provides pre-arrival assistance as a first-stop resource for self-assessment, professional orientation, registration, and employment information. Concrete, step-by-step instructions support pre-arrival preparation. The assessment of academic qualification and work history can be initiated abroad.
- CTTAM documentation requirements do not require applicants to arrange for the third-party submission of educational transcripts or regulatory histories.
- CTTAM's assessment of IETT qualifications includes assessing professional work experience. Work experience is considered both to supplement academic qualification and to qualify for up to one year of CTTAM's two year work experience requirement. Relevant work experience acquired by IETTs in Canada prior to registration is also considered and counts toward meeting CTTAM's Canadian work experience requirement. CTTAM provides IETTs strong personal support and assistance. Exam preparation support is provided for the jurisprudence exam. The registrar can provide letters about an applicant's anticipated designation status for employment purposes.
- CTTAM's Associate Registration designation allows those who are close to qualification an opportunity to practice along with a pathway to full designation.
- The registration process is timely. CTTAM's registration data for the 2011 – 2015 period indicates the average time to full registration of just under 4 months.

## **New Assessment Process under Consideration**

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Currently, CTTAM is considering a new assessment strategy, the Competency Report assessment and is in the process of adopting another, Professional Certification Exams.

### **Competency Report Assessment Model**

A Competency Report assessment would replace CTTAM's current IETT assessment of professional work experience. The Competency Report model is currently used in a few provincial jurisdictions.

In this process, applicants would open an application and complete the Technology of Registrations Canada no-fee, on line self-assessment. This involves applicants self-assessing their competency against the National Technology Benchmarks in their specific technician or technologist discipline. An online application 'dashboard' would allow applicants to see and monitor the status of the application with CTTAM.

The applicant's self-assessment together with a work experience assessment form would be provided to employers to support and direct their assessment of the applicant's competencies.

The applicant then would use this information together with a discipline-specific Competency Profile to complete a Competency Report – a point-form description of their work experience qualifications in relation to six key competencies. Competency Reports must be reviewed and signed by a professional reference familiar with the individual's professional experience.

CTTAM would assess Competency Reports using two discipline-specific subject matter experts.

### **Professional Certification Exams**

Currently in use by the Association of Science & Engineering Technologist Professionals of Alberta, Professional Certification Exams are discipline-specific competency assessments used to allow applicants seeking technologist level certification a way to demonstrated qualification as an alternative to academic upgrading. These exams are intended for applicants with non-accredited technologist level academic qualifications or who may have technician level academic qualification but significant professional experience.

### **Fair Practice Progress**

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The Competency Report Assessment Model under consideration is potentially a significant improvement in CTTAM's ability to assess and recognize professional work experience qualifications of IETTs. The process provides an innovative,

## Fair Practice Analysis

The Fairness Commissioner has identified the need for timely and effective registration, the recognition of qualifications acquired through professional work experience and the need for supervised practice opportunities as key substantive issues critical to realize progress among Manitoba regulators.

Following the Manitoba Fairness Standard, the Fairness Commissioner has the following commendations, comments and concerns about CTTAM's state of progress concerning these key fairness issues:

### Timely Registration

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*The assessment and registration process is structured efficiently (Manitoba Fairness Standard, 7.1).*

CTTAM's registration process is straightforward and structured efficiently.

Pathways are available to move from the partial recognition of Associate registration to full designation as well as from the Technician to Technologist designation.

As right to title designations, employment in the field is possible throughout the registration process so far as individuals do not represent themselves as certified technicians or technologists.

CTTAM is considering changes to its interim 'Associate' designation. New, provisional interim designations could be introduced that would make clear the level of academic qualification recognized. Provisional designations that reflect the individual's level of academic qualification – student, technician or technologist – would help employers better understand an IETT's qualifications.

*The assessment and registration process is periodically reviewed to ensure timeliness for internationally educated applicants (Manitoba Fairness Standard, 7.2).*

CTTAM's assessment and registration process is subject to regular review. CTTAM is currently in the process of implementing Professional Certification Exams and is considering implementing a Competency Report assessment model. Both of these changes could help strengthen CTTAM's assessment ability and would support improved recognition of IETT qualification. CTTAM continues to review challenges surrounding its Technical Report requirement.

Significant work by the Canadian Council of Technicians and Technologists went into the development of the National Technology Benchmarks and its extensive International Qualifications Database.

To help ensure more informed academic assessments, in 2013 CTTAM participated in a delegation of technician and technologist regulators that traveled to the Philippines.



## Recognition of Professional Work Experience

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*Professional work experience is considered to determine qualification (Manitoba Fairness Standard, 5.10).*

CTTAM considers professional work experience both for the purposes of determining academic qualification and for the purposes of reducing its two year work experience requirement. IETTs can have up to one year of qualifying international professional work experience recognized. However, one year of Canadian work experience is mandatory. Relevant work experience acquired by IETTs in Canada prior to registration is considered and counts toward meeting the requirement.

The new Competency Report assessment model under consideration by CTTAM would provide a more structured, powerful approach to assess professional work experience. Grounded on the National Technology Benchmarks, an innovative self-assessment would support applicants and employers identifying relevant experience and helps direct CTTAM's assessment. This approach would be progressive.

*Regulator has objective standards and criteria to assess knowledge and competencies acquired through work experience (Manitoba Fairness Standard, 5.11).*

CTTAM relies on the National Technology Benchmarks, developed by the Canadian Council of Technicians and Technologists, for standards and criteria to assess professional work experience.

The Competency Report assessment model would improve CTTAM's assessment strategy to apply the Benchmarks criteria and standards.

*If Canadian work experience is a mandatory requirement, it is clearly justified (Manitoba Fairness Standard, 5.12).*

For both the Technician and Technologist designation, applicants must complete one year of professional work in Canada to qualify for full designation. This requirement is similar across the country in this profession.

A mandatory, one year Canadian work experience requirement for IETTs is unfair in circumstances where the applicant can provide evidence of having worked in a Canadian-like environment or evidence of experience that suggest they will hit the ground running in the Canadian market place. In these circumstances, there is little warrant for the requirement.

## Progress Opportunities

The Fairness Commissioner sees the following opportunities for progress regarding the Certified Technicians and Technologists Association of Manitoba's assessment and registration practice:

1. Adopting the Competency Report assessment model currently in use in other provincial jurisdictions would improve CTTAM's capacity to assess professional work experience;
2. Adopting the Professional Certification Exams in use in other provincial jurisdictions and review the Technical Report qualification requirement for its relevance in this context would improve technologist registration opportunities for IETTs;
3. The mandatory, one year Canadian work experience requirement would be fairer if consideration is given to international professional experience acquired in a Canadian-like environment or relevant for successful Canadian practice;
4. Delivering the Professional Practice Seminar CTTAM has developed would provide IETTs strong professional orientation and help support workplace integration;
5. To improve CTTAM's registration information for IETTs it would be helpful if the 'Steps to Registration' and 'Document Checklist' items were updated and re-introduced and if access to records information were introduced.

## Fairness Commissioner's Recommendation

To ensure compliance to *The Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act*, the Fairness Commissioner recommends that Certified Technicians and Technologists Association of Manitoba take action regarding these progress opportunities.

Progress Opportunity	CTTAM Action(s)	Completion Date
<p>3. The mandatory, one year Canadian work experience requirement would be fairer if consideration is given to international experience acquired in a Canadian-like environment or relevant for successful Canadian practice;</p>	<p>Recognition of validated international work experience will meet the two year work requirement for certification.</p> <p>One year of supervised practice and a competency work reports are required.</p>	<p>Sep 2017</p>
<p>4. Delivering the Professional Practice Seminar CTTAM has developed would provide IETTs strong professional orientation and help support workplace integration;</p>	<p>CTTAM members have received Professional Practice training. Scheduling of sessions are in progress.</p>	<p>Feb 2017</p>
<p>5. To improve CTTAM's registration information for IETTs, it would be helpful if the 'Steps to Registration' and 'Document Checklist' items were re-introduced and if access to records information was provided;</p>	<p>Webpage redesign and the addition of online registration module to current association management software is under development.</p> <p>Applicants will be able to register online, upload records, access member status and records.</p>	<p>Dec 2017</p>

## Appendix I: 2011-2015 Registration Data

The Certified Technicians and Technologists Association of Manitoba (CTTAM) report annually to OMFC on the registration of internationally educated technicians and technologists (IETTs).

CTTAM received 1,373 total applications from 2011-2015. Among these applicants, 556 or 40% were internationally educated applicants (IEAs) with education from 51 different countries. The top country of education was the Philippines with 54.7% of applicants, followed by those educated in India at 9.57%, and Israel at 5.8%.

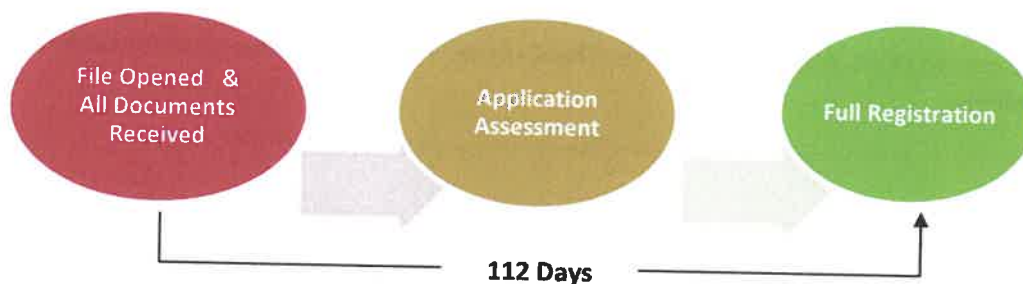
With regard to licensure outcomes, 35% of IEAs obtained full registrations by the end of 2015 and the remaining applicants were provisionally licensed as Associates.

Based on available information of 556 IEAs between 2011 and 2015, 196 were successfully registered by the end of 2015. Among the total registered IEA's, 25% were licensed as technicians and 10% were licensed as technologists.



The time, from when an IEA's application documents were received by CTTAM to full registration averaged 112 calendar days, or 3.7 months for the successful IEAs. The average process time for licensed technicians and licensed technologists was the same at 3.7 months.

### Average Time to Full Registration



Nine per cent of registrations were obtained within 1 month, 90% were obtained between 1 month and 12 months, 1% was obtained between 1 and 2 years, and 1% was obtained between 2 and 4 years. The shortest process time, from when an IEAs' application documents were received by CTTAM to when full registration was obtained, was 15 calendar days while the longest process time was over 2.5 years.

**Analysis of 2011 – 2105 regulator data on internationally educated applicants provided by the Manitoba Bureau of Statistics.**

## Appendix II: 2016 Registration Review Process

The OMFC's 2016 review process has several key steps: meeting to discuss the focus and process of the review, agreeing to a review schedule, documenting, evaluating and preparing a progress report, and achieving an action plan to move things forward. The process is designed to support regulators to further evolve registration practice and realize progressive change.

Activity	Description	Date
<b>Registration Review Workshop</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group meeting between OMFC and regulators</li> <li>• Latest data and research presented</li> <li>• Fairness Standard, review focus and process presented</li> <li>• Review schedule provided</li> </ul>	June 10, 2016
<b>Progress Report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTTAM report on its fair practice progress</li> <li>• Includes analysis of timely registration, recognition of professional work experience and supervised practice opportunities</li> <li>• Progress opportunities identified</li> <li>• Recommendation from Fairness Commissioner to address progress opportunities</li> </ul>	October 3, 2016
<b>Progress Meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTTAM and Fairness Commissioner discuss report and possible actions CTTAM is considering addressing progress opportunities</li> </ul>	October 25, 2016
<b>CTTAM Action Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTTAM's Action Plan submitted to OMFC</li> </ul>	December 7, 2016
<b>2016 Registration Review Report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report submitted to CTTAM</li> <li>• Report contains the review findings, CTTAM's Action Plan, and the Fairness Commissioner's Compliance Statement</li> </ul>	December 14, 2016
<b>Registration Review Closeout Meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTTAM and Fairness Commissioner discuss Registration Review Report, potential OMFC support for actions &amp; how CTTAM's action plan will inform the relationship moving forward</li> <li>• Registration Review Report submitted to Minister of Education and Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade and uploaded on OMFC website</li> </ul>	December 15, 2016

### CTTAM Review participants:

Robert Okabe, CTTAM Registrar & Executive Director

Andrew Procca, CTTAM Board President Elect

# OFFICE OF THE MANITOBA FAIRNESS COMMISSIONER

## 2016 Registration Review – Certified Technicians and Technologists Association of Manitoba

June – December 2016

