
Natural Resource Professional (NRP) Policy

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Policy

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1.0 Introduction

This policy applies to you if you are thinking about or applying to become a member of the Association of BC Forest Professionals (ABC FP) under the Natural Resource Professional (NRP) pilot project framework. It will tell you what the requirements are to become a member, how to apply, and the rules that apply. You should also refer to the following documents, available at www.abcfp.ca:

- Application packages;
- *Foresters Act*; and
- Association bylaws.

This policy assumes that you have already completed your schooling and know your career plans or are currently working. If you have not completed your schooling or are still trying to decide whether you want to apply to the ABC FP under NRP, please refer to our website at www.abcfp.ca for more information.

1.1 Overview

The *Foresters Act* regulates the practice of professional forestry in British Columbia (BC). Since its enactment in 1947, the *Foresters Act* has defined the practice of professional forestry, reserved that practice to Registered Professional Foresters (RPF), and established a regulatory body (the ABC FP) to govern the profession. The *Foresters Act* requires any person in BC who wants to practise professional forestry, as defined in the Act, in BC to be a member of the ABC FP. This type of legislation, commonly known as ‘right to practise’ legislation, is similar to the legislation that sets the rules for doctors, lawyers, or accountants.

Within the *Foresters Act* and the ABC FP Bylaws are the powers to grant limited licenses and certificates of accreditation. The following policy is consistent with the Act and the Bylaws and provides more detail for all involved in providing the right to practise aspects of professional forestry to NRP practitioners.

1.2 Membership Types and Requirements

The *Foresters Act* defines six different membership classes and allows council to make bylaws that establish different categories of membership within each class. Each category may have different practice or membership rights and responsibilities.

Applicants for NRP are categorized as Associate Members. Applicants who qualify for membership under section 2.2.1 of this policy as conditional NRPs will immediately be granted practice rights under a certificate of accreditation issued in accordance with section 16.1 of the *Foresters Act*.

1.3 Plain Language

We have tried to write this policy using plain and straightforward language. There are times when we use words or phrases that have special meanings or significance. These are defined in the definition section of the *Registration Policy*.

2.0 Route of Entry for Natural Resource Professionals (NRP)

2.1 Recognized Degrees

At this stage in the process, you must have graduated with a recognized degree from one of the programs listed below in order to apply within the NRP framework:

- University of British Columbia's Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Natural Resource Conservation (**May 1999 – May 2005**) or Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Natural Resource Conservation, Science and Management major (*May 2006 to present*);
- Thompson Rivers University's Bachelor in Natural Resource Science (**May 1997 to present**);
- University of Northern British Columbia's Bachelor of Natural Resource Management (BNRM) in Wildlife and Fisheries (**May 2001 to present**); and
- University of Northern British Columbia's BNRM in Outdoor Recreation and Conservation (**May 2008 to May 2013**).

2.2 Two Routes of Entry

2.2.1 Conditional NRP

This route may be available to you if you are a graduate with a recognized degree from one of the programs listed in section 2.1 and meet the following conditions:

Condition 1: You have a recognized degree, conferred on or before December 1, 2009.

Condition 2: You apply to enroll as a conditional NRP.

Condition 3: You entered into practice before December 1, 2009 and you have at least 60 months of progressive work experience in forestry or natural resources within Canada as at the date of your application for membership. Work experience gained during articling for another professional association will count towards this work experience.

You will complete a membership application package that includes at least two (2) character references from registered members of either the ABCFP; the Association of

Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of British Columbia; the College of Applied Biology - British Columbia; or the British Columbia Institute of Agrologists.

Condition 5: You complete the Professional Ethics and Obligations and Professional Reliance online workshops prior to writing the professional ethics exam. (Exemption: This requirement is not mandatory for any individual who is currently a member of the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of British Columbia; the College of Applied Biology - British Columbia; or the British Columbia Institute of Agrologists at the time of application if the applicant can document that they have completed the required workshop(s) with their current profession).

Condition 6: You write and pass a professional ethics exam within a year from the date you have been admitted as a member or at the earliest reasonable opportunity.

Condition 7: If you do not complete the above requirements in accordance within the prescribed period you and you have not been granted an extension in writing from the ABCFP will lose your temporary practice rights and/or your conditional NRP membership.

2.2.2 Trainee NRP (TNRP)

This route may be available to you if you are a graduate with a recognized degree from one of the programs listed in section 2.1 and meet the following conditions:

Condition 1: You have a recognized degree, conferred after December 1, 2009.

Condition 2: You make application to enroll as a Trainee NRP.

Condition 3: You will complete a membership application package that includes among others: an articling agreement, a confidential sponsor reference form; two (2) character references from registered members of either the ABCFP; the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of British Columbia; the College of Applied Biology - British Columbia; or the British Columbia Institute of Agrologists;

Condition 4: You complete the Professional Ethics and Obligations and Professional Reliance workshops to be eligible to write the professional ethics exam.

Condition 5: You write and pass the professional ethics exam.

Condition 6: You complete at least 24 months of work experience under the guidance of a sponsor AFTER you enroll as a TNRP.

2.3 Application Packages and Deadlines

Described below is the application process. Application packages containing necessary forms and instructions are available on our website at www.abcfp.ca.

We will only accept your application if it is completely filled out and error free; otherwise, it will be returned to you. If your application is incomplete or contains errors, you may not meet your goals for writing the exam, particularly if your

initial application is submitted close to a deadline that then cannot be met if you are required to resubmit your application.

The onus is on you to ensure that your application is received on time, is complete, and is free of errors.

2.4 Work Experience

The topic of work experience comes up in parts of this policy. Any reference to work experience means work experience relevant to natural resource practice within the restricted scope of practice outlined on our website (www.abcfp.ca) that is within the larger practice of professional forestry.

Work experience must be acceptable to the registrar and must be earned as: 1) Conditional NRP route - before you become an ABCFP member; or 2) Trainee NRP route - after you have been admitted as an ABCFP member, where your experience practising professional forestry must be under the supervision of your sponsoring forester or an NRP.

The registrar will look at the quantity, quality, and breadth of your work experience when making a decision about whether your work experience qualifies.

3.0 Application Process

3.1 Submitting an Application Package

Application packages are available on our website. The application packages contain all the necessary forms and information you will need to apply. Please note that all documents EXCEPT your official transcripts must be included in ONE application package.

With the exception of your transcripts, your application will only be accepted if it contains the following:

- **Application Form** filled in completely and signed where indicated. Because ABCFP correspondence with our members is done mainly by e-mail, please provide an e-mail address that you check regularly. It is your responsibility to keep your contact information up to date.

- **Résumé** that details all forestry and natural resource related positions held since high school graduation.
- **Confidential Reports** from two references plus one from your sponsor*. The necessary forms are included in the application package. Your sponsor must sign and seal or stamp his/her report. (*Exception: Individuals applying for the conditional NRP route are not required to have a sponsor.)
- **Indictable Offence Form** completed and signed.
- **Application Fee** plus **Annual Membership Fee**. Rates and payment options, are available on the website. Depending on the time of year when you apply, the annual fee may be prorated.
- **Articling Agreement*** completed by you and your sponsor. This agreement sets out the respective roles and responsibilities that you and your sponsor have during your articling period. (*Exception: Individuals applying for the conditional NRP route are not required to submit an articling agreement.)
- **Official School Transcripts** that state degrees have been granted. If the official transcripts are not yet available, you must have a letter from the dean or program advisor of your school indicating the degree is complete before we can accept your application. In this case, you must ensure that official transcripts are provided to us once they are available. Official transcripts must be sent directly to us by the issuing educational institution.

3.1.1 Only Fully Completed Applications Will be Accepted

You are applying to become a member of a profession that demands high standards from its members. Your application package must not contain errors or omissions. If it does, it will not be processed. The registration department will contact you by e-mail regarding any deficiencies and keep your incomplete application on hold for a period of six months. Thereafter, you must submit a new application package.

If you have any questions about your package that are not answered by this policy, the documentation accompanying the application package, forms, or the materials on our website, contact a member of the registration department.

3.2 Processing Completed Applications

Once we have received your completed application package, you will be notified by e-mail. We will also date-stamp your application package at this time. This date is important because it becomes the reference date of your work experience, it affects the timing of your professional ethics exam and the granting of your formal NRP status.

Registration department staff will process your application and then refer it to the board of examiners (BOE) and council for consideration. You will officially become a member when council approves your application. Once your application is approved, we will e-mail to you a welcome letter with information about your membership which may include time limits for articling (for TNRPs only), when you will be able to write your professional ethics exam, and any additional requirements.

The entire process from our receipt of your completed application package to the time you receive your welcome letter may take up to eight (8) weeks. Depending on the membership you applied for, once your application is approved, you will become an Associate Member either as a conditional NRP or TNRP.

4.0 Articling Requirements (for TNRPs only)

As a TNRP member, you must gain 24 months of relevant professional work experience under the guidance of a registered member (sponsor). At least 18 months of this experience must be gained in BC. Since job markets cannot be guaranteed, you have up to 48 months from the date we receive your completed application to fulfill your articling requirements.

The details about your articling requirements are set out in the *Articling Policy*, which can be found on our website at www.abcfp.ca. It includes information on scope of practice rights, supervision, work experience, use of title, the length of the articling period, and sponsoring members.

During your articling period, you must complete the required Professional Ethics and Obligations and Professional Reliance workshops. These workshops are designed to provide applicants with information and knowledge that is required of all forest professionals and may be available in-person or online.

5.0 Professional Ethics Exam

Your earliest and latest dates to write the exam will be included in your welcome letter. To be eligible to write the exam, you must have completed the Professional Reliance and or Professional Ethics and Obligations workshops as specified above. All information pertaining to the exam will be posted on our website.

5.1 Submitting your Exam Application

The exam application is available on the ABCFP website. We expect that you will not make errors or omissions in your application package. You should budget enough time to allow for delivery of your application, notification of any errors, and re-submission of your package. For TNRPs, please anticipate that your sponsor and references may not be available at all times and that it will take some time to gather

necessary documents when you budget your time for preparing your application package.

Refer to the ABCFP website at www.abcfp.ca for detail on the timing and location for exam writing.

5.2 Special Exam or Other Exam Requests

If for medical reasons, learning disabilities or any other extraordinary circumstances you would like to be considered for an oral exam alternative to the sit-down exam, please contact the registrar.

If for documented medical reasons, you need extra time to write your exam, you require special equipment, or you have other special needs, we will work with you to assess what, if any, special arrangements may be appropriate.

All requests for special accommodations for the exams are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and are at the discretion of the registrar.

5.3 Exam Format and Marking

The professional ethics exam format and required passing mark may differ from exams required for other membership categories. We will let you know of the format and required passing mark for the exam well in advance of the exam date.

Marking procedures are designed to ensure marking consistency and that your exam will be marked and judged in relation to all others who answer the same questions you chose to answer. Once the exam has been marked and re-marked (if required), the results are final. No further appeals or re-marking is possible.

5.4 Releasing Exam Marks

The board of examiners will report the exam results to council. Once council has been informed, your exam results will be available online in your membership account.

5.5 Rewriting the Exam

Exam rewriting option for condition NRPs and TNRPs will be the same as for TFTs and FITs as described in the exam rewriting section of the *Registration Policy*.

5.6 Switching Member Categories and Registration Exam Attempts

For the purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

Entry stream: means enrolment in a membership category leading up to registration either as an RFT, an RPF, or a member under the NRP pilot project. There are three entry streams, the RFT entry stream, the RPF entry stream, and the NRP entry stream.

RFT entry stream: means enrolment as a Trainee Forest Technologist (TFT);

RPF entry stream: means enrolment either as a Forester in Training (FIT) or Forestry Pupil (FP); and

NRP entry stream: means being an associate member of the ABCFP as a TNRP and articling towards the NRP membership.

If you have written and failed the required exam in one entry stream and then switch to another entry stream, a separate tally will be set up for the current entry stream so that your first opportunity to write in the current stream will be considered a new, rather than a subsequent, attempt.

For example, if you are a conditional NRP or TNRP and have failed the NRP exam once and then switch enrolment to FIT, your initial opportunity to write the RPF registration exam will be considered your first attempt.

If you have failed the exam in one entry stream:

- twice ; or,
- have been granted a third attempt, failed on that attempt and have been barred from re-enrolling in that entry stream for three (3) years, you will not be barred from enrolling in another entry stream so long as you are qualified to apply.

6.0 Certificate of Accreditation

A Certificate of Accreditation specifies your title, designation, and any limitations on your practice as described in the certificate.

Conditional NRPs will receive their formal NRP status and a conditional Certificate of Accreditation. This certificate is conditional on completing the required workshops and passing the exam.

Trainee NRPs who successfully pass the professional ethics will receive their formal NRP status and Certificate of Accreditation once they have provided proof that they have also completed their 24-month articling requirement.

7.0 Change in Membership Status (Leave of Absence, Reinstatement, and Resignation)

The *Members Change of Status Policy* applies to all Associate members including conditional NRPs or TNRPs who want to apply to change their membership status.

8.0 Route to Become a RFT or RPF

If you become a member of the ABCFP under any of the provisions of this policy, you are subject to the applicable association bylaws. After membership under NRP, you are eligible to seek full practice rights under Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or Registered Forest Technologist (RFT) status by gaining all the competencies required of those membership classes. You will be required to meet the requirements outlined in the *Registration Policy* and achieve the required competency standards.

Questions?

Questions should be referred to:

Registration Department
Association of BC Forest Professionals
Suite 602 – 1281 West Georgia St
Vancouver, BC V6E 3J7

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E-mail: admissions@abcfp.ca

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Ensuring BC's Forests Are In Good Hands.