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FULL MEMBERSHIP THROUGH THE CREDENTIAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS (CAP)

You must be a Registered Professional Forester (R.P.F.) or Associate member, with a prescribed scope of practice, in order to practice professional forestry in Ontario. Foreign-trained applicants and graduates from Canadian forestry programs that are not accredited by the Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board (CFAB) may be considered for Full membership, or alternatively, for Associate membership (working within a prescribed scope of practice), through the Credential Assessment Process (CAP) of the [Forestry Professionals Regulators of Canada \(FPRC\)](#). Through the CAP your current education, training, and experience are assessed to determine if you have the necessary competencies to qualify for practicing membership in the Ontario Professional Foresters Association (OPFA).

The national Credential Assessment Process convenes assessment panels four times each year. The deadlines for submitting portfolio material to the OPFA for review and assembly are:

December 1 st	– for January 1 st assessment
March 1 st	– for April 1 st assessment
June 1 st	– for July 1 st assessment
September 1 st	– for October 1 st assessment

Registration steps for internationally trained applicants and graduates from Canadian forestry programs that are not accredited by the CFAB:

Step 1 – Apply for Provisional Membership

By submitting:

1. A [Provisional Membership application form](#);
2. A Resume or Curriculum Vitae (CV) with each line numbered; and
3. The \$100 Application Fee- you can make your payment by e-transfer to opfa@opfa.ca, mailing a cheque or money order, or by phoning the OPFA office to pay by credit card.

Note: If you are a Student Member and apply for Provisional Membership within 6 months of graduating, the application fee is reduced to \$50.

Step 2 – Submit a Mentoring Agreement & begin the work experience requirement

You will receive written confirmation of your approval as a Provisional Member of the OPFA and a list of the remaining steps towards reaching Full Membership. One requirement is at least one completed [Mentoring Agreement](#), usually submitted within 30 days of approval as a Provisional Member. Please refer to the [Mentorship Instructions](#) for instructions on who can be a Mentor.

18 months of progressive, professional forestry experience (after graduation and within the last 5 years) under the supervision or mentorship of a Full, Associate, Inactive or Life Member of the OPFA, or other registered forestry professional in Canada, is required after you are approved as a Provisional member. You must complete at least 6 months of this experience after it has been determined that you have met 80% of the professional forester competencies.

You may, at any time, request that the Registration Committee review your prior experience to determine if you qualify for up to 12 months of credit towards the required 18 months experience. You can do this by submitting a resumé describing the work or volunteer experience, and listing the name(s), and contact information of the registered professional forester(s) in Ontario or another Canadian province or country who mentored you, and the timeframes of their mentorship. The [Criteria for Relevant Experience](#) will provide you with more information. A credit may also be granted for graduate degrees in forestry calculated as 1/3 of the length of the program to a maximum of 6 months.

Please note that you can begin filling your 18-month work experience requirement whilst also working on completing the remaining steps to Full Membership. **You must maintain a [Provisional Member Work History Form](#) to keep a record of your work experience.**

Step 3 – Create a Personal Practice Focus & a Learning Plan

The Personal Practice Focus and the Learning Plan are the documents that guide your competency goals and continuing education. You can find a [Provisional Member Guide to Developing a Personal Practice Focus and a Learning Plan](#) on the OPFA website.

You will need to maintain and update these documents and regularly review them with your mentor throughout your time as a Provisional Member. They will also be required to be maintained once you are a practicing member.

Step 4 – Complete your application portfolio & undergo the Credential Assessment Process (CAP)

An overview of the CAP is available on the [Forest Professional Regulators of Canada \(FPRC\) website](#), and all documents, forms and the database can be accessed on the [CAP website](#). Please [contact the OPFA Registration Manager](#) for further information and guidance through the process.

Step 5 – Meet the Competency Requirements

The competency assessment report is sent to the Registrar by the CAP assessment panel. The report will identify if you have any gaps in competencies. The Registrar and/or Registration Manager will share this information with you and the OPFA Registration Committee. The Registration Committee will then determine how the gaps must be filled. You may be required to complete some on the online [Bridge Training Program for Foresters](#) courses.

If gaps in the core competencies identified in the CAP cannot be filled, Associate Membership in the OPFA may be an alternative to Full membership. Associate members must practice within a limited scope of professional forestry practice in a specific geographical area.

Step 6 – Complete the Ontario Forest Policy & Legislative Framework Bridge Training

Unless you have taken an accredited forestry program at an Ontario university within the past five years, you will be required to complete the on-line [Ontario Forest Policy & Legislative Framework \(modules 1-4\)](#) which is offered through Lakehead University.

Please note that you can begin these modules at any point in the registration process.

Step 7 – Meet the Work Experience Requirement

Complete the 18-month relevant, mentored and progressive work experience requirement. Experience must be approved by the Registration Committee.

A minimum of 6 months of this experience must be completed after 80% of the competencies have been met.

- If the competency assessment report shows that you successfully demonstrated 80% or more of the competencies, then you may request that the Registration Committee consider granting you up to the full 18 months of experience if you already have eligible experience, or you can continue to work to complete this requirement.
- If the competency assessment report shows that you have not successfully demonstrated 80% or more of the competencies, the final

6 months of the 18- month experience requirement cannot begin until you have gap filled up to the 80% point.

When you have completed the 18-month experience requirement, submit your completed Work History Form to your sponsors.

Step 8 – Have your character witnesses submit Character Witness Forms

You are required to have two (2) character witnesses submit [Character Witness Forms](#) directly to the OPFA. Character witnesses must be:

- 1) a practicing member of the OPFA in good standing, or a member of another regulated profession in Canada, who has known the applicant for at least 6 months and can attest to their character (at least one of the two required character witnesses must fit into this category), or;
- 2) not a member of the OPFA but have known the applicant for at least 2 years and can attest to their character.

Step 9 – Have your sponsors submit Sponsorship Forms

Sponsorships are needed at the end of the 18-month work experience period, but you are recommended to identify suitable sponsors earlier in the process. Sponsorship forms must be provided by two (2) sponsors who have direct knowledge of your work. At least one sponsor must be a Full or Associate (with a relevant scope of practice) Member. The second sponsor may be a work supervisor.

Completed Sponsorship Forms should be forwarded to the OPFA office directly from the sponsors. The [Sponsorship Form](#) and [Sponsorship Instructions](#) are available on our website. Your sponsors will also need to review, sign off on, and submit your Work History Form to the OPFA office.

Step 10 – Submit a revised CV and a Full Membership Application Form

Your CV must be up-to-date, and dates of employment must be listed in YYYY/MM/DD format.

You can find the [Full Membership Application Form](#) on the OPFA website.

Step 11 – Report that your Personal Practice Focus (PPF) and Learning Plan (LP) are complete and up to date.

You need only report that these documents are completed and retained in your files, you do not need to submit the documents themselves.

Once approved as a practicing member, you will need to update and maintain these documents, as described in the [Practice Guidance- Competency Support](#) document on the OPFA website.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Registration Manager at registration.manager@opfa.ca