

***Competency-Based Assessment Guide***

*Information for Applicants,  
Validators, and Assessors*

## Competency-Based Assessment Guide Information for Applicants, Validators, and Assessors

Adapted from:

Engineers & Geoscientists British Columbia's (EGBC) *Competency  
Assessment Guide for Applicants, Validators and Assessors*

Professional Engineers and Geoscientists Newfoundland and Labrador's (PEGNL) *Competency Assessment Information Manual  
for Applicants, Validators, and Assessors*

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# Competency-Based Assessment Guide

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## Competency-Based Assessment Guide

### 1 Introduction

Geoscience is a self-regulated profession in ten provincial and territorial Canadian jurisdictions. In seven of the ten jurisdictions, geoscience is regulated under joint legislation with engineering, while in the remaining three (Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia), geoscience is regulated under separate legislation. In each case, the regulatory associations have a mandate to regulate the practice of geoscience and register professional geoscientists.

The Professional Geoscientist (P.Ge.) designation, as a member holding a valid certificate of registration in Canada, allows an individual to practice geoscience, or professionally practice, in the province or territory where it was granted, including in Nova Scotia. Only those with valid certificates of registration in the jurisdiction in which they are working, or, in some cases, practicing under the direct supervision of a professional holding their P.Eng. or P.Ge. designation, have a legal right to practice professionally in the regulated jurisdiction in which they are working.

Geoscientists Canada have worked to harmonize requirements for professional registration under the *Geoscience Knowledge and Experience Requirements for Professional Registration in Canada* (the GKE). This allows a professional, registered and in good standing in one jurisdiction in Canada, to become registered in other jurisdictions through reciprocal agreements. This is further governed through federal legislation such as the **Canada Free Trade Agreement (specifically, Chapter 7)** and provincial legislation such as the **Fair Registration and Practices Act, 2008** in Nova Scotia. While there can be some variation in registration requirements in each jurisdiction, there is a drive towards harmonization of the three main requirements: academic qualifications, the National Professional Practice Exam, and work experience.

Work experience is assessed using Competency-Based Assessment (CBA) to determine whether Applicants have progressed to a professional level of competency in their field during their geoscience work experience. The online Competency-Based Assessment System (CBA System) was designed to ensure that regulatory requirements uphold and protect the public interest while maintaining an equitable, transparent, consistent, and efficient registration process. The CBA System comprises the required proficiencies for entry to the profession and provides clear guidance on the path to registration for Applicants, Validators, Assessors, and employers alike.

This guide is intended to assist P.Ge. Applicants in completing their CBA application, as well as to guide Validators and Assessors in verifying and evaluating these applications. The contents are intended to enhance the reader's understanding of geoscience competencies and how they should be met and presented in a Competency Self-Assessment.

#### 1.1 Geoscientists Nova Scotia

**Geoscientists Nova Scotia** (officially the Association of Professional Geoscientists of Nova Scotia, APGNS) has a mandate to regulate the practice of geoscience in the public interest. APGNS exists so that there will be competent and ethical practice of geoscience in Nova Scotia, and to instill public confidence in the profession.

The **Geoscience Profession Act, 2002** (the Act) governs the practice of geoscience in the Province of

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Nova Scotia. APGNS has the authority to license practitioners under the Act and strives to ensure the ethical conduct of all professional members.

Licensing and registration systems by regulators normally serve three purposes:

- Setting standards for entry to practice for professions with associated admission of professionals subject to meeting those standards,
- Establishing guidelines or standards for maintaining competency and enhancing knowledge and expertise of professional members in their practice, generally known as continuing professional development (CPD) standards. The requirements of these standards include periodic monitoring to confirm compliance; and
- Establishing and enforcing a discipline process to address issues of conduct deserving of sanction.

Section 7 of the Act empowers APGNS to:

- (g) prescribe the nature and extent of the education and practical experience that must be possessed by any person before being permitted to practice professional geoscience or before being enrolled as a member-in-training,*
- (h) adopt and require adherence to standards of practice, competence and conduct, and performance standards and technical standards, for members of the Association, persons licensed to practice and members-in-training,*
- (i) provide facilities for determining by examination or other means the competency of persons seeking to practice professional geoscience or to be enrolled as members-in-training and grant certificates of registration and licenses to practice to persons qualified to practice,*
- (k) arrange and establish ways and means by which persons may be trained in the profession of geoscience,*
- (m) prescribe conditions, requirements and procedures for the registration of members of the Association, the enrolment of members-in-training and the issuance of licenses to practice, and the renewal and re-instatement thereof,*

Questions or concerns relating to this policy document or the *Geoscience Profession Act* should be addressed to the Registrar of APGNS via email at [registrar@geoscientistsns.ca](mailto:registrar@geoscientistsns.ca).

### 1.2 Competency- Based Assessment Guide Purpose

CBA is used to evaluate one component of the P.Geo. registration requirements – professional work experience. The full list of P.Geo. registration requirements for Nova Scotia can be found in APGNS's *Registration Policy*, located on our [website](#). Note that an Applicant is not eligible to apply for P.Geo. registration until they have achieved a minimum of 48 months, or 4 years, of work experience. This requirement is separate from, though relevant to, Competency-Based Assessment.

## **Competency-Based Assessment Guide**

This Competency-Based Assessment Guide supports Applicants, as well as Validators, Assessors, and other interested parties in navigating the CBA System. The Geoscience Competency Framework (Appendix A) describes the required proficiencies (including Workplace Examples) for entry to the profession. The Applicant completes a Competency Self-Assessment Form to demonstrate that they have achieved an acceptable level of professional competence, which is verified by a Validator(s) before being evaluated by an Assessor(s). This CBA System is designed to ensure that professional registration requirements protect the interests of the public while maintaining an equitable, transparent, consistent and efficient registration process.

### **1.2.1 Applicability and Coming into Force**

Transition from the former, paper-based experience reporting system to the online CBA process is as follows:

1. CBA shall be used by:
  - (a) Geoscientists-in-Training (GIT) registered with APGNS on or after May 1, 2026.
  - (b) GITs registered with APGNS before May 1, 2026, who have not submitted any experience reports in the former paper-based system by May 1, 2026.
  - (c) International graduates who have applied for GIT and have been given the opportunity to submit work experience in lieu of writing confirmatory exams.
2. All GITs registered before May 1, 2026, who have submitted one or more experience reports in the former paper-based system May 1, 2026, have the choice to continue in the former system or switch to CBA. These GITs are encouraged and invited to switch to CBA.
3. CBA does not apply to applicants registered in, and transferring from, another Canadian regulatory body. It also does not apply to License to Practice applicants.

## **1.3 Definitions**

### **Act**

The Nova Scotia Geoscience Profession Act, 2002 (c.7, s.1)

### **Admissions Board**

The body appointed by the APGNS Council to govern the approval of applicants applying to register as professional members or members-in-training.

### **Applicant**

Person applying for registration as a professional geoscientist.

### **Assessor**

A professional member who reviews the Applicant's submission and Validators' feedback to make a recommendation on the Applicant's readiness for professional registration.

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### **By-laws**

By-laws of the Association of Professional Geoscientists of Nova Scotia made under the Geoscience Profession Act Chapter 7 of the Acts of 2002.

### **Discipline**

A specific field of practice governed by the Act (i.e., geology, geophysics, environmental geoscience, etc.).

### **Professional Member**

A geoscientist or licensee to practice entitled to engage in the practice of geoscience under the Act.

### **Validator**

Person - typically the Applicant's direct supervisor - who confirms the work experience information of which they have personal knowledge.

## **2 Competency-Based Assessment Overview**

### **2.1 Elements and Definitions**

#### **2.1.1 Competency**

Competencies are defined as an identified skill set or knowledge base that the Applicant must have attained to achieve professional registration. These are behavioral-type descriptions that can be linked to a task or role of an occupational category. In the CBA System, competencies are assessed relative to standards expected and recognized by employers and the community at large. The Geoscience Competency Framework (Appendix A) outlines the common competencies related to work experience that are essential for professional geoscientists in all disciplines to ensure effective practice and public safety.

#### **2.1.2 Work Experience Competencies and Competency Categories**

The Geoscience Competency Framework (Appendix A) consists of four Competency Categories:

- Professionalism
- Scientific method
- Area of geoscience practice
- Complementary

The four categories represent the essential areas in which professional geoscientists of all disciplines must demonstrate an acceptable degree of competence to qualify for independent practice. There are a total of 29 Work-Experience Competencies (WEC) to be demonstrated across the four Competency Categories.

Applicants document work experience that they believe demonstrates a level of competence relative to the task described for each of the 29 WECs. Each WEC in the Geoscience Competency

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Framework contains a list of Workplace Examples to assist the Applicant.

### 2.1.3 Competency-Based Assessment System

The CBA System is intended to be an efficient, easy-to-use online system that enables APGNS student members, Geoscientists-in-Training, and Member Applicants to save their work experience information, monitor their progress towards meeting the competency requirements, and submit this information for online validation and assessment.

## 2.2 Level of Competence

Level of competence is a function of three variables:

- Level of complexity of the task expressed in the competency.
- Level of supervision provided in the applicant's performance of the task.
- Level of risk based upon the real-world result of the task.

As the level of competence increases, the level of supervision decreases and the level of complexity and risk increases. The level of risk is determined by how significant the decisions are likely to be based on the work undertaken. For example, there may be significant financial risks to public investors based on the result of a mineral resource estimate conducted by a qualified professional geoscientist, or risks to soil and groundwater resources based on an industrial operation that is evaluated by a professional geoscientist.

### 2.2.1 Competency Rating Scale

The **Competency Rating Scale** (Table 1) outlines six different levels of competence (0-5), to determine whether an Applicant has achieved the required level of competence for P.Geo. registration.

**Table 1: Competency Rating Scale**

Competence Level	The candidate's provided example demonstrates:
0	No Exposure. No exposure to the competency.
1	Training Level. A general awareness of the competency and its significance in practice.
2	Level of Limited Experience. Application of the competency, or components of the competency, with considerable supervision, in situations of low complexity and minimal risk.
3	Approaching a Professional Level. 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.

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<b>4</b>	Working at a Professional Level. Application 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.
<b>5</b>	Mature Geoscience Level. Application of the competency without 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.

The perceived level of competence for each competency is rated on a scale of 0 through 5, where 3 represents the level expected for entry-to-practice<sup>1</sup>. Ratings will be based upon the level of competency definitions shown in Table 1. Repeatable and reliable performance is expected for ratings of level 3 or higher.

A successful Applicant must meet each individual work experience competency (WEC) to a minimum of level one (1, training level) on the Competency Rating Scale, while achieving the required average level of three (3, approaching a professional level) for each of the four Competency Categories. Note that a subset of the WECs, identified as the Canadian WECs, require individual competency rankings of 3. This is further described in Section 3.3.3.

The Assessor's rating will be based upon the Assessor's review of the workplace experience that the Applicant provides. It will consider the ratings of the Applicant and the Validator, although it may differ.

### 2.2.2 Workplace Examples

The Applicant must describe workplace activities - specific actions, skills or behaviors – that demonstrate acceptable competence for each WEC.

Within Appendix A, the Geoscience Competency Framework, APGNS provides a list of Workplace Examples, common to all geoscience disciplines, for each WEC. The Workplace Examples are meant to help Applicants understand what types of workplace activities are needed to meet each requirement, or what specific knowledge base, experience, or skill they must develop before achieving professional registration. They are intended as guidance and are not intended to be an exhaustive list.

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<sup>1</sup> The rating scale goes beyond that required for entry to practice, to include higher levels of achievement, with the intent to recognize that PGeo candidates may be experienced geoscientists who possess such higher-level abilities.

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### 2.3 Roles and Responsibilities

The following is an overview of the roles and responsibilities of each participant in the CBA System.

#### **APPLICANT:**

- Provides work experience details through the CBA System, including work experience chronology and specific examples to address each competency,
- Provides self-assessed level for each competency according to the Competency Rating Scale,
- Provides contact information for a minimum of four individuals to act as Validators to verify and provide feedback on their competency self-assessment, and
- Provides further information as requested.

#### **VALIDATOR:**

- Supervisor/Employer/Colleague/Client; a P.Geo. or equivalent who is familiar with Applicant's work and can verify the self-assessment (refer to Section 3.4.1),
- Confirms the work experience information of which they have personal knowledge,
- Provides level scores for competencies to which they are assigned by Applicants (if applicable),
- For those Validators who were not given specific competencies to validate, they will provide an overall assessment. For example, if the applicant provided examples from only one supervisor, that supervisor validates all the examples, and the other three validators provide general comments and answer the general reference questions included in the competency assessment reporting system, and
- Provides overall feedback on the Applicant's readiness for registration.
- Applicants cannot act as their own Validator.

#### **ASSESSOR:**

- Qualified APGNS-trained volunteers, ideally in the Applicant's area of practice,
- Reviews Applicant's submission as well as Validators' feedback,
- Provides scores for each competency, and,
- Makes a recommendation on Applicant's readiness for professional registration.

#### **INTERVIEWER:**

- Assesses the Applicant further if necessary.

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### 3 Documentation and Instructions

#### 3.1 Application Components

There are two main components that Applicants must complete, both of which are submitted through the CBA System:

- A brief, chronological **Employment History**. This provides a short form overview of an Applicant's experience.

A **Competency Self-Assessment** using examples drawn from work experience to demonstrate achievement of each Work Experience Competency.

For a full list of required documentation for Applicants, including proof of academic qualifications, please refer to APGNS's website.

**Competency submissions are not<sup>2</sup> assessed until the Applicant is registered with APGNS as a Geoscientist-in-Training and ALL required application documents have been received.**

#### 3.2 Before You Apply

APGNS recommends that Applicants take the following initial steps:

- Discuss the CBA system with proposed Validators so that they are aware of what the expectations are.
- Ensure that your resume/curriculum vitae (CV) is kept up to date to include key job roles, projects, and achievements over the period of work experience you are claiming (a minimum of four years). This will save you time completing the Employment History and selecting projects to use as examples in the Competency Self-Assessment. Note that a project does not have to be completed to use it as a competency example.
- Maintain a record of all your Continuing Professional Development (CPD) goals and activities.
- Familiarize yourself with the Geoscience Competency Framework (Appendix A) and its Workplace Examples.
- For key learning activities please take the time to reflect briefly on the key learning that you gained, how it may have impacted your practice, and how it contributed to demonstrating competence within any of the competencies.

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<sup>2</sup> with one exception – Academic Review cases where the applicant is given the opportunity to submit work experience to waive confirmatory exams.

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### 3.3 Employment History

#### 3.3.1 Compiling an Employment History

All Applicants must complete an *Employment History* summary through the CBA System. The *Employment History* section creates a chronological, short form overview of an Applicant's experience, including a brief summary of their responsibilities in each position. This summary can be edited at any time before an Applicant submits their final competency self-assessment.

Applicants should remember to:

- Briefly explain any gaps or overlaps in time periods.
- Demonstrate evidence of progression of experience and responsibility throughout your career.

**IMPORTANT:** As per the *Geoscience Profession Act, 2002* (Section 10 b), an Applicant must obtain at least four years of relevant work experience prior to becoming registered as a professional member, and this is determined through a review of the applicant's *Employment History*. CBA does NOT replace the need for this requirement.

#### 3.3.2 Types of Eligible Experience

More information on this requirement is found on the application form for licensure. In addition, if you have any questions about this requirement prior to applying/completing your CBA assessment, please contact APGNS's Registrar at [registrar@geoscientistsns.ca](mailto:registrar@geoscientistsns.ca).

#### 3.3.3 Canadian Work-Environment Experience Competencies

All P.Geo. Applicants must demonstrate Canadian environment competencies under the direct supervision of a Canadian professional geoscientist (or equivalent). The Canadian Work-Environment Experience Competencies (CWECs) are a subset of 7 of the existing 29 work experience competencies that best demonstrate knowledge and experience of Canadian regulations, codes, standards, quality control, business culture and practices, safety awareness, professional accountability, and communication.

The seven Canadian Work-Environment Experience Competencies are:

- 1. Professional Competencies
  - 1.1 Comply with relevant legislation, regulations, and statutory reporting requirements
  - 1.4 Maintain constructive working relationships
  - 1.5 Apply ethical principles
  - 1.6 Respond to obligations and responsibilities to the public, to the natural environment, to clients and to employers
  - 1.7 Contribute to health and safety in the workplace
- 4. Complementary Competencies
  - 4.1 Deliver and comprehend oral communication
  - 4.2 Deliver and comprehend written communication

Workplace Examples for each of the CWECs contain specific references to the Canadian

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environment to guide Applicants on submitting appropriate examples. To satisfy the Canadian Work-Environment Experience Competency requirement, a Competency Level of 3 (rather than 1) is required for each of these CWECs.

### Canadian Work-Environment Experience Competencies and International Experience

Canadian environment or “equivalent-to-Canadian” experience normally means geoscience work experience within Canada or the United States. If you have international experience with a company that used Canadian or North American standards, customs and/or codes, it might be considered as equivalent-to-Canadian and count toward the Canadian experience requirement. This would include validated experience supervised by a professional member of a Canadian or equivalent licensing body. The Applicant would have to be working, at least, to international standards and it could include working for a multinational corporation or a Canadian or U.S. corporation overseas.

## 3.4 Competency Self-Assessment

Competency self-assessment is a self-driven activity that allows individuals to assess how their competencies-knowledge, skills and abilities meet the requirements.

### 3.4.1 Selecting Validators

Through the CBA System, Applicants must provide **the names and contact email addresses of a minimum of four (4) Validators**. Validators confirm your competency examples and provide overall feedback on your readiness for professional licensure.

The Validator must have had technical responsibility for the Applicant’s work and have witnessed the Applicant performing the duties and tasks as described in the work and competencies. Consider to whom you report or who signs off on your work when listing Validators. One Validator must be a direct supervisor and share the same discipline or scope of practice as the Applicant. Clients and consultants may serve as Validators but must have first-hand knowledge of the Applicant’s work.

Ideally, all Validators will be professional geoscientists (or equivalent). However, if that is not possible, ensure that a **minimum of two are professional geoscientists**. A professional engineer can validate geoscience experience if the experience falls within the field of professional practice. For example, geological engineers may validate geoscientists since there is an overlap in the profession.

As you complete your Competency Self-Assessment, you will assign each example to a Validator having first-hand knowledge of the work described. This Validator will be asked to provide a competence level score for the example and will have the option of providing a comment. All Validators are also asked to provide overall feedback on your experience and readiness for registration.

Each competency requires one Validator, but one Validator can verify multiple competencies. There is no requirement to assign all Validators to competencies. Validators not assigned to any

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competencies will be asked to provide overall feedback. For example, work-term supervisors who do not need to validate any examples may be included as Validators to provide overall feedback, which will allow them to comment on and confirm your experience during the work term.

### *Validator General Feedback Questions*

All Validators must provide acceptable answers, as determined by the Registrar, to the following general feedback questions. These questions serve the purpose of providing a reference as well as validation of specific periods of work experience.

- Please specify your current employer and position.
- What is your professional designation?
- What is your jurisdiction of registration?
- What is your discipline of geoscience?
- What is your registration/license number, if applicable?
- What is your relationship with the applicant?
- During what time period have you known the applicant?
- During which time period did you have a professional/business relationship with the applicant?
- What is or was your professional/business relationship to the applicant?
- Have you reviewed and taken responsibility for the applicant's work?
- In your opinion, is the applicant's character acceptable?
- In your opinion, are the applicant's English or French language skills related to the provision of geoscience services at a level sufficient to protect the interest of the public?
  - a. reading
  - b. writing
  - c. listening
  - d. speaking
- In your opinion, does the applicant:
  - a. apply geoscience principles in a knowledgeable and accurate manner?
  - b. have the ability to recognize and work within their limitations?
  - c. possess sound professional judgment?
  - d. adhere to the provincial licensing body's Code of Ethics?
- Do you feel that you have enough support and information to complete the task of validation and to make a judgement whether the applicant is ready to assume professional responsibility?
- In your judgment, how much of the applicant's experience with which you are specifically familiar was engineering/geoscience?

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- In your judgment, has the applicant reached a "professional level" in their work? If your answer is "Yes", you are indicating that the applicant can accept full professional responsibility and has reached the level of professional maturity needed to judge when they are out of their area of competence.

### 3.4.2 Providing Competency Workplace Examples

The Competency Self-Assessment section mimics the Competency Framework (Appendix A) and is divided into the four Competency Categories with each of the 29 WECs listed under the appropriate Category. An example must be provided for all WECs prior to final submission.

When filling in the Competency Self-Assessment, use both the WECs and their Workplace Examples as guidelines to identify suitable and relevant projects and activities from your geoscience experience that will best **demonstrate your achievement of each competency. Be specific about your individual actions and contributions.**

For each example, use Table 1 (Section 2.2.1) to identify a self-assessed competence level that you believe you have demonstrated. The descriptions are also provided in the applicable screens in the reporting system. Each WEC must be achieved at a minimum of level one (1) on the Competency Rating Scale (or three (3) for the seven Canadian WECs), while achieving the required average level of three (3) (the entry to practice level) for each Competency Category.

### 3.4.3 Selecting, Drafting, and Saving Examples

Under each WEC you are asked to describe the example of your recent geoscience activities that best demonstrates your achievement of the competency. The examples you select should reflect activities or projects in which you had responsibility. Note that a project does not need to be completed to use it as a competency example. Details are encouraged - be specific in describing how you have met the competency.

When selecting examples, pay close attention to the provided Workplace Examples as they are intended to assist you in identifying typical evidence to submit. However, they are only a guide. You do not need to demonstrate all Workplace Examples listed. You can also use relevant examples from your own work experience to demonstrate competency that are not listed as a Workplace Example.

**IMPORTANT:** Applicants cannot edit the content of competencies or Validator assignments after they have selected the button to submit the assessment for validation. Do all necessary checks to ensure accuracy before submission.

## 3.5 Competency Example Components

Each example includes the following information:

- **Employer and Position:** Your employer and position at the time of the work described in the example.
- **Validator:** The Professional Geoscientist (or equivalent) that has first-hand knowledge

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of your work who you are asking to validate this example.

- **Start Date and End Date (Month/Year):** The time period covered by your specific example for this competency.
- **Situation:** A brief overview of a specific situation or problem. The same situation can be used to cover multiple competencies.
- **Action:** The actions that you took in response to the situation, including geoscience judgements made or solutions found. This section is typically the longest portion of the example and should include details about the specific actions that you took that demonstrate completion of the competency. Point form is permitted.
- **Outcome:** The impact that your actions, solutions, or judgements generated.
- **Self-Assessed Competence Level:** The level on the Competency Rating Scale that you believe that you demonstrated in the example.
- **Canadian Environment Example:** Whether this experience was gained in a Canadian environment or one equivalent (see Section 3.3.3).

Examples are valid if:

- They are related to unique problems without obvious pre-determined solutions; and
- You had full or partial responsibility for delivering the outcome; and
- They typically took at least one month (full time equivalent) to accomplish.

### 3.5.1 Tips on Writing Examples

The objective is to supply sufficient information to enable straightforward verification of your evidence by Assessors, and not to leave Assessors with substantive questions or information gaps that require further investigation before they can verify that the required competence level is met.

- Your examples should demonstrate experience in a geoscience environment or as part of a geoscience assignment.
- Refer to the provided Workplace Examples for examples of what could be good evidence to include in the Competency Self-Assessment.
- Be specific about your contribution when describing your experience. Avoid general terms such as “participated in” or “was involved with” and state your exact duties.
- Always write in the first person using “I” statements – even if you were working as part of a group.
- Provide key details. Include the significance of the project (i.e., an indication of project size such as dollar value and duration), your role in the project, technical or managerial complexity, key issues, and outcomes.
- Consider appropriate level of detail. Less detail may be needed for substantial, obviously complex projects or activities than for smaller-scale projects where the complexities may not be immediately apparent to the Assessors.

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- Wherever possible use point form when describing the actions you took to resolve the situation described in your example.
- The same situation/project can be used to demonstrate several competencies AND different aspects of the same project can be used to demonstrate several competencies.
- A project does not need to be completed to use it as a competency example.
- As an Applicant, it is your responsibility to pick your best evidence for your application. Don't wait to be asked!

### 3.5.2 Confidential Information

Where project details are required to be kept confidential, include a statement to that effect within the reporting system. Provide as much detail as you are permitted with the goal of providing sufficient evidence that you are able to practice competently as a professional geoscientist. This could be demonstrated by documentation that describes the nature of your work and its complexities without disclosing confidential details about solutions, business processes, client names or locations.

***The Applicant may use surrogate names such as "Project X" in "City/Town Q" then inform the Validator separately which project is being referenced as such. Note that although all APGNS Assessors are bound by confidentiality, it is wise not to disclose proprietary or confidential information because Assessors may work in the same industry or sector.*** Where there is a choice, obfuscate the information or use non-confidential information. Discuss with supervisor(s) before submittal.

## 4 Validation of an Application

### 4.1 Validation Requirements

Please see Section 3.4.1 for applicant Validation Requirements. Supplementary information for Validation Requirements is found below.

Applicants not directly supervised by a professional geoscientist would normally be referred to the application process by an APGNS-approved mentor. The mentor can serve as a Validator for competency examples provided by the Applicant.

When an Applicant is under the supervision of an engineer or geoscientist in a jurisdiction where licensure of that engineer or geoscientist is not normally required (i.e. in another country), a CV must be submitted with the application so that the Admissions Board may ascertain that the Validator is "equivalent" to a licensed Professional Engineer or Professional Geoscientist.

For any Validators who are not professional engineers or geoscientists, the Applicant must submit their CV in the "Supporting Documentation" section of their application.

No additional reference forms are required to be submitted for users of the CBA System; all

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supervisor feedback must be provided through the validation process.

***Note that Validators may be contacted by APGNS to verify their identity and relationship to the Applicant.***

### 4.2 Validation Process

The online validation process proceeds as follows:

- Validators cited by the Applicant receive a link by email which includes login information to complete their validation through the online system. This email will only be sent when an Applicant submits an example through interim validation or a completed Competency Self-Assessment. It is recommended that the Applicant contact the Validator(s) before or immediately after releasing the completed submission for validation to confirm they received their link. **Note: If the Validation email was not received, check the spam filter. The domain name of the email is <https://competencyassessment.ca>.**
- Following the link, the Validator will enter the CBA System.
- The Validator will first view the Applicant's education and employment history. No input is required from the Validator in these sections, but they provide the Validator with the opportunity to review chronological summaries of the Applicant's education and experience.
- Validators then have an opportunity to decline to complete the process if they are not willing or able to verify the Applicant's experience. A reason must be provided if the validation is declined, and a comment box is provided. The reason, along with all Validator feedback, is confidential and is not visible to the Applicant.
- The Validator is asked to review the Applicant's Competency Self-Assessment and provide feedback on any examples that the Applicant has assigned to them. Applicants select the appropriate Validator for each example they provide. The selected Validator provides a rating on the Competency Rating Scale (Table 1, Section 2.2.1) and is given the option to provide a comment. Validator comments on the examples are encouraged and help to provide valuable additional feedback and information to Assessors.
- Finally, Validators will be asked to provide overall feedback on the Applicant's readiness for licensure. Note that if a Validator is not assigned to a specific competency example, they are asked to complete the overall feedback section only.

#### 4.2.1 Applicant Disagreement with Validator's Evaluation

In the reporting system, Validator comments are not visible to the Applicant, but Validators are urged to inform the Applicant separately of any areas of concern, unless there are legal reasons preventing it. An Applicant may not agree with the evaluation of a Validator. If that is the case, it should be discussed with the Validator and if necessary, an additional letter submitted to APGNS Registrar stating the concerns.

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### 5 Assessing an Application – Overview

Each competency submission is reviewed by two Assessors, ideally in the Applicant's field of practice. The Applicant is asked to show understanding of all of the competencies and to demonstrate an overall average minimum level achievement in each category. However, it is important to note that Assessors can look at other factors, including the peer recommendations, to determine if the Applicant is ready for professional registration.

The online assessment process proceeds as follows:

- Assessors are assigned by APGNS staff and are notified by email once the submission is ready for review. The submission is made once the Applicant has completed all data entry and all Validators have completed their reviews. The Assessors will log in to the CBA System and perform their reviews independently.
- The Assessor will examine the Applicant's education and employment history. No input is required from the Assessor in these sections, but they provide the Assessor with the opportunity to review chronological summaries of the Applicant's education and experience. The employment history section also provides Assessors with an opportunity to look for a progression of responsibility in the Applicant's experience.
- The Assessor will then review the Applicant's Competency Self-Assessment and determine for each competency whether the example(s) provided represent sufficient evidence that it has been met. While reviewing each example, Assessors will note the competence level claimed by the Applicant and validated by the Validator for each competency. Based on the breadth, depth and quality of the example provided, the Assessor will determine the competence level demonstrated for each competency. Descriptions of each competency level are available in Table 1 of this guide. Assessors also have the option of providing a comment for each Competency for review by the Admissions Board; these comments are confidential to the assessment process and cannot be viewed by the Applicant or Validators. If a re-submission is required, the Applicant will be provided with the details of the issue.
- The system calculates the average Competence Level achieved for each category according to each Assessor.
- In the *Supporting Documents* section, Assessors may review any supporting documents uploaded by the Applicant. The inclusion of supporting documents is optional, except for the CVs of any Validators who are not professional engineers or geoscientists.
- In the *Validator Overall Feedback* section, Assessors will review the feedback of the Applicant's Validators.
- The Assessor will then be asked to confirm their final recommendation on whether the Applicant has met the competencies at the required level for professional registration.

#### 5.1 Validator/Applicant Discrepancy in Ratings

If a Validator rates an Applicant lower than the Applicant self-rates, Assessors consider several things:

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- If it is one competency and the category averages to an acceptable level, it is normally not considered to be a problem. Validators whose rating is below the Applicant's self-assessment will often comment on why, although it is not mandatory. Assessors tend to accept the Validator's rating, especially if it is below that of the Applicant, as it is may be accompanied by a concern articulated by the Validator.
- Assessors look at the Validator's overall additional feedback at the end to see if the Validator considers the person ready for registration or licensure.
- It is possible that the Applicant did an unacceptable job of writing the example, but the experience is acceptable. The Applicant will be provided with the opportunity to rewrite and re-submit the competency in question.
- If the Validator indicates that the Applicant needs additional experience to satisfy a specific competency and the Assessors agree, the Assessors will comment, and the Applicant will normally be given the opportunity to re-submit the competency in question, if it is necessary to pass either the competency or the category. Upon assessment of the re-submission, one of three things may happen:
  - the competency is accepted, or
  - the Applicant will have to use another example from other work experience, or
  - the Applicant will have to gain additional experience to satisfactorily complete a competency category.

### 5.2 Rating an Example

Assessors rate each example in an Applicant's Self-Assessment for each competency according to the Competency Rating Scale (Table 1, Section 2.2.1). An Assessor's role is to examine the examples provided for each competency and determine the competence level that has been demonstrated. Applicants must have met the required average Competence Level for each category to be granted registration.

#### 5.2.1 Example Review Process

An evaluation of Competency Category 1 - Professionalism serves as an example of the review process. Seven competencies (1.1-1.7) are included the Professional Competencies category.

The Assessor reads and assesses the examples for each Competency, keeping in mind the following:

- Examples must be related to unique problems without obvious pre-determined solutions.
- The Applicant must have had full or partial responsibility for delivering the outcome.
- Examples are strong substantial examples completed over a period of time.

**Note:** The length of time it takes to perform a task is not indicative of complexity. A complex example can take a short amount of time and a simple example can take an extended period. For instance, for working well in a team, a significant difference of

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opinion could be resolved within a week and be an excellent example. The quality of the example is more important than the time it takes to complete it.

- Examples must be clear and specific and demonstrate the Applicant's competence in a particular area. Assessors cannot rely on implied evidence.

Based on the evidence provided in the examples, the Assessor will assign the Applicant a score on the Competency Rating Scale for each competency in the category – in this case, the seven competencies under Professional Competencies (Geoscience). The Applicant's self-assessed score and the Validator's feedback are available for reference.

Assessors may look to the Competency Rating Scale and Workplace Examples for guidance in determining whether candidates have met the required standard for each competency.

The online tool calculates the average that the Applicant has achieved for each Competency Category. For the Geoscience Professional Competencies category, if the average score is equal to or higher than the required minimum overall competence level of 3, and a level of 1 was achieved for each individual WEC (and level 3 for Canadian WECs), the Applicant has satisfied the requirements for Technical Competence or Professional Competencies.

### 5.2.2 When the Assessor Does Not Agree or When Any Competencies Do Not Pass

Further assessment is required if the Assessor does not agree that a specific competency is passed. Depending on the situation, additional Assessors may be contacted, the Applicant may be required to submit additional Validators, or the submission may go before the Registrar to decide. Other measures may also be taken depending on the circumstances. This process applies to the first submission as well as any re-submissions.

## 6 The Assessment Process - Applicant Stages

### 6.1 When to Start Entering Your Competencies

You can create an account for the CBA System and begin using the system in one of the following circumstances:

- You are approved as a Geoscientist-In-Training with APGNS; or
- You apply for membership in the Association (P.Geo.).

In either case, you will have a unique ID (GIT number, or Application In Process (AIP) number) which must be used when establishing your account.

You access the system online here: <https://competencyassessment.ca/>.

Once you have followed the instructions to set up an account, APGNS will be notified automatically with a request to approve your account, and you will be notified by email when it is available for you to begin entering your information.

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### 6.2 Applying for Professional Membership

***Current Geoscientists-in-Training:*** Upon completion of at least 48 months of experience, have completed your entries in the CBA System, and have made application for professional licensure, you may submit your competency examples for validation and assessment.

***First Time Applicants for Certificate of Registration:*** Upon application to APGNS, you will receive sign up information for your account in the CBA System. While you are completing your Competency Self-Assessment, APGNS will proceed with the evaluation of your academic qualifications. You may submit your competency examples for validation and assessment once complete, but your Competency Self-Assessment will not be assessed until the evaluation of your academic qualifications is complete. It is therefore important to supply all required academic information in a timely fashion.

Once the CBA report is accepted, the report is sent to the Admissions Board for review and recommendation of approval to APGNS Council. The APGNS Council is the final approving body, and they will determine if professional registration or licensure is obtained. A passing grade on the National Professional Practice Exam (NPPE) is also required prior to being granted professional registration or licensure.

### 6.3 Tracking Progress of Your Assessment

Once you have submitted your Competency Self-Assessment, you are able to log back into the system at any time to track the progress of your Validators in verifying your submission. This information will be available in the Competency Self-Assessment section of the system.

### 6.4 Communication of Results

Once your Competency Self-Assessment has been validated and assessed, and all other elements of your application are deemed to be in order, your application file will be forwarded to the APGNS Admissions Board for review and to Council for approval. This will typically take 4-6 weeks but may be longer, depending on case load. The decision of the Council following recommendations from the Admissions Board will be sent to you in an official letter from the Registrar, typically within 2 weeks following the Council meeting at which your application was approved.

Applicants should contact the Registrar if their results have not been communicated within two to three months of submission.

### 6.5 Resubmission

Should your submission not be accepted, you may be asked to re-submit examples for certain competency areas. The specific competencies are made available in the CBA System for the Applicant to re-enter information. Once completed, those competencies are released for the Validator(s) and Assessors to review again using the same process as before. Further instructions will be provided should that be required.

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### 6.6 Interviews

In cases where further clarification or detail is required, Applicants may be asked to attend an interview. These interviews provide Applicants with an opportunity to present in person a summary of their experience, to further expand on their project work, and/or to better explain how they apply geoscience theory in their everyday working life. The interview helps to determine whether a candidate has satisfied all of the experience requirements and has demonstrated a progression of experience and responsibility to a professional level.

Competency Categories or WECs in which an Applicant was rated as below the required competence level may be areas of focus for the interview.

### 6.7 Appeals

The Admissions Board's decision on satisfactory experience is a recommendation to the APGNS Council. If the experience is not approved due to a negative assessment by the Admissions Board, the Applicant is given the opportunity to make their case to the Registration Appeal Committee. Note that further assessment is part of the standard process for all cases where re-submission is flagged by the original Assessor.

In accordance with the APGNS Admissions Board Policy and Procedures (2015), an Applicant whose application for registration as a professional member is rejected may appeal to the Registration Appeal Committee in writing within 30 days of being informed of the Council decision by the Registrar.

It should be noted that appeals can only be made when a decision is reached to reject an application and may be undertaken as an "additional information" or a "challenge" appeal. The decision of the Registration Appeal Committee is final.

### 6.8 Geoscientists-in-Training Transferring from Other Associations

Experience is not transferable as a Geoscientist-in-Training if it was reviewed and approved by another Association in Canada equivalent to APGNS, with some exceptions:

- If the experience was assessed in the same Competency Assessment System as APGNS uses, then it may be acceptable.
- If the experience was assessed using a different framework altogether then it may be transferable if all four years were reviewed and approved in their entirety.

Contact the APGNS Registrar to inquire about how it can be transferred if any of the above scenarios apply to you. Normally, Applicants are advised to finish the entire process to becoming a professional member in the other Association, then transfer to APGNS as a professional member under inter-Association mobility.

See also Section 1.2.1 – Applicability and Coming into Force.

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### Appendix A – Geoscience Competency Framework

<b>WORK EXPERIENCE COMPETENCIES</b> (each require one example, as demonstrated by the Applicant)	<b>GEOSCIENCE WORKPLACE EXAMPLES</b> (guidance on example content that will demonstrate the competency)
<b>1. Category: Professional Competencies (minimum overall competence level: 3)</b>	
1.1 This competency is intended to demonstrate your knowledge and awareness of Canadian national, provincial, territorial and municipal regulations, codes, standards, and Indigenous knowledge, rights and treaties. This includes local geoscience procedures and practices as applicable. (CWEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Apply for licenses and permits</li> <li>b. Undertake stakeholder consultations</li> <li>c. Consider and incorporate Indigenous knowledge, rights and treaties in decision making</li> <li>d. Use appropriate standards in decision making</li> <li>e. Complete and files reports and notifications</li> </ul>
1.2. Practice within the bounds of personal expertise and limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Undertake self-assessment to identify personal limits</li> <li>b. Seek advice from professionals with more appropriate expertise</li> <li>c. Refer client to other professionals</li> </ul>
1.3. Increase relevant knowledge, skills and level of performance over time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Attend conferences, workshops or courses related to area of practice</li> <li>b. Undertake focused research or learning to address knowledge gaps</li> <li>c. Obtain relevant specialty training or certification</li> </ul>
1.4. This competency is intended to demonstrate your ability to understand and implement the Canadian business culture and practices. (CWEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Undertake and apply diversity training</li> <li>b. Provide and accept constructive feedback</li> <li>c. Contribute to workplace conflict resolution</li> </ul>
1.5. This competency is intended to demonstrate your ability to understand and implement the Canadian business culture and practices. (CWEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Communicate consequences of disregarding professional advice</li> <li>b. Respond to unethical behaviour of others</li> <li>c. Identify and address conflict of interest</li> </ul>
1.6. This competency is intended to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Undertake work activities in a manner that minimizes environmental impact</li> </ul>

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WORK EXPERIENCE COMPETENCIES (each require one example, as demonstrated by the Applicant)	GEOSCIENCE WORKPLACE EXAMPLES (guidance on example content that will demonstrate the competency)
<p>demonstrate your ability to balance stakeholder needs with Canadian professional geoscientist obligations. (CWEC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Make decisions consistent with client or employer needs that protect the safety, health and welfare of the public</li> <li>c. Employ the principles of risk management in project cost analysis</li> <li>d. Provide accessible and appropriate information to minimize public concerns</li> </ul>
<p>1.7. This competency is intended to demonstrate your ability to address the health and safety of your clients, coworkers, the public, and yourself consistent with Canadian regulations, codes, and standards. (CWEC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Proactively address workplace health and safety</li> <li>b. Identify unsafe practices or hazardous situations</li> <li>c. Contribute to development of site-specific health and safety requirements</li> </ul>

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WORK EXPERIENCE COMPETENCIES (each require one example, as demonstrated by the Applicant)	GEOSCIENCE WORKPLACE EXAMPLES (guidance on example content that will demonstrate the competency)
<b>2. Category: Competencies in Scientific Method (minimum overall competence level: 3)</b>	
2.1. Apply scientific principles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Use mathematical and statistical principles to analyze data</li> <li>b. Use principles of chemistry and physics to interpret data</li> <li>c. Formulate, test and evaluate hypothesis</li> </ul>
2.2. Effectively utilize scientific literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Undertake a literature search</li> <li>b. Critically analyze and incorporate published research</li> <li>c. Identify and acknowledge relevant sources</li> </ul>
2.3. Identify uncertainty and ambiguity in data, and limits to knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify bias in data collection</li> <li>b. Evaluate margin of error on results</li> <li>c. Display uncertainty in analytical results or interpretation</li> </ul>
2.4. Apply principles of quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Follow established protocols in data collection or analysis</li> <li>b. Review project outcomes relative to quality standards</li> <li>c. Establish QA / QC standards</li> </ul>
2.5. Undertake relevant investigation and due diligence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Research complete background information</li> <li>b. Review similar situations to identify known hazards and risks</li> <li>c. Consider potential unanticipated outcomes</li> </ul>

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WORK EXPERIENCE COMPETENCIES (each require one example, as demonstrated by the Applicant)	GEOSCIENCE WORKPLACE EXAMPLES (guidance on example content that will demonstrate the competency)
<b>3. Category: Competencies in Area of Geoscience Practice (minimal overall competence level: 3)</b>	
	Examples of investigations:
3.1. Plan investigations based upon purpose of study, incorporating existing site-specific information and appropriate approaches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. geological mapping</li> <li>b. geophysical survey</li> <li>c. baseline monitoring</li> <li>d. geohazard assessment</li> <li>e. drilling program</li> <li>f. sampling program</li> <li>g. environmental site assessment</li> <li>h. research project</li> </ul>
3.2. Acquire, process and analyze data using appropriate methodologies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Use effective devices and instruments to acquire data</li> <li>b. Apply locational tools and principles to georeference data</li> <li>c. Analyze and process data using 3-D modelling software</li> </ul>
3.3. Incorporate relevant data from other sources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Integrate historical and current data</li> <li>b. Include local or regional information</li> <li>c. Identify analogs</li> </ul>
3.4. Interpret and evaluate data to construct models consistent with purpose of investigation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Prepare and interpret logs, sections or maps</li> <li>b. Prepare and interpret spreadsheets, charts or diagrams</li> <li>c. Apply geoscience principles to generate models</li> </ul>
3.5. Critically evaluate models.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Address uncertainty and bias</li> <li>b. Compare and contrast analogous models</li> <li>c. Evaluate validity of model relative to objectives</li> </ul>

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<b>WORK EXPERIENCE COMPETENCIES</b> (each require one example, as demonstrated by the Applicant)	<b>GEOSCIENCE WORKPLACE EXAMPLES</b> (guidance on example content that will demonstrate the competency)
3.6. Formulate conclusions and recommendations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Define drilling targets</li> <li>b. Assess site suitability and determine mitigation measures</li> <li>c. Assess feasibility based on resource estimation</li> <li>d. Provide alternative solutions and make recommendations</li> </ul>
3.7. Adapt methodologies to address unfamiliar situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Modify mapping or sampling methodologies in unfamiliar terrain or geological settings</li> <li>b. Adapt approach based on stakeholder values</li> <li>c. Integrate additional knowledge &amp; skills to address unfamiliar situations</li> <li>d. Develop new techniques</li> </ul>

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WORK EXPERIENCE COMPETENCIES (each require one example, as demonstrated by the Applicant)	GEOSCIENCE WORKPLACE EXAMPLES (guidance on example content that will demonstrate the competency)
<b>4. Category: Complementary Competencies</b> (minimal overall competence level: 3)	
4.1. This competency is intended to demonstrate your ability to effectively communicate orally in the language of business of the jurisdiction in which you are applying, either French or English. (CWEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Participate in a consultation or working group</li> <li>b. Deliver a geoscience lecture or presentation</li> <li>c. Describe a geoscience model to a client, peer or supervisor</li> </ul>
4.2. This competency is intended to demonstrate your ability to effectively communicate in writing in the language of business of the jurisdiction in which you are applying, either French or English. (CWEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Prepare and respond to business correspondence</li> <li>b. Write a project or funding proposal</li> <li>c. Interpret and synthesize written information</li> </ul>
4.3. Communicate technical information effectively to a variety of audiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Create or adapt a presentation for technical and non-technical audiences</li> <li>b. Create or modify written material for technical and non-technical audiences</li> <li>c. Deliver a geoscience presentation to students</li> </ul>
4.4. Manage activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Plan or coordinate geoscience field work</li> <li>b. Plan or coordinate data collection or analysis</li> <li>c. Organize a conference, workshop or meeting</li> </ul>
4.5. Use time management skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Prioritize activities to meet deadlines</li> <li>b. Use scheduling tools</li> <li>c. Adapt schedule to changing situations</li> </ul>
4.6. Provide direction to others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Provide instructions to students</li> <li>b. Advise team members or co-workers</li> <li>c. Supervise the work of others</li> </ul>
4.7. Contribute to budgetary management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Evaluate quotes</li> <li>b. Estimate costs</li> </ul>

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WORK EXPERIENCE COMPETENCIES (each require one example, as demonstrated by the Applicant)	GEOSCIENCE WORKPLACE EXAMPLES (guidance on example content that will demonstrate the competency)
4.8. Apply basic principles of risk management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Control expenditures</li> <li>a. Mitigate risk associated with field work</li> <li>b. Coordinate activities to manage risk</li> <li>c. Communicate business risks associated with geoscience interpretations</li> </ul>
4.9. Contribute to secure data management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Use data security software</li> <li>b. Protect confidential information or materials</li> <li>c. Develop or follow organizational data management protocols</li> </ul>
4.10. Maintain comprehensive professional records.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. File and archive comprehensive and clear field observations</li> <li>b. Label, store and catalogue samples</li> <li>c. Prepare and retain business and administrative records</li> </ul>

Note: CWEC = This is a mandatory Canadian Work Environment Competency. The minimum required level for this competency is 3.

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### Appendix B – Competency Self-Assessment Submittal Checklist

This checklist has been created to assist Applicants in reviewing their Competency Self-Assessment before they submit it for validation. Consulting this checklist prior to submission will reduce the likelihood of delays in the processing of their application for professional licensure.

#### **Employment History**

- Does your employment history consist of at least 48 months' experience?
  - You may receive credit of up to 12 months' experience for pre-graduation work experience (work terms, etc.) obtained in the second half of the program
  - You may receive credit of up to 12 months' experience for each graduate degree obtained, up to a maximum of 24 months' experience
- Have you briefly explained any gaps or overlaps in your experience?

#### **Validators**

- Do you have at least 4 Validators?
- Is at least 1 Validator a direct supervisor?
- Are at least 2 Validators professional engineers or professional geoscientists (or equivalent)?
- Have you attached CVs in the Supporting Documentation section for any non-P. Geo./P.Eng. Validators?

#### **Competency Examples**

- Did you check the competency and associated workplace examples to make sure your example demonstrates the competency?
- Did you use first person?
- Were you detailed and specific in what you did?
- Did you assign a Validator with first-hand knowledge of the example?

#### **Canadian Environment Competencies/ Canadian Work-Experience Competencies (CWECS)**

- Did your examples for these competencies take place in Canada?
- If not, did you explain how your example is comparable to the Canadian environment?

NOTE THAT SUBMITTING YOUR COMPETENCY SELF-ASSESSMENT DOES NOT CONSTITUTE AN APPLICATION FOR PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE. IF IT IS YOUR INTENT TO OBTAIN PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE, YOU MUST SUBMIT A FORMAL APPLICATION.

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### Appendix C – Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: Whom do I contact if I have questions?**

A: If you still have questions after reading this manual in its entirety, send your questions to APGNS's Registrar ([registrar@geoscientistsns.ca](mailto:registrar@geoscientistsns.ca)).

**Q: How much information am I required to submit as part of my application?**

A: Applicants are required to submit two main components on the CBA System:

- An **Employment History**: This section is essentially a “resume builder” in which you provide a brief description of your periods of employment.
- A **Competency Self-Assessment**: This section asks you to select examples from your work experience to demonstrate how you have achieved each Competency. There are character limits for each example, with 300 characters permitted for the “Situation” and “Outcome” sections and 1200 characters permitted for the “Action” section.

**Q: How many hours will it take to put together my application?**

A: This will vary, but you can make it easier for yourself by maintaining records of your work history, the projects that you have been involved in and your training records. You can use the CBA System to record your employment history and examples in draft form and build your self-assessment as you gain further experience.

**Q: My work conditions are confidential. How do I get around this in submitting my Competency Self-Assessment?**

A: Generally, Assessors do not need a high level of detail on confidential information – they need sufficient evidence to be satisfied that you are able to practice competently as a professional geoscientist. It is expected that this could be demonstrated by documentation that describes the nature of your work and its complexities without disclosing confidential details about solutions or business processes. All Assessors are bound by confidentiality.

**Q: I have only worked on one or two major projects over my four years of experience. Do I need to use a different project for each Competency?**

A: It is acceptable to reference the same major project in multiple competency examples provided you describe the specific actions that you took to demonstrate each competency. Portions of the “Situation” section may be repeated, but entire examples may not be. In particular, the “Action” section should be specific to each competency.

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

A: There is no requirement to cover the entire four years of experience through competency examples. Applicants are encouraged to select their strongest examples for each competency, so focusing on recent experience is acceptable.

## Competency-Based Assessment Guide

### **Q: How long should my Competency Self-Assessment examples be?**

A: While there is no required length, examples must be sufficiently detailed to provide the Assessor with a clear picture of the nature and level of the work performed and how it pertains to the competency being addressed. The “Situation” and “Outcome” sections are intended to be brief; both have 300-character limits in the online system. The “Action” section is where the Assessors are looking for a detailed description of the specific actions taken that demonstrate the competency, and it has a 1200-character limit. Point-form is optional in all three sections and is recommended for the “Action” section.

### **Q: Can I provide a Validator who will not be verifying any specific competencies to comment on my overall readiness for licensure?**

A: Yes, you can name additional Validators who will be asked to provide overall feedback on your readiness for professional licensure without asking them to verify any competencies.

### **Q: Do all of my Validators need to be professional geoscientists? How many Validators do I need?**

A: At least two of your four Validators are required to be professional geoscientists (or equivalent). It is recommended however that all of your Validators be professional engineers or geoscientists if possible. For any Validators who are not professional engineers or geoscientists, a CV must be provided so APGNS can evaluate if the Validator has appropriate experience to serve as a Validator.

### **Q: What do I do if my direct supervisor is not a P. Eng./P. Geo.?**

A: You should contact APGNS immediately to discuss if you need a mentor appointed.

You must provide a copy of your direct supervisor’s CV. The CV can be uploaded in the “Supporting Documentation” section of your competency assessment.

### **Q: My supervisor has a license to practice in Nova Scotia. Do I need to provide a copy of their CV?**

A: If your Validator is registered with APGNS, you may not need to provide a CV. You will be contacted if one is needed. If your Validator is registered with another jurisdiction, you must provide a copy of their CV.

### **Q: What is the difference between a Validator and a mentor? Do I need a mentor?**

A: A Validator is a professional engineer or geoscientist (or equivalent) who directly supervises your work and most often takes professional responsibility for that work. A mentor is someone officially assigned by APGNS to provide support and guidance to a member in training who is not being supervised by a professional engineer or geoscientist (or equivalent). Mentors do not normally directly supervise or take responsibility for your work. However, an officially appointed mentor can serve as a Validator under the CBA framework.

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### **Q: What if I had more than one supervisor during a certain period of time?**

A: Each competency example requires one Validator to validate the information. If you had more than one supervisor for a particular example, talk to your supervisors and choose the one who is best able to validate that example.

### **Q: I have completed my first competencies. How can I get feedback?**

A: You are encouraged to discuss your competencies with your Validators, particularly your direct supervisor. You can use the PDF function to generate a report of your competency examples to discuss your experience with your validators.

### **Q: I have been documenting my experience in my diary. What do I do with the logbook?**

A: The Competency Assessment System replaces the diary. Documenting your experience in your diary can be a very useful tool to assist you in completing your Competency Self-Assessment. However, the diary does not need to be signed off on or submitted with your Competency Self-Assessment.

### **Q: Why can't I fill out or edit my Education Information? / Why is my Education Information not in my Competency Self-Assessment?**

A: The Education Information section is filled out by APGNS based on the information you provided in your Application. Contact APGNS if your Education Information needs editing. ***The Education Information section will NOT be completed until official transcripts are DIRECTLY provided to APGNS by your educational institution.*** If your educational institution cannot provide official transcripts directly to APGNS, your transcripts must be notarized.

### **Q: Will my Competency Self-Assessment be assessed if my academic qualifications have not yet been approved by APGNS?**

A: No. APGNS will start the review of your academic qualifications upon receipt of your application. You may work on your Competency Self-Assessment while your academic qualifications are being reviewed, but it will not be assessed until your academic qualifications are approved.

If you are currently registered as a Geoscientist-in-Training, your academic qualifications were approved when you became a Geoscientist-in-Training.

### **Q: What is the Canadian experience requirement?**

A: You must complete the 7 Canadian Work-Environment Experience Competencies under the direct supervision of a Canadian Professional Geoscientist (or equivalent).

### **Q: Can I use the Competency Assessment System to apply for a license to practice?**

A: No. APGNS does not currently use the Competency Assessment System to assess applications.

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**Q: How long does the process typically take? How can I track the progression of my competency submissions?**

A: Once your assessment has been validated, it may take more than 8 weeks for it to be assessed by Assessors and reviewed by the Admissions Board. You can track the progress of the validation of your assessment through the Competency Assessment System.

**Q: How will I be notified of the results of my assessment?**

A: You will receive an official letter from APGNS.

**Q: I have started a Competency Self-Assessment in another jurisdiction. Can I transfer it to APGNS?**

A: No, the Competency Assessment System is not able to transfer accounts between jurisdictions. You can create a new APGNS Competency Self-Assessment and re-enter the information, or you can proceed with completing the Competency Self-Assessment and professional registration process in your other jurisdiction. Upon successful registration as a professional, you can then transfer to APGNS as a professional member. If your Competency Self-Assessment is advanced and any validation has occurred, it is recommended that you complete it in your current jurisdiction and transfer to APGNS after becoming a professional member.