

Pathways to Early Childhood Education Credentialing in Canada



**Child Care
Human Resources
Sector Council**

Prepared for the
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The information in this report is current as of December 2009.
Updated information regarding regulatory practices may be found on the online Guide to ECE Credentialing in Canada
(<http://www.ccsc-cssge.ca/english/guide>) or from provincial/territorial government web sites.

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

About the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council

The Child Care Human Resources Sector Council (CCHRSC) is a pan-Canadian, non-profit organization dedicated to moving forward on human resource issues in the early learning and child care sector. Members of the CCHRSC volunteer board work in national and provincial/territorial (PT) child care and labour organizations; post-secondary training institutions, child care centres, nursery schools and preschools or their own homes as early childhood educators or employers; and in government.

By bringing together national partners and other stakeholders, the CCHRSC examines and responds to issues such as recruitment and retention, training and skills development. The following strategic priorities guide the work of the CCHRSC:

- provide leadership and coordination on human resource issues in the sector;
- foster enhanced human resource management practices in the sector;
- foster enhanced skills development practices in the sector;
- develop mechanisms to increase the portability/recognition of credentials; and
- increase access to, and understanding of, labour market information, trends, and issues in the sector.

Through its projects, the CCHRSC undertakes research, and develops strategies and tools to meet the needs of the child care workforce and achieve related goals.

Background to the Pathways to Early Childhood Education Credentialing in Canada Project

There is a growing shortage of qualified early childhood educators in regulated child care centres and nursery/preschool programs in many provinces and territories (PTs). A recent CCHRSC study, *Understanding and Addressing Workforce Shortages in Early Childhood Education and Care*, found that the demand for the early childhood education and care (ECEC) workforce grew by 40% between 2000 and 2007, compared to 15% for all occupations, and that shortages are especially acute for qualified early childhood educators.¹

The staffing problem is compounded by the differences in educational requirements across jurisdictions, as well as in processes and mechanisms for recognizing credentials from different PTs and from outside the country. For many years, Early Childhood Education (ECE) qualifications awarded in one jurisdiction have not been recognized in another, resulting in lack of portability of credits and credentials and at times a confusing, expensive and time-consuming process for individuals seeking the appropriate credentials. Child care centres are often operating with more untrained staff than permitted under regulation because qualified staff cannot be found – while at the same time ECEs from another jurisdiction are not always able to easily get recognition for their credentials or pursue a clear route to becoming recognized.

In 2008, the CCHRSC – with the support of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada – undertook the Pathways to Early Childhood Education Credentialing in Canada project. The main goal of the project was to better understand the requirements and processes used in each province and territory to recognize an individual's ECE credentials in order to be considered eligible to work in that jurisdiction as a qualified early childhood educator.

The objectives of the project were to:

- identify and document all aspects of the credential assessment and certification/registration
- practices that exist for Canadian early childhood educators in each province and territory;
- analyze existing practices to:

¹ Child Care Human Resources Sector Council Spring 2009 Bulletin. Accessed September 9, 2009 from: <http://www.ccscc-cssge.ca/uploads/CCHRSpring09final.pdf>.

- demonstrate the similarities and differences from one province or territory to another
- document how occupational tools, including occupational standards, essential skills profiles, and occupational language analysis are reflected in existing practices;
- develop and promote tools to assist in the analysis of certification/registration processes; and
- develop tools to enhance understanding of credential assessment and/or certification and registration practices, encourage skills development and assist in identification of skills gaps.

Project Documents

The Pathways project documented current ECE certification, equivalency and credential recognition practices across the country and created tools to help ensure that these practices could be clearly understood from one province or territory to another, resulting in four documents:

1. A Guide to Early Childhood Education Credentialing in Canada, a reference for early childhood educators and others working in early childhood programs, child care licensing officials, ECE faculty in post-secondary institutions, and others involved or interested in the early childhood sector. The guide provides relevant information for each province and territory on:
 - the requirements to work in regulated child care;
 - certification processes;
 - recognized post-secondary ECE programs;
 - assessment of post-secondary credentials and work experience gained in a different province or territory, or outside of Canada;
 - considerations given for recognition of related education and experience; and
 - contacts for government and related certification and equivalency bodies.

This guide is available online: <http://www.ccscc-cssge.ca/english/guide>.
2. This document, the Pathways to Early Childhood Education Credentialing in Canada report, intended for credentialing officials, policy makers, researchers and employers, which:
 - provides an overview of the systems or approaches to credentialing in place in each province or territory and the policy that guides them;
 - provides a context for areas related to credentialing, including foreign credential recognition and prior learning assessment and recognition;
 - profiles interesting practices in foreign credential recognition and prior learning assessment and recognition; and
 - explores the impact of Canada's Agreement on Internal Trade on labour mobility in the early childhood sector.
3. An Essential Skills Profile for the early childhood educator (ECE).
4. An Occupational Language Analysis (OLA) for the early childhood educator role and the administrator role.

The *Pathways* report and guide examine and document the requirements to work in regulated child care, in full- and part-day child care centres, school-age programs and in family child care.

Pathways to Early Childhood Education Credentialing in Canada provides information on early childhood education credential and certification requirements and practices across the country and represents a step to improving labour mobility for the early childhood sector. It builds on a significant body of work undertaken over the last 10 years. Work undertaken as part of the initial Child Care Human Resources Sector Study, the Association of Canadian Community Colleges and the Canadian Child Care Federation joint program of research, the CCHRSC Labour Market Update and Training Strategy project² all examined issues related to the need for increased mobility and portability of credits and credentials and opportunities for career advancement.

² For further details see the CCHRSC main reports of these two projects: Working for Change: Our Child Care Workforce, http://www.ccscc-cssge.ca/english/pdf/research/CCHRSC20main_en.pdf and People, Programs and Practices: A Training Strategy for the Early Childhood Education and Care Sector in Canada, <http://www.ccscc-cssge.ca/uploads/TrainingStrategy2007V7.pdf>.

SECTION 2: METHODOLOGY

The *Pathways to Early Childhood Education Credentialing in Canada* project was undertaken by a four-person research and consulting team. The team worked under the direction of a project steering committee, which included experts in ECE credentialing as well as members of the CCHRSC board of directors (see Appendix 3 for a complete list of steering committee members).

Literature and Document Review

A literature and document review was undertaken to gather both general information on credentialing and certification in Canada, and specific reports related to the early childhood sector. The review also included some of the current procedures and mechanisms for early childhood education credentialing, as outlined on ministry web sites, handbooks and application forms (see Appendix 2 for a complete list of the literature, documents and web sites reviewed).

Provincial/Territorial Interviews

Provincial/territorial directors of early childhood education and care were the primary points of contact to identify individuals responsible for certification in their jurisdictions. Individuals responsible for determining equivalency and international credential recognition were identified in provinces and territories that do not certify ECEs.

Officials were asked for documents, application forms and other materials relevant to credentialing processes for initial review. Information was not collected from the Northwest Territories or Nunavut since they did not have post-secondary requirements or certification processes at time of writing. After reviewing the materials, an interview guide was developed that covered:

- certification procedures for individuals with an ECE from within the province or territory;
- responsibility and procedures for granting equivalency to individuals with related education;
- procedures for recognizing post-secondary ECE credentials from other provinces;
- responsibility and procedures for assessing international qualifications; and
- changes as a result of the Agreement on Internal Trade.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with the relevant officials in each province; Yukon interview was conducted by telephone. Information gathered from the interviews formed the basis of the *Guide to Early Childhood Education Credentialing in Canada*.

Key Informant Interviews

In addition to the face-to-face interviews with credentialing officials in each province or territory, a number of key informant telephone interviews were conducted to provide additional information:

- Interviews with provincial/territorial officials, where gaps in information had been identified, or where responsibilities were split between departments
- Interviews with credentialing experts from other, related sectors
- Interviews with selected ECEs who had undergone certification in a number of different provinces
- Further interviews with provincial/territorial or designated officials in selected jurisdictions, to examine in more detail practices related to Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR), and assessment and recognition of international credentials

Validation

Information gathered from the face-to-face meetings and the document review was synthesized into provincial/territorial profiles as part of the *Guide to Early Childhood Education Credentialing*. The guide was reviewed by the project steering committee for overall approach and content areas. Each profile was then sent to the respective credential official for review and input.

Case studies were prepared from the in-depth interviews on PLAR and International Credential Recognition, and were reviewed by the respective key informants.

The final report and *Guide to Early Childhood Education Credentialing* were validated at a meeting of credentialing officials from each province and territory in October 2009. The meeting also provided an opportunity for discussion and knowledge exchange.

SECTION 3: OVERVIEW OF ECE CREDENTIALING

The terminology and processes used to determine if an individual is qualified to work in a regulated child care setting or to use particular ECE designations vary across provinces and territories. This section describes the terms used in the general credentialing literature and how they are applied to the early childhood sector in various provinces and territories.

Types of Credentialing

In general, credentialing refers to the practice of documenting a person's qualifications and/or competency in order for them to practice their profession in a particular province or territory. The term is used for three main types of designations:

- A certificate, diploma or degree from a post-secondary institution, indicating a partially or fully completed education program.³
- A license, certificate or registration with a government regulatory body (or its designate) for an occupation, indicating official permission to engage in a form of employment.⁴ Some occupations are regulated in some provinces or territories but not regulated in others.⁵
- An industry recognized certificate granted by a certification body upon a candidate's successful demonstration of occupational competence.⁶ Professional certification is voluntary; it is not a requirement for an individual to be certified in order to work.

All provinces and Yukon require a post-secondary certificate or diploma in ECE, or an approved equivalent, for a percentage of staff working with children in centre-based child care programs. These qualifications are referred to as post-secondary credentials. The percentages of staff required to have ECE credentials, and whether some or all of those staff require a one-year certificate or a two-year diploma,⁷ vary by province and territory, but are contained in legislation in each jurisdiction.

Seven provinces⁸ and Yukon have additional credentialing requirements and procedures. In these jurisdictions, all or some of the staff working in centre-based child care and – in two provinces – family child care providers must apply to the appropriate regulatory body to acquire the necessary credential, which is usually a condition of employment. The requirements are contained in the respective provincial/territorial child care regulations. In these seven provinces and Yukon, child care is considered a regulated profession. The specific terminology used for each province and territory's credentialing process is outlined later in this section.

As of 2009, voluntary professional certification for early childhood educators is provided through professional organizations in two provinces, with plans under consideration in another:

- In Ontario, through the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario (AECEO), a professional organization.⁹

³ International Credential Evaluation Service. Retrieved September 10, 2009 from: <http://www.bcit.ca/ices/faq.shtml#credential>.

⁴ Doherty (2000). Credentialing as a Strategy to Promoting Quality in Child Care. *Research Connections Canada*, 4.

⁵ Canadian Information Centre of International Credentials. Retrieved June 14, 2009 from: www.cicic.ca.

⁶ The Alliance of Sector Councils (2008). Setting the Standard: Accepted Principles and Recommended Practices for National Occupational Standards, Certification Programs and Accreditation Programs. Retrieved June 10, 2009 from: http://www.councils.org/uploadedFiles/Resources_and_Publications/Publications/Setting-the-Standard-EN.pdf?n=5970.

⁷ Quebec has a three-year *Diplôme d'études collégiales* (DEC) program; however, as the first year is a general education program similar to the last year of high school in most provinces and territories, it is considered equivalent to a two-year diploma.

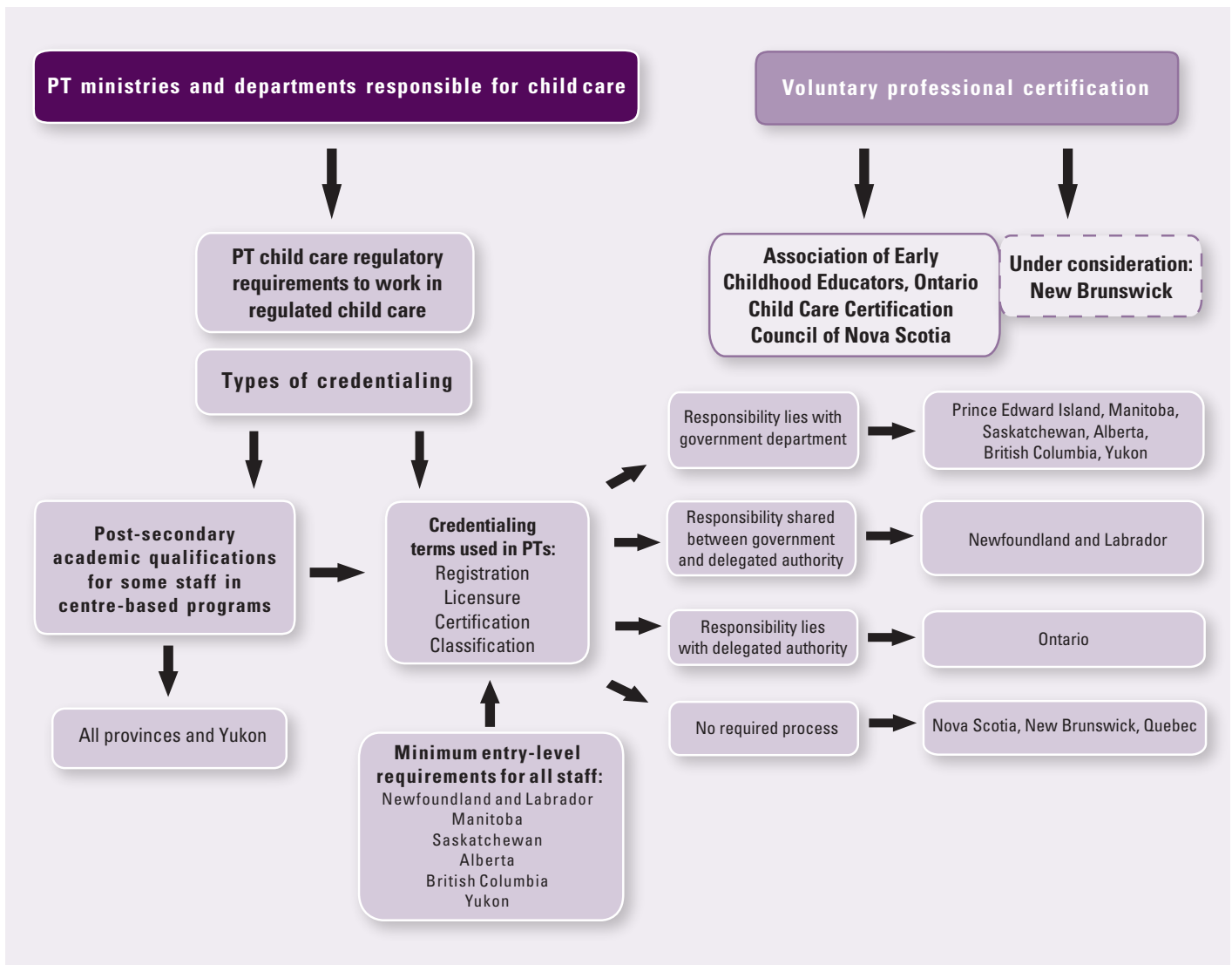
⁸ These include Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia.

⁹ Voluntary professional certification in Ontario is different from registration in the College of Early Childhood Educators.

- In Nova Scotia, through the Certification Council of Early Childhood Educators of Nova Scotia (CCECENS), a non-profit society.
- In New Brunswick, the Early Childhood Education and Care New Brunswick (ECCENB) held consultations on a proposed voluntary certification model and alternative options for professional development funding (Flanagan, 2008).

Figure 1 provides an overview of the three types of ECE credentialing.

Figure 1. Overview of Early Childhood Education Credentialing



Academic Credential Requirements in Regulated Child Care Programs¹⁰

All provinces and Yukon require early childhood education qualifications for all or a percentage of staff working in child care centres for children 0-5. A percentage of those staff are required to have completed a post-secondary ECE certificate or diploma. Six provinces and territories require all staff to have some ECE-specific training, usually an orientation course, or one post-secondary ECE course. There is a wide range among provinces and territories as to the number of staff who must be qualified ECEs, and the amount of education required. Some examples include:

- In Manitoba, two-thirds of staff in full-day child care centres for children 0-5, and one-half of staff in nursery schools and school-age programs must have a two-year ECE diploma; directors in full-day centres must also have a post-diploma certificate or degree.
- In Québec, two-thirds of staff in centres for children 0-4 require an ECE diploma or an Attestation (one-year certificate) and three years experience. In Nova Scotia, two-thirds of all staff must have completed an early childhood education program or equivalent.
- Ontario requires one staff per group of children to have completed a two-year ECE diploma. BC requires one staff per group in programs for children 3-5 to have a one-year certificate, and in programs for children 0-3, the requirement includes at least one staff with an infant/toddler ECE (two-years) and additional trained ECEs, depending on the size of the group. Newfoundland and Labrador requires one staff per group to have a one-year certificate.
- Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta require directors to have at least a two-year diploma.
- Saskatchewan and Yukon require 30% of staff to have a one-year certificate and an additional 20% a two-year diploma.
- Alberta requires one in four staff to have a one-year ECE certificate or equivalent. A 58-hour orientation course or three-credit ECE course is needed for staff working in preschools and school-age programs.
- In New Brunswick, the director, or one in four staff, and in Prince Edward Island, the supervisor and one staff in centres for children 0-5 need a one-year ECE certificate.
- Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba, Alberta, British Columbia and Yukon require all staff to have some ECE-related training. In Saskatchewan, all staff working 65 hours/month or more must be certified and meet the training requirements. The amount of training for entry level staff varies from 30-120 hours. In Manitoba, child care assistants have to complete the training within the first year of employment and in Alberta, child development assistants have up to six months to become certified at which time they must have completed the required training, comprised of a 58-hour Orientation Course or 3-credit ECE course.
- In Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Québec and Ontario there are no minimum educational entry requirements, beyond the necessary numbers of qualified ECEs.
- In New Brunswick, Québec and British Columbia there are no educational requirements for staff in school-age child care.
- At this time there are no ECE educational requirements for any staff in Nunavut or the Northwest Territories.

There are no post-secondary ECE credentials required to work as a regulated or licensed family child care provider. However, some provinces and territories require some ECE-specific training:

- Newfoundland and Labrador requires a 30-60 hour course, plus 30 hours of professional development every three years.

¹⁰ These examples do not provide an exhaustive review of provincial/territorial requirements. See Table 5 in Appendix 1 for full details for each jurisdiction.

- Nova Scotia requires completion of Level 1 of the Canadian Child Care Federation Family Home Day Care Training.
- Prince Edward Island requires a 30-hour course, plus 30 hours of professional development every three years.
- Québec requires an approved 45-hour course, plus six hours of professional development per year.
- Manitoba requires an approved 40-hour course from a community college in family child care or early childhood education within the first year of operating.
- Saskatchewan requires a 40-hour introductory course in ECE or equivalent within one year of becoming licensed for child care providers, and a 120-hour ECE course for licensees in group family child care within three years of being licensed, plus six hours of professional development per year.
- British Columbia requires 20 hours of course work in child development, guidance, health and safety, or nutrition.
- Yukon requires a 60-hour course or equivalent in early childhood development.

The Terminology of ECE Credentialing Processes

The seven jurisdictions that have a credentialing process as a requirement to work in child care beyond academic qualifications use a variety of terms.

- Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Yukon *certify* staff. They each have different levels of *certification*, depending on the length and type of the training or educational program completed.
- Ontario *registers* early childhood educators. There is one level – Registered Early Childhood Educator, or *Éducatrice de la petite enfance inscrit(e)*.
- British Columbia *registers* early childhood educators and assistants and issues a *Licence to Practice*. There are five types of *licences*.
- Manitoba *classifies* staff and issues certificates. There are three levels of *classification*.
- In Newfoundland and Labrador, individuals are also *classified* depending on either the type of care or the ages of the children in the program.

Throughout this report and in the *Guide*, the term certification is used to refer to regulatory credentialing, except when reference is made to a specific province or territory. In that case the language of the jurisdiction is used.

The detailed requirements for the ECE academic qualifications and the certification processes can be found on the online *Guide to Early Childhood Credentialing in Canada*: <http://www.cpsc-cssge.ca/english/guide>.

In addition to using various terms for certification, provinces and territories use different terms for the various levels of ECE certification. Table 1 provides an overview of the terms used within individual provinces and territories.

Table 1. Provincial/territorial terms used for certification levels

Province/Territory	Terms used for certification levels
Newfoundland	Entry Level; Level 1; Level 2; Level 3; Level 4
Nova Scotia	N/A
Prince Edward Island	Early Childhood Program Staff; Early Childhood Supervisor
New Brunswick	N/A
Quebec	N/A
Ontario	Registered Early Childhood Educator; Éducatrice de la petite enfance inscrit(e)
Manitoba	Child Care Assistant; ECE II; ECE III
Saskatchewan	ECE I; ECE II; ECE III
Alberta	Child Development Assistant; Child Development Worker; Child Development Supervisor
British Columbia	ECE Assistant; ECE 1-year; ECE; ECE Infant/Toddler; ECE Special Needs
Yukon Territory	Child Care Worker 1; Child Care Worker 1A (in policy only); Child Care Worker II; Child Care Worker IIA (in policy only); Child Care Worker III
Northwest Territories	N/A
Nunavut	N/A

The Rationale for Certification

The major rationale for certification is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public in situations where the public being served (e.g., young children) is unlikely to be able to judge on its own the competence of the service.¹¹ Other legislative bases for registration and licensure include assuring the public that services will protect its health and safety, services are financially secure, and practitioners have at least minimum levels of competence, perform their services ethically and are members of the occupation.

The Ontario College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE), a self-regulatory organization and the most recently formed registration body in Canada, states that its “primary duty is to serve and protect the public interest.”¹² Members of the college are professionals who meet entry to practice requirements and standards of practice of the profession, assuring parents that their children are in the care of a qualified professional.¹³

Responsibility for ECE Certification

The responsibility for certifying early childhood educators is usually located in the government ministry or department responsible for child care services:

¹¹ Doherty (2000). *Research Connections Canada*, 4; McDonnell, L., Piasetzki, D., and Raptis-Benner, A. (2003). Bridging the Distance: A National Certification Process for Early Childhood Educators. *Research Connections Canada*, 10, 227-257.

¹² The primary duty of the College of Early Childhood Educators is to serve and protect the public interest by:

- Setting registration requirements to ensure that only qualified and competent individuals are registered as members;
- Maintaining a public register of early childhood educators;
- Establishing a code of ethics and standards of practice for early childhood educators;
- Investigating complaints from the public about the conduct of its members and, if necessary, disciplining members;
- Setting standards of practice that all early childhood educators are accountable to meet;
- Assuring parents that members of the College will be held accountable for providing a high standard of care and early education for children.

¹³ College of Early Childhood Educators 2009. See: <http://www.collegeofece.on.ca>.

- Prince Edward Island: Child Care Facilities Board, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- Manitoba: Qualification Services, Manitoba Child Care Program, Manitoba Family Services and Housing
- Saskatchewan: Early Learning and Child Care Branch, Saskatchewan Education
- Alberta: Child Care Staff Certification, Alberta Children and Youth Services
- British Columbia: ECE Registry in the Ministry of Children and Family Development
- Yukon: Child Care Services Unit, Family and Child Services Branch, Department of Health and Social Services

Ontario, and Newfoundland and Labrador, have delegated all or part of the authority for certification to other bodies.

- In Newfoundland and Labrador, the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador (AECENL) is funded by the provincial government to provide the Child Care Services Certification service. Academic qualifications are assessed by the Registrar of Certification at AECENL and approved by the Provincial Director of Child Care Services.
- In Ontario, the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE), the first such body in Canada, is a self-regulatory organization with authority through the Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007, that registers early childhood educators. Registered members of the college are legally entitled to practice the profession of early childhood education and are required to use the title Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE) in connection with their practice. Ontario is currently the only jurisdiction where an individual can be both registered to work as an ECE and receive professional certification through the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario (AECEO), a voluntary professional organization that administers its own voluntary certification process.

At present, Ontario is the only jurisdiction with a fee for certification. In 2009, there was a one-time application processing fee of \$75 and a registration fee of \$150 for registration with the College of Early Childhood Educators. Additional fees apply for voluntary certification.

Individuals Requiring ECE Certification

There is variation across provinces and territories as to whether or not everyone working with children in regulated child care settings must be certified.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba, Alberta, British Columbia and Yukon, all staff working in child care centres (and part-day nursery schools where they are licensed) must be certified. In Saskatchewan, all staff working more than 65 hours/month must be certified. Entry-level certification usually requires either a specific ECE orientation course, ranging in length from 30 hours to 120 hours (depending on the province or territory); or completion of one or more courses that are part of a post-secondary ECE program.

- In Prince Edward Island and Ontario some staff are required to be certified.
 - In Prince Edward Island, the centre supervisor and one staff are required to be certified.
 - In Ontario, one staff per group of children and the centre supervisor are required to be Registered Early Childhood Educators. Other staff with an ECE qualification must be registered in order to use the designation of early childhood educator.
- In Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island and Yukon family child care providers must be certified; in Newfoundland and Labrador they must also have a Family Child Care classification.
- There are no certification requirements for family child care providers in other provinces and territories; however providers may choose to become certified. In Manitoba, family child care providers with higher level certification

(ECE II or ECE III) may charge a higher daily fee than those who are not certified. In Alberta, providers who are certified are eligible for additional wage top up.

- There is considerable variation in the certification requirements for staff working in school-age programs.
 - In British Columbia, requirements for certification do not apply to school-age staff.
 - In Prince Edward Island, the supervisor and one staff in school-age programs must be certified for Type II centres, which requires one unit of continuing education, defined as a one-semester relevant university/college course.
 - In Alberta, staff in school-age programs require entry level certification.
 - In Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Yukon, the certification requirements are similar to those in child care centres for children under school age.
- Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island and Yukon require family child care providers to be certified.

Certification Renewal Requirements

Four provinces require renewal of certification; in three of those provinces, proof of professional development is required in order to renew.

- In Newfoundland and Labrador and Prince Edward Island, certificates are issued for a three-year period. A minimum of 30 hours of professional development is required in the three-year certificate period in order to recertify. There is no cost to renew certification.
- In British Columbia, the Licence to Practice must be renewed after one year if the applicant has an ECE one-year licence, or otherwise, every five years. Effective November 2009, 40 hours of professional development is required every five years for an ECE licence; completion of an additional credit course in early childhood education is required for an assistant licence. There is no fee to renew certification.
- In Ontario, registration must be renewed annually. Currently, there are no requirements for on-going professional development. The annual registration fee is \$150.
- In Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Yukon, certification does not expire; there are no renewal requirements. However, in Yukon, individuals with degrees or diplomas in a related field, who are classified as Child Care Worker Level III, are required to take an additional early child development course and renew their certification yearly.

SECTION 4: ASPECTS OF CREDENTIALING

Entry-Level Certification

While there are no jurisdictions in Canada that require all staff in regulated child care programs to hold post-secondary credentials in early childhood education, in recent years a number of provinces/territories have introduced entry level certification, and therefore require all staff to be certified/classified/registered. The purpose of entry level certification is to ensure that all staff who are working with young children have a basic level of understanding of child development.

Currently, entry level certification is mandatory in six jurisdictions: Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, and Yukon.¹⁴ While some require entry level upon employment (NL, SK, BC, YK), others require completion of a required number of hours of study with six months (AB) or one year (MB) of employment. In Saskatchewan, entry level is not required for those who are employed for less than 65 hours per month.

There is considerable range in the duration of study required to obtain entry-level certification. Requirements range from completion of one post-secondary course (usually 30 hours) to 120 hours of study.¹⁵ Newfoundland and Labrador is the only province that requires specific types of entry-level study depending on the ages of the children in the program, and does not permit entry-level staff to work with infants.

While all six jurisdictions will recognize completion of post-secondary study in early childhood education of the required number of hours, Alberta and Newfoundland and Labrador each provide a provincially designed entry level course of study:

- Alberta's Ministry of Children and Youth Services has developed a non-credit 58-hour Child Care Orientation Course in partnership with early childhood professionals and educational institutions in the province. The course meets the child care assistant certification training requirements, and is available through classroom, distance and online delivery methods. Students must be Canadian citizens or hold a permanent resident card, and must either be employed in a licensed Alberta child care program, or attending high school with an interest in pursuing a career in child care.
- In Newfoundland and Labrador, the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador offers non-credit orientation courses through the Registrar's office.¹⁶ There is a registration fee for the course, but this fee is refunded upon successful completion of the course to those who are employed in regulated child care programs in the province.

Since Newfoundland and Labrador both certifies and classifies early childhood educators, there are orientation courses specifically designed for the age group of children that the educator will be working with. Courses include:

- Preschool Orientation – five modules
- Infant Orientation – six modules
- School Age Orientation – four modules
- Family Child Care Orientation – 12 modules

The orientation courses are regularly offered in a self-study, distance (correspondence) format through the Office of the Registrar. The courses are sometimes offered (in whole or in part) in a workshop format. In order to be considered for the purposes

¹⁴ In NB, the provincial association of early childhood educators, Early Childhood Care and Education New Brunswick (ECCENB) has proposed a certification model to government for review. The proposed model includes entry-level certification as a requirement for all staff in regulated early childhood and school-age child care programs.

¹⁵ See Section 10: Reference Guide for detailed descriptions of entry-level requirements.

¹⁶ See <http://www.aecenl.ca/images/pdfs/ocinfoaug2008.pdf> for an overview of AECENL's orientation course.

of certification the workshop facilitator and materials must be pre-approved by the Registrar. Certified early childhood educators may receive five hours of credit for professional development upon completion of any one of the orientation courses.

Early Childhood Certification

With the exception of Northwest Territories and Nunavut, all jurisdictions in Canada have legislated¹⁷ requirements outlining post-secondary training and/or experience for early childhood educators (ECEs) who work in regulated early childhood education and care (ECEC) programs. However, across Canada, jurisdictions vary in the titles given to such “certified” or “qualified” staff, and vary in the number of qualified ECEs who must be on staff at any given time. And, despite the strong evidence concerning the importance of the qualifications of the program director, only Manitoba has specific educational requirements for directors.

There are 11 jurisdictions in Canada that outline qualifications for staff to be employed in regulated ECEC programs. Despite the differences in terminology and numbers of qualified staff required to be employed in a regulated program, for the most part provincial and territorial requirements call for post-secondary credentials of a one-year ECE certificate or a two-year ECE diploma.¹⁸ There are currently no jurisdictions in Canada that require a degree in early childhood education for any staff in regulated ECEC programs.¹⁹

Given the ongoing and at times severe challenges in the ability to recruit qualified staff for regulated ECEC programs, almost all jurisdictions allow for the “director” or an equivalent licensing body to grant exceptions or variances to the licensing requirements if applicants can demonstrate they have been unable to recruit a qualified person after making a reasonable effort to do so. However, there is generally some sort of condition or provision placed on the license so that the individual who is hired must begin a course of study leading to a credential; there is also generally a time period specified for this to happen.

In three provinces, (PEI, NL, BC) ECE certification must be renewed on a regular basis, with renewal dependent on verification of a specified level of participation in ECE professional development activities.

At any given time in Canada, there are provinces or territories in the midst of reviewing or revising their regulations and policies concerning requirements for certification and/or qualifications. For example, currently:

- Québec is phasing in a new requirement for increased numbers of qualified staff in privately operated child care programs (les garderies).
- Nova Scotia has completed a province-wide consultation on required qualifications for early childhood educators. Feedback from the consultations is now under review.
- In New Brunswick, the professional organization representing early childhood educators – Early Childhood Care and Education New Brunswick (ECCENB) – has put forward a proposed model for certification of early childhood educators. This is under review.
- The Ontario government is currently reviewing recommendations regarding educational qualifications for early childhood educators as contained in the recently released report of the Special Early Learning Advisor.²⁰

¹⁷ In New Brunswick, training requirements are enforced by policy as determined by provincial standards.

¹⁸ Quebec is the only jurisdiction with a three-year DEC diploma.

¹⁹ In 2009, Dr. Charles Pascal, the Ontario Early Learning Advisor, in his report to the Premier of Ontario, *With our Best Future in Mind*, recommended that early childhood educators hold degrees in early childhood education. This recommendation is currently under review.

²⁰ Pascal, C. (2009). *With Our Best Future in Mind: Implementing Early Learning in Ontario*. Report to the Premier by the Special Advisor on Early Learning.

Provincial/Territorial Financial Support for Credentialing

In recent years, provinces and territories have implemented a number of funding programs²¹ that support individuals to acquire ECE credentials and to upgrade their qualifications, and dedicated wage top-ups that increase with the level of certification achieved. As of fiscal year 2009/2010, the following financial supports were in place across the country:²²

- Newfoundland and Labrador refunds the \$25-\$75 cost of an entry-level orientation course once it has been completed.
- Newfoundland and Labrador provides bursaries of up to \$5,000 for those who graduated from a full-time recognized ECE program in the province in 2006 or later, and who work in a child care centre or regulated family child care immediately following graduation for a minimum of two years. The province also provides bursaries of \$1,200 per placement for ECEs and regulated family child care providers who are upgrading through distance delivery to cover the cost of on-campus field placements.
- Nova Scotia refunds up to \$5,000 per year for those who successfully complete a full-time early childhood education training program, with a return-of-service agreement.
- Nova Scotia refunds up to \$5,000 per year for those currently working full-time in child care – and up to \$1,000 per year for those currently working part-time – who successfully complete course work in early childhood education, with a return-of-service agreement.
- New Brunswick provides up to \$3,000 per year for individuals who are currently employed in a provincially approved child care facility, and who have – on or after January 2007 – either completed courses as part of the one-year ECE certificate from a recognized training institute; or completed the one-year ECE certificate.
- Prince Edward Island provides up to \$2,000 for individuals who need a maximum of four additional courses to complete the requirements for ECE certification.
- Ontario assists child care professionals working in licensed child care settings who want to upgrade their qualifications and obtain an ECE diploma. Financial support is available to eligible applicants in three ways:
 - An education grant based on tuition fees, minus any other grants or awards, except an Ontario student loan
 - A travel grant to assist with the cost of commuting to and from school
 - A training allowance to help with living costs while taking training, to a maximum of \$5,000 per semester
- Manitoba Child Care facilities have access to numerous forms of training, as well as supports, including:
 - A staff-replacement grant to non-profit centres to cover the cost of substitutes for staff attending ECE workplace training (two days per week) so that workplace students may continue to receive a full salary while completing their two-year ECE diploma.
 - Students enrolled in a full-time ECE diploma program may apply for \$4,000 in tuition support. The funds are paid over two years, upon successful completion of each year, and the individual is required to work in child care for a minimum of two years after graduation.
 - A \$350 annual training grant for child care assistants and experienced family child care providers as incentive to attain their ECE II, and for ECE IIs wishing to upgrade to an ECE III level.
- Saskatchewan provides tuition reimbursement grants of \$150 to the licensee of a child care program once a staff per-

²¹ The funding programs described in this section are current in 2009.

²² For updated and current information, please refer to the relevant provincial/territorial government web site.

son has successfully completed an ECE course. For 2008-10, a two-year pilot program of education support grants of \$900 per required ratio staff was made available to licensed child care centres for staff members to acquire or increase an ECE credential. The funds may be used to cover additional tuition costs, books, travel, or staff replacement costs.

- Alberta has several funding initiatives to assist with ECE training and qualification upgrading:
 - High school students who have completed required credit courses through Career and Technologies Studies or who have completed the Child Care Orientation course while in high school are eligible for a \$2,500 scholarship to pursue post-secondary studies in early childhood education.
 - Employed child development assistants and child development workers are eligible for professional development grants of up to \$1,000 per year to help pay for post-secondary courses and required textbooks.
 - Tuition bursaries of up to \$10,000 are available for individuals working in child care centres, pre-schools, out-of-school programs and family day home agencies to further their education and enhance their leadership skills. The individual must hold or be in training for a leadership position and make a commitment to remain in the child care field for at least one year for each year covered by the bursary.
- In British Columbia, graduates from an approved early childhood education program whose final year of study was between January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2008, and who are employed in a licensed child care facility, may be eligible for a loan repayment towards their provincial student loan of \$1,250 per year for each of the first and second year after graduation that they are employed as an early childhood educator.
- In an effort to make ECE training more accessible, many post-secondary institutions have made some or all of their ECE programs available through distance education, which enables staff who may be working in the field to continue their employment while increasing their level of training. Prince Edward Island and Manitoba have implemented innovative day-time programs that enable experienced but unqualified staff to retain their jobs and acquire an ECE credential. Prince Edward Island's Accelerated Training Model is a 33-week program where students alternate between the classroom and practicum in 11-week blocks and are able to collect Employment Insurance payments for the time they are in the classroom. Manitoba's Workplace Training Program enables participants to attend classes two days a week and work in their centre for three days. During the two-year period it takes to complete the program, the Manitoba Child Care Program provides funding to centres to cover the cost of substitute staff to replace students while they are in the classroom, enabling them to receive their full salary during the training period.²³ Upon completion of the program, graduates receive their ECE diploma.

All provinces and territories provide some form of operating grants to eligible child care facilities. Some jurisdictions have specific funding programs that reflect the level of certification or education achieved.

- Newfoundland and Labrador has an Early Learning and Child Care Supplement of \$3,330 per year for staff with Level 1 certification (one-year certificate), and \$6,660 per year paid directly for staff with Level 2 certification (two-year diploma) or higher.
- The Nova Scotia Child Care Stabilization Grant provides \$4,500 per year for trained staff and \$4,200 per year for those deemed equivalent.
- The New Brunswick Quality Improvement Funding Support (QIFS) Program provides \$4.11 per hour for staff with a minimum one-year ECE certificate compared to \$2.56 per hour for staff without.
- In Manitoba, family child care providers classified as ECE IIs or ECE IIIs may charge higher maximum daily fees, equivalent to the maximum allowable fees in child care centres.

²³ The Workplace Training Program, first offered by Red River College, is now available at the University College of the North and Assiniboine Community College.

- In Alberta, staff support funding grants are available to all certified staff in licensed centres in good standing. The amounts range from \$1.44 per hour for child development assistants (CDAs) working in pre-accredited centres to \$6.62 per hour for staff with child development supervisor (CDS) certification in accredited centres up to 181 hours per month. Family day home providers and consultants in agencies are also eligible for the funding, ranging from \$1.44 per hour for a provider with CDA certification in a pre-accredited agency to \$6.62 per hour for those with CDS certification in an accredited agency.
- Yukon provides funds for child care staff and family child care providers ranging from \$1.85 per hour for Level 1 Certification to \$9.00 per hour for Level 3 to a maximum of 40 hours per week.

Provincial Post-secondary Standards for Early Childhood Education

Six provinces have adopted provincial standards for post-secondary early childhood education programs. These include Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Québec, Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia.

Newfoundland and Labrador: Early Childhood Care and Education Program Standards

Newfoundland and Labrador's standards were revised in January 2008. They are based on the Canadian Child Care Federation's National Training Guidelines and the Occupational Standards for Child Care Practitioners, and reflect the principles and practices outlined in policy documents related to the *Child Care Services Act* (NL), Regulations, and policies. The ECCE program standards:

- Are created for use in the development of one- and two-year ECE programs. All standards that apply to one-year programs are also required for two-year programs; there may be additional requirements articulated for two-year programs.
- Require that ECE training programs make a full-time licensed child care program available to the students. The post-secondary program must hold the license for the child care program. The standards outline specific requirements for the child care program, including requirements: for being "on site"; to surpass minimum standards for materials and furnishings; to have a fully functioning kitchen; provide access for students at times other than field placements; provide for an observation room with microphones and two way mirrors; and other specifications regarding the program philosophy, design, delivery and curriculum content.
- Outline qualifications for instructional staff and staff in demonstration centres.
- Prescribe the duration and structure of practicum placements.
- Outline admission requirements for new students.

In addition to an outline for required course content hours (see below), the Newfoundland and Labrador standards describe specific examples of skills, abilities and knowledge required of ECE graduates from either one- or two-year programs.

Nova Scotia: Standards for Full-time Early Childhood Education and Training Programs

The Early Childhood Development Services section of the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services, under the authority of the *Day Care Act & Regulations* (1989), establishes policies and procedures for Early Childhood Education training in the Province of Nova Scotia and approves new early childhood education training programs. These standards are intended to formalize the application and assessment process, promote more consistency in programs across the province, and support consistency in decision-making. The Child Care Training and Education Program Approval Committee prepared the document, with representation from the Nova Scotia Round Table on Day Care.

The Nova Scotia standards were last revised in 2005. New post-secondary programs, as of January 1, 1998, must meet these standards and cannot begin operation until they have the department's approval. Early childhood education training programs, which receive initial approval and subsequently make significant program changes that are reflective of the items in the standards document, must seek approval for those changes in order to maintain their approved program status.

In addition to expectations regarding curriculum content, the Nova Scotia ECE standards require:

- Evidence of program coordination.
- Evidence of faculty hiring practices that encourage diversity.
- Description of annual program review terms of reference.
- Establishment of a program advisory committee, with specific criteria for such a committee. The post-secondary institution must submit terms of reference for the program advisory committee.
- Evidence of professional development opportunities for faculty.
- Evidence of faculty qualifications that meet stated requirements for both full- and part-time faculty.

Evidence is also required to describe:

- an annual faculty review, which must also include student input;
- instructional approaches;
- student services, including library and resources, lab school (on campus, full-day, licensed); and
- student recruitment strategies.

Québec: Techniques d'éducation à l'enfance

Program requirements in Québec were approved in 2000 and modified in 2002. The standards describe the purpose of the program, which is "to train educators for child care services for children ages 0-12 years."²⁴ The main function of the educators in regulated child care services consists of creating an environment that favours physical, psychomotor, cognitive, language, and socio-affective skills, and morals while establishing a positive relationship with the children. Educators are also responsible for the conception, organization, animation and evaluation of activities that contribute globally to the development of the children left in their care.

The post-secondary program competencies are targeted to those who will be employed as early childhood educators and assistants. The standards outline the minimum number of required course credit hours, although specific course titles are not identified. Rather, the standards identify 22 specific competencies for the three-year Diplôme d'études collégiales (DÉC)²⁵ that are considered to be course objectives and standards, and focus on areas such as child development, child and family issues, educational approaches, the work environment, program design and implementation, and communication. The Attestation d'études collégiales (AEC) provides study to address 12 specific competencies and one complementary competency in a one-year program.

Ontario: Early Childhood Education Program Standard

The Ontario Program Standard is intended to guide post-secondary programs delivered by Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology. Program standards were first introduced in Ontario in 1993 in an effort to bring greater consistency to post-secondary programs. The Colleges Branch of the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities has responsibility for the development and approval of system-wide program standards in all colleges of applied arts and technology in the province.

²⁴ See http://www2.inforoutefpt.org/guide/det_prog_col.asp?QProg=322.A0&QRegion=0.

²⁵ There are 13 competencies identified for the one year Attestation d'études collégiale (AEC).

Program standards are developed through a broad consultation process involving employers, professional associations, universities, secondary schools and program graduates working in the field, as well as students, faculty and administrators in the colleges themselves. From time to time, the ministry conducts reviews of the vocational learning outcomes along with the generic and general education requirements for early childhood education in order that the standards remain appropriate and relevant to the needs of students and employers.

Each program standard is made up of three elements, which collectively outline the required skills and knowledge that a student must reliably demonstrate in order to graduate:

- Vocational Standard – vocationally specific learning outcomes – in this case, learning outcomes specifically related to early childhood education;
- Generic Skills Standard – generic learning outcomes which apply to all programs of similar length;
- General Education Standard – the requirement for general education courses that apply to all post-secondary programs, and which are intended to enable students to effectively meet the societal challenges they encounter in their families, communities and working life.

Individual colleges determine the specific program structure, delivery methods and other curriculum matters. Individual colleges also determine whether additional learning outcomes will be required to reflect specific local needs or interests. The ministry has established a process to accredit college programs.

The vocational and generic skills components of program standards are expressed as learning outcomes, which in turn are defined by “elements of performance”. These elements are indicators of the means by which the student may proceed to satisfactory performance of the learning outcome. For some standards, an “explanation” is also provided. General education standards are expressed as a series of goals and objectives that address such things as aesthetic appreciation, civic life, cultural understanding, personal development, social understanding, understanding science and technology, and work and the economy.

Nine vocational learning outcomes are outlined, which relate specifically to the work of early childhood educators. These outcomes outline areas such as curriculum, observation skills, relationships, compliance with safety and health requirements, communication, dealing with children in changing social contexts, and developing a personal philosophy, and demonstrating principles of fairness, equity and diversity in all dealings with children and families. Each standard is further defined by specific elements of the performance, which are seen to be indicators of how well the student has mastered the specific aspects of the learning outcome. Generic learning outcomes are described and presented in the same manner.

Manitoba: Early Learning and Child Care Competencies

The Child Care Education Program Approval Committee (CCEPAC), Manitoba Department of Advanced Education and Literacy, reviews and approves training programs for child care workers and monitors the quality and standards of early childhood education in Manitoba. The provincial Early Learning and Child Care Competencies are intended to be used by post-secondary institutions in the development and assessment of their early childhood education (ECE) programs and the students who are registered in those programs. The competencies were first developed in 1985 and were based on the competencies developed by Child Development Associates (Washington, DC, 1982).

Each post-secondary institution is expected to design a program that ensures its early childhood education graduates demonstrate knowledge and skills reflecting the five competency goals in the major areas of early learning and child care. In general terms, the competency goals address the child care environment, the child, relationships, the family and community, and the profession. Specific focus areas of knowledge are identified for each competency goal. Learning objectives are outlined for each focus area, and a rationale is described for each of the particular learning objectives. Examples of skills and abilities for the early childhood educator are presented, but are not intended to be considered an exhaustive list.

British Columbia: Early Childhood Education Training Program Approval

Under the authority of the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* (2004) and the Child Care Licensing Regulation, the Director of the Early Childhood Educator Registry sets standards for the certification of early childhood educators (ECEs) in British Columbia. Part of this process includes the approval of post-secondary training programs that have been evaluated and found to provide students with the knowledge, skills and abilities required to be meet this standard. The standard for certification is based on the Child Care Sector Occupational Competencies that were established by British Columbia's Multi-Lateral Task Force on Training, Career Pathing and Labour Mobility in 2000.

ECE Registry staff review applications from post-secondary ECE programs, and if required, will conduct an on-site visit to the facility as part of the approval process. The assessment process takes an average of six to 12 months. ECE program approval may be granted on an interim or conditional basis or for an indefinite or fixed period of time, depending upon individual program circumstances.

Post-secondary ECE programs applying for approval must satisfactorily describe the components of the program, including:

- Mission and statement of purpose.
- Administration, including the organizational chart of the ECE program, criteria for qualities of administrators/coordinators; job descriptions for administrative personnel involved in development or delivery of the ECE program; written policies for admission, academic approval, credit transfer, and PLAR.
- Personnel/staffing, including written statement of qualifications and experience for each category of personnel; job descriptions; policies regarding ongoing professional development; policies to support participation in professional organizations; and policies for regular review and performance evaluation.
- Instructional methods, including standards for learning activities demonstrating a variety of teaching strategies; strategies to address adult learning and individualized learning styles; provision for diversity in program content, instructional methods, and materials.
- Program review, including schedule for reviews and evaluations.
- Admission criteria, including articulation agreements with other post-secondary institutions.
- Student evaluation, including description of evaluation tools, grading systems, examples of student records, and requirements for graduation.
- Access, including community needs assessments.
- Facility/equipment/resources, including description of floor plan, equipment and resources; outline of a variety of children's programs accessible by students and faculty; availability and access to library/resource centre and presentation equipment.
- Program goals and objectives, including program content and philosophy; course descriptions (subject matter, hours of instruction and transfer of credit).
- Curriculum, which must address competencies outlined in the BC Child Care Sector Occupational Competencies (2002).
- Practicum, including selection and evaluation processes; names of practicum sites; description of on-site visits; qualifications of supervisors.

The standards also describe the required areas of instruction for early childhood educators, infant toddler educators, and special needs educators. For the latter two, certification as an early childhood educator is a pre-requisite.

Minimum Hours of Study

While some jurisdictions outline the scope, content and duration of post-secondary ECE programs in their “standards”, others identify particular areas of study and minimum hours of study in their regulated certification programs. An analysis of the minimum number of hours of study required shows that there are significant differences between and among those provinces with specified numbers of hours of study. Table 2 outlines specific requirements in those provinces where scope, content and duration of post-secondary ECE programs is defined:

Table 2. Hours required for ECE post-secondary credentials – as defined in regulation for certification, or in standards for post-secondary ECE programs

Province/Territory	Total number of hours	Breakdown of requirements (hours)		
		Area of study	1-year	2-year
Newfoundland	1-year program: 1,320 hours 2-year program: 2,175 hours	Curriculum	300	540
		Child Development and Observation	225	300
		Families	60	180
		Communications	60	90
		Health and safety	45	60
		Research	40	60
		Administration	30	60
		Guidance	60	75
		Nutrition	45	45
		Prof. Development	30	45
		Practicum	425	720
Nova Scotia	1,280 hours	Child growth and development: 120 Curriculum studies: 240 Behaviour guidance: 60 Broad areas of study: 360 Practicum: 500 <i>Note: These broad areas include observation and assessment; health, safety and nutrition; diversity; exceptional children; professionalism and community resource studies; foundations of early childhood education; research; and communication.</i>		
Prince Edward Island	NA			
New Brunswick	NA			
Quebec	2,490 hours (3-year program) Minimum 1,200 hours (1-year program)	ECE-specific: 1,830 General courses for all program areas: 420 General courses suited to ECE: 150 General complementary courses: 90 ECE-specific		
Ontario	Required hours of study are not specified – Ontario’s standards address learning outcomes; individual post-secondary institutions plan their own courses and timetables in order to achieve the outcomes.			
Manitoba	Required hours of study are not specified.			

	Introductory ECE1: 120 1-year ECE2: 520 2-year ECE3: 1,060 hours Note: Requirements for hours of study and content of study are related to certification levels.	Broad definition of area of study - each area includes specific courses	ECE1	ECE2	ECE3
Saskatchewan		Child development Programming Relationships Related courses	40 40 40 0	120 160 120 120	160 240 280 380
Alberta	Required hours of study are not specified; Alberta certification specifies hours of study for its ECE equivalency process.				
British Columbia	Minimum: 902 hours for ECE certification – specialization for infant/toddler and/or special needs requires an additional 450 hours.	Child growth and development: 90 Program development, curriculum, and foundations: 312 Interpersonal skills/community/family: 45 Health, safety and nutrition: 30 Practicum: 425 (with seminar and observation within course of study) <i>Note: All hours refer to minimum allowed. First aid training (8 hours) is in addition to the minimum hours established for health, safety, and nutrition.</i>			
Yukon Territory	Required hours of study are not specified; Yukon specifies hours of study for its ECE equivalency process for certification.				
Northwest Territories	NA				
Nunavut	NA				

There are many similarities and some distinct differences in how provinces have approached the development of standards for post-secondary ECE programs. For example:

- Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia have outlined very specific requirements related to administration and program resources for post-secondary ECE programs, including (but not limited to) a description of acceptable academic credentials for ECE faculty; the need for access to an on-site regulated early childhood education program; requirements for an annual program review; requirements for an annual performance review for faculty; and an outline of admission requirements to the program.
- Ontario and Manitoba have left decisions regarding administration of programs to the individual colleges.
- Ontario does not require or provide for on-site early childhood education programs for student access – individual colleges must fund these lab programs out of their operating budgets if they wish to have them as part of their programs.
- Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia have cited the Canadian Child Care Federation’s National Training Guidelines as contributing to the development of provincial standards. Newfoundland and Labrador is the first jurisdiction to incorporate the Occupational Standards for Child Care Practitioners into their provincial standards for post-secondary ECE programs. British Columbia has used its own 2002 BC Occupational Competencies. Ontario’s standards are based on broad consultation with the ECE sector.
- Many jurisdictions have outlined the minimum number of instructional hours for each component of the provincial post-secondary ECE curriculum (NL, NS, BC, QC) while Ontario and Alberta have left this decision to the post-secondary institution.
- Some jurisdictions (NL, NS and BC) have specified the number of hours required for practicum placements. Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia have outlined specific standards in terms of the types of placements that are acceptable, and the nature of the supervision required during the work placement.

- Newfoundland and Labrador and Ontario describe their standards in terms of learning outcomes for the early childhood educator; Québec, Manitoba and British Columbia describe their standards in terms of “competencies”; Nova Scotia describes its standards in terms of course content.

Results of interviews with provincial and territorial officials regarding approaches to equivalency and assessment of international credentials demonstrated that in those provinces where there are standards for post-secondary ECE programs, these standards have played a valuable role in providing a sound basis and rationale for assessment and recognition of credentials. Further analysis of the provincial standards for post-secondary ECE programs clearly indicates that occupational standards have made a key contribution to this work.

Equivalency

The previous section describes the various processes taken in provinces and territories to determine what constitutes a recognized post-secondary ECE certificate or diploma. It also describes the entry-level requirements in provinces and territories that require them. Provinces and territories have a variety of mechanisms to assess the credentials of individuals who do not have an ECE certificate or diploma awarded in the jurisdiction in which they wish to work, to determine if the credentials are equivalent to the ECE requirements of the particular province or territory. The process of equivalency does not usually result in an additional post-secondary credential, but enables individuals to become certified in a particular province or territory, or where certification is not practiced, enable them to be deemed “qualified” to work in child care in accordance with the requirements of the particular province or territory’s child care regulations.

There is considerable variation across jurisdictions in which credentials are accepted as equivalent and the mechanisms used to assess them. An overview of different processes is provided below. For further details about the requirements and procedures in a particular province or territory, please refer to the *Guide to Early Childhood Education Credentialing*.

Equivalency procedures generally fall into one of three main categories:

- Related post-secondary credentials other than ECE
- Post-secondary ECE credentials acquired in another province or territory
- Post-secondary credentials acquired outside Canada

Related Post-secondary Credentials other than ECE

Some provinces and territories list specific post-secondary credentials that are considered equivalent to an ECE credential; some assess the credential against a set of competencies, or against the number of course hours required for an ECE certificate or diploma; others do not accept related credentials as equivalent, but refer the individual to have their credential assessed at a post-secondary institution to determine if the courses taken are transferable to an ECE program. In some cases, gaps are identified and specific additional course work is required before equivalency is granted.

Ontario and Manitoba do not generally accept credentials other than early childhood education. In both provinces individuals may have their credentials assessed at a post-secondary institution to determine if any of the courses taken are transferable to an ECE diploma program.

In Manitoba, an individual with post-secondary education (generally two years) and 60 hours of professional development within the last two years may apply to the Competency-Based Assessment/Prior Learning Assessment (CBA/PLA) program. It takes approximately eight months to complete and entitles the individual to an ECE II classification.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, the Registrar for Child Care Services Certification assesses related credentials and makes recommendations to the Provincial Director of Child Care Services for approval. The Director of Child Care Services may determine that a combination of educational qualifications is equivalent to one of the certification levels.

In Saskatchewan, the Manager of Credentials and Quality Improvement assesses an individual's transcript against the certification requirements and identifies equivalencies and any additional courses required. Certification requirements are based on course hours in four categories:

- ECE I requires 40 hours in each of child development, programming, and relationships.
- ECE II requires 120 hours in each of child development, relationships and related courses, and 160 hours in programming.
- ECE III requires 160 hours in child development, 240 hours in programming, 280 hours in relationships and 380 hours in related courses.

New Brunswick, British Columbia and Yukon recognize specific diploma and degrees:

- New Brunswick recognizes a Bachelor of Primary or Secondary Education
- British Columbia considers education comparable to an ECE if the course content covers at least 80% of the material in an ECE program. A Bachelor of Primary Education with an ECE specialization and a Bachelor of Child and Youth Care with an ECE specialization are recognized as comparable to an ECE. Typically, individuals with other credentials qualify as an ECE assistant. Individuals may be referred to a post-secondary institution to determine if advanced standing would be given, or they may be referred to one of two colleges that have a PLAR process.
- In Yukon, a degree or diploma in the Health and Social Sciences fields or a Bachelor of Education is considered equivalent to a Child Care Worker level III. However, applicants must first successfully complete a 45-hour early childhood development course. They also must reapply for designation each year and provide proof of successful completion of ECD/ECE coursework on an annual basis.

In Québec, the following post-secondary credentials and/or experience are recognized as equivalent training:

- A diploma in special education or social work, plus an attestation in early childhood education or childcare education **or** a university certificate in early childhood.
- An attestation in early childhood education in a program requiring a minimum of 1200 hours of training, together with three years of relevant full-time experience.
- A university certificate in early childhood, together with three years of relevant full-time experience.
- A bachelor's degree with a minimum of one minor in one of: early childhood, preschool education, psycho-education, psychology, and remedial and special education, including or together with three university- or college-level courses of a minimum of 45 hours each in child health, child safety and the educational approach.
- An attestation for early childhood educators working with Aboriginal children. Outside Aboriginal communities, this should be accompanied by three years of relevant full-time experience on a full-time basis.

In Prince Edward Island, any of the following sets of basic training, extension and experience qualifications from an institution or agency approved by the Child Care Facilities Board or, in unusual cases, some other comparable combination of training and experience acceptable to the board, qualifies an individual for a certification as a supervisor in a Type I facility (early childhood centre). Individuals who complete the required extension units but do not have the required years of experience may be certified as a program staff, and eligible to work as a qualified staff person in a Type I facility (early childhood centre).

Basic Training	Extension Units	Years of Experience
University degree (or equivalent award) in Early Childhood Development or Child Study	-	-
Diploma (or equivalent award) in Early Childhood program of at least 2 academic years	-	2
Diploma (or equivalent award) in Early Childhood program of at least 1 academic year	-	3
University degree (or equivalent award) in a field related to child care or education	2	1
Post-secondary diploma (or equivalent) in a field related to child care or education	4	3
Credit for 10 university semester courses in a field related to child care or education	4	3

- For the purpose of certification, 800 hours work experience in a licensed child care facility is recognized by the board as equivalent to one year of experience.
- When extension units are required for equivalency, at least two of those units must include post-secondary courses in child growth and development, and early childhood teaching methods.
- An extension unit is defined as 30 hours of post-secondary education from a recognized college/university.

Alberta grants equivalency to a range of credentials from a variety of related human services disciplines, for both child development worker and child development supervisor designations, as outlined in its Educational Equivalencies for Alberta Child Care Staff Certification.

For certification as a child development supervisor, the following credentials are deemed equivalent:

- Alberta Permanent Teaching Certificate designation
- Education degree (early childhood education, elementary education, secondary education, general or after degree)
- Child and Youth Care diploma or degree
- Class A – Out of School Certification from the City of Edmonton or Calgary
- Class C - Out of School Certification from the City of Edmonton only
- Early Learning and Child Care diploma
- Home Science (child development) degree
- Science (education) degree
- Social Work degree
- 1,545 hours of education in child care (includes child development courses and 800 hours of practicum)

For certification as a child development worker, the following credentials are deemed equivalent:

- Arts (psychology or sociology) degree
- Class B - Out of School Certification from the City of Edmonton or Calgary
- Class C - Out of School Certification from the City of Calgary only
- Early Learning and Child Care certificate

- Educational Assistant – diploma
- Fine Arts (with ECE coursework) degree
- Licensed practical nurse designation
- Medicine – degree
- Physical Education – degree
- Recreational Therapy – diploma or degree
- Rehabilitation – diploma or degree
- School-Age Care – certificate
- Science (Nursing) – degree
- Social Work – diploma
- Teaching – diploma
- 770 hours of education in child care (includes child development courses and 400 hours of practicum)

Note: A college-level English or French course is required, in addition or as part of the above noted equivalencies, for certification and re-certification as a child development worker and child development supervisor.

Post-secondary ECE Credentials Acquired in Another Province or Territory

Under the Labour Mobility Chapter of Canada’s *Agreement on Internal Trade* (see Section 5 for details about the agreement and the implications for early childhood educators) individuals certified in early childhood education as defined in provincial/territorial legislation in one province or territory must be certified at an equivalent level in other Canadian jurisdictions that also have certification processes. This requirement for mutual recognition involves Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia and Yukon, as these are the jurisdictions that have provincially regulated certification/classification/registration processes.

Even though certified ECEs residing in one of the eight jurisdictions listed above are not required to have their post-secondary ECE credentials assessed in order to be certified in another province or territory, this is not the case for ECEs who are not yet certified, but who may be applying for certification for the first time, or who may be moving from a province that does not have a regulated certification, classification, or registration process. As well, there are provinces that do not have certification processes, but that do have legislated requirements for qualified ECEs to work in their regulated ECEC programs. In these provinces (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Québec) individuals must have their credentials assessed to determine that they are able to meet ECE licensing requirements.

Therefore, all jurisdictions have processes in place to assess and recognize credentials that have been earned in another jurisdiction in Canada. Table 3 outlines how each province and territory assesses and recognizes out-of-province ECE credentials, and how other ECE credentials are handled.

Table 3. Assessment of out-of-province ECE credentials of individuals without ECE certification

Province/Territory	Recognized ECE credentials	Other ECE credentials
Newfoundland	ECE credentials from a public or private college recognized in the home province.	Completed course work and practicum requirements are compared to Newfoundland and Labrador Early Childhood Care and Education Program Standards (2008) to determine equivalency.
Nova Scotia	Not specified.	Credentials are reviewed by the Early Childhood Development Branch and are assessed against compliance with the Nova Scotia Post-secondary Standards for Early Childhood Education.
Prince Edward Island	ECE credentials from a public college; ECE credentials from private colleges in the Atlantic region may be recognized.	Individuals have the option of having credentials reviewed by the college to determine if any courses or content would be recognized. Once the individual has successfully completed the required course material she or he submits the official transcript to the Child Care Facilities Board.
New Brunswick	Any one- or two-year ECE credential from a post-secondary institution that is a member of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) or that is accepted by another province in Atlantic Canada.	Other qualifications are referred to New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) or the Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (CCNB) for assessment.
Quebec	Two-year ECE programs of at least 1800 hours are equivalent to a DEC. Individuals must have a secondary school diploma earned in another province of Canada. One-year ECE certificate programs between 750 and 1,800 hours are deemed equivalent to an attestation of college studies (AÉC).	No equivalency is granted for graduates of other early childhood programs comprising less than 750 hours of training.
Ontario	The College of Early Childhood Educators maintains a list of Canadian early childhood education programs whose credentials are recognized by the college for registration. ²⁶	Applicants with other ECE credentials from another institution are referred to the Association of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario (AECEO) or the Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario (AFÉSEO) for a review of their credentials. Following the review, a learning prescription outlining necessary courses is provided to the applicant.

²⁶ Applicants with an ECE credential from an institution on the College of Early Childhood Educators' approved list are usually required to take, at minimum, Ontario-specific courses on legislation, health and safety, and a supervised practicum. The requirements must be completed within a two-year time frame. Once the prescription is completed, the AECEO provides a Letter of Equivalency Certificate to the applicant, who can then move to the registration process with the college. Unless the applicant is exempt, an ECE Knowledge Assessment Exam and Language Fluency Testing is a required part of the equivalency process. There is an equivalency application fee of \$100 and an ECE knowledge assessment exam fee of \$50. The time from application to receiving a "letter of prescription" is approximately 6-8 weeks. Out-of-province equivalency assessment will eventually become the responsibility of the College of Early Childhood Educators.

Manitoba	All two-year ECE diploma programs from a public college in Canada.	Applicants with credentials from other institutions may choose to have their credentials assessed at one of the approved post-secondary ECE programs to determine if credit will be given towards an ECE diploma. Applicants with at least two years of post-secondary education may be eligible for the 6-8 month CBA/PLA program, which involves portfolio development, self-assessment and demonstration of the evidence of performance, assessed against the performance standards developed for the field. (See Manitoba case study, page 36, for further detail.)
Saskatchewan	The Early learning and Child Care Program maintains a list of recognized post-secondary ECE programs. The post-secondary institution must be recognized in its home province.	If the credential is not deemed to be equivalent the course outlines are reviewed to determine content and hours.
Alberta	ECE credentials from a public or private college recognized in the home province.	ECE credentials from an educational institution not recognized by the home jurisdiction. Courses may be assessed on an individual basis.
British Columbia	All two-year ECE diplomas from a post-secondary institution recognized in the home province. If the credential is more than 10 years old, proof of work and PD must also be submitted.	Other ECE credentials are reviewed against BC's Occupational Competencies Assessment Tool. The registry identifies additional areas of study required; the BC post-secondary institution identifies courses that meet those areas of study. Alternatively, the applicant may contact a training institution approved by the ECE Registry to discuss an academic assessment of the individual's training, or they may undertake PLAR at Northern Lights or Douglas College.
Yukon Territory	ECE credentials from a recognized post-secondary institution.	Applications are assessed for compliance with the number of hours of study required for each level of certification in each of the learning streams which include health, child development, self-esteem, methods, field placement and electives.

Post-secondary Credentials Acquired Outside Canada

In most provinces and territories, international credentials in an early childhood field are assessed on a case-by-case basis. Refer to Section 6 for a discussion of international credential recognition and provincial/territorial experiences, including case studies from three jurisdictions, and to the *Guide to Early Childhood Education Credentialing in Canada* for the specific processes in each province and territory.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

The Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment (CAPLA) defines PLAR as a systematic process that involves the identification, documentation, assessment and recognition of learning (i.e., skills, knowledge and values). This learning may be acquired through formal and informal study, including work and life experience, training, independent study, volunteer work, travel, hobbies and family experiences. Recognition of prior learning can be used toward the requirements of education and training programs, occupational and/or professional certification, labour market entry, and organizational and human resource capacity building.²⁷

The Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials notes: “Adults learn in many different ways throughout their lives. Their social skills develop over years; their technical skills develop at work and at home as needs arise. Many

²⁷ Retrieved September 12, 2009 from: http://www.capla.ca/benchmark_en.php

adults have had to learn computer skills in recent years. Their efforts in the volunteer sector and in their leisure time, whether in the arts, sports, or even travel, all contribute to adult learning. Yet many people have no documentation or other means to verify their knowledge and skills. PLAR is a process that helps adults to demonstrate and obtain recognition for learning that they acquire outside of formal education settings. PLAR focuses on what adults know and can actually ‘do’.²⁸

CAPLA notes that for the most part, there are two main approaches to help adult learners assess and gain recognition for their learning:

- **Portfolio Development:** A portfolio is an organized collection of materials which records and verifies an adult's learning achievements and relates them to the requirements of an education or training program, a work standard, or a professional qualification. CAPLA notes that the process of developing a portfolio is often as important as the content, given that the individual must analyze their previous learning and experience, and be able to communicate that learning to others.
- **The Challenge Process:** Challenge processes differ amongst educational institutions and regulatory bodies, but usually include one or more of the following:
 - assessment of educational documents
 - standardized tests and program reviews of employer-based training
 - product assessment
 - interviews and oral exams
 - performance testing and demonstrations²⁹
 - essays
 - challenge exams
 - self-assessment

Although PLAR itself is not new, the field of practice and the role of practitioners have been evolving.³⁰ Recognition for Learning (RFL), a community based initiative of CAPLA, provides a venue for colleges and universities to share their experiences, innovative approaches, and research on PLAR. Efforts continue across Canada to identify how PLAR – or other descriptors, including Recognition for Prior Learning (RPL) – can be useful for, credible, and well-understood by adults who bring skills and aptitudes to their workplace but who may or may not have academic credentials.

PLAR in Early Childhood Education

PLAR is used in several different aspects of credentialing processes:

- Assessment and recognition of international credentials
- Assessment for individuals without formal ECE post-secondary credentials
- Assessment for individuals with related post-secondary credentials
- Assessment for individuals in jurisdictions not impacted by the labour mobility provisions of the Agreement on Internal Trade

²⁸ Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials. Fact Sheet #6. Retrieved September 13, 2009 from: <http://www.cicic.ca/en/page.aspx?sortcode=2.20.23.24>.

²⁹ In ECE, this performance testing and demonstration may take place in the workplace.

³⁰ Recognition for Learning. The PLAR community in Canada. Retrieved September 13, 2009 from: <http://recognitionforlearning.ca/practitioner/aboutPLAR.php>.

Given the relatively large population of adults employed in regulated early childhood education and care programs who have significant experience, but lack any formal academic post-secondary credential, it would appear that PLAR is an ideal option for the early childhood sector. Interviews with key informants, however, indicate that there are numerous questions and misconceptions in the sector regarding PLAR. These issues involve concerns about cost, time involved, process for and extent of documenting prior learning, usefulness, and the difference between learning and experience. One key informant reported that educators in her province had decided it was easier to take the course than to go through the PLAR process. Another key informant noted that PLAR seemed to be more popular among students in the continuing education program, rather than students in full time ECE studies.

Part of the difficulties identified by key informants involved the discrepancy between what was expected in a PLAR evaluation, and the amount of credit or recognition that was achieved. Many individuals with many years of experience felt they would be granted the equivalent of a two-year diploma or at least a one-year certificate. CAPLA explains that “learning” and “experience” are not necessarily the same things. Learning takes place *through* different kinds of experiences such as working, reading, travel, volunteer work and community involvement – but the level and depth of learning gained from an experience is something that varies from person to person. And with PLAR, it is essential that the type of learning that has been achieved is relevant to the particular field of study or employment that the person is seeking.

Other issues of confusion and misconception about PLAR include cost, timeframe, and nature of assessment/documentation. Contrary to popular belief, there is a cost to PLAR. Each college/university has its own policies regarding fees, but there is generally a fee for the assessment, and there may be a fee for course registration. The timeframe for PLAR and the nature and type of documentation required appear to be more extensive than what people expect, leading to the observation above that many decide it is easier to take the course than to go through the PLAR process. However, as documented in the final report of the *Pan-Canadian Gateways Project: Accreditation and Recognition of Learning for Adult Human Services Practitioners*, individuals with little opportunity to obtain formal education based on a lack of formal credentials – such as women in low-income employment in a variety of programs in the human services field, including early childhood education – benefit from PLAR initiatives.³¹

In all provinces and territories, the PLAR assessment is carried out at the college or university level. Government or agency credentialing bodies may have partnerships with colleges or universities that involve a PLAR component, but for the most part do not participate in these processes. The following case studies outline three different provincial approaches to credentialing that use PLAR as a key activity:

Case Study: Newfoundland and Labrador

At the College of the North Atlantic (CNA), PLAR is a process that allows individuals to demonstrate prior learning (experiential, non-credit and informational) in order to receive credit towards a post-secondary course in their program. In the Early Childhood Education program at CNA, students are given every opportunity to receive credit for past learning experiences through a comprehensive systematic process of evaluation.

Developing PLAR in the Early Childhood Education Program at the College of the North Atlantic

By the early 1990s in Newfoundland, many people had been working in the early childhood field for a considerable time without any formal training. The Department of Social Services was beginning to develop a certification model based on ECE qualifications, and the ECE program at the CNA had identified the need to offer the ECE diploma program through distance delivery. The opportunity arose for collaboration between government and the college to look at ways to move the field forward in terms of more education and certification, with recognition of experience and educational standards. The Department of Education was interested in the development of a model that could support very experienced workers into the certification and education systems without requiring these workers to leave their jobs. How could these workers be assessed for the ECE program?

³¹ Arscott, J., Crowther, I., Young, M., and Ungarian, L. (2007). P. 44. *Producing Results in Prior Learning: A Report from the Gateways Project*. Alberta: Athabasca University.

The PLAR model in the ECE program was developed between 1991 and 1994 through a Child Care Initiative Grant with a provincial advisory committee that included representatives from government departments and the CNA. PLAR became part of the ECE program at the college, encouraging people who had work experience to get credit from their experiential learning and to continue their education.

Initially, individuals needed two or more years of experience to participate in PLAR and were often found to be most successful with four or more years' experience. With a focus on the complete ECE program, they were required to develop a portfolio with a chronological record of their experience, learning aspects, essays and documentation of informal learning such as workshops. The portfolio process gave students an opportunity to present themselves and their strengths, provided an overview of the students' knowledge and skills, and provided a good foundation on which to build the rest of their program. This portfolio process met the needs of a large group of people who had experience without credentials, enabling them to get credit and then go on to continue their ECE training, many achieving both a credential and certification.

Many owner/operators of child care programs did pursue the PLAR process and went on to encourage their staff to do so as well. The most successful individuals were those with experience!

Overview of the current process

To access PLAR, individuals must be enrolled in the ECE program and registered for the course for which they are seeking recognition based on their prior learning and experience. All PLAR applications must be received by the registrar's office no later than three weeks before the start date of the course.

Students receive individual support from faculty. The faculty member responsible for the course provides the student with the course outline, the PLAR process and expected outcomes. Course outcomes are derived from the competencies set out in the provincial standards.

From the course outline, students begin to work through the PLAR process. They may write a challenge exam or prepare an essay. What do they understand about these course outcomes? How do they support these outcomes in their workplace? What do they know about the course content and how do they apply it? Students may also be asked to complete a critical reflection of their practice allowing them to analytically present what they know.

Faculty then compare what students have presented to the expected outcomes. Some faculty may require additional information and will do an oral interview with the student. Another faculty may ask for samples of children's art based on what the student has planned (e.g., for a course in creative art). Faculty may use other methods of assessment; for example, the student may be asked to do all of the regular assignments in the course or take an exam. Assessment methods differ by course content, but all methods evaluate the student's prior learning experiential knowledge relative to the course outcomes.

The PLAR assessment is completed within three weeks of the semester start date.

PLAR and certification

In Newfoundland and Labrador, certification levels are assessed based on academic qualifications. In order to acknowledge an individual's experience, the registrar may send an individual to the CNA for PLAR. Once PLAR is complete, the individual can submit documentation of credits received from the college to the registrar for assessment towards certification.

Unique features

The ECE program uses multiple approaches to assess prior learning (observation, self-assessment, essays, samples of children's work, workshop summaries, course assignments and exams) with a rigour that allows students to demonstrate their best practice.

The model of collaboration that developed PLAR – government departments of social services and education, the early

childhood professional association and the college – has continued to work toward a higher level of education and certification in Newfoundland, establishing the Registrar of Certification, PLAR and an ECE program that is now completely online.

Lessons to share

The Early Childhood Education PLAR process has changed over the years. The college made the PLAR process generic for all programs, emphasizing individual courses and exams. The nature of the students who use PLAR in ECE has also shifted. PLAR in ECE was initially designed for workers in the field with lots of experience but no training. Now any student can apply to have a course undergo the PLAR process in the ECE program. Some individuals use PLAR as a quick route to complete the program; others use PLAR who have training from other jurisdictions.

A key message to other faculty: Don't be sure that you have an accurate assessment of a student just by assignments or an exam. Dig deeper – talk, use various methods (observation, self-assessment, essay, samples or photos of children's work from an activity planned by the student) to find out what they know. Be convinced that the student has the prior learning knowledge to meet the course competencies.

Of interest

- Almost all ECE distance students at the CNA apply for PLAR for one or more courses.
- Many students apply to “PLAR” several courses during their program, enabling them to complete the full two-year diploma program in a relatively short period of time.
- The PLAR success rate is high for ECE distance students and may be attributed to their level of experience. Many ECE distance students have several years work experience prior to and during their enrolment in the ECE program.

For further information:

Early Childhood Education Program Information, College of the North Atlantic

<http://dls.cna.nl.ca/ece/programinfo.htm>

Case Study: Manitoba

In Manitoba, Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) is embedded throughout government departments, colleges and universities, and industry with the goal of making the recognition of prior learning accessible and available to many.

The Manitoba PLA Centre was established in 1998 with a three-year mandate. Its purpose was to provide advisory services to individuals and consulting services to post-secondary education, business and industry to support the development of PLAR. As part of its work, demonstration projects were undertaken to validate the use of prior learning assessment in a variety of fields.

Since the PLA Centre was put in place, partnerships have been developed between government and the adult learning community, government and business/industry, and government and post-secondary education to continue to move Manitoba's PLA agenda forward.

Developing the Competency Based Assessment/Prior Learning Assessment Program (CBA/PLA) at the Manitoba Child Care Program

One of the first demonstration projects of Manitoba's PLA Centre was the Manitoba Child Care Program's CBA/PLA Program. The CBA/PLA program was developed in 2000 for child care assistants (CCAs) already working in child care centres who had a post-secondary diploma or degree that was not recognized for classification at the trained ECE II level, but was considered to be child care related. The program enables these CCAs to obtain the ECE II classification level while they continue to work.

The project was developed using accepted PLA theory and practice with a goal of providing a friendly and flexible assessment process to an adult learner. The participants were supported with individual advisor/assessors (subject matter experts with experience in prior learning assessment). During the pilot phase, the framework of program outcomes and learning outcomes was developed.

The pilot phase of the project was overseen by a steering committee that included representatives from the Manitoba Child Care Association, Assiniboine and Red River Colleges, government and stakeholders. When the pilot was completed, the Manitoba Child Care Program (MCCP) adopted the CBA/PLA program as an effective and efficient way to assess an individual's prior learning by meeting individual learning needs and using a team assessment approach that includes a one-to-one advisor/assessor and a peer assessor. The advisor and peer assessor observe, provide feedback and examine portfolios while the participant self-assesses, self-reflects and demonstrates the required knowledge, skill and judgments.

Overview of the current process

Child care assistants who work in regulated child care programs learn about the CBA/PLA program through their employers and colleagues, through MCCP qualifications staff who assess credentials and award classifications, and through the Manitoba Child Care web site.

In order to participate in the CBA/PLA program, child care assistants need a combination of prior learning, employment and experience, support from their employer, a commitment to the ECE field and a willingness to invest six to nine months to the process. There is a group intake once or twice per year to begin portfolio development.

There are no tuition fees for CBA/PLA, and applicants are expected to cover minimal costs related to purchasing learning aids, child development texts and portfolio-related materials.

At the beginning of the portfolio development process, individuals are assigned an advisor/assessor and a peer assessor (an ECE II or III). Participants attend an orientation meeting, and complete a self-assessment and the required elements of a portfolio as specified in the Competency Based Assessment and Training Framework. This framework specifies ECE learning outcomes in 13 competency areas: safe, health, learning environment, physical, cognitive, communication, creative, self, social, guidance, families, program management and professionalism. A program outcome is identified for each competency area. Specific learning outcomes, the evidence of performance for each learning outcome and examples of direct and indirect evidence are detailed for each area.

Participants demonstrate their knowledge by:

- preparing and submitting a portfolio that identifies, describes and demonstrates the learning obtained from a variety of sources;
- being observed by in their place of employment by an advisor/assessor; and
- participating in an interview with an advisor/assessor.

Participants attend a final assessment meeting to discuss competencies and learning gaps. Where gaps are identified, further demonstration is required before the participant receives the ECE II classification.

Participants, advisors/assessors and peer assessors provide ongoing feedback about the program.

Unique features

The Department of Family Services and Housing is a regulatory government body that has developed a program that it funds and uses to move child care assistants with related training to a higher child care classification level.

Lessons to share

- The self-assessment and self-reflection (based on learning outcomes) components of the CBA/PLA program build confidence and empower individual participants.
- The CBA/PLA program is individualized, respectful, transparent and committed to successful completion.
- The CBA/PLA program is cost effective and time efficient. With a focus on child care assistants already working in the system with skills and education, the program works with participants for a short term to fill any learning gaps.
- Employers are in a win-win situation. Their employees' skills improve and they have staff at a higher classification level. The successful CBA/PLA participants bring renewed enthusiasm and learning back to their place of employment and often beyond into the child care community as well.
- The most successful people are those who are open to learning, organized, self-directed and self-motivated.

Challenges

CBA/PLA is not recognized by post-secondary institutions and there are issues around articulation.³² However, it is recognized when individuals wish to take post-diploma training at colleges and universities. Graduates of one of the Manitoba Child Care Program CBA programs can pursue post-diploma education to upgrade their classification to an ECE III.

Immigration is increasing in Manitoba. Some of the candidates for the CBA/PLA program do struggle with English-language competence. The required portfolio is currently paper-based and requires a high level of written English-language competence. MCCP is looking at ways to make the portfolio development aspect of the program more manageable for participants for whom English is an additional language (EAL).

Of interest

- 95% of CCAs who apply to the CBA/PLA program complete the program.
- 36 individuals are currently “in process” in the CBA/PLA program.
- In 2008, 27 individuals received their ECE II through the CBA/PLA program.
- The average number of participants who complete annually is 12.

For further information

- Information on the Classification of Early Childhood Educators and Child Care Assistants: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childcare/pubs/classification.pdf>
- Child Care Online: Careers in Child Care: http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childcare/careers_training.html

Case Study: Québec

In Québec, PLAR is known as recognition of prior learning and competencies – Reconnaissance des acquis et compétences (RAC). In 2002, Québec adopted a province-wide action plan for RAC that involved three ministries - le Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) (Ministry of Education, Recreation and Sport), le Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale (Ministry of Employment and Social Solidarity) and le Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles (Ministry of Immigration and Cultural Communities), and existing training networks. MELS was responsible for the start-up of this combined-effort action plan.

Each region of Québec received start-up funding from MELS for the development of RAC in various areas of study. In order to better respond to specific local needs and characteristics (e.g., geographic area, population density) service delivery can differ from one region to another. For example, some regions offer services in one centralized location

³² Articulation is a planned process used to facilitate efficient and effective progression and transfer of students between and among educational institutions. Articulation “agreements” may involve secondary and/or post-secondary educational institutions, particularly when advanced standing is given for a course of study completed at another institution.

while in others each individual learning establishment offers front-line services. RAC offices, in collaboration with the Cégeps in their region, fulfill the role of the host organization, and provide ongoing support and resources for clients needing college-level qualifications (AEC – Attestation d'études collégiales or DEC - Diplôme d'études collégiales)³³ and who have already developed competencies in the workforce. The RAC offices receive financial and strategic support from MELS, from the Conférence régionale des élus (regional government), and from Emploi-Québec.

Developing RAC for early childhood education at Cégep Marie-Victorin

For over 20 years, the RAC office of the Cégep Marie-Victorin has had a process in place to recognize learning resulting from work and/or life experiences (through transcripts, diplomas, attestations, etc.) corresponding to certain programs of study. However, in 2005, le Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés (MFA) (the Ministry of Family and Seniors) adopted new regulations requiring two-thirds of all éducatrices (early childhood educators) in les garderies (private centers) to obtain a minimum of college level certification (attestation d'études collégiales - AEC) in addition to three years of experience in order to be qualified, instead of the previous requirement for one-third of staff to have the necessary qualifications.³⁴ This change prompted the combined-effort action plan and the necessary funding to develop RAC services specific to early childhood education in order to upgrade the educational qualifications of a significant number of educators.

As a result, in 2005 an analysis of the position of an éducatrice (ECE) was completed, providing an overview of the requirements, conditions of practice, and tasks related to the role. Using the objectives, standards and achievement contexts established by MELS, the Cégep Marie-Victorin, in collaboration with other partners, developed descriptive files which now serve as references and as self-evaluation tools for each of the competencies³⁵ of the program.

The ECE competencies were established by the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) and are specific to the different recognized programs of study. In Québec, the three-year Early Childhood Education program (DEC) has 22 specific competencies broken down into 1,830 contact-hours as well as general training of 660 hours. The college attestation (AEC) has 12 specific competencies and one complementary competency. For the past 15 years, the Cégep Marie-Victorin has offered RAC services for general training. The Cégep was then mandated by MELS to further develop procedures and tools for RAC, which are now available across all Québec colleges.

The program at Cégep Marie-Victorin has continual entry throughout the year, including evenings, weekends, and summer. Two intake methods are used: either in cohorts or individually. Participants receive support throughout the entire process, either from an educational counsellor or from an expert assigned to the individual file, and the Cégep ensures close supervision of its participants. Group support is also an option for participants. This “coaching” service gives rise to a sort of co-professional development in a context that is typically carried out individually. Participants also have the option of communicating with their tutor by e-mail or by telephone.

Any adult is eligible who meets the admission requirements of the college, and who has significant experience related to a particular program of study. RAC permits those who are eligible to be evaluated for skills they have developed without having to take the related courses; to have access to training that is individualized and relevant to the results of their evaluation; to obtain a diploma or an attestation in ways that are more appropriate for the needs of a mature student; and to access training at a lesser cost than a traditional course of study.

The length of the RAC process varies according to the program of study (one-year AEC or three-year DEC) and the prior education and availability of the individual. In general, participants are usually able to demonstrate all 12 competencies for the one-year AEC (Attestation in Early Childhood Education), as well as the complementary competencies, in less than

³³ Attestation of College Studies or Diploma of College Studies.

³⁴ Previously, one third of early childhood educators were required to have this credential. This requirement has already been implemented in CPEs (the non-profit sector programs). The garderies have five years to comply with the new regulations, and must do so by 2011.

³⁵ Quebec has identified 22 competencies that guide the ECE curriculum for the DEC at the post-secondary level, and which serve as a basis for analysis of equivalency for applicants from outside of the province or outside of Canada.

one year. The option of proceeding in pairs or groups of competencies allows the process to be accelerated, while at the same time offering integrated training that addresses identified gaps in particular competency areas. For example, the competency related to child observation is paired with the competency concerned with global child development.

For the College Studies Diploma (diplôme d'études collégiales - DEC) in Early Childhood Development, it takes about a year and a half to complete the specific competencies and about six months for the general training competencies. These different competencies can be developed simultaneously or separately, depending on the particular needs of each student.

Fees for the program vary from one institution to another. At Cégep Marie-Victorin, the fee to open a file is \$90. The fees for the recognition of prior learning and competencies are \$40 per competency (up to a maximum of \$500 for specific training or \$300 for general training). These fees do not include any necessary materials.

RAC process

As a result of ongoing support from MELS for training of RAC consultants at both the college level and the secondary level, the majority of colleges in Québec now offer RAC services. The procedure for participants is similar from one organization to another. As an example, the process followed at Cégep Marie-Victorin³⁶ is described below.

Step I: Individual or group information meeting

Presentation of the process of recognition of prior learning and competencies, its particular features and its requirements; distribution of relevant forms including the application for admission.

Step II: Submission of documents for application, which include:

Any required documents (secondary school diploma and government-issued transcript; transcripts from colleges or universities, if applicable; birth certificate; etc.); the completed application for admission; documents proving one's status as a resident of Québec, if applicable; a letter of confirmation of employment in a relevant field; a curriculum vitae; a photocopy of a valid first aid certification, if applicable; and payment for admission costs.

Step III: Validation of application for admission

Self-evaluation of the candidate in relation to competencies in early childhood education, (this also serves as a means of evaluating the candidate's written French); admission interview conducted by specialists in the particular program of study; and if acceptance is recommended by the specialists as well as by the application advisor, the completion of the admission process.

Step IV: Program registration

Signing of the Admission Contract; presentation of the results of the evaluation of the candidate's academic file as conducted by the educational assistant and the educational counsellor responsible for admission; payment of registration fees.

Step V: Skills assessment

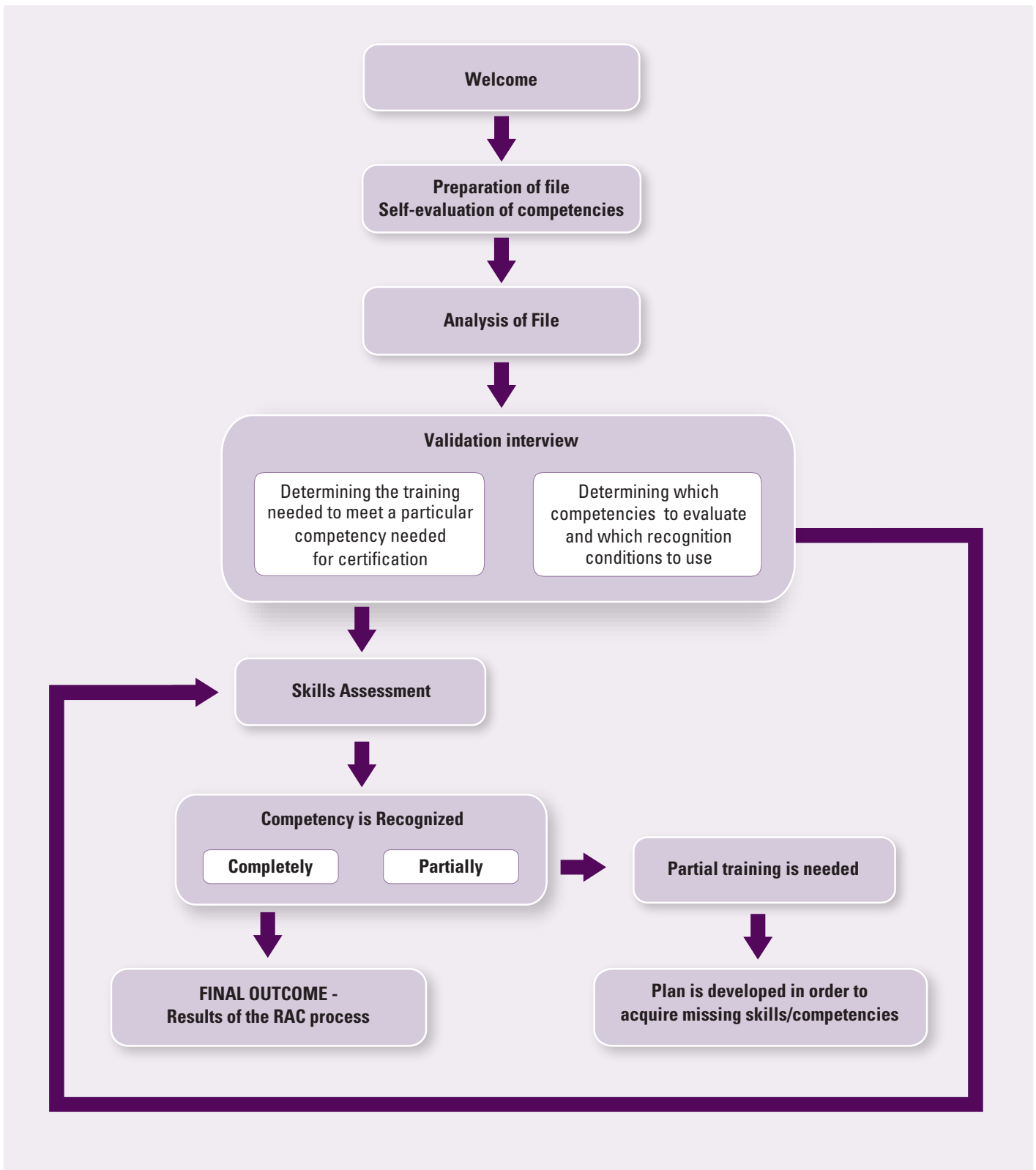
The Cégep's office of recognition of prior learning and competencies uses several different approaches to assess participants' skills and abilities. These methods may include individual assignments, tasks to be carried out in the Cégep or in the participant's workplace under the supervision of specialists, interviews, etc.

Step VI: Training

Depending on the results of the skills assessment, some participants take part in training related to any partially developed skills they may have. This training can take several different forms, including group training sessions, specific readings, tutoring, etc. Figure 2 provides an overview of the RAC process.

³⁶ http://www.collegemv.qc.ca/CMS/Media/2823_254_fr-CA_0_Guide_de_candidature_H09.pdf.

Figure 2: Overview of the Reconnaissance des acquis et compétences (RAC) process at Cégep Marie-Victorin³⁷



³⁷ Retrieved September 2, 2009 from: <http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/rac/> (translated from French).

Successes and challenges

In the early childhood education program, 92% of participants complete the RAC process and their studies, earning a recognized diploma. RAC is attractive to both those who are employed in the early childhood sector and to employers. Advantages include:

- obtaining an objective summary of employees' skills and competencies;
- improving employees' access to ongoing training and thus improving their qualifications;
- fostering loyalty in their employees by offering the potential for advancement; and
- improving the performance of the staff team.

The most significant challenges have been related to the training and retention of RAC specialists. Other challenges include: adapting to tight deadlines, new procedures and evaluation tools, and the increasing number of participants to oversee. Regular discussions and training workshops are offered to support the specialists in their jobs.

As well, certain constraints have come from the participants themselves, particularly those with a first language other than French or English. In these cases, a 60-hour French course becomes a pre-admission requirement. The course must also have some content related to the teaching profession. In addition, the hiring of a tutor having the same first language as the participant, as well as a good mastery of the French language allows for even more individualized support of participants with significant language communication difficulties. The Cégep Marie-Victorin contributes some expertise to Vanier College in Montreal so that the latter can offer similar services to its Anglophone clientele. As well, optional group meetings are offered to all candidates, which often prove to be motivating for students.

Lessons to share

For the majority of participants, the RAC process is comparable to returning to school. When participants' particular needs – in terms of training and/or other educational elements that are missing from their repertoire – are identified and presented to them following their evaluation, problems can sometimes arise related to participants' feelings of inadequacy. However, those who have completed the program have described their appreciation for the highly personalized service and the high quality of the tutoring. Once trained, participants are highly valued by their employers since they possess not only relevant experience, but a formal education recognized by a college-level diploma or attestation.

The organizational structure of the RAC service and good assessment tools are successful elements of the program. The importance of teamwork for all players (RAC consultants, content specialists, etc.) must be recognized as well, since it helps to ensure the success of this process.

The use of a variety of means of evaluating participants has proven to be a marker of success. A combination of oral activities, written and practical tasks, and direct observations has contributed to a fair, efficient and objective evaluation.

Of interest

- The organizational structure of the RAC office at Cégep Marie-Victorin is fairly unique compared to those in operation in other Québec colleges. The RAC office is made up of seven professionals and two support staff as well as an executive director dedicated to the RAC service. Since 1990, the college administration has worked to offer RAC services that are integrated with other sections of the college.
- An evaluation of the RAC program at Cégep Marie-Victorin has recently been conducted. The evaluation looked at the consistency of the process, adherence to policy and quality. This report is not yet publicly available.
- In June 2009, MELS established a national consulting group on the RAC, to support further improvements at a regional level.

For more information

Centre régional de reconnaissance des acquis et des compétences de Montréal: <http://www.competencesmontreal.qc.ca/organisme>

Centre de documentation collégiale: www.cdc.qc.ca

For RAC in Québec: Two bibliographies of documents published between 1985 and 1995 are available, with more than 100 documents regarding skill recognition, and other documents published by the FIRAQ. Conseil supérieur de l'Éducation: www.cse.gouv.qc.ca

Inforoute formation professionnelle et technique: www.inforoutefpt.org/ensemble_dossiers_meq/dossiers.asp

Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport: www.mels.gouv.qc.ca

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SECTION 5: CERTIFICATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Certification and Licensing

Across Canada, provinces and territories have taken different approaches to ensuring that qualified staff are employed in regulated early childhood education and care programs. In some provinces (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Québec), regulations describing necessary qualifications for early childhood educators are considered as part of the licensing process. In these provinces, licensing officials review credentials in order to ensure that the educators meet provincial requirements, and that there are adequate numbers of qualified staff present in the program. In most cases, licensing officials consult regularly with the provincial child care office or other designated body/agency in order to determine equivalency. Individuals may be referred to other designated agencies for assessment and review of their qualifications.

A majority of jurisdictions, however, have introduced certification/classification/registration practices. For the most part, certification practices are:

- administered by government bodies (PE, MB, SK, AB, BC, YK);
- administered in partnership with professional organizations (NL); or
- delegated by legislation to a professional body, such as the College of Early Childhood Educators in Ontario.

In these jurisdictions, the onus is on the certification or credentialing body to assess qualifications, determine equivalency and issue (or revoke, in some instances) certificates. Licensing officials are required to ensure that prescribed numbers of staff have the relevant certificates. Provincial/territorial credentialing officials are responsible for dealing with any complexities in the assessment of certification applications, determining equivalency and any other issues related to the individual's qualifications.

These differences are important for analysis of labour mobility and the role of the employer.

Labour Mobility

In Canada, discussions on labour mobility have taken place within the context of the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT). The Internal Trade Secretariat, established to provide administrative and operational support to the functioning of the agreement, notes that:

“The Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) is an intergovernmental trade agreement signed by Canadian First Ministers that came into force in 1995. Its purpose is to reduce and eliminate, to the extent possible, barriers to the free movement of persons, goods, services, and investment within Canada and to establish an open, efficient, and stable domestic market.”

Chapter 7 of the AIT deals with labour mobility. Until recently, compliance with the labour mobility provisions of Chapter 7 was voluntary. However, in August 2008, the Council of the Federation (premiers) requested the Forum of Labour Market Ministers (FLMM) to achieve “full mobility” across Canada by April 1, 2009 for persons practicing in occupations that require a license to work. Premiers asked for amendments to be made to the AIT in order to “remove non-conforming elements such as licensing or residency requirements as a condition of employment.”

These amendments to the AIT became effective in January 2009. Provincial/territorial governments, the Government of Canada, and in some cases organizations involved in certification and licensing have been working together to implement the amended Chapter 7 of the AIT. In all occupations, there has been considerable collaboration, networking and sharing of best practices. In all jurisdictions, premiers have agreed that any required changes in policies, practices, or legislation will be put in place in order to ensure labour mobility by the required date.

The Provincial Territorial Directors of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) have undertaken considerable collaborative work in order to fully understand the details and implications of provincial/territorial requirements for certification, licensing, and/or registration of early childhood educators, and to determine the possibility of reaching mutual agreement for proceeding with ECEC certification/licensing/registration on a collective basis. At the same time, each province/territory has approached labour mobility for early childhood educators within the context of a broader jurisdictional approach to labour mobility. Currently, some jurisdictions have enacted new labour mobility legislation that describes the provincial approaches to certification for those who are already certified in other parts of Canada. For example, some jurisdictions have noted that they will award a similar level of certification to those individuals who have been certified in other jurisdictions. Others have noted that they will determine the level of certification based on the individual's scope of practice authorized by her or his certification in another jurisdiction.

What does labour mobility mean for certified early childhood educators?

The provisions of the labour mobility chapter in the AIT impact the ability of “certified” early childhood educators to move from one certifying province in Canada to another, and be recognized for their qualifications. This is because the Labour Mobility Chapter (7) of the AIT targets three main barriers that prevent or limit the interprovincial movement of workers: residency requirements; practices related to occupational licensing, certification and registration; and differences in occupational standards.

In simple terms, this means that early childhood educators who are certified in one province or territory are able to be certified in the same occupation and at the same level (provided levels are comparable) in another province or territory that has a regulated ECE certification/classification/registration process without having to undertake significant additional training, examination or assessment. Individuals will still need to apply for certification in the new jurisdiction and provide the necessary documentation.

The AIT does give provinces or territories the right to impose “additional requirements”. However, the legislation differentiates between types of requirements:

- Requirements such as examinations, additional education/training, or practice hours must be linked to demonstrated differences in occupational standards or scope of practice. If a province or territory makes this decision, the jurisdiction must demonstrate why the additional requirement is necessary to achieve a “legitimate objective”³⁸ and that it is not a barrier to mobility.
 - All legitimate objectives must be posted on a provincial/territorial web site.
 - To date, there are no jurisdictions that have posted any legitimate objectives for early childhood educators.
- If individuals have a certification restriction or condition imposed on their license to practice in their original province, the receiving province may impose a similar restriction or may refuse to certify.

In the early childhood education and care sector, the provisions of the AIT regarding labour mobility apply to:

- Newfoundland and Labrador
- Prince Edward Island
- Ontario
- Manitoba

³⁸ In cases where significant differences in certification requirements exist between jurisdictions, a provincial or territorial government may approve an exception to full labour mobility provided the exception is justified by one of the following legitimate objectives: public security and safety; public order; protection of human, animal or plant life or health; protection of the environment; consumer protection; protection of the health, safety and well-being of workers; provision of adequate social and health services to all its geographic regions; programs for disadvantaged groups.

- Saskatchewan
- Alberta
- British Columbia
- Yukon Territory

Therefore, any early childhood educator who is certified in one of the above jurisdictions is able to seek comparable certification if moving to one of these provinces or Yukon. Qualified early childhood educators who live in provinces or territories that are not on this list must apply to the certification office if they move to one of the jurisdictions on the list above. Likewise, certified early childhood educators moving from one of the above provinces/territory to a province or territory that is not on this list should consult the Guide to ECEC Credentialing (<http://www.ccscc-cssge.ca/english/guide>) for further information, or contact the provincial/territorial contacts listed in Appendix 1 (Reference Guide) of this report in order to determine how to have their credentials recognized/approved for purposes of employment.

It is important to note that certified early childhood educators are considered to have labour mobility based on their certification status rather than their educational credentials. Therefore, individuals who have their credentials assessed as equivalent to persons with an ECE diploma or degree, and who are therefore certified in their own province or territory, must be given the same consideration as any other certified person with respect to labour mobility. This is also relevant for people who may have been grand-parented into certification at a time when provincial or territorial regulations on staff qualifications were introduced.

As well, individuals who are certified as early childhood educators based on assessment and recognition of international credentials also have the right to labour mobility in Canada provided they move to another jurisdiction with an ECE certification/classification/registration process.

Role of Employers

Employers in regulated early childhood education and care programs have specific administrative responsibilities regarding credentialing of ECEs. The role of the employer depends, in part, on the jurisdiction.

As noted earlier in this section, provinces and territories have taken different approaches to addressing the need for qualified staff to be employed in regulated ECEC programs. In some provinces (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Québec), regulations describing necessary qualifications for early childhood educators are considered part of the licensing process. In these provinces, employers must assess the qualifications of prospective employees to determine if their credentials meet provincial requirements. Verification of credentials is typically carried out by licensing officials as part of the licensing process for the ECEC program. In interviews with officials in these provinces, it was suggested that experienced employers are quite skilled in carrying out these assessments, and will generally put conditions on any offer of employment until it is confirmed that the qualifications meet approval for licensing.

Where certification/classification/registration practices are in place, (NL, PE, ON, MB, SK, AB, BC, YK) however, the onus is on the early childhood educator to provide the necessary documentation to the certification body for initial application, adhere to any requirements for renewal, and maintain a current certificate. In these situations, employers are required to review the certificate issued, ensure that the certificate is current, and demonstrate to licensing officials that the required number of staff possess such credentials.

The labour mobility provisions of the Agreement on Internal Trade, however, will create new responsibilities for employers in provinces with certification programs. In the past, employers have been familiar with their own provincial/territorial requirements for staff qualifications and provisions for equivalency – and these requirements have been reflected in the types and levels of certification of staff. Since August 2009, individuals with provincial/territorial certification may possess a variety of types of post-secondary education and/or experience, and may have been granted equivalency in their

originating province. Therefore, the onus will now be on employers to review the actual post-secondary education credentials and previous work experience for new applicants for employment. Employers will no longer be able to “assume” that a particular type of post-secondary education or previous work experience is the basis for certification.

SECTION 6: INTERNATIONAL CREDENTIALS

Background

In Canada, there is longstanding and widespread interest in the development of processes and approaches to support the recognition and portability of educational qualifications obtained in other countries. In 1990, Canada ratified the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees concerning Higher Education in the States belonging to the Europe Region (1979). The purpose of the convention is to promote international mobility by advocating wider recognition of higher education and professional qualifications. As a result of Canada's ratification of the Convention, each province and territory was required to assure that the convention was applied in its jurisdiction.³⁹

In order to meet Canada's obligations under the convention, the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC) was established in 1990 under the umbrella of the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada (CMEC). The CICIC collects, organizes and distributes information for provinces and territories. The centre also acts as a national clearinghouse and referral service both for individuals who wish to have their international credentials recognized in Canada, and for Canadians who wish to study overseas. CICIC provides a wealth of information on its web site (www.cicic.ca) including specific information regarding the assessment and recognition of credentials for the purpose of employment in Canada. While CICIC does not assess qualifications, it does provide information and referrals for provincially mandated agencies that make up the Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services of Canada (ACESC).⁴⁰

The ACESC, ("the Alliance") was established in 1999. Previously, member agencies collaborated as part of the Provincial Assessment Committee (PAC) (1996 – 1999). ACESC shares information on assessment methodologies used across Canada, and follows codes of good practice as outlined in the *General Guiding Principles for Good Practice in the Assessment of Foreign Credentials*. Membership in the Alliance is voluntary; CICIC provides coordination for the Alliance, and serves as an ex-officio member. The Alliance has also established a partnership with the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) Working Group on Access to Professions and Trades. The members of this working group provide advice to the Alliance, assist in promoting the portability of assessments, and facilitate information dissemination and exchange.

Credentialing assessments provided by the various organizations that are members of the alliance are considered to be of an advisory nature. Therefore, employers, post-secondary institutions and professional regulatory bodies have complete autonomy in their decisions related to employment, admission, and certification. The Alliance recognizes and supports the importance of labour mobility, and has established mechanisms for inter-provincial recognition for credential assessments among member services.⁴¹

Agencies affiliated with the ACESC are found in British Columbia, Alberta (also serving Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories), Manitoba, Ontario, and Québec.^{42,43} Although such agencies are not present in the Atlantic provinces or in the territories, applications from those provinces/territories may be referred to any one of the agencies.⁴⁴ In several provinces (Alberta, Manitoba, Québec) the agency functions are carried out by provincial government departments/ministries. A fee is generally involved for review of credentials, although costs vary among jurisdictions. Wait times for decisions may vary, depending on the complexity of the application.

³⁹ See: http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13516%26URL_DO=DO_TOPIC%26URL_SECTION=201.html.

⁴⁰ See: www.canalliance.org/.

⁴¹ See: <http://www.canalliance.org/assurance.en.stm>.

⁴² See Section 10: Reference Guide for contact information for all agencies providing assessment of international credentials.

⁴³ In Quebec, the Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles is also responsible for assessing ECE credentials obtained in other provinces of Canada.

⁴⁴ In addition to member agencies of the ACESC, there are two more agencies in Ontario that provide assessment of internationally earned ECEC credentials.

Provincial/Territorial Referrals and Experiences

Interviews with provincial/territorial officials responsible for ECEC credentialing practices identified that applications for early childhood certification/classification/registration may be referred to one of the member agencies of the ACESC for review and verification of the nature of the credential – or the assessment itself may be carried out in the child care certification office.

As may be expected, officials in larger provinces report a higher volume of international applications for recognition of early childhood education and care credentials than do those in the smaller jurisdictions. Officials in the Atlantic provinces and in the territories report very small annual rates (with several jurisdictions reporting approximately 2-5 applications per year). Even so, smaller jurisdictions have noticed an upward trend over the past few years in the number of international applicants. In one jurisdiction, recruitment difficulties have resulted in employers advertising internationally for ECE qualified staff. In turn, this practice has resulted in an increase in the number of international applications for certification.

On the other hand, larger provinces are dealing with ever-increasing numbers of applicants from other countries. Officials in a few provinces have commented on a growing trend for immigrant women with teaching experience in the public school system to move to the early childhood system, due to difficulties in having their education credentials recognized by various teachers' organizations and licensing bodies. It was also noted that in other countries, early childhood education carries a higher profile and status than in Canada, and so careers in early childhood education are held in high regard.

Case Studies

The following case studies describe current practices in British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario with respect to assessment and recognition of international credentials.

Case Study: British Columbia

In British Columbia, the Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Registry, Ministry of Children and Family Development, is responsible for assessing the credentials and/or competency of internationally trained individuals to determine if they have the knowledge, skills and abilities to be licensed as early childhood educators. The ECE registry works in partnership with the International Credential Evaluation Service (ICES) and British Columbia post-secondary institutions to determine the equivalency of training received outside of Canada. The ECE registry has been assessing international credentials since January 1997.

Overview of the process

Information about international credential assessment is available on the ECE registry web site. Many applicants contact the ECE registry by phone or e-mail for further explanation. Individual applicants submit an application to the ECE registry along with requests to their training institution for:

- An official transcript to be sent to the International Credential Evaluation Service for a comprehensive report. Any document not in English or French must be accompanied by a literal English or French translation. The ICES review is usually completed after seven weeks; the report is then sent to the ECE registry. There is a fee for the ICES review, but individuals may apply to be reimbursed by the ECE registry.
- A Program Confirmation Form to be completed in English and sent to the ECE registry.

The ICES comprehensive report provides information about the training institution, as well as the courses, titles, grades and credit conversion of the applicant's program or course of study. The training institution must be recognized by the government of its province, state or country; be able to provide an official transcript; and the applicant's program or course of study must be considered post-secondary.

The Program Confirmation Form provides information for the ECE registry to assess the academic requirements toward a license to practice as an early childhood educator assistant, early childhood educator, infant and toddler educator or special needs early childhood educator. The training institution provides information about the length, instructional hours and completion of the academic program. In addition, the institution supplies course content information with instructional hours and requirements for 13 areas of study, including child growth and development, program development, curriculum and foundations, interpersonal skills, community relations, interacting with families, health/safety and nutrition, infant/toddler, children with additional support needs, administration, and practicum.

Equivalencies

Once the ECE registry receives both the ICES report and the Program Confirmation Form, an assessment is usually completed within four weeks. The ECE registry assesses the information in the Program Confirmation Form to determine whether an individual meets 80% of the instructional time and course content required to be licensed/registered as an early childhood educator in British Columbia. The registry notifies applicants in writing as to whether they have fully, partially or not-at-all met the requirements. If there are gaps in the knowledge and skills required, the registry will identify additional areas of study for applicants. Applicants then contact a local BC post-secondary institution that will identify courses to meet the additional areas of study. Once the course work is completed, individuals complete an ECE registry application with the British Columbia college transcript.

Equivalencies

British Columbia accepts the following international credentials:

- A National Nursery Education Board (NNEB) from the United Kingdom is considered equivalent to the requirements for a licensure as an ECE and infant/toddler educator; a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3 or higher is considered equivalent to the requirements for licensure as an ECE.
- A diplôme professionnel de professeurs des écoles in France is considered equivalent to the requirements for ECE licensure.
- USA Montessori training completed at an institution accredited by the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) is considered equivalent to meeting the requirements as an ECE assistant.

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) option

Prior Learning Assessment is a process that allows applicants to demonstrate their knowledge through challenge exams, portfolio submissions and demonstrative practicum. Applicants use this option when their training institution is not recognized by the government of the province, state or country, their course of study is not considered post-secondary, the training was less than 120 hours of instruction, or the institution is no longer in existence or unable to provide an official transcript.

Currently, Douglas College and Northern Lights College provide PLA services for ECE courses. Northern Lights College provides PLA for select ECE courses and Douglas College offers PLA for the entire two-year ECE program, both for licensure and for academic credit.

Douglas College has two approaches to PLAR: one is by competency for the purpose of licensure and the other is by credit towards an ECE certificate or diploma. Students work closely with a mentor assessor, assigned by Douglas College, for a period of three to six months. The mentor assessor helps guide the student in demonstrating to the mentor assessor what she or he already knows about ECE. The largest piece of work that the student completes (for licensure) is a timeline of experiences to demonstrate the competencies learned outside the classroom, compiled in a comprehensive portfolio. The PLA option is not used as often as might benefit internationally trained applicants. Costs for PLA services can be prohibitive for some applicants. Douglas College offerings have been focused on the Lower Mainland; the college is currently expanding PLA services.

Unique features

The ECE registry works in partnership with ICES to validate credentials and institutional information. This partnership has been most valuable to the ECE registry's work. ICES' expertise and knowledge of international institutions and educational systems is essential to assessing internationally trained ECEs in British Columbia.

Lessons to share

Employers frequently contact the ECE registry with concerns about the length of time of the credential assessment process. Many players are involved in the process of assessing international credentials and sometimes long delays happen at the training institutions or translation services. The ECE registry recognizes that more communication is needed with the ECE community about how the process works. Both ICES and the registry work to meet their processing timeframes upon receipt of documents; however there are often many delays before documents arrive in British Columbia.

Challenges

The Program Confirmation Form provides instructional time and course content information. The ECE registry has questioned how some training institutions complete this information. Is there another format, approach or different use of language that would make the information request more accessible to international institutions? Are there other ways to gather this information? With a greater focus on recognizing international credentials in British Columbia, the registry may investigate new ways for individuals to demonstrate their knowledge. Self-assessments, more PLA, observations and processes used by other professions, are all possibilities to consider.

Of interest

- Anecdotally, many of the internationally trained ECE applicants come to British Columbia from the United Kingdom, Korea, Taiwan, Australia and New Zealand.
- Prior to 1999, ICES assessed both the official transcript and the Program Confirmation Form. In 1999, the protocol was changed as a result of an applicant appeal; the ECE registry now makes the determination of equivalency by assessing course content through the Program Confirmation Form.

For further information:

Early Childhood Educator Registry: <http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/ece/index.htm>

International Credential Evaluation Service: http://www.bcit.ca/files/ices/pdf/bcit-ices_application_form_feb08.pdf

International Credential Evaluation Service – Early Childhood Educator Registry Evaluation Requirements for Foreign-Trained Applicants: http://www.bcit.ca/files/ices/bcit-ices_ece_foreign_sept06.pdf

Selecting a Credential Evaluation Process: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/ece/pdfs/selecting_credential_evaluation_process.pdf

Program Confirmation Form: http://www.bcit.ca/files/ices/bcit-ices_program_confirmation_ece_sept06.pdf

Case Study: Alberta

The Child Care Staff Certification Office, Alberta Children and Youth Services, completes assessments for individuals with post-secondary training from other countries seeking certification as a child development assistant, child development worker or child development supervisor. The Child Care Staff Certification Office has been assessing post-secondary qualifications of individuals trained within and outside Canada since 1990.

There have been two recent developments in Alberta's approach to child care credential assessment. In May 2008, the Child Care Staff Certification Office expanded its equivalency requirements from a focus on early childhood education training to include post-secondary diploma and degree programs in the human services field. If the educational institution is considered post-secondary in its state or country, it will be considered post-secondary for the purpose of the certification assessment.

Overview of the process

Information about child care staff certification is available on the Alberta Children and Youth Services web site and through a toll-free information line. Individuals also learn about the process through child care program owners/operators. In Alberta, the process for credential assessment is the same for both Canadian and internationally trained individuals.

Individuals submit an application form and an official/original transcript – translated into English (if required) and notarized for authenticity – to the Child Care Staff Certification Office. Transcripts may be sent directly from the educational institution or attached to the application form. The office contacts applicants if more information is required, such as course descriptions.

Educational equivalencies and course hour equivalencies are used to assess applications. Both the Educational Equivalencies Chart and the Course Hours Equivalency Chart are in the Certification Guide for Child Care Staff, available on the web site.

- The Educational Equivalencies Chart lists educational training programs that meet the equivalency requirements for certification as a child development assistant, child development worker and child development supervisor. These equivalencies are used for individuals who have completed educational programs.
- The Course Hours Equivalency Chart shows the minimum number of course hours in different subject areas (child development, programming, relationship courses, related and practicum courses) required for certification as a child development worker and child development supervisor. The course hours chart is based on ECE training programs at Alberta public colleges. It is used to assess an individual's post-secondary training on a course-by-course basis. This process is used for persons whose educational program is incomplete or whose educational program is not included in the Educational Equivalencies Chart.

If applicants' educational programs do not match the Educational Equivalencies Chart or applicants disagree with the office assessment, they may have their educational credentials assessed by the International Qualification Assessment Service (IQAS) to determine the equivalency of the educational training. IQAS compares educational qualifications from other countries to provincial educational standards and issues certificates of comparison to educational standards in a Canadian province. The service is a result of the collaborative efforts of numerous groups in Alberta and across Canada. Immigrant-serving agencies, post-secondary institutions, professional licensing bodies, employers and various federal and provincial government agencies played a role in the development of the service. The IQAS team provides an assessment service based on clearly defined principles, developed and maintained in partnership with these groups.

Applicants may also contact one of Alberta's public colleges and request an assessment of their post-secondary course work to identify what additional ECE courses are required to obtain equivalency to an ECE certificate or diploma. After all documents are received by the Child Care Staff Certification Office, assessments for certification are assessed in date order and generally completed within four weeks.

Unique features

In Alberta, the process for credential assessment is the same for both Canadian and internationally trained individuals. The Child Care Staff Certification Office conducts assessments for all applications. Applicants may use IQAS and public colleges to obtain documentation to verify that their training meets the required certification requirements.

Lessons to share

The certification process in Alberta is simple, clear and transparent. Information is readily available on a web site that is easy to navigate. Equivalency and course content charts are posted, as well as a comprehensive Guide to Child Care Staff Certification. There is a toll-free information line for Alberta residents to access the Child Care Staff Certification Office.

Challenges

Some applicants have difficulty accessing official transcripts from their training institutions.

Of interest

- The Foreign Qualification Recognition (FQR) plan is a new Alberta initiative that is working to understand internationally trained individuals (their training, what they need to know to work in an Alberta certifying occupation) and to identify any training gaps across all occupations that have a regulated certifying body/organization. FQR is intended to initiate bridging options to help new immigrants become certified in various sectors.

For further information:

Child Care Staff Certification, with links to the Certification Guide for Child Care Staff and Application Form and certifying information: <http://www.child.alberta.ca/certification>

International Qualification Assessment Service IQAS: www.immigration.alberta.ca/iqas

Case Study: Ontario

The Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario (AECEO) and l'Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario (AFÉSEO) are the early childhood educators' professional organizations in Ontario. The AECEO and l'AFÉSEO have over 40 years combined experience in assessing credential equivalency of individuals trained both out-of-province and out-of-country, providing services in English and French respectively. The AECEO and l'AFÉSEO's Letter of Equivalency Certificates meet the required educational qualification component of the application process for membership in Ontario's newly formed regulatory body, the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE). The AECEO and l'AFÉSEO are recognized by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) and the early childhood sector in Ontario as the bodies that evaluate credentials of internationally trained individuals.

Background to the AECEO Bridging Project: ACCESS to the Early Childhood Education Field Ontario

Over the years, the AECEO observed that while many individuals with international credentials applied for equivalency, few completed the process. In addition, the sector recognized that individuals with unrecognized international training were working in the field as assistants. If their training became recognized, these individuals could work as early childhood educators, utilizing their knowledge and skills in positions with improved wages and working conditions.

AECEO reviewed current practices for internationally trained applicants: many individuals required additional supports (e.g., settlement, language, cultural context, employment, mentorship and networking) in order to have their training recognized and work as ECEs in Ontario.

In 2006, the AECEO launched ACCESS to the ECE Field Ontario, a bridging project to address the barriers faced by individuals with international training. This project, funded by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, was first offered in Toronto at George Brown College and has now expanded to include Ottawa, Peel and Hamilton regions. Partners include George Brown, Algonquin, Mohawk and Sheridan Colleges, Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office and other settlement services. Individuals who successfully complete the ACCESS program receive a Letter of Equivalency Certificate from the AECEO.

L'AFÉSEO, with fewer internationally trained applicants (all French speaking), is able to provide additional one-to-one supports and laddering into employment to these individuals through the organization's regular services.

Overview of the process

There are four components to the ACCESS process: assessment of language, assessment of credentials, prescribed training and bridging to employment. Throughout the process, applicants receive support, assistance and guidance from counselors, consultants, mentors and faculty who provide information about what is needed to work in the ECE field in Ontario.

1. Assessment of language
 - Individuals submit proof of language fluency in English (Canadian Benchmark Level 8).⁴⁵
2. Assessment of credentials
 - Individuals submit documents, including copies of diploma/degree, official transcripts and course outlines, and current employment experience in licensed early learning and child care settings. Individuals also complete a Knowledge of ECE Field Assessment and language assessment. Fees for these assessments are on the AECEO web site.
 - AECEO evaluates all documents and assessments to determine the individual's current knowledge, strengths and gaps, using the I (MTCU) Early Childhood Education Program Standard. The evaluation process usually takes at least eight weeks once all documents are received by AECEO. A letter detailing the outcome of the evaluation is sent to the applicant, and any gaps identified in the applicant's learning result in course upgrading recommendations.
3. Prescribed training/mentoring
 - Most applicants are advised to take these courses at the partner post-secondary institution in their community: ECE in the Canadian Context, Health and Safety, Curriculum, Administration and Legislation, and a supervised placement (final placement competencies) in a college lab school or licensed non-profit early childhood setting. These courses have been designed to familiarize applicants with the Canadian system and prepare them to work in the ECE profession in Ontario.
4. Bridging to employment
 - With its network of employers, AECEO offers workshops, speakers and sessions for applicants to learn job search, resume and interview skills. Applicants completing the program at George Brown College are placed on the supply list at the college's lab schools. Applicants completing their programs at Mohawk and Algonquin Colleges will have opportunities to meet employers in their community.

Unique features

The AECEO is a non-profit, provincial professional organization that evaluates credentials of internationally trained individuals. The AECEO partners with colleges and settlement services to provide the ACCESS program.

The ACCESS program provides individualized supports so that internationally trained applicants with an early years background can access and successfully complete the equivalency process. The ACCESS program recognizes and respects the individual's international training while providing additional courses for applicants to learn about the Canadian context and integrate their skills with Ontario standards. In addition, the project provides opportunities to move into an employment pathway in Ontario. Throughout the process, ACCESS provides personal support to guide applicants.

Lessons to share

- A rigorous process of evaluating credentials, assessments and other documents legitimizes international ECE credentials in the early learning and child care community. As well, a supervised placement in a high quality early learning and child care setting is critical to the applicant's learning and experience.
- The initial project partnership between AECEO, George Brown College and Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Officer encouraged a responsive project structure. For example, both course content and location were revised during the project phase to reflect input and meet the needs of applicants.

Challenges

There are many settlement issues for applicants in the ACCESS program (e.g., finding appropriate housing, learning how to use the subway system). New immigrants need support from settlement services in addition to the academic counsel-

⁴⁵ For more information, visit the Canadian Centre for Language Benchmarks at www.language.ca.

ling offered at colleges and the employment support offered through the AECEO. Often the availability of these services depends on where individuals live.

The evaluation of international credentials relies on information from the out-of-country institutions through transcripts and course outlines that often must be translated. Sometimes the transcripts are not clear about the focus of education courses and credits. Equivalent transcripts should show a clear focus on elementary and preschool education and be distinguished from secondary education training. Alternative methods of assessment should be developed for those individuals who do not have official records due to displacement.

Of interest

- Anecdotally, many of the internationally trained ECE applicants come to Ontario from India, China, West Africa, Bangladesh, and Eastern Europe.
- Over 80% of individuals who completed the ACCESS program find work in ECE. Other candidates pursue further studies or seek employment in the social service and immigration settlement sector.
- The ACCESS project’s first course was posted online (ECE in the Canadian Context) as a hybrid (combination of face-to-face and online) in September 2009.

For further information:

ACCESS to the Early Childhood Education Field in Ontario – web information: <http://www.aeceo.ca/access/international>

AECEO Equivalency Handbook: http://www.aeceo.ca/files/user_files/equivalency_handbook.pdf

ACCESS to the Early Childhood Education Field in Ontario - Application Form (equivalency application form): http://www.aeceo.ca/files/user_files/Bridging_Application.pdf

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) Early Childhood Education (ECE) Program Standards: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/college/progstan/humserv/eerchedu.html>

L'Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario: <http://www.afeseo.ca/>

Challenges

The assessment of international credentials related to early childhood education often presents challenges to provincial/territorial credentialing officials. As noted earlier, while officials have the option of referring credentials to one of the assessment agencies, they are required to make the final decisions regarding equivalency or certification. For the most part, officials agreed that the time required to complete the process presents challenges both for the applicant and for the prospective employer. Several officials interviewed – particularly in smaller jurisdictions – noted that in the interest of time, their first strategy was to contact colleagues in other jurisdictions to determine if anyone had prior experience with graduates presenting similar credentials.

Overall, officials noted that at times it was difficult to determine the “match” between the content of early childhood education courses completed in other countries and the required provincial or territorial content needed for equivalency. Some jurisdictions have related processes in place to support this assessment, such as Prior Learning Assessment and a variety of assessment forms and procedures. Even so, a number of officials speculated as to whether further improvements to the assessment and recognition process were possible, in order to ensure that the process was fair, timely and equitable.

Government of Canada Strategy

The Government of Canada has identified that a highly skilled workforce will be needed in order to meet the needs of the economy of the 21st century. The government has further noted that one of the keys to prosperity and competitiveness in Canada will be the degree to which internationally trained workers are able to contribute to Canada’s economic and social development. In order to facilitate the recognition of internationally trained workers, the Government of Canada

has developed the Internationally Trained Workers Initiative. This is an integrated, comprehensive strategy to address the barriers to employment internationally trained workers face. Over 14 federal government departments are involved in this initiative.

The Foreign Credential Recognition (FCR) program is one of the key components of the initiative. The government defines Foreign Credential Recognition as “the process of verifying that the education and job experience obtained in another country are equal to the standards established for Canadian workers.”⁴⁶ Since credential recognition is generally the responsibility of provinces and territories (who may in turn delegate this responsibility to regulatory agencies), the Government of Canada has been working with other levels of government and related agencies to support credential recognition processes that are fair, accessible, coherent, transparent and rigorous. Funding is available to provinces, territories and stakeholders – including regulatory bodies, post-secondary institutions, sector councils and employers – to implement projects that facilitate the assessment and recognition of qualifications acquired in other countries. The FCR program may be a vehicle for ECEC credentialing officials and experts to pursue improvements to their current approaches to the assessment and recognition of international credentials.

⁴⁶ See: <http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/cs/comm/hrsd/news/2005/050425bb.shtml>

SECTION 7: LESSONS FROM OTHER SECTORS

The power of self-government granted to the professions has two essential aspects - the authority to license and the ability to discipline licensees. The licensing power is essentially the authority to decide who shall be permitted to earn their living by the pursuit of a particular calling. This means that professional organizations act as the gatekeepers to the professions in their assessment of the qualifications of prospective members. Once an individual becomes a member of a profession, the professional organization has the power to regulate the conduct of the licensee by establishing rules of practice and standards of conduct enforceable through the discipline process....

The Supreme Court of Canada has concluded that it is difficult to overstate the importance in our society of the proper regulation of our learned professions. The primary purpose of the establishment of self-governing professions is the protection of the public. This is achieved by ensuring that only the qualified and the competent are permitted to practise and that members of the profession conform to appropriate standards of professional conduct.

James T. Casey⁴⁷

Approaches to Credentialing in Other Sectors

As noted at the beginning of this report, credentialing refers to the practice of documenting a person's qualifications and/or competency in order for them to practise their profession. The term is used to refer to a certificate/diploma/degree from a post-secondary institution; a license or certificate or registration with a government regulatory body (or its designate) indicating official permission to engage in a form of employment; or an industry-granted certificate based on an individual's demonstration of occupational competence.

For the most part, other sectors in Canada focus their credentialing efforts on professional certification and/or registration. Professional certification is voluntary, and is typically not required for employment. However, there are some professions that require, as a matter of employment, registration with the appropriate certification or professional body. As noted in Section 3, there are only two Canadian provinces where professional certification is an option for early childhood educators – Ontario and Nova Scotia.

A review of professional certification practices for other occupations in Canada, however, suggests that there are a number of professions that offer, generally through their professional organizations, the option of applying for and completing the process for professional certification. In some cases, the certification is done at a national level, and some of these certification practices are also recognized internationally. In others, certification may be possible at a national level, but also exists at a provincial/territorial level. In these cases, there is generally some collaboration or relationship between the two credentialing bodies; but in other cases, the option of provincial certification varies across provinces. In still other cases, registration/certification is carried out in each province or territory, and legislation and regulations often differ. Examples include:

⁴⁷ Casey, James T (1994). *The Regulation of Professions in Canada*, pp. 1; 1-3. Toronto: Carswell Thomson Professional Publishing. As quoted in: *Regulation of Social Work Practice in Canada*. Paper prepared for the Social Work Summit - Montreal, October 2001, by: Alison MacDonald and Rod Adachi. The Alberta College of Social Workers. Retrieved September 13, 2009 from: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/sw/caddssw/projects/Registration%20in%20Canada%20-%20social%20work%20summit.pdf>.

- **Canadian Association of Information Technology Professionals** – for certification as an Information Systems Professional (I.S.P.)
 - The I.S.P. is legislated as a self-regulating designation in six provinces: British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Other provinces are working toward similar legislation through their provincial government. The I.S.P. designation is also recognized in the United Kingdom (by the British Computer Society), Australia (by the Australian Computer Society), New Zealand (by the New Zealand Computer Society), and in the USA, CIPS has a mutual recognition agreement with the ICCP (<http://www.iccp.org/>) to facilitate easier cross-border movement for professionals in IT.
- **Canadian Association of Professional Engineers**
 - Engineering is a regulated profession in Canada. Licensing is carried out by 12 provincial and territorial associations or regulatory bodies that set standards and regulate the profession. An engineering license is valid only within that jurisdiction. However, there is a mobility agreement among some provinces and territories regarding transfer of licenses.
- **Canadian Nurses Association**
 - The Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) offers professional certification in 19 specialties and areas of nursing practice. CNA defines certification as a voluntary and periodic process (certification renewal) by which an organized professional body confirms that a registered nurse has demonstrated competence in a nursing specialty/area of nursing practice by having met predetermined standards of that specialty/area of nursing practice. The purpose of certification is threefold:
 - to promote excellence in nursing care for the people of Canada through the establishment of national standards of practice in nursing specialty areas;
 - to provide an opportunity for practitioners to confirm their competence in a specialty/area of nursing practice; and
 - to identify through a recognized credential, those nurses meeting the national standards of their specialty/area of nursing practice.

Social Workers

Even though other professions have very clear processes in place for registration/certification practices, in some cases there are variations among jurisdictions that resemble the challenges in the early childhood sector. For example, social workers in Canada are considered to be “registered” upon verification of successful completion of a social work degree awarded from a university that is accredited (or deemed to be equivalent) by the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work (CASSW). The Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) is a federation of nine provincial and one territorial social work organizations. The CASW is active in the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), and provides leadership within the IFSW Executive Committee, as well as within the North American Region.⁴⁸ The CASW explains that the regulation of social work in Canada is a provincial/territorial responsibility. In seven of 10 provinces, the regulatory body and the professional association are under the same umbrella. All members in good standing in the provincial/territorial organization of social workers are automatically affiliated with the national organization, as well as connected at the international level. However, MacDonald and Adachi (2001)⁴⁹ point out that there are differences among jurisdictions such as:

- There is a range of entry level criteria.
- Some jurisdictions require a period of provisional registration for new applicants.
- Required documentation varies with regard to references, criminal record checks, evidence of academic preparation,

⁴⁸ Retrieved September 13, 2009 from: <http://www.casw-acts.ca/>.

⁴⁹ MacDonald and Adachi (2001). *Regulation of social work practice in Canada*. In Canadian Association of Social Workers *Social Work Scope of Practice*. Retrieved September 9, 2009 from: http://www.casw-acts.ca/advocacy/scope_e.pdf.

provision of a personal statement, etc.

- Categories of membership are not consistent.
- Some jurisdictions have criteria for assessing equivalence.
- Categories of people required to be registered and definitions of mandatory registration vary.
- In some jurisdictions registration remains a voluntary act.
- Some jurisdictions exempt specific groups, such as government employees, from any legal requirements.
- Some jurisdictions are authorized to use examinations in the registration process for all or a specified type of applicant.

MacDonald and Adachi also note that in some jurisdictions (Manitoba and Québec) a social worker is “registered”, while in others (Nova Scotia and British Columbia), social workers are “certified”. In Alberta, social workers are “licensed”.

Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists

The Canadian Association of Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA) was established in 1964 as the Canadian Speech and Hearing Association (CSHA). Since then, it has grown to represent over 5,000 members across Canada as the only national body to represent the professional needs of both speech language pathologists and audiologists. In 1985, the CSHA voted to represent the professional concerns of both speech language pathologists and audiologists in Canada. At that time, the name of the organization was changed to its current title, and in that same year, CASLPA launched its certification program. Key objectives of the organization over the past 45 years have been to establish and maintain high national standards of training and practice, develop ties with provincial associations and their services, and build the membership.

CASLPA has joint membership with professional associations in some of the Canadian provinces and as such, membership in CASLPA will also mean membership in the provincial professional association. Membership in CASLPA may facilitate membership in some of the provinces, but there may be specific additional requirements in some of the licensed provinces (currently Québec, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Alberta and Ontario).⁵⁰

Until recently, CASLPA provided accreditation services to clinical sites (e.g., Nova Scotia Hearing and Speech Centre, with 28 clinics across the province) but recently the CASLPA board has determined that the organization will phase out this program. However, CASLPA’s clinical certification program (which had been a requirement for its accredited sites) continues to be an extremely well received initiative by the members. Key informants indicate that over 80% of CASLPA members are certified.

Clinical certification by CASLPA is a voluntary professional certification program and viewed as a benefit for members of the association. Clinically certified members of the association must be current members in good standing and committed to meeting continuing education requirements. Clinical certification is not the same thing as holding a license or registration to practice in a specific province, which is currently required in six provinces that have regulatory bodies. (See above for listing of provinces; see below for more details regarding provincial requirements). In some jurisdictions, CASLPA clinical certification may be recognized as evidence of meeting the academic and clinical requirements for licensing/registration with these regulatory bodies.

Features of the certification program include:

- **The clinical certification program has two components:** the clinical certification exam and a continuing

⁵⁰ British Columbia is expected to require provincial registration and application for a license to practice by 2010.

education program. Applicants must be members of CASLPA⁵¹. Membership is open to: students who have completed all coursework⁵² requirements and are anticipating graduation in the calendar year of the exam; members in good standing; and members whose applications are in process of evaluation. Each year, approximately 80% of new graduates in Canada apply for CASLPA clinical certification. To maintain clinical certification status, members must accrue 45 continuing education equivalents⁵³ (CEEs) over a three-year period and maintain membership in the association. There is no separate fee for holding clinical certification.

- **Equivalency is an option.** An applicant may not have a master’s degree, but may have equivalent content, depending on the university where studies were completed. In this case, CASLPA would recognize “substantial equivalency” based on an assessment of course content, number of courses and practicum hours.
- **International applications are welcomed.** An individual with international credentials must complete an application for the International Qualifications Assessment Service along with a release, which must be signed so that the report on the assessment of the degree/training may be forwarded to CASLPA. There is a fee payable to IQAS of \$200, and a \$500 fee to CASLPA for the evaluation of credentials.

Assessment from IQAS takes approximately six weeks. If the applicant does not meet the academic and clinical practicum requirements for membership, the applicant may then be required to write the certification examination as a further step in qualifying for membership and certification.

- **International Mutual Recognition is in place.** CASLPA has mutual recognition agreements with some international professional associations, including the American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA), Speech Pathology Australia, The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (UK), the Irish Association of Speech and Language Therapists and the New Zealand Speech-Language Therapists' Association. CASLPA is now in negotiation with the professional association in South Africa. There are requirements and procedures before applying for membership and clinical certification with CASLPA for members of these associations, and in some cases, additional course work must be completed. International graduates are sometimes required to pass the clinical certification examination by one of the regulatory bodies and, once licensed, are then eligible to apply for CASLPA membership and clinical certification.
- **A national set of competencies has been agreed to.** *Assessing and Certifying Clinical Competency Foundations of Clinical Practice for Audiology and Speech- Language Pathology (2004)* was developed by CASLPA following a two-year period of broad consultation with clinicians and university faculty. As the sector’s knowledge base and scope of practice evolve, periodic revisions of the Foundations of Clinical Practice will be made to ensure that it gives an accurate framework for the training of speech-language pathologists and audiologists. The Foundations of Clinical Practice is designed to be general and flexible, not prescriptive. While it provides a common framework⁵⁴, it allows each Canadian university program to create its own curriculum, building on the unique strengths and interests of its faculty and the network of clinicians that are part of each student’s training. The Foundations of Clinical Practice also serves as the basis for the CASLPA certification program and national examinations. The competences described are intended for the entry-level clinician and do not list all knowledge and skills expected of experienced clinicians, directors and

⁵¹ An individual must hold a Master’s Degree in Speech Language Pathology or Audiology (or equivalent) in order to be eligible for membership in CASLPA.

⁵² Course work must meet the following minimum hour requirements: 270 hours of course work in normal development and use of speech, language and hearing; 360 hours of course work in the major area (either speech-language pathology or audiology); and 90 hours of course work in the minor area (audiology courses for speech-language pathologists or speech-language pathology courses for audiologists) in addition to 350 hours of supervised clinical practicum as described for speech language pathologist and audiologist.

⁵³ There are no specific requirements or processes for approval of the continuing education units. Activities may include conference/workshop participation, presentations, self-study, or supervision of students. However, there are maximum hours established for certain types of continuing education.

⁵⁴ The key informant noted that these competencies may be considered equivalent to occupational standards as developed in other sectors.

academic members. New graduates are expected to be generalists, (not specialists) and learning is ongoing as the professional works in different settings with various clients, supervisors and management styles. Professionals must maintain open communication with clients and staff, and apply client-centred, outcome-based treatment that is also evidence-based.

- Program accreditation is in place. There are nine universities in Canada that offer post-secondary study in speech language pathology and audiology at the graduate level. All programs are accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Canadian University Programs in Audiology and Speech Language Pathology (CACUP-ASLP), www.cacup-aslp.ca.
- **Provincial/territorial regulatory practices differ.** All six jurisdictions that outline regulatory requirements to practice as a speech language pathologist or audiologist require a master's degree or equivalent. No province or territory requires CASLPA clinical certification as a requirement for employment. However, many jurisdictions note that employers require such certification. In the Northwest Territories, even though there are no territorial regulations regarding qualifications, it is noted that the largest employer (who employs 75% of speech language pathologists and the only audiologists) requires CASLPA certification. In Nova Scotia, even though there is no legislation governing the practice, the Department of Health requires a master's in audiology or speech-language pathology and professional clinical certification from CASLPA, and school boards require professionals to possess or be eligible to obtain CASLPA clinical certification and hold a valid Nova Scotia teacher's certificate.
- **Provisions exist for lapsed membership and/or certification.** CASLPA members who are not certified but who have let their membership lapse simply re-apply for membership and pay the required annual fee. Renewal of CASLPA clinical certification depends on annual membership fees and completion of a required amount of continuing education in a three-year period. If a certified member has let her or his certification lapse due to incomplete hours of continuing education or non-payment of annual fees, the individual would be required to take the clinical certification exam again in order to re-instate the certification. CASLPA does not have a requirement for employment in order to maintain certification – but other provincial/territorial regulatory bodies may have different requirements regarding employment.

Lessons for the early childhood sector

A review of credentialing (certification and registration) experiences in other professions clearly highlights some interesting observations and lessons for the early childhood sector. While the typical level of education for some of these professions is generally of a higher degree than currently required for early childhood educators, it is interesting to note that other professions struggle with different types of provincial requirements, language and processes. At a time when post-secondary program accreditation has been recommended for the early childhood sector⁵⁵, it is useful to analyze its contribution to certification, and potentially to international mutual recognition agreements. Further examination of these issues in the early childhood sector would clearly benefit from consultation with those in other sectors who have debated and addressed similar challenges.

⁵⁵ Beach, J., and Flanagan, K. (2007). *People, Programs and Practices: A Training Strategy for the Early Childhood Education and Care Sector in Canada*. Ottawa, ON: Child Care Human Resources Sector Council.

SECTION 8: CONCLUSION

Policies and practices in ECE credentialing⁵⁶ have broad and important impacts on the planning, delivery and quality of ECEC programs and services. There is a compelling body of evidence to demonstrate that specialized post-secondary training in early childhood education contributes to the quality of early childhood programs and ultimately to better learning outcomes for children. This research is well understood by governments across Canada, and all provinces and one territory have included requirements for such post-secondary specialization in their legislation governing the operation of regulated early childhood programs. As well, all jurisdictions provide some type of support for individuals to achieve the necessary academic credentials for such specialization.

Validation sessions held with post-secondary ECE faculty also confirmed that provincial/territorial certification or registration requirements for staff in ECEC programs influence the quality of post-secondary ECE education, since practicum experience is considered to be a key component of the certificate/diploma program. Faculty have noted that the strength of the post-secondary ECE qualifications for ECE directors and staff is directly related to the quality of supervision provided to ECE students during practicum placements.

Although there are differences across Canada in the language used to describe the various certification, registration, licensure and classification processes, and variations in the titles given to those who have met the prescribed requirements, provincial/territorial approaches to ECE credentialing are similar in that they describe the numbers/percentages of staff to hold certain types of academic credentials, generally call for completion of post-secondary ECE courses, outline approaches to equivalency and provide for assessments of international qualifications. In this respect, the ECEC sector is not unique in its differences. Lessons learned from other sectors indicate that other professions are also challenged with respect to language, titles and conditions for certification and/or registration.

In the past year, the requirement for compliance with the labour mobility provisions of the Agreement on Internal Trade has had a significant impact on all sectors, including early childhood education and care. Key informants and participants in the final Pathways to ECE Credentialing in Canada project validation sessions noted that the discussions and considerations regarding mandatory labour mobility have suggested the need for a close re-examination of previous research into the concepts of a national ECE certification program, and program accreditation at the post-secondary level for ECE studies.

Research undertaken for the Pathways to ECE Credentialing in Canada project has noted that ECE credentialing practices are continuing to evolve across Canada. In recent years, a number of jurisdictions have introduced requirements for entry-level certification for all staff in regulated early childhood centres. There is some interest in learning more about apprenticeship programs. A few jurisdictions have noted that they are either considering or actively planning further changes to the requirements for staff qualifications in regulated ECEC programs. Credentialing officials described the increasing frequency of applications from individuals who have studied outside of Canada, and noted the unique challenges of determining certification/registration status for those who have entered Canada as refugees, and therefore are without any documentation of prior education or experience.

⁵⁶ As noted earlier in this report, credentialing refers to the practice of documenting individuals' qualifications and/or competency in order for them to practice their profession in a particular province or territory. The term is used for three main types of designations:

- A certificate, diploma or degree from a post-secondary institution, indicating a partially or fully completed education program.
- A license or certificate or registration with a government regulatory body (or its designate) for an occupation, indicating official permission to engage in a form of employment. Some occupations are regulated in some provinces or territories but not regulated in others.
- An industry-recognized certificate granted by a certification body upon a candidate's successful demonstration of occupational competence. Professional certification is voluntary; it is not a requirement for an individual to be certified in order to work.

As well, language surrounding credentialing practices continues to change. Credentialing officials noted that “equivalency” is now spoken of as “comparable education”; and the term “RPL” (Recognition of Prior Learning) is beginning to replace the term “PLAR” (Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition).

It is clear that ECE credentialing legislation, policy and practice is developed within the tension between the reality of ECE recruitment challenges, and solid research evidence that demonstrates the importance of highly qualified educators in order to provide quality learning and care environments for young children. The issue of labour mobility for early childhood educators brings another perspective to such developments. As one official noted, “Any decision about credentialing taken in one jurisdiction has an impact on the whole country.”

One of the unexpected outcomes of the Pathways to ECE Credentialing in Canada project is the development of a communication network among provincial/territorial credentialing officials, facilitated by the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council. This type of network will be valuable as the sector examines lessons from other professions, deals with labour mobility, finds ways to better meet the needs of international applicants, and as new questions arise about the feasibility of a national certification program and post-secondary program accreditation.

APPENDIX 1. REFERENCE GUIDES

The Language of ECEC Credentialing

As noted in this report, the language used for early childhood education and care credentialing in Canada varies from one jurisdiction to another. Common terms used include certification, registration, and classification. At the same time, the language used to define an individual's status may also be different, and include terms such as early childhood educator, child development worker, child development specialist, infant/toddler educator, special needs educator, child care assistant, and child care worker.

Table 4 provides a snapshot of certification/classification/registration processes used in each jurisdiction, along with the terminology used to define or describe the individual who meets the requirements.

Table 4. Snapshot of provincial/territorial approaches to credentialing

Province/Territory	Is there a certification, classification, or registration process?	Notes
Newfoundland	Yes	Newfoundland and Labrador uses a combined certification and classification system. Those who meet provincial qualifications may be certified and classified. Certification is done in five levels: Entry, Level 1, 2, 3, and 4; Classification is done by pre-school, infant, school-age, or family child care.
Nova Scotia	No	Nova Scotia does not have a regulated process for certification of qualified staff. Staff qualifications are outlined in the licensing requirements for regulated child care programs.
Prince Edward Island	Yes	Prince Edward Island uses a certification system. Those who meet the provincial qualifications may be certified as an early childhood program staff or an early childhood supervisor. There are additional certification titles for family child care supervisors and family child care program staff, and school age supervisors and school age program staff.
New Brunswick	No	New Brunswick does not have a regulated process for certification of qualified staff. Staff qualifications are outlined in the licensing requirements for regulated child care programs.
Quebec	No	Québec does not have a regulated process for certification of qualified staff. Staff qualifications are outlined in the licensing requirements for regulated child care programs.
Ontario	Yes	Ontario has a registration system. Those who meet provincial qualifications may be registered with the Ontario College of Early Childhood Educators as an early childhood educator. In Ontario this is a regulated occupation, which means that only those who are registered with the Ontario College of Early Childhood Educators are able to call themselves early childhood educators.
Manitoba	Yes	Manitoba uses a classification system. Those who meet the provincial qualifications may be classified as a child care assistant, an early childhood educator II, or an early childhood educator III.
Saskatchewan	Yes	Saskatchewan uses a certification system. Those who meet provincial qualifications may be certified as an ECE I, ECE II, or ECE III.
Alberta	Yes	Alberta uses a certification system. Those who meet provincial qualifications may be certified as a child development assistant, a child development worker, or a child development supervisor.
British Columbia	Yes	British Columbia uses a registration system. Those who meet provincial qualifications may be registered as an early childhood assistant, an early childhood educator (1-year license), an early childhood educator (5-year license), an early childhood educator infant/toddler, or an early childhood educator special needs.
Yukon Territory	Yes	Yukon uses a certification system. Those who meet territorial qualifications may be certified as a child care worker in Levels I, IA, II, IIA, or III.
Northwest Territories	No	The Northwest Territories does not outline educational requirements for staff working in regulated child care programs.
Nunavut	No	Nunavut does not outline educational requirements for staff working in regulated child care programs.

Requirements for Employment in Regulated Early Childhood Education and Care Programs

Requirements for employment in regulated early childhood education and care programs – while similar – are also different from one jurisdiction to another. Differences include variations in the level of post-secondary education and experience required, as well as the number of staff required to possess such credentials. Requirements are often outlined according to type of program.

The following information is intended to provide a convenient reference tool regarding the different types of staff qualifications required for employment in regulated early childhood education and care programs in Canada. Requirements are outlined for employment in:

- Centre-based programs (Table 5)
- Family child care/home programs (Table 6)
- School-age child care programs (Table 7)

Table 5. Provincial/territorial certification and educational requirements⁵⁷ for regulated group (centre-based) programs**Newfoundland**

All staff working with children in a regulated child care centre and who are considered in the child:staff ratio must be certified. There are five levels of certification. The first four levels (Entry, Level 1, 2, and 3) of certification are also classified depending on either the delivery method or the ages of the children in the program; Level 4 is the same for all age groups. An ECE certificate typically involves one year of post-secondary study; an ECE diploma typically involves two years of post-secondary study.

Preschool: To work in a regulated child care centre with preschool children 2-6 years, who are not attending school

- Entry level: Preschool Orientation Course
- Level 1: Completion of provincially approved one-year ECE certificate program
- Level 2: Completion of a provincially approved two-year ECE diploma program
- Level 3:
 - Level 2 certification, plus a post-diploma ECE certificate or specialization or
 - a university degree plus a provincially recognized certificate in ECE (or equivalent)
- Level 4:
 - a university degree in early childhood education or
 - a university degree plus a provincially recognized ECE diploma

School Age: To work in a regulated child care centre with children 4-12 years who also attend school

- Entry level: School Age Orientation Course
- Level 1:
 - ECE certificate plus School Age Orientation Course or
 - related post-secondary certificate plus School Age Orientation Course
- Level 2:
 - ECE diploma plus School Age Orientation Course or
 - related post-secondary diploma plus School Age Orientation Course
- Level 3:
 - preschool or school-age Level 2 plus post-diploma school-age child care specialization or
 - an education degree plus school-age child care orientation course or
 - related university degree plus School Age Orientation Course
- Level 4:
 - university degree in early childhood education or
 - a university degree plus an ECE diploma

Infant: To work in a regulated child care centre with children 0-23 months

- No entry level available – all ECEs working with infants must have level 1 Preschool as a minimum qualification
- Level 1: ECE certificate plus Infant Child Care Orientation Course
- Level 2: ECE diploma plus Infant Child Care Orientation Course
- Level 3:
 - ECE diploma plus post-diploma infant-toddler specialization or
 - related university degree plus ECE certificate plus Infant Child Care Orientation Course
- Level 4:
 - a university degree in early childhood education or
 - a university degree plus an ECE diploma

See “information on orientation course”, <http://www.aecen.ca/images/pdfs/ocinfoaug2008.pdf>.

Individuals may have more than one level of certification and classification. See “initial application form”, http://www.aecen.ca/images/pdfs/ini_app_2009.pdf.

Centre-based programs: An operator or head of a centre is required to have at least Level 2 certification, hold the classifications for the age groups of children the centre is licensed for, and have at least two years experience in a licensed child care centre. The lead staff in a room is required to have at least Level 1 certification in the classification that covers the age group of the children in the room. All other staff are required to have at least entry level certification.

Other: ECE instructors and program consultants are required to have Level 4 certification. Program consultants must also have at least three years experience in a child care setting.

⁵⁷ In addition, criminal records checks, first aid certificates and medical examinations may be required.

Nova Scotia
<p>In Nova Scotia, "training in early childhood education" refers to the successful completion of a post-secondary ECE program from a list of specific programs or the equivalent. Completion of the training program or its equivalent is required for 2/3 of staff – the position of director is included in this number. The chief administrative officer of a facility must have completed a training program in early childhood education or its equivalent. "Equivalent" is further defined in regulation.</p>
Prince Edward Island
<p>Child care staff are certified according to the requirements of the license by facility type. An early childhood centre requires a Type I license; a family child care home or school-age child care centre requires a Type II license.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Type I centres, the centre supervisor and one full-time staff member require at least a one-year early childhood development diploma or equivalent. Depending on education and experience, an individual may be certified as an early childhood program staff or as an early childhood supervisor. The centre supervisor is required to hold an EC supervisor certificate. • In Type II centres the supervisor and 1 staff person require successful completion of one unit of continuing education (defined as a one-semester relevant university/college course) and provide two supporting letters of reference.
New Brunswick
<p>Requirements for staff qualifications in regulated early childhood education and care programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The director, or his/her designate, or one in four staff in a child care centre is required to have a one-year ECE certificate or equivalent. There are no entry requirements to work in a child care centre. <p>Currently, these requirements do not apply to staff working in stand-alone school-age programs.</p>
Quebec
<p>In Centres de la petite enfance (CPEs), two-thirds of staff working directly with children will require a three-year Diplôme d'études collégiales (DEC) or a one-year Attestation and three years experience. The experience may be gained before, during, or after the period of study. In garderies, the requirement for two-thirds of staff to meet these qualifications will become effective in 2011. Currently, one-third of staff in garderies must meet these qualifications. In addition, the holder of a licence of a centre must have a person employed who is responsible for management of the centre, for planning, for organization of direction, control and evaluation of programs and means of the centre. This person acts under the authority of the board committee, which is predominantly composed of parents.</p> <p>There are no educational requirements for other staff to work in a child care centre in Québec.</p> <p>The Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés (MFA) is responsible for regulated child care in Québec.</p>
Ontario
<p>One staff person per group of children is required to have a two-year diploma in early childhood education from an approved Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology (OCAAT) or the equivalent. Centre supervisors must have the same education and at least two years experience. There are no educational requirements for other staff to work in a child care centre in Ontario.</p> <p>The College of Early Childhood Educators, established in Ontario in 2007, is a professional self-regulatory organization for early childhood educators. The college regulates the practice of early childhood education, establishes and maintains qualifications for membership, and issues certificates of registration. It also has responsibility to enforce professional and ethical standards, investigate complaints against members and deal with issues of discipline.</p> <p>All individuals using the term "early childhood educator" or "registered early childhood educator," or who have an ECE diploma or equivalent and are working as a supervisor, staff or resource teacher in a child care centre, within the scope of practice as defined in the Early Childhood Educators Act, are required to join the college, and, effective February 14, 2009, must have applied to the college for registration. See "membership requirements", http://collegeofece.on.ca/userfiles/file/2009-notice/CECE-TC-008-membershiprequirements.pdf.</p> <p>There is one general certificate of registration for the title of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • registered early childhood educator or • Éducatrice de la petite enfance inscrit(e)

Manitoba
<p>All staff working with children in child care centres, nursery schools and school-age child care centres must be classified.⁵⁸</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child care assistant (CCA): no post-secondary credentials are required. The CCA must complete 40 hours of ECE course work (or a related course that, in the opinion of the Director of Manitoba Child Care Program, is relevant to ECE) within the first year of employment. Relevant course work completed in the previous eight years is considered valid. • ECE II: requires <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · completion of a two-year ECE diploma from a post-secondary institution whose program has been approved by the Child Care Education Program Approval Committee (CCEPAC) of the Manitoba Department of Advanced Education and Literacy or · completion of competency-based assessment programs offered by the Manitoba Child Care Program or · are deemed equivalent by the Director of the Manitoba Child Care Program • ECE III: requires <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · completion of an ECE II program, and completion of a post-diploma specialization recognized by CCEPAC, including leadership, administration, infant care, aboriginal child care and special needs child care or · a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Developmental Studies: Stream C – Child Development and Child Care.
Saskatchewan
<p>All staff employed for 65 hours/month or more as a child care worker in a licensed child care centre are required to meet or exceed the qualifications for certification set in the Child Care Regulations. There are three levels of certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECE I: requires 120-hour orientation course or equivalent • ECE II: requires a one-year early ECE certificate or equivalent • ECE II: requires a two-year ECE diploma or equivalent <p>Centre directors hired after 2001 must meet the requirements for an ECE III. All child care staff working 65 hours or more in a child care centre must meet the requirements for an ECE I; 30% of staff must meet the requirements for an ECE II; and in addition, a further 20% of staff must meet the requirements for an ECE III.</p>
Alberta
<p>All staff working with children must be certified within six months of employment. There are three levels of certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child development assistant, http://www.child.alberta.ca/certification, requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · completion of a 58-hour government-sponsored orientation program delivered through classroom, distance or online; or · the required Career and Technology Studies credit courses which focus on early learning and child care offered through Alberta high schools; or · a 45-hour (three-credit) college-level course in child development. • Child development worker, http://www.child.alberta.ca/certification, requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · completion of a one-year ECE certificate from an approved public college, an approved private vocational school with at least one college-level English/French course; or · completion of an equivalent educational programs with at least one college-level English/French course; or · completion of the Alberta Life Experience Equivalency Process (LEEP). • Child development supervisor, http://www.child.alberta.ca/certification, requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · completion of a two-year ECE diploma from an approved public college, an approved private vocational school with at least one college-level English/French course; or · completion of an equivalent educational program with at least one college-level English/French course. <p>The program supervisor in a licensed day care program must hold a Child Development Supervisor Certificate. At least one in every four staff working directly with children between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. must hold at least a Child Development Worker Certificate. All other staff must hold at least a Child Development Assistant Certificate.</p> <p>All staff working directly with children in a licensed preschool (nursery school) program or out-of-school care program must hold at least a Child Development Assistant Certificate.</p> <p>Staff have six months to obtain certification but may not have unsupervised access to the children prior to certification.</p> <p>Note: Prior to November 2008, Alberta certified staff as Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3. The earlier classifications remain valid and are equivalent to certification as a child development assistant, child development worker, and child development supervisor, respectively.</p>

British Columbia
<p>All staff working with children in a child care centre or preschool program must have a Licence to Practice.⁵⁸ There are three levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECE assistant: requires one post-secondary course from an approved list and a character reference. • ECE: requires a basic certificate from an approved British Columbia post-secondary ECE program. There is a one-year ECE, which requires a character reference, and a five-year ECE, which requires 500 hours of supervised work in an ECE setting and a competency-based reference. • ECE infant/toddler and ECE special needs: requires post-basic certificate or diploma in one of the specialized areas.
Yukon Territory
<p>All staff who are working in centre-based programs and who are included in the child:staff ratio must hold some type of child care worker certification. There are three levels of certification outlined in Yukon Child Care Program Regulations, with an additional two levels of certification described in policy. Each level also describes the number of hours of study that must be completed in various “streams”, which include health, child development, self-esteem, methods, field placement and electives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child care worker I: a person who has successfully completed a 60-hour introduction to an early childhood development course or equivalent. If two 30-hour courses are used, they must be from different streams. • Child care worker IA (in policy): a person with child care worker I certification who has also completed additional course work in each of the streams described above, but has not yet completed one full year of training. • Child care worker II: a person who has successfully completed one year of training in early childhood development or the equivalent. • Child care worker IIA (in policy): a person with child care worker II certification who has also completed additional course work in each of the streams described above, but has not yet completed two full years of training. • Child care worker III: a person who has successfully completed two or more years of training in early childhood development or the equivalent. <p>In centre-based programs, 20% of staff must meet or exceed the child care worker III qualifications, an additional 30% must meet or exceed the child care worker II qualifications and the rest must meet or exceed child care worker I qualifications.</p>
Northwest Territories
None specified.
Nunavut
None specified.

⁵⁸ Manitoba uses the term classification; however, to be consistent with other jurisdictions, the term certification will be used interchangeably.

⁵⁹ British Columbia uses the term “Licence to Practice”; however, to be consistent with other jurisdictions, the term “certification” will be used interchangeably.

Table 6. Provincial/territorial certification and educational training, and related requirements for regulated family child care

Province/Territory	Minimum Age	ECE Training or Orientation	Other Requirements
Newfoundland	18	30-60-hour course; must have entry level certification with family child care classification. 30 hours professional development every three years.	Valid first aid certificate. Certificate of conduct and child protection record check for all residents of the home. Home visitors in a family child care agency: Level 2 certification with family child care classification and at least two years experience in a family child care setting.
Nova Scotia	18	Level 1 of the Canadian Child Care Federation Family Home Day Care Training. Ongoing professional development training	Valid first aid and infant CPR certificate Criminal reference check and child abuse registry check
Prince Edward Island	18	30-hour course; must be certified as either a family child care home supervisor or a family child care home program staff. 30 hours of professional development every three years.	Two positive references from community members. Valid first aid certificate.
New Brunswick	19	None.	Must have completed first aid course. Prior contact and criminal record check.
Quebec	Not specified	45-hour course. Six hours of professional development every year. Providers supervised by a family child care coordinating office.	Valid first aid certificate. Two positive references from community members, and medical, physical and mental health certificates. Criminal reference and child care abuse registry checks for all family members over 14 years old. Evaluation every year by the coordinating office staff.
Ontario	18	None; however, many agencies provide training.	Home visitors must have a post-secondary credential in child development and family studies, at least two years of experience working with children and be approved by a director. Home visitors are not required to be registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators but qualified individuals may do so.

Manitoba	18	<p>Approved 40-hr course from community college in family child care or early childhood education within first year of operating. Relevant course work completed in the previous eight years is considered valid.</p> <p>Classification is not required.</p> <p>Requirements are the same for providers in group family child care.</p>	<p>Providers assessed by Manitoba Child Care Program for suitability to provide care based on recognized family child care competencies.</p> <p>First-aid certificate with CPR training relevant to the age group being cared for.</p> <p>All adults in the family must have clear criminal record check.</p>
Saskatchewan	18	<p>40- hour introductory course in ECE or equivalent within one year of becoming licensed.</p> <p>120-hour ECE course for licensees in group family child care within three years of being licensed. The licensee must meet or exceed the qualifications for an ECE I.</p> <p>Six hours of professional development annually.</p>	<p>First aid and CPR training.</p> <p>An orientation session with a program consultant.</p> <p>Criminal records search for all adults who reside in the home.</p>
Alberta	18	<p>Contracted family day home agencies required to develop appropriate training in accordance with Part1: Standard 5 and 5A under the Family Day Home Standards Manual.</p> <p>The licence holder and each additional provider in a licensed group family child care home must be certified at a minimum of a child development assistant.</p>	<p>Completion of first aid course.</p> <p>Criminal records check, including a vulnerable sector search.</p> <p>By September 1, 2012, the licence holder or an additional care provider must be certified at minimum as a child development worker.</p>
British Columbia	19	<p>20 hours course work in child development, guidance, health and safety, or nutrition.</p> <p>A licence to practice is not required.</p>	<p>First aid certificate.</p> <p>Criminal records check for any person over the age of 12 ordinarily present at the facility.</p>
Yukon Territory	18	<p>60-hour course or equivalent; required to have a Level 1 certification.</p>	<p>First aid certificate.</p> <p>Criminal records check.</p>
Northwest Territories	19	None.	Clear criminal record with regard to offences regarding a child.
Nunavut	19	None.	Clear criminal record with regard to offences regarding a child.

Table 7. Provincial/territorial certification and educational requirements⁶⁰ for regulated school-age programs

Newfoundland

Entry level: School age orientation course.

Level 1: ECE certificate plus school-age orientation course or related post-secondary certificate plus school-age orientation course.

Level 2: ECE diploma plus school-age orientation course or related post-secondary diploma plus a school-age orientation course.

Level 3: preschool or school-age Level 2 plus post-diploma school-age child care specialization, or an education degree plus school-age child care orientation course, or related university degree plus preschool orientation course and school-age orientation course.

Level 4: university degree in early childhood education or a university degree plus an ECE diploma.

An operator or head of a centre is required to have at least Level 2 certification, hold the classifications for the age groups of children the centre is licensed for, and have at least two years experience in a licensed child care centre. The lead staff in a room is required to have at least Level 1 certification in the classification that covers the age group of the children in the room. All other staff are required to have at least entry Level certification.

Nova Scotia

“Training in early childhood education” refers to the successful completion of a post-secondary ECE program, from a list of specific programs, or its equivalent. Completion of the training program or its equivalent is required for 2/3 of staff working directly with children – the position of director is included in this number. The chief administrative officer of a facility must have completed a training program in early childhood education or its equivalent. “Equivalent” is further defined in regulation. Individuals will be considered to have the equivalent of early childhood education if they comply with the following requirements:

- successful completion of Grade XII or the equivalent through the General Education Development program of the Department of Education; and
- a minimum of two years’ experience in a licensed day care facility; and
- successful completion of a full credit course of two semesters in a post-secondary education program in at least one of the following areas, and successful completion of 25 hours in training programs, seminars or workshops in the other area not completed by way of post-secondary education:
 - human growth and development with an emphasis on the young child
 - curriculum development and implementation of programs for young children in day care facilities

Prince Edward Island

The supervisor and one additional staff person in a school-age program are required to be certified as a Type II school age supervisor or Type II school age program staff, respectively. Certification in this category requires completion of a 30-hour post-secondary course in a subject relevant to the age group of children involved, and two supporting letters of reference.

New Brunswick

The current standards for staff qualifications are not applicable to those employed in stand-alone school-age programs.

Quebec

There are no educational requirements for staff working in school-age child care programs outlined at the provincial level; however, school boards may require the lead staff to have an early childhood education diploma.

School-age child care programs are administered by the Ministry of Education.

⁶⁰ In addition, criminal records checks, first-aid certificates and medical examinations may be required.

Ontario
<p>One staff person per group of children is required to have a two-year diploma in early childhood education from an approved Ontario college of applied arts and technology (OCAAT) or the equivalent. Centre supervisors must have the same education and have at least two years experience.</p> <p>There are no educational requirements for other staff to work in school-age child care in Ontario.</p> <p>All individuals using the term “early childhood educator” or “registered early childhood educator,” or who have an ECE diploma or equivalent and are working as a supervisor, staff or resource teacher in a child care centre, within the scope of practice as defined in the Early Childhood Educators Act are required to join the College.</p>
Manitoba
<p>A child care centre director of a school-age child care centre, shall meet the requirements of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an ECE II and have at least one year’s experience working with children in child care or in a related setting; or • an ECE III. <p>One half of all staff who care for children in a school-age child care centre and who are included in the staff-to-child ratio shall meet the requirements of a ECE II or III.</p> <p>At least one staff person per group of children in a school-age child care centre shall meet the requirements of an ECE II or III.</p>
Saskatchewan
<p>All staff employed for 65 hours/month or more in a licensed school-age centre are required to meet or exceed the qualifications for certification set in the Child Care Regulations. There are three levels of certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECE I requires 120-hour orientation course or equivalent. • ECE II requires a one-year early ECE certificate or equivalent. • ECE II requires a two-year ECE diploma or equivalent. <p>Centre directors hired after 2001 must meet the requirements for an ECE III. All child care staff working 65 hours or more in a child care centre must meet the requirements for an ECE I; 30% of staff must meet the requirements for an ECE II; and in addition, a further 20% of staff must meet the requirements for an ECE III.</p>
Alberta
<p>Each staff member must be certified at minimum as a child development assistant.</p>
British Columbia
<p>In school-age child care programs, the centre director and staff are required to be “responsible adults”. The number of adults required to be working with children depends on the ages and numbers of the children involved.</p> <p>Staff in school-age programs are not required to have a Licence to Practice.</p>

Yukon Territory
<p>School-age child care programs require specified numbers of staff to be certified in the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child care worker I: a person who has successfully completed a 60-hour introduction to early childhood development course or equivalent. If two 30-hour courses are used, they must be from different streams. • Child care worker IA (in policy): a person with child care worker I certification who has also completed additional course work in each of the streams described above, but has not yet completed one full year of training. • Child care worker II: a person who has successfully completed one year of training in early childhood development or equivalent. • Child care worker IIA (in policy): a person with child care worker II certification who has also completed additional course work in each of the streams described above, but has not yet completed two full years of training. • Child care worker III: a person who has successfully completed two or more years of training in early childhood development or equivalent. <p>Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% of staff must meet or exceed, and continue to meet or exceed, child care worker I qualifications. • 30% of staff must meet or exceed, and continue to meet or exceed, child care worker II qualifications. • An additional 20% of staff must meet or exceed, and continue to meet or exceed, child care worker III qualifications.
Northwest Territories
None specified.
Nunavut
None specified.

Legislation and Regulations

The authority for establishing requirements for certification/classification/registration and the related requirements for numbers of staff who must have such qualifications is found in provincial/territorial legislation and regulations for early childhood education and care programs. The following provides a convenient guide to the various Acts and Regulations to the Acts that specifically relate to credentialing:

Table 8. Legislation/regulations specific to ECE certification

Newfoundland	Child Care Services Regulation (2) Definitions and Regulations (17) to (224) as per Section 16(e) of the Child Care Services Act.
Nova Scotia	Day Care Regulation 21A of the Day Care Act , R.S.N.S. 1989, c. 120 O.I.C. 79-1556 (November 27, 1979), N.S. Reg. 195/79, as amended up to O.I.C. 2004-363 (September 8, 2004), N.S. Reg. 202/2004.
Prince Edward Island	Regulations to the Child Care Facilities Act, (1) Definitions; Part VII Staffing, Part VIII Certification, and Schedules B and C as per Child Care Facilities Act, Section 9.
New Brunswick	Day Care Regulation 83-85, Child Day Care Facilities Operator Standards as per Family Services Act.
Quebec	Regulation respecting educational childcare services, Sections 22 and 129, 130 as per the Educational Child Care Act.
Ontario	Ontario Regulation 221/08 as per Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007.
Manitoba	Definitions in Manitoba Regulation 62/86 for “early childhood educator II” and “early childhood educator III” as per the Community Child Care Standards Act, Sections 30 (1), (2) and (3).
Saskatchewan	The Child Care Regulations, 2001, section 2 (n), (o) and (p) defines ECE I, II, and III. Section 41 (5) sets the mix of certification levels required in a licensed child care centre. Section 42 sets out the requirements for the granting of exemptions to licensed child care centres.
Alberta	Part 3, Sections 13-18, and relevant sections of Schedules 1-5 of the Child Care Licensing Regulation as per the Child Care Licensing Act, Section 27(1)(g).
British Columbia	Child Care Licensing Regulation (Sections 24-33) gives authority for granting ECE certification (Licence to Practice) as well as for suspending or cancelling certification as per The Community Care and Assisted Living Act: Section 8 of the Act gives the power to the director to issue and take action on licenses. Sections 24-33 outline who the director of the registry is, the requirements for a certificate, and the process for suspending, cancelling or varying licenses.
Yukon Territory	Yukon Child Care Program Regulations, Section 6 as per Yukon Child Care Act Section 39(g).

Provincial/Territorial Contacts for ECEC Credentialing

The information contained in the reference guides in this section is based on information that is accurate as of September 2009. However, legislation and policies are often under review and therefore subject to change. The Guide to ECEC Credentialing (<http://www.csc-cssge.ca/english/guide>) is a web-based searchable document that provides current information on various aspects of the ECEC credentialing process.

In addition, the following individuals have responsibility for policy (provincial/territorial directors of ECEC) and/or program (provincial/territorial ECEC credentialing contacts) aspects of the ECEC credentialing processes in each province and/or territory in Canada:

Table 9. Provincial/territorial contacts for ECE credentialing		
Province/Territory	PT Directors of ECEC	PT ECEC Credentialing Contacts
Newfoundland	<p>Helen Sinclair Provincial Director of Child Care Services Department of Child, Youth, and Family Services 28 Pippy Place P.O. Box 8700 St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador A1B 4J6 Telephone: (709) 729-4055 Fax: (709) 729-6382 E-mail: hsinclair@gov.nl.ca</p>	<p>Mary Goss-Prowse Registrar Child Care Services Certification Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador P. O. Box 8657 St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador A1B 3T1 Telephone: (709) 579-3028 Toll-free outside St. John's: 1-877-579-3028 Fax: (709) 579-0217 E-mail: aecenl@nfld.net</p>
Nova Scotia	<p>Virginia O'Connell Director, Early Childhood Development Services Nova Scotia Department of Community Services P.O. Box 696 Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2T7 Telephone: (902) 424-5489 Fax : (902) 424-0708 E-mail : oconneva@gov.ns.ca</p>	<p>Patricia Mertins Program Officer Early Childhood Development Services Nova Scotia Department of Community Services P.O. Box 696 Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2T7 Telephone: (902) 424-3207 Fax: (902) 424-0708 E-mail: mertinpj@gov.ns.ca</p>
Prince Edward Island	<p>Sarah Henry Healthy Child Development Coordinator Department of Education and Early Childhood Development P.O. Box 2000 161 St. Peters Road Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island C1A 7N8 Telephone: (902) 894-0260 Fax: (902) 368-6186 E-mail: skhenry@gov.pe.ca</p>	<p>Cathy McCormack Early Childhood Officer Department of Education and Early Childhood Development P.O. Box 2000 161 St. Peters Road Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island C1A 7N8 Telephone: (902) 368-6518 Fax: (902) 368-6156 E-mail: camccormack@ihis.org</p>

<p>New Brunswick</p>	<p>Diane Lutes Program Consultant Early Childhood and School Based Services Department of Social Development P.O. Box 6000 551 King St. 2nd Floor Fredericton, New Brunswick E3B 1E7 Telephone: (506) 869-6878 (Moncton) Fax: (506) 453-2082 or (506) 856-3013 (Moncton) E-mail: diane.lutes@gnb.ca</p>	<p>Diane Lutes Program Consultant Early Childhood and School Based Services Department of Social Development P.O. Box 6000 551 King St. 2nd Floor Fredericton, New Brunswick E3B 1E7 Telephone: (506) 869-6878 (Moncton) Fax: (506) 453-2082 or (506) 856-3013 (Moncton) E-mail: diane.lutes@gnb.ca</p>
<p>Quebec</p>	<p>Position is Vacant</p>	<p>Denis Paiement Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés 600, rue Fullum Montréal (Québec) H2K 4S7 Téléphone: (514) 873-6271 Téléphone sans frais: 1-888-643-4721 E-mail: denis.paiement@mfa.gouv.qc.ca</p>
<p>Ontario</p>	<p>Julie Mathien Director Early Learning and Child Development Branch Ministry of Children and Youth Services 56 Wellesley Street West 15th floor Toronto, Ontario M5S 2S3 Telephone: (416) 325-5874 E-mail: julie.mathien@ontario.ca</p>	<p>Laura Sheehan Director of Registration College of Early Childhood Educators 438 University Avenue, Suite 1900 Toronto, Ontario, M5G 2K8 Telephone: (416) 961-8558 Toll Free: 1-888-961-8558 E-mail: LauraS@collegeofece.on.ca</p> <p>AECEO 40 Orchard View Blvd., Suite 211 Toronto, Ontario M4R 1B9 Telephone: (416) 487-3157 ext. 21 Ontario Toll Free: 1-866-932-3236 www.aeceo.ca</p> <p>AFÉSEO 140, rue Genest Ottawa, Ontario K1L 7Y9 Téléphone: (613) 741-5107 www.afeseo.ca</p>
<p>Manitoba</p>	<p>Margaret Ferniuk Family Services and Housing Assistant Director, Child Care Program 219-114 Garry St. Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 1G1 Telephone: (204) 945-4003 Fax: (204) 948-2630 E-mail: Margaret.ferniuk@gov.mb.ca</p>	<p>Elin Ibrahim Quality Enhancement Coordinator Manitoba Child Care Program Qualifications Services 219-114 Garry Street Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 4V6 Telephone: (204) 945-7355 Toll Free 1-888-213-4754 E-mail: elin.ibrahim@gov.mb.ca</p>

<p>Saskatchewan</p>	<p>Lois Zelmer Executive Director Early Learning and Child Care Branch Ministry of Education 2220 College Avenue Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 4V9 Telephone: (306) 787-0765 Fax: (306) 787-0277 E-mail: lzelmer@sasked.gov.sk.ca</p>	<p>Carol Olson Manager of Credentials and Quality Improvement Early Learning and Child Care Branch Ministry of Education 2220 College Avenue Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 4V9 Telephone: (306) 787-2004 E-mail: carol.olson@gov.sk.ca</p>
<p>Alberta</p>	<p>Lynn Jerchel Director Child Development Branch Alberta Children and Youth Services 6th Floor, Sterling Place 9940 106 Street Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2N2 Telephone: (780) 422-4538 Fax: (780) 427-1258 E-mail; lynn.jerchel@gov.ab.ca</p>	<p>Murray Kleiter Manager Provincial Programs Alberta Children and Youth Services 6th Floor, Sterling Place 9940 106 Street Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2N2 Telephone: (780) 422-6595 Fax: (780) 427-1258 E-mail: murray.kleiter@gov.ab.ca</p>
<p>British Columbia</p>	<p>Lenora E. Angel Executive Director, Child Care Programs and Services P.O. Box 9965 Stn. Provincial Govt Victoria, British Columbia V8W 9R4 Location Address: 4th floor – 836 Yates Street Victoria, British Columbia V8W 1L8 Telephone: (250) 952-6089 Fax: (250) 387-2997 E-mail: Lenora.Angel@gov.bc.ca</p> <p>Anne Wetherill Assistant Director, Early Years Policy Ministry of Children and Family Development PO Box 9778 Stn Prov Govt Victoria, British Columbia V8W 9S5 Location Address: 3rd Floor – 836 Yates Street Victoria, British Columbia V8W 1L8 Telephone: (250) 387-5828 Facsimile: (250) 356-2528 E-mail: Anne.wetherill@gov.bc.ca</p>	<p>Denise C. Pawliuk Registrar Early Childhood Educator Registry Ministry of Children and Family Development PO Box 9965 Stn Prov Govt Victoria, British Columbia V8W 9R4 Location Address: 4th floor – 836 Yates Street Victoria, British Columbia V8W 1L8 Telephone: (250) 356-6501 Toll-free: 1-888-338-6622 Fax: (250) 952-0765 E-mail: ECERegistry@gov.bc.ca</p>

<p>Yukon Territory</p>	<p>Debbie Mauch A/Manager Child Care Services Unit Department of Health and Social Services Government of Yukon 9010 Quartz Road Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2Z5 Telephone: (867) 667 5635 Fax: (867) 393-7140 E-mail: Debbie.Mauch@gov.yk.ca</p>	<p>Tammy Reinhart Child Care Inspector and Program Consultant Child Care Services Unit Department of Health and Social Services, Government of Yukon 9010 Quartz Road Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2Z5 Telephone: (867) 667-3493 E-mail: Tammy.reinhart@gov.yk.ca</p>
<p>Northwest Territories</p>	<p>Gillian Moir Early Childhood Coordinator Education, Culture and Employment Government of the NWT P.O. Box 1320 Yellowknife, Northwest Territories X1A 2L9 Telephone: (867) 920-8973 Fax: (867) 873-0109 E-mail: Gillian_Moir@gov.nt.ca</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Nunavut</p>	<p>Leslie Leafloor Early Childhood Development Manager Department of Education Government of Nunavut P.O. Box 1000 Station 910 Iqaluit, Nunavut X0A 0H0 Telephone: (867) 975-5607 Fax: (867) 975-5610 E-mail: lleafloor@gov.nu.ca</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Credential Assessment and Qualification Recognition Services

<p>Alberta International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS) Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry 9th Floor, 108th Street Building 9942 - 108 Street Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2J5 Canada Tel.: +1 780 427-2655 Toll-free in Alberta: 310-0000, ask for 427-2655 Fax: +1 780 422-9734 Web site: http://employment.alberta.ca/cps/rde/xchg/hre/hs.xsl/4512.html</p>	<p>Ontario Comparative Education Service (CES) School of Continuing Studies University of Toronto 158 St. George Street Toronto, Ontario M5S 2V8 Canada Tel.: +1 416 978-2400 Fax: +1 416 978-7022 E-mail: learn@utoronto.ca Web site: http://learn.utoronto.ca/ces.htm</p>
<p>British Columbia International Credential Evaluation Service (ICES) 3700, Willingdon Avenue Burnaby, British Columbia V5G 3H2 Canada Tel.: +1 604 432-8800 Toll-Free within North America: +1-866-434-9197 Fax: +1 604 435-7033 E-mail: icesinfo@bcit.ca Web site: http://www.bcit.ca/ices/</p>	<p>International Credential Assessment Service of Canada (ICAS) Ontario AgriCentre 100 Stone Road West, Suite 303 Guelph, Ontario N1G 5L3 Canada Tel: +1 519 763-7282 Toll-free: +1 800 321-6021 Fax: +1 519 763-6964 E-mail: info@icascanada.ca Fees and Services Web site: http://www.icascanada.ca/</p>
<p>Manitoba Academic Credentials Assessment Service - Manitoba (ACAS) Manitoba Labour and Immigration Settlement and Labour Market Services Branch 5th Floor, 213 Notre Dame Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 1N3 Canada Tel.: +1 204 945-6300 Toll-Free within North America: +1-800-665-8332 Fax: +1 204 948-2148 Web site: http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/immigrate/work/recognition/acas.html</p>	<p>World Education Services-Canada (WES Canada) 45 Charles Street East, Suite 700 Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1S2 Canada Tel.: +1 416 972-0070 Fax: +1 416 972-9004 Toll-free: +1 866 343-0070 (from outside the 416 area code) E-mail: ontario@wes.org Web site: http://www.wes.org/ca/</p>

<p>Québec Centre d'expertise sur les formations acquises hors du Québec (CEFAHQ) Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles 255, boulevard Crémazie Est, 8e étage Montréal (Québec) H2M 1M2 Canada Tel.: +1 514 864-9191 Elsewhere in Québec (toll free): +1 877 264-6164 Fax: +1 514 873-8701 E-mail: renseignements@micc.gouv.qc.ca Web site: http://www.immigration-Québec.gouv.qc.ca/en/education/comparative-evaluation/index.html</p>	<p>Northwest Territories International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS) The Government of the Northwest Territories provides this service through an interprovincial agreement with the Government of Alberta. Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry 9th Floor, 108th Street Building 9942 - 108 Street Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2J5 Canada Tel.: +1 780 427-2655 Toll-free in Alberta: 310-0000, ask for 427-2655 Fax: +1 780 422-9734 Web site: http://employment.alberta.ca/cps/rde/xchg/hre/hs.xsl/4512.html</p>
<p>Saskatchewan International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS) <i>The Government of Saskatchewan provides this service through an interprovincial agreement with the Government of Alberta.</i> Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry 9th Floor, 108th Street Building 9942 - 108 Street Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2J5 Canada Tel.: +1 780 427-2655 Toll-free in Alberta: 310-0000, ask for 427-2655 Fax: +1 780 422-9734 Web site: http://employment.alberta.ca/cps/rde/xchg/hre/hs.xsl/4512.html</p>	<p>Other provinces and territories For credential evaluation services in New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Nunavut or Yukon, any of the services listed may be contacted.</p>

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF DOCUMENTS AND WEB SITES REVIEWED

Federal government documents/web sites

Document/web site	Topic/theme
Agreement on Internal Trade: http://www.ait-aci.ca/ .	Labour mobility
Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services of Canada (ACESC), Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC) and Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) (2009). Pan-Canadian Quality Standards in International Credential Evaluation. http://www.cicic.ca/docs/2009-report-standards-evaluations.en.pdf .	International credentials
Council of the Federation: http://www.councilofthefederation.ca/aboutcouncil/aboutcouncil.html .	Labour mobility
Council of Ministers of Education (2008). Report of the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer. http://www.cmec.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/120/CreditTransfer2008.en.pdf .	Credit transfer
Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) (1999). Certification Program Development Guide.	Certification
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. Foreign Credential Recognition: http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/credential_recognition/index.shtml .	International credentials
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada Labour Mobility. http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/labour_mobility/index.shtml .	Labour mobility
Human Resource Partnerships Directorate, Human Resources Development Canada (Rev. 2000). Occupational Standards Development Process. http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/hip/hrp/corporate/pdf/osdp.pdf .	Certification
Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission: http://www.mphec.ca/ .	Mobility Credit transfer

Provincial/territorial documents/web sites

Document/web site	Topic/theme
Newfoundland and Labrador	
Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador http://www.aecenl.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=15&Itemid=30 . Site includes links to: Certification Information Booklet Application for Certification Foreign Credential Information	Certification Foreign credential assessment
Early Childhood Education Program Information, College of the North Atlantic Links to PLAR information: http://dls.cna.nl.ca/ece/programinfo.htm .	PLAR
Nova Scotia	
Certification Council of Early Childhood Educators of Nova Scotia: http://www.cccns.org/cert/home.html . Site includes links to: Certification information, application for ECE certification	Certification
NSCC Early Childhood Education (2007). Recognizing Prior Learning, Giving Credit Where Credit is Due: A Student Guide. http://www.ecdsc.nsc.ca/docs/SelfAuditGuide.pdf .	PLAR
NSCC. Guide to Articulation, Credit and Transfer Agreements. http://www.nsc.ca/News_Events/Publications/NSCC_Articulation_Guide.pdf .	Credit transfer Articulation
The PLA Centre, Halifax: http://www.placentre.ns.ca/index2.php .	PLAR
Prince Edward Island	
Education and Early Childhood Development: http://www.gov.pe.ca/educ/index.php3?number=79614 . Site includes links to: Certification of early child care staff	Certification/ registration
Workplace Learning PEI, Inc. Prior Learning and Assessment and Recognition Services: http://www.nald.ca/workplaceedpei/plar.htm .	PLAR
New Brunswick	
Credit Transfer and Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition: http://www.gnb.ca/0105/plar-era/ .	Credit transfer PLAR
Flanagan, K. (2008). Summary of Consultations on Proposed Certification Model and Options for PD Funding. Retrieved September 8, 2009 from: http://www.eccenb-sepenb.com/en/download/certification/summarycert-consul.pdf .	Certification

Québec	
Administrative Guide Concerning the Classification and Remuneration of Salaried Employees in Childcare Services and Home Childcare Coordinating Offices: http://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/includes/composants/telecharger.asp?fichier=/publications/pdf/SF_guide_admin_classification_remuneration_personnel_en.pdf&langue=en	Classification Qualification
Conseil supérieur de l'éducation (2000). La reconnaissance des acquis, une responsabilité politique et sociale. Avis au ministre de l'Éducation. Rapport annuel sur l'état et les besoins de l'éducation 2003-2004, Ste-Foy : CSE.	PLAR
EPortfolio et la démarche de reconnaissance des acquis et des compétences. Martine Cloutier, Cégep@distance, Samantha Slade, Sofa et Guy Cloutier, MELs: http://www.slideshare.net/sam5/eportfolio .	PLAR
Équivalence AEC et DEC: These documents present equivalencies acknowledged in various programs in education in childhood to be given in the collegiate or in the university compared with the program of DEC in ECE acknowledged by the ministry.	Equivalency Credit transfer
Gouvernement du Québec (2002). Plan d'action en matière d'éducation des adultes et de formation continue. Retrieved September 2, 2009 from: http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/REFORME/formation_con/Plan/Plan.pdf .	PLAR
Gouvernement du Québec (2002). Politique gouvernementale d'éducation des adultes et de formation continue. http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/REFORME/formation_con/Politique/Politique.pdf .	PLAR
Heading for Success: http://www.toutpoureussir.com/en/metier_details.php?metier_id=158&cid=1 . Québec's Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport	Qualification
Ministère de l'Éducation du loisir et du sport, Gouvernement du Québec : http://www.reconnaissancedesacquis.ca/rac-en-bref/a-propos/ .	PLAR
Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (2006). Conseillère et conseiller en reconnaissance des acquis et des compétences. Rapport d'analyse de la situation de travail. Québec : DGPD. Retrieved September 2, 2009 from: http://www.inforoutefpt.org/documents/ASTConseillerRAC.pdf .	PLAR
Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (2005). Reconnaissance des acquis et des compétences en formation professionnelle et technique. Cadre général et technique. Québec : Gouvernement du Québec. Retrieved September 2, 2009 from: http://www.inforoutefpt.org/documents/RAC_CadreGeneralTechnique.pdf .	PLAR
Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale et ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (2008). Le pacte pour l'emploi. Le Québec de toutes ses forces. Québec : Gouvernement du Québec. www.pacte-emploi.gouv.qc.ca .	PLAR
Obtaining a Comparative Evaluation for Studies Done Outside Québec: http://www.immigration-Québec.gouv.qc.ca/en/education/comparative-evaluation/index.html .	Equivalency
Ministère de l'Immigration et Communautés Culturelles (2005). Les personnes immigrantes formées à l'étranger et l'accès aux professions et métiers réglementés. Québec : Gouvernement du Québec.	International credentials

<p>Personnel des services de garde : http://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/services-de-garde/personnel-des-services-de-garde/devenir-educateur/index_en.asp. Site includes link to document: Administrative rule concerning training equivalences for childcare staff recognized in conformance with section 22 of the Regulation respecting educational childcare services No. RA-06-01: http://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/publications/pdf/SF_regle_adm_titulaires_permis_en.pdf.</p>	<p>Qualification equivalency</p>
<p>La reconnaissance des acquis au Cégep Marie-Victorin : http://rccfc.ca/congres_07_ppt/presentation_tremblay.ppt.</p>	<p>PLAR</p>
<p>La reconnaissance des acquis et des compétences. Emploi-Québec : www.reconnaissancedesacquis.com/liens.htm.</p>	<p>PLAR</p>
<p>Reconnaissance des acquis et des compétences en éducation à l'enfance en milieu scolaire, Cégep Ste-Foy, Québec : http://dfc.cegep-ste-foy.qc.ca/accueil/reconnaissance-des-acquis-et-des-competences/education-a-l'enfance-en-milieu-scolaire/.</p>	<p>PLAR</p>
<p>Sonia Fradette, Gilles Tremblay. Reconnaissance des acquis et des compétences en formation professionnelle et technique : cadre général, cadre technique: document de référence : http://www3.mels.gouv.qc.ca/fpt/Bibliotheque/CadreFinalRACEbook.pdf.</p>	<p>PLAR</p>
<p>Ontario</p>	
<p>ACCESS to the Early Childhood Education Field in Ontario Project: http://www.aeceo.ca/access.</p>	<p>International credentials</p>
<p>Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario: http://www.aeceo.ca/. Site includes links to: Certification Equivalency, with further links for Canadian and Internationally trained professionals</p>	<p>Certification Equivalency International credentials</p>
<p>L'Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario: http://www.afeseo.ca/.</p>	<p>Certification Equivalency International credentials</p>
<p>College of Early Childhood Educators: http://www.collegeofece.on.ca. CECE Application Guide: http://www.collegeofece.on.ca/userfiles/CECE-ApplicationGuideAugust212008.pdf?phpMyAdmin=e3d5703f93d9da490a254aa38be6f98d.</p>	<p>Registration</p>
<p>Early Childhood Educators Qualifications Upgrade Program: http://www.ecegrants.on.ca/.</p>	<p>Qualifications</p>
<p>Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Access to the Early Childhood Educator Profession in Ontario: http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/working/career/trades/ece.shtml.</p>	<p>Foreign credential equivalency</p>
<p>Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (2000). Early Childhood Education Program Standard. http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/college/progstan/humserv/eerchedu.html.</p>	<p>Qualification</p>
<p>Ontario College University Transfer Guide: http://www.ocutg.on.ca/.</p>	<p>Credit transfer</p>

Student Mobility - Further Education of Ontario College Graduates, February 2008 http://www.collegesontario.org/client/collegesontario/colleges_ontario_lp4w_ind_webstation.nsf/resources/2008StudentMobility/\$file/CO_MOBILITY_2008.pdf .	Mobility
World Education Services: http://www.wes.org/ca/ .	International credentials
Manitoba	
Academic Credentials Assessment Service (ACAS): http://www2.immigratemanitoba.com/browse/work_in_manitoba/work-recognition-acas.html .	International credentials
Child Care Online, Careers in Child Care CBA/PLA competency-based training/prior learning assessment: http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childcare/careers_training.html .	PLAR
Council on Post-secondary Education: http://www.copse.mb.ca/en/index.html .	Credit transfer
Information on the Classification of Early Childhood Educators and Child Care Assistants (document) http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childcare/classification.html or http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childcare/pubs/classification.pdf .	Certification/ registration Equivalency
Manitoba Labour and Immigration (2004). Framework for a Manitoba strategy on qualification recognition. Retrieved September 8, 2009 from: http://www.manitoba.ca/labour/immigrate/asset_library/en/settlement/pdf/settlement_strategy_booklet.pdf .	Foreign Credential
Prior Learning and Assessment Recognition in Manitoba: http://www.plarinmanitoba.ca/site/govt_services/postsec_e.php .	PLAR
Saskatchewan	
ECE Certification Information: http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/Default.aspx?DN=6b22c8b3-1db6-464a-a040-166add2740d9 . Site includes the document: ECE Certification Information Sheet 2007 On-line Forms: http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/On-Line-Forms . Site includes these documents: ELCC Application for Certification ELCC Application for Certification – Home Provider	Certification
Recognizing Prior Learning: http://www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/rpl/ . Site includes links to: Credit transfer, qualification recognition and PLAR	International credentials PLAR
Saskatchewan Council for Admissions and Transfer SaskCAT: http://www.saskcat.ca/default.asp . Site includes: Transfer Credit Guide	Credit transfer

Saskatchewan Institute of Technology (SIASST), Early Childhood Education Certificate, PLAR Availability: http://www.siastr.sk.ca/programs_courses_descriptions/ECECERT.shtml . Site includes links to PLAR Fact Sheet and Candidate Guide	PLAR
Alberta	
Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer ACAT: http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca/ . Site includes: Online Alberta Transfer Guide http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca/main.asp . PLAR http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca/plar/ .	Credit transfer PLAR
Child Care Staff Certification: http://www.child.alberta.ca/certification . Site includes link to Certification Guide for Child Care Staff, Certification Application, Child Care Licensing Act and Regulation: Information for Child Care Professionals: Brochure http://www.child.alberta.ca/childcare .	Certification / registration equivalencies Out-of-province interna- tional credentials
Foreign Qualification Recognition: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/Immigration/6427.html .	International credentials
International Qualifications Assessment Services: http://employment.alberta.ca/ .	International credentials
British Columbia	
BC Council on Admissions and Transfer: http://www.bccat.bc.ca/index.cfm . Site includes: BC Transfer Guide that includes ECE course-to-course transfer matrix and course cluster tables http://www.bctransferguide.ca/program/ece/index.cfm . Early Childhood Education Transfer Matrix Instructor's Guide: http://www.bccat.bc.ca/pubs/eceguide.pdf .	Credit transfer, articula- tion in BC post-secondary
Early Childhood Educator Registry: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/ece/index.htm . Site includes links to these documents: The early childhood educator in BC : guide to registration and renewal procedures Application for early childhood educator license to practice Renewal for early childhood educator license to practice Selecting a credential evaluation process: <a href="http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/ece/pdfs/selecting_creden-
tial_evaluation_process.pdf">http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/ece/pdfs/selecting_creden- tial_evaluation_process.pdf .	Certification/ registration
International Credential Evaluation Service: http://www.bcit.ca/ices/ . Site includes: Program Confirmation Form: Information Required from Applicants Who Have Completed ECE Training Outside of British Columbia http://www.bcit.ca/files/ices/bcit-ices_program_confirmation_ece_sept06.pdf . Early Childhood Educator Registry: Requirement Sheet for Foreign Trained Applicants <a href="http://www.bcit.ca/files/
ices/bcit-ices_ece_foreign_sept06.pdf">http://www.bcit.ca/files/ ices/bcit-ices_ece_foreign_sept06.pdf .	Out-of- province and international credential assessment
Prior Learning Assessment in the BC Public Post-secondary System: http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/pla/welcome. htm#top .	PLAR

Yukon	
<p>Yukon Health and Social Services, Publications and Resources: http://www.hss.gov.yk.ca/publications.</p> <p>Site includes links to:</p> <p>Child Care Professional Level Designation Guidelines</p> <p>Application for certification of child care professionals: http://www.hss.gov.yk.ca/downloads/app_cert_ccp.pdf.</p>	Certification/ registration

Organization documents/web sites

Document/web site	Topic/theme
The Alliance of Sector Councils. Gateway (web portal on issues of internationally trained workers): http://www.conseils.org/gateway/ .	International credentials
The Alliance of Sector Councils (2008). Setting the Standard: Accepted principles for National Occupational Standards, Certification Programs and Accreditation Programs. Retrieved June 10, 2009 from: http://www.councils.org/uploadedFiles/Resources_and_Publications/Publications/Setting-the-Standard-EN.pdf?n=5970 .	International credentials
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APPENDIX 5: LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED

- ACAS:** Academic Credentials Assessment Service
- ACAT:** Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer
- ACCC:** Association of Canadian Community Colleges
- ACESC:** Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services of Canada
- AFÉSEO:** L'Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario
- AÉC:** Attestation d'études collégiales
- AIT:** Agreement on Internal Trade
- AECENL:** Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador
- AECEO:** Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario
- ACESC:** Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services of Canada
- ASHA:** American Speech and Hearing Association
- BCCAT:** BC Council on Admissions and Transfer
- CACUP-ASLP:** Council for Accreditation of Canadian University Programs in Audiology and Speech Language Pathology
- CAPLA:** Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment
- CASPLA:** Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists
- CASSW:** Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work
- CASW:** Canadian Association of Social Workers
- CBA:** competency-based assessment
- CCA:** child care assistant
- CCECENS:** Certification Council of Early Childhood Educators of Nova Scotia
- CCEPAC:** Child Care Education Program Approval Committee
- CCHRSC:** Child Care Human Resources Sector Council
- CCNB:** Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick
- CCW:** child care worker
- CDW:** child development worker
- CECE:** College of Early Childhood Educators
- CEE:** continuing education equivalent
- CICIC:** Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials
- CMEC:** Council of Ministers of Education, Canada
- CNA:** The Canadian Nurses Association
- CNA:** College of the North Atlantic
- CPE:** Centre de la petite enfance
- CSHA:** Canadian Speech and Hearing Association

DÉC: Diplôme d'études collégiales
EAL: English as an additional language
ECCENB: Early Childhood Care and Education New Brunswick
ECE: early childhood education, and early childhood educator
ECEC: early childhood education and care
ELCC: early learning and child care
FLMM: Forum of Labour Market Ministers
FCR: foreign credential recognition
FQR: foreign qualification recognition
FPT: federal/provincial/territorial
HRSDC: Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
IFSW: International Federation of Social Workers
IQAS: International Qualifications Assessment Services
ICES: International Credential Evaluation Service
QIFS: Quality Improvement Funding Support
I.S.P.: information systems professional
MACTE: Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education
MCCP: Manitoba Child Care Program
MELS : Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport
MTCU : Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
NBCC : New Brunswick Community College
MPHEC: Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission
NNEB: National Nursery Education Board
OCUTG: Ontario College University Transfer Guide
PAC: Provincial Assessment Committee
PLA: prior learning assessment
PLAR: prior learning assessment and recognition
PTs: provinces and territories
RECE: registered early childhood educator
RFL: recognition for learning
RPL: recognition of prior learning
SaskCAT: Saskatchewan Council for Admissions and Transfer
SIASST: Saskatchewan Institute of Technology
TASC: The Alliance of Sector Councils
UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
WES: World Education Services