



NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
PROVINCIAL APPRENTICESHIP & CERTIFICATION BOARD

Apprenticeship Accreditation Resource Manual

April 17, 2026

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UNIT I

Provincial Accreditation and Certification Board Accreditation Policy

Unit I: Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board Accreditation Policy

1.1 Purpose and Scope

The Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board (PACB) is responsible for the accreditation of all provincial apprenticeship training programs offered by private and public training institutions in Newfoundland and Labrador. Accredited apprenticeship programs ensure that the program meets or exceeds educational and industry standards as identified in the Red Seal Occupational Standards (RSOS) and reflected in the Provincial Plans of Training (POTs) and Atlantic Apprenticeship Curriculum Standards (AACS). The purpose of this policy is to ensure that those who have the desire and attributes to become qualified tradespersons reach their goals by participating in quality training programs. The accreditation policy provides an auditing mechanism for provincial apprenticeship training programs, independent of the education system. It also meets the challenges of technological changes by stimulating ongoing curriculum improvement, through the process of continuous review.

If a student graduates from an accredited training program with a minimum final mark of 70% or better in the trade subjects and level for which the program is accredited, (as indicated in the level chart), he or she is entitled to receive credit toward their apprenticeship. The mark of 70% must be attained in both the theory examination and the practical project assignment, where applicable as documented on an official transcript.

1.2 Policy Statement

Any training institution offering apprenticeship-training programs in Newfoundland and Labrador can have programs accredited by the PACB, by making application in the format approved by the PACB and paying the required fee. To maintain the accreditation of their programs, the training institution must submit an Annual Maintenance Report to the PACB. Apprentices who exit from accredited programs will get full recognition and automatic credit transfer toward their apprenticeship program. Apprentices who exit from non-accredited programs may be evaluated on an individual basis by the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process before being able to write the journeyman examination for the occupation.

1.3 Limitations of the Policy

Programs eligible for accreditation by the PACB are limited to apprenticeship programs that lead to Red Seal Certification, and any other programs under the direction of the Board. The PACB accredits programs for three or five years and maintains a provincial registry of accredited programs. The Board does not accredit institutions, agencies, departments, or faculties.

1.4 Program Accreditation Procedures

The accreditation procedure shall consist of the following steps:

1. The training institution applies to the PACB.
2. The evaluation of an apprenticeship program is based on the qualitative and quantitative analysis of data provided by the training institution. The accreditation team references the Provincial Plan of Training (POT) and Atlantic Apprenticeship Curriculum Standards (AACS), that

reflects the Red Seal Occupational Standards (RSOS) for Red Seal programs, and through the Provincial Standards for apprenticeship programs that are not Red Seal designated.

3. The training institution pays the applicable fee.
4. A team consisting of a Program Development Specialist (PDS) and one or two team members (Journeypersons), who conduct an accreditation site visit to the training institution.
5. The PDS prepares and sends a draft accreditation report to the training institution and the team member(s) for comment on information included in the report.
6. Once feedback on the draft is received, the PDS sends the final written accreditation site visit report to the PACB with a recommendation on accreditation.
7. The initial accreditation designation is for three years. Subsequent accreditation designation is for five years. During that time, the training institution must report any change in the accredited program to the PACB through the appropriate authorities. Any change that alters the conditions under which accreditation was awarded, may require a reassessment.

1.5 Program Accreditation Process

The Accreditation process addresses the following elements in ensuring that the instructor, the facilities, and the curriculum are of the highest quality and meet standards established and approved by the PACB:

- Admission, Retention and Graduation Policies and Standards
- All Instructional Staff
- Faculty Evaluation
- Educational Facilities and Equipment
- Course Portfolios
- Student Success and Satisfaction Evaluation
- Program Evaluation by Graduates and Employers of Graduates

1.6 Maintenance of Accreditation of Apprenticeship Training Programs

Annual Maintenance Reports

To maintain the accreditation status of their apprenticeship programs, training institutions must submit an Annual Maintenance Report (AMR) and fee to the PACB. The report notes any changes to the elements addressed in the program accreditation process.

Training institutions will be advised in writing by the PDS of the AMR's due date. If concerns were identified during the previous site visit, the training institution must provide details on how these concerns were addressed.

Failure to submit the completed AMR and fee within **30 days** of the due date could result in the accreditation of the program being revoked. If circumstances prevent the training institution from meeting this deadline, written notification stating the reasons must be provided prior to the **30 days** specified.

At the discretion of the Board and subject to the information submitted, a follow-up site visit may be conducted if there are any changes to the mandatory elements.

Newly Hired Instructors

The College of the North Atlantic must provide accreditation staff with copies of certificates, diplomas, and/or degrees for all recently recruited core course instructors, instructional assistants, and demonstrators who are engaged in the instruction of accredited programs or Apprenticeship training courses. These documents must clearly demonstrate the educational qualifications of the individuals in their respective subject areas. In the case of instructors for apprenticeship programs, there are additional requirements to meet. They must hold a valid Newfoundland and Labrador Certificate of Qualification, indicating the relevant provincial or interprovincial certification in the subject area of instruction. Additionally, these instructors must demonstrate a minimum of 2 years of practical, trade-related work experience within their designated field.

All requisite documentation, inclusive of copies of certificates, diplomas, degrees, and pertinent trade qualifications, must be submitted to the accreditation staff prior to the instructor's commencement date.

1.7 Accreditation Renewal Process

At the end of the three-year or five-year term, training institutions must apply for the re-accreditation of any programs that have been accredited. **During this time, it is required that training institutions that have accredited pre-employment programs and offer apprenticeship training, must have both levels of training accredited.** Non-compliance with this requirement will result in apprentices no longer being sent to these non-accredited apprenticeship training programs.

Re-accreditation requires approval from the PACB within **six months** of the expiration date of the previous certificate. Failure to obtain approval within this timeframe will result in the application being treated as a new accreditation application, with subsequent approval granted for a three-year (3) period. Further extensions beyond the initial six months can be considered by the PACB on a case-by-case basis.

1.8 Programs Not Accredited by the PACB

The list of programs accredited by the PACB is published on the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development website to identify those institutions that offer quality programs and to ensure that graduates receive recognition for their training.

Graduates who exit from non-accredited pre-employment programs may be evaluated on an individual basis by the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process prior to registering as apprentices.

1.9 Programs Accredited but Offered on an Intermittent Basis

Training institutions offering accredited apprenticeship programs on an intermittent basis will maintain their accreditation status as long as all program elements remained unchanged. In the submission of the Annual Maintenance Report (AMR), training institutions are required to reflect the latest program information regarding the intermittent status.

If any of the program elements have changed during the accreditation period requiring new facilities, equipment, or staff, a re-application for accreditation and a site visit may be necessary. The site visit will be a one- or two-person site visit, the cost of which is in accordance with the established accreditation fee schedule. The validation of new documentation, a tour of the facilities, and interviews with students

and faculty may be required. If the accreditation team becomes aware of non-conformance to any accreditation standards, an investigation of these areas of non-conformance will also be conducted.

However, the program must have been offered during the accreditation period to apply for reaccreditation. The PACB cannot reaccredit programs that has had no new cohort since the last accreditation.

1.10 Programs Accredited but Subsequently Changed Ownership

A training institution transferring ownership of an accredited apprenticeship program to another training institution is required to inform the PACB of the ownership change. The new owner may maintain the accreditation status as long as all the program elements remained unchanged.

It is the responsibility of the new owner to become familiar with the apprenticeship accreditation requirements, including the AMR. If, due to new ownership, any of the program elements have been changed requiring new policies, instructional staff, and shop facilities, a re-application of accreditation may be necessary. The PACB will arrange for a one- or two-person site visit in accordance with the accreditation requirements.

1.11 Courses Offered as Part of the Apprenticeship Program

Training institutions offering partial apprenticeship programs are not required to seek accreditation of the courses they offer. The PACB accredits pre-employment and apprenticeship programs only, and not courses taken from part of the apprenticeship programs.

Graduates who exit from partial pre-employment programs will be evaluated on an individual basis by the RPL process. An evaluation will be conducted prior to enrolment into the apprenticeship programs at other training institutions.

1.12 Accreditation Fees

Fees cover costs related to administration, travel expenses and team honorariums. All current costs noted are **subject to change**.

Initial Accreditation

The initial accreditation site visit fee is \$4,000.00. The site visit team consists of the PDS and one or two team members. Upon approval of the initial accreditation application by the PACB, the program will have a **three-year** accreditation term.

Re-accreditation

The re-accreditation site visit fee is \$1,000. The site visit team consists of the PDS and, in most cases, one team member. Upon approval of the re-accreditation application by the PACB, the program will have a **five-year** accreditation term.

Apprenticeship Training Facility Check

The facility check fee is \$450. The site visit team consists of the PDS and, in most cases, one team member. Upon approval by the PACB, the facility check will be valid for five years.

Program Accreditation Verification

For programs that have been **deferred** or **denied** accreditation due to findings, a second site visit may be necessary. The PACB decides whether a two- or three-person team is warranted. The cost for a verification visit will be established by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD).

For programs that report **significant program changes** during the accreditation period, the PACB may require a two-person verification site visit to the training institution. EECD will establish the cost for a verification visit.

Annual Maintenance Report

The annual fee of \$200.00 must accompany the completed Annual Maintenance Report for each accredited program.

1.13 Deferral of Accreditation

A training institution that has had its application for initial or re-accreditation deferred by the PACB, must address findings with evidence and in writing **within 60 days** of the PACB's decision. A follow-up visit by a departmental PDS may be necessary to confirm that the requested changes have been made. When the PDS determines that the findings have been suitably addressed, a follow-up report recommending approval of the accreditation or re-accreditation will be submitted to the PACB for approval.

1.14 Denial of Accreditation

A training institution that has had its application for accreditation denied by the PACB, may reapply after the findings have been addressed, and the revised program has been delivered to a new class of graduates. Under these conditions, and where the training institution attests in writing that all the other elements have remained unchanged, the accreditation documentation will be limited to evidence which addresses the findings of the previous accreditation application. The focus of the site visit will be left to the discretion of the PDS.

If during the site visit, the accreditation team becomes aware of non-conformance to other accreditation standards, a further investigation of these areas of non-conformance will be conducted. Where program changes exceed those required to correct findings, a full accreditation application and audit will be necessary.

1.15 Accreditation Appeals Process

A training institution that has had its application for accreditation denied by the PACB, may appeal that decision in writing to the PACB within **30 days** of receipt of that decision. The appeal will be referred to an independent ad-hoc Appeals Committee established by the PACB.

The appeals committee shall consist of members who are trained in the accreditation process and are familiar with at least one program accreditation, and member/s active in the industry and registered as a journeyman in the occupation that is being assessed. The Committee shall consist of three members, none of whom shall have a personal stake in the program under review or the training institution seeking accreditation. Limitations are:

1. The appeals committee will limit its review to the documentation which was part of the accreditation application. This appeal process is not an extension of that accreditation application, and therefore, new documentation will not be accepted nor reviewed.
2. The majority decision of the appeals committee is final and conclusive and binding upon the parties affected.
3. All costs of the appeal shall be incurred by:
 - the training institution if the decision of the PACB is upheld by the appeals committee.
 - the PACB, if the accreditation decision is overturned by the appeals committee.
4. Since any finding is grounds for denying an accreditation, appeal requests will be accepted only where the training institution specifically indicates the reasons why, based on the evidence provided to the accreditation team, they feel each of the findings were unsubstantiated.

When making application for an appeal, the following procedures apply:

1. Within 30 days of receipt of the decision of the PACB, the training institution must provide written notification to the PACB of its intention to appeal.
2. The PACB will evaluate the appeal to ensure the training institution specifically indicates the reasons why, based on the evidence provided to the accreditation team, they feel each of the findings were unsubstantiated.
3. Upon receipt of this notice to appeal, the PACB chair will refer the request to the appeals committee within three weeks.
4. The appeals committee will review in an expeditious manner, all documentation related to the findings at issue, and other accreditation documentation as deemed necessary by the committee. If, in the opinion of the committee, sufficient evidence exists to render a decision, they may do so at this point.
5. If further clarification is required, the appeals committee may meet with the concerned parties before rendering a decision.
6. In rendering its decision, the appeals committee may, within one month of receiving the appeal request:
 - uphold the accreditation decision which means that due process was followed and that the findings of the accreditation team were substantiated.
 - overturn the accreditation decision which means that due process was not followed and there is sufficient evidence provided by the training institution to prove that the program meets the accreditation criteria.
7. The chair of the appeals committee will report its decision in writing to the PACB.
8. The PACB will report the decision of the appeals committee to the training institution within one week.

1.16 Site Inspections Prior to Offering Apprenticeship Training

Any **public training institution** asking to offer apprenticeship training (levels 2 – 4) in Newfoundland and Labrador is required to have a site inspection completed by a team consisting of an official with Apprenticeship and Trades Certification Division and a subject matter expert in the trade (i.e., Apprenticeship Program Officer or an accreditation team member). Applicable fees will be determined by the PACB.

The training institution must adhere to all standards established by the PACB as outlined in the accreditation resource manual. Once the training institution has all the required equipment/facility requirements in place to deliver program learning outcomes, accreditation staff must be contacted to arrange a site inspection to verify the tools, equipment and supplies required for program delivery.

Recommendations resulting from the site inspection must be implemented by the training institution, and a follow-up inspection may be required prior to final approval. All mandatory accreditation elements must be in place before final program approval will be granted and enrolment can take place.

Where recommendations and/or mandatory practical requirements have not been implemented by the training institution within a period of **six (6) months nor verified through site inspection**, the program application will be considered withdrawn by the Department.

The PACB facility check approval is valid for five years. A registry of approved facilities is provided to the Manager of Industrial Training. Only approved facilities will be considered to offer apprenticeship training. If during the five-year period the facility, tool and/or equipment requirements are revised, the public training institution must provide evidence of adhering to the new standards to accreditation staff before the institution will receive affected class calls.

UNIT II

AN OVERVIEW OF THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Unit II: An Overview of the Accreditation Process

2.1 Accreditation Process Checklist for Training Institutions

1. Ensure all staff associated with the program is aware of the accreditation process.
2. Complete the self-assessment to ensure that the program is ready for accreditation.
3. Complete the Apprenticeship Accreditation Application, and forward electronically to the Program Development Specialist (PDS). The PDS will review and may request further information.
4. The training institution must establish and maintain an accreditation e-mail account for their institution to which the Accreditation PDS will send all accreditation-related communication and from which all accreditation-related communication should be received from the institution. Access to that email account should be provided within the institution to all staff who need it.

Suggested format: *school acronym +accreditation@school email server and domain*

5. Once the PDS has confirmed all elements in the Apprenticeship Accreditation Application have been met, site visit arrangements will be made.
6. Pay the cost of the accreditation/re-accreditation.
7. Work with the PDS to determine a date for the site visit.
8. Review the information provided by the PDS. This will include information regarding the team member(s). If there are no actual conflicts of interest, sign and return the team approval form to the PDS. The signature acknowledges approval of the team by the training institution and confirms that there are no conflicts of interest that may adversely affect the apprenticeship accreditation process. If there are conflicts of interest, the PDS will work directly with the training institution for a reasonable solution. The PDS will also provide a draft agenda for the training institution to complete and revise as needed.
9. Prepare for the team visit ensuring all elements identified in the self-assessment and the site visit preparation sections of this manual have been addressed.
10. Review the draft report provided by the PDS and provide feedback.
11. Following the decision by the PACB, the training institution assesses the final report alongside team recommendations and implements necessary program changes accordingly.
12. If denied accreditation, review findings to determine if grounds exist for an appeal and initiate an appeal.
13. Submit annual maintenance reports to the PACB during the accreditation period. It is important to notify the PDS of any changes to the program within the accreditation period.
14. Keep records and course portfolios up to date and ready for the next review of apprenticeship program accreditation.

2.2 Objectives of PACB Accreditation

The primary objective of accreditation is to identify to the prospective students, counselors, parents, employers, and the public those apprenticeship training programs that meet the PACB's minimum standards to produce graduates who can function at the required level of competence.

Accreditation

- provides an auditing mechanism that is independent of the educational system,
- assures the educational community and the public that a program has clearly defined and appropriate objectives and is meeting them,
- ensures that a program reflects current technical practices and educational methodologies,
- promotes portability of qualifications through the provision of accredited educational programs, stimulates continuous improvement.

2.3 Who benefits from accreditation?

- The **public**, through industry, benefits by receiving high quality service from the graduates of accredited programs.
- **Employers** benefit by having the assurance that graduates from an accredited program have the competencies demanded by industry to meet current and future requirements.
- **Faculty** benefits by ongoing professional development necessary to ensure their programs are current with industry requirements.
- **Graduates** from an accredited program benefit by having assurance that their education has met standards thereby adequately preparing them for employment in industry.
- **Journeypersons** benefit by having the standards of their occupation continually improving and ensuring that the credibility of the occupations is maintained.

2.4 Accreditation Team Selection

The accreditation team is comprised of the PDS and one or two industry representatives (team members). The team members must:

- have subject matter experience and knowledge.
- have Journeyperson certification in the applicable program.
- have no conflict of interest as seen by the PDS or training institution; and
- be willing to commit the required time and energy to the entire accreditation process.

2.5 Program Assessment

The mandate of the accreditation team is to assess the program's compliance with PACB accreditation standards. The assessment of accreditation compliance is based on evidence gained from review of the training institution accreditation documentation and an on-site visit. The audit by the accreditation team includes:

- interviews with faculty, students, graduates, and employers,
- verification of practices being followed based on documentation provided,
- a review of lesson plans, samples of students' work, evaluation tools, shops/laboratories, equipment, classrooms, and computer availability at the site,
- a review of course portfolios
- verification of laboratory/shop and /or field experience ensuring they are an integral part of the program.

Before a program can be audited, it must have graduates. For apprenticeship training it is mandatory for at least one class cohort to have completed level training before accreditation can be sought. When accreditation is granted, such accreditation will be applicable to the graduates of the program up to **one year previous**.

Prior to starting the accreditation process, the PACB recommends that the training institution complete a self-assessment (see Unit III) to confirm that the program meets accreditation criteria, and the training institution can provide evidence of same.

2.6 Accreditation Review and Site Visit

The PDS and/or team member will conduct some of the review remotely. This will include interviewing campus administrators, instructors, demonstrators, students, graduates, and employers either by phone or email. Additionally, the PDS may request additional information via email. The actual site visit will include:

- a meeting with a representative of the training institution who is available to direct the site visit team and answer questions,
- a tour of physical facilities including, but not limited to, laboratories, shops, field, libraries, student services, classrooms, and computer facilities,
- a review of all the tools and equipment required for the program (if being shared or leased, documentation as evidence of its availability and use as required in the program),
- a tour of all off-campus facilities used in connection with the program,
- a review of all course portfolios for the program (please ensure the course portfolios have all the elements as identified in the Apprenticeship Accreditation Application (Section IV. COURSE PORTFOLIOS). It is recommended that the training institution provide as much evidence as possible regarding completion of theoretical and practical learning objectives such as, student projects and reports, models or equipment constructed by the students and other evidence of student performance,
- a review of current student files to ensure all requirements are met.

Before the end of the visit, the team will prepare and deliver a verbal report to training institution staff at the exit meeting where each party will have the opportunity to ask questions about the concerns and findings.

2.7 The Accreditation Reports

Within two weeks of the site visit, a **draft** report is prepared by the PDS and forwarded via email to the training institution and the team member(s). This report includes the information verbally provided by the PDS at the exit meeting regarding rated elements and any concerns or findings. It allows team

members to verify that the written details match the verbal report. The draft report also provides an opportunity for the training institution to comment on the written facts.

After reviewing the training institution's response to the draft report, the PDS will then prepare report, the training institution's response to the accreditation report, any further clarifying correspondence and other relevant information are then forwarded for the PACB's review along with a recommendation regarding accreditation.

2.8 The Accreditation Decision

The PACB will be asked to endorse the team report. To reach an accreditation decision the PACB considers the accreditation history, the information including the accreditation team's report, the training institution's response to the accreditation report, any further clarifying correspondence and other relevant information. The report is then signed by the PACB Chair, and the signed copy is forwarded to the training institution.

2.9 Accreditation Term

A three-year accreditation term is given to training institutions receiving program accreditation for the first time. The five-year accreditation period is granted to programs that have been previously accredited. Re-accreditation must be approved by the PACB within 6 months of the expiry date of the previous certificate, otherwise the application will be considered as a new application and subsequent approval will be for a three-year period. Further extensions beyond the initial six months can be considered by the PACB on a case-by-case basis.

The accreditation term is subject to review for cause at any time. Changes in an accredited program may justify the need for a reassessment of the program. The training institution should discuss any anticipated changes with the PACB to determine the effect on the current accreditation status.

Throughout a program's accreditation term, the PDS and, if needed, an accreditation team member, may conduct random site visits to ensure that the program is maintaining accreditation standards.

2.10 The Appeal Process

A training institution that has had its application for accreditation denied by the PACB may appeal that decision in writing to the PACB within **30 days** of receipt of that decision, in accordance with the Appeals Policy.

2.11 Publication of Accreditation

The list of accredited programs is on the Department Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) website.

2.12 Public Release

The training institution may use the accreditation designation only while it is valid and only for the programs that are accredited. This includes, but not limited to, an accreditation designation on the student's transcript as well as advertiser's.

UNIT III

TRAINING INSTITUTION SELF-ASSESSMENT

Unit III: Training Institution Self-Assessment

3.1 The Self-Assessment Process

Prior to starting the accreditation process, the PACB recommends that the training institution complete a self-assessment to confirm that the program meets accreditation criteria, and that the training institution can provide evidence of same. This unit will help the training institution in assessing their program's compliance with the PACB accreditation requirements.

3.2 Marking Scheme Rating Factors

The following checklist and ratings are the **same as those used on the accreditation team's assessment guidelines checklist**. If the self-assessment is properly completed, the training institution should identify both the programs' strengths and shortcomings prior to the team's visit and should be able to predict the outcome of their accreditation application.

The Rating Scale

Exceptional (E)

This rating is chosen when the team agrees that the element exceeds normal requirements. If the (E) rating is chosen, a reason must be provided and documented with evidence.

Acceptable (A)

If the element is within the expected norm, the rating of (A) is chosen. Documentation is not required.

Marginal (M)

If this category is chosen, the reason must be documented with evidence. It is used when the element is not clearly compliant with the requirements for that element. It suggests a concern, potentially a finding.

Unacceptable (U)

An Unacceptable rating **must** be documented with a significant amount of firm and substantial evidence. It is used when the element is clearly causing a concern or, in the case of a mandatory element, a finding.

Not Applicable (N)

On occasion, some non-mandatory elements may be absent from the program and may be rated as Not Applicable.

3.3. Checklist of Elements to be Audited.

List of Elements to be Audited.

Each bullet is an element that should be reviewed for evidence. The box (□) can be filled in with the **E A M U N** rating. Please note that the items identified with **asterisks * are mandatory items for which the institution must provide evidence.**

Concerns vs. Findings

A **finding** is a mandatory element that is unacceptable, whereas a **concern** is a non-mandatory element that is unacceptable or marginal, or a mandatory element that is marginal. For example, the presence of no safety hazards in the shop is a mandatory element; if rated as unacceptable, it is classified as a finding, and if rated as marginal, it is considered a concern. Whereas written policies on equity, diversity, and inclusion are non-mandatory elements; therefore, a rating of unacceptable or marginal will classify them as concerns. **Any concern identified in the previous accreditation final site visit report may be deemed a finding if it is not completely resolved before the re-accreditation site visit.**

I. The Training Institution

□ Branch Campuses and Off-Campus Facilities

- All facilities must meet fire and, if applicable, health and safety standards. *

□ Calendar Entry

- Based on the approved Provincial Plan of Training, the calendar entry must reflect the full scope of the program including the description and duration of the courses. *
- The calendar should not contradict apprenticeship policies and practices. *
- The calendar must clearly outline entrance requirements for the program. *

□ Student Handbook

- The student handbook must contain admissions policies, attendance policies, hours of operation, code of conduct/disciplinary procedures, compliant resolution process, and a policy or procedure on accommodating students with disabilities. *

II. Admission, Retention and Graduation Policies and Standards

Student records and transcripts must be checked against the apprenticeship program requirements.

□ Entrance Requirements

- The training institution must have written policies on admission categories. *
- Evidence in student's file that the admission requirement has been met will be reviewed (high school diploma, ABE Certificate, evidence of successful completion of CAAT Level B or higher). *
- There are supports available to ensure the retention of students. *

□ Admission with Advanced Standing, Credit Transfer and/or Recognition of Prior Learning

- The training institution must have written policies on advanced standing, credit transfer and/or recognition of prior learning. *

- If students in the accreditation year and/or current year have been accepted under this category, there must be evidence in the students' records as to how the conditions were met. *

Policy on Program Completion Requirements

The training institution must have written policies on the following and be able to provide evidence to the team that the policies have been implemented:

- Academic requirements to successfully complete the program. * (For each course, a formal assessment is required for which 70% is the pass mark. A mark of 70% must be attained in both the theory examination and the practical project assignment, where applicable.)
- Academic probation, *
- Expulsion for academic failure, *
- Repeating courses, *
- Supplementary exams. *

Inclusive Policies and Procedures

The accreditation team recommends that each training institution have:

- Written policies on equity, diversity, and inclusion in training,
- A Respectful Learning Environment Policy,
- A Harassment Policy,
- Evidence that these and other applicable policies are being implemented.

Services to Students

Provide the written policies AND evidence that the policies have been implemented for the following services to students:

- Guidance services rendered to students on admissions,
- Remedial programs and academic counseling services,
- Services to students with disabilities.

Graduation Credential and Transcript

- The graduation credential should accurately state the name of the program. It is preferable to also include the duration.
- Any records of achievement/transcripts should correlate with courses listed in the Provincial Plans of Training. *

III. Apprenticeship Program

Program Duration and Layout Chart

- Evidence that the program being taught matches or is substantially like the Plan of Training and/or Atlantic Apprenticeship Curriculum Standards. *
- Evidence that the correct version of the Plan of Training and/or Atlantic Apprenticeship Curriculum Standards is being taught. *

IV. All Instructional Staff

- Evidence that instructors are given sufficient preparation time. *
- Evidence that instructors have sufficient hours of student contact. *
- Evidence that there is enough faculty. *
 - The team uses discretion to determine enough faculty. However, the following ratio is the **maximum allowable students per instructor**:
 - Classroom Instruction - 30:1
 - Laboratory/Shop - 16:1
 - Field/Pit – 8:1 (Heavy Equipment Operator and Mobile Crane Operator)
 - Even though the faculty may include full time and part-time members, there must be enough faculty and staff to assure adequate levels of student faculty interaction, student curricular counseling and faculty participation in the development, control, and administration of the program.
- Evidence that the faculty feel supported by administration, have the tools and resources to satisfactorily teach all objectives in the course.
- Evidence that faculty have opportunities for professional development to remain current in their teaching area.
- Faculty Evaluation**
 - Evidence of a written faculty evaluation policy. Faculty evaluation should address a variety of elements including administrative evaluation, student evaluation, and self-evaluation, leading to professional development where appropriate.
 - Evidence that the policy is being implemented.
- Core Instructional Staff**
 - Evidence must be found that the core instructor(s) has/have appropriate academic credentials.
 - * If a program includes an introduction to another trade or a course(s) related to another trade, a journeyman in that trade, at the discretion of the team, can teach that course. For example, a journeyman welder can teach AB1680 Gas Metal Arc Welding – GMAW (MIG) in the Auto Body and Collision Technician program.
 - Apart from Heavy Equipment Operator, all instructors must hold a Red Seal certification if the trade is Red Seal.
 - The following qualifications for instructors in the Heavy Equipment Operator program are required:
 - Instructors in the practical portion of the Heavy Equipment Operator program must have endorsements in all pieces of equipment they are teaching. This differs from the theory courses where accreditation staff recommends that the Heavy Equipment Operator Instructors have, at a minimum, one endorsement.
 - All theory instructors must have Red Seal certification.
 - The practical instructors for the following pieces of equipment: Dozer, Excavator, and Tracker-Loader Backhoe, must have Red Seal certification.
 - All core instructors must possess or be pursuing a Post-Secondary Instructor’s Certificate or approved equivalent in accordance with the instructor certification requirements of the Department of Education. *

To be consider pursuing a Post-Secondary Instructor's Certificate, the core instructor must enroll in the program on or before the first anniversary of the hire date. The date of hire applies to the educational institution, not to a particular location or Campus. The core instructor must complete a minimum of two courses, each calendar year, until completion of the credential.

- Evidence that faculty maintains current knowledge of their industrial field and understands industry expectations. Faculty normally remains current by actively participating in professional societies, reading literature, continuing education, consulting, and periodic returns to industry.

For Private Training Institutions only:

- Evidence, in the form of a letter, that core instructors have been approved by the Department of Education. *
- Evidence that core instructors are only instructing courses for which they were approved. *

Essential Skills Instructional Staff

- Evidence must be found that the essential skills instructors have appropriate academic credentials. *

In an Essential Skills course, instructor qualifications should complement the curriculum being delivered. This would usually mean a certificate or diploma related to the field of instruction.

- All essential skills instructors must have relevant academic experience to assist in the delivery of the program. *

For Private Training Institutions only:

- Evidence, in the form of a letter, that the essential skills instructors have been approved by the Department of Education. *
- Evidence that the essential skills instructors are instructing in the area for which they were approved. *

Demonstrators/Instructional Assistants

- Evidence must be found that the demonstrator(s)/Instruction Assistant(s) has/have appropriate credentials. *
- All demonstrators/instructional assistants must have their journeyman certification in the occupation they are teaching. *

For Private Training Institutions only:

- Evidence in the form of a letter that demonstrators/instructional assistants have been approved by the Department of Education. *
- Evidence that demonstrators/instructional assistants are only demonstrating in the area for which they were approved. *

V. Course Portfolios

It is **essential** that the training institution effectively cover all competencies found in the program's Provincial Plan of Training and/or Atlantic Apprenticeship Curriculum Standard.

Evidence that the approved Plan of Training and/or Atlantic Apprenticeship Curriculum Standard is being delivered*

- The instructor should be delivering the Plan of Training and/or Atlantic Apprenticeship Curriculum Standard approved for the year the students were enrolled. They should also have the most recently approved Plan of Training on site and/or Atlantic Apprenticeship Curriculum Standard. *

Lesson Plans/Learning Guides that Address Objectives*

Detailed lesson plans should exist for each objective in the Plan of Training. Each lesson plan should include:

Objective(s) from the Plan of Training

- Each lesson plan should be broken down into objectives that the instructor can cover in one class sitting (to a maximum of 10 hours). This will help ensure that any instructor required to teach the material would understand when to introduce a reference, project, assignment, topic, and so on.

List of instructional aids, materials and tools used to teach the objective.

Location (i.e., shop or classroom)

Duration (time spent on the objective)

- It is important to keep in mind the duration of the entire course to determine how to allocate time for each objective (theoretical and practical, including evaluations).

Reference materials

- Include copies of handouts and presentations.
- When utilizing textbooks, make sure to specify the title and edition, and indicate the pages or chapters where the objective is addressed.
- When referencing websites or online videos, provide the full URLs.

Learning activities. This is the step-by-step walk through of the lesson itself.

- Break the lesson into individual learning activities (i.e., how the instructor will deliver the lesson). The instructor should consider how they engage students to learn the objective in a meaningful way (e.g., complete worksheets, split into small discussion groups, lecture, self-assessments, demonstrations, videos, etc.).
- Determine the sequence of tasks and specify how the students will be organized.

Example: Instructor will show the 15 minute online video, Gas Metal-Arc Welding Training DVD (GMAW) www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8ajBWZbjkQ after which instructor will ask questions to the class to discuss as a group. Students will be subsequently given a self-assessment (see handout 1) to complete. (Duration 1 hour).

Marking System.

A page/section that includes all the evaluation tools that are used towards the final grade in the course (e.g., assignments, quizzes, final exam, and projects). Include how each evaluation tool contributes to the student's final grade. For example, grade items can count as a percentage of a final grade worth 100% or grade items can be worth a certain number of points that are totaled for a final grade. Students should be made aware the value of each evaluation tool. As such, each individual assignment, quiz, and project should be identified.

- Evaluation tools include but are not limited to exams, practical projects, presentations, quizzes, and assignments.
- Practical projects must be assigned a grade value.

Breakdown of Evaluation Tools and Weighting.

- Students should be evaluated in a clear and objective manner on competencies found in the Plan of Training. As such, evaluations should reflect the learning objectives.
- Include copies of all **evaluation tools** listed in the marking system with the associated **answer key or rubric** showing how students are to be evaluated.
- For practical objectives, the lesson plan must include **project/job sheets**. These sheets contain tasks that match the practical requirement and reflect industry best practices. Project/job sheets should have clear and detailed instructions and, where possible, be based in the “real world” and contain the types of problems/scenarios students might encounter in the future. To complete the task, students should work through a process that approximates what they would do if they were facing that situation in a workplace.
- When practical to use one, the lesson plan should also include a **grading rubric**. Rubrics are most used when instructors evaluate student performance against a range of assessment criteria and performance standards. They are not needed when an instructor is evaluating a single task. For work involving calculations, a rubric is not necessary. As an example, ER1170 Voltage Drop and Power Loss has a practical requirement to “Use CEC tables to calculate voltage drop.” This involves a calculation and will not require a rubric. Rubrics contain a specific list of criteria, so students know exactly what the instructor expectations are. There is a clear gradation of quality based on the degree (percentages) to which a criterion has been met. For each score there should be a description of what the performance at each achievement level looks like, to show how the score is derived and what is expected of the students.

Samples of Student Work*

For each evaluation tool, there should be three recent **samples of student work**: one from the lower end, mid-point, and upper end of the range of achievement. It is essential that the marking is clear and unbiased. Students should know specifically why marks were lost.

Evidence of students completing practical requirements.

- Where reasonable, evidence can include photographs, videos and/or completed shop projects. Including such evidence indicates that the instructor verifies that the practical accurately portrays what is described.
- Evidence should be identified with a date and description (e.g., project number, course number, activity).
- It is important to note that some tasks can be verified by other means. The instructor is not being directed to take photographs of every minor practical task. Having student signatures on completed job sheets, logbook hours and practical rubrics will also provide evidence. However, it should be clear in the course portfolio that students were informed of the purpose and meaning of their signatures. With regards to online learning, digital signatures would be acceptable.

Resource Material*

Evidence that there is an adequate amount of resource material used to support the delivery of each course*

Textbooks*

Confirmation that the textbooks used in each course are current and acceptable*

Evidence that 100% of the fundamental competencies are met*

VI. PROGRAM SUCCESS AND SATISFACTION

Student Success and Satisfaction*

- Analyze historical data to determine: *
 - program completion rates,
 - program failure rates,
 - program attrition rates,
 - whether there is evidence that students were interviewed to determine their reasons for leaving the program,
 - whether there is a formal mechanism or policy for students to register complaints,
 - evidence of student satisfaction with the program.

Graduate Satisfaction

Evidence of graduate satisfaction with employment.

Employer Satisfaction

Evidence of employer satisfaction with recent graduates.

VII. Educational Facilities

Expendable materials *

Evidence must be found of the availability of sufficient expendable material to give the students proper academic and “hands-on” learning experiences. *

Reflect Current Techniques

- Adequate facilities to effectively deliver the program. *
- Provision for updating equipment in response to changing practices in occupations. *
- Evidence to indicate facilities are being used to educate students in modern techniques. *

Equipment Reflect Industry Standards

- Where reasonable, evidence must be found that the equipment is the same as would be encountered in industry. *
- Enough equipment and computers to ensure appropriate hours of practical training for each student. *

Shop/Field Site

- Shop is organized, clean, well-ventilated, and bright.
- Field site is organized and spacious for proper use of equipment.
- All tools and equipment are accessible.
- Shop size is comfortable for the number of students in each class offering of the program.

Safety

- No safety hazards within the shop area. *
- Field site is free of hazards. *
- Appropriate personal protective equipment required while in shop and out in field site. *
- Safety signage and evacuation routes within shop and out in field site. *
- Each shop has a first aid station, fire extinguisher and dual eye wash station as per the tool and equipment list. *
- The facility has regular fire and lockdown drills. *

Sufficient Tools

- Sufficient tools and equipment must be available as per the trade-specific tool and equipment list or at the discretion of the accreditation team. *
- Review of all the tools and equipment required for the program. All tools and equipment do not need to be onsite during the site visit if they are rented or loaned.
- If tools and equipment are being rented or loaned, documentation as evidence of its availability and use as required in the program must be presented during the site visit.

UNIT IV

Accreditation Applications

Unit IV: Accreditation Applications

4.1 Apprenticeship Accreditation Application

After completing the self-assessment process and determining readiness to apply for accreditation/re-accreditation, training institutions must complete and electronically submit the Apprenticeship Accreditation Application. The format of the form must be followed as shown on the Apprenticeship and Trades Certification website.

Once the Apprenticeship Accreditation Application has been accepted, the accreditation/re-accreditation fee will be requested, and arrangements will begin for the site visit.

UNIT V

Training Institution Site Visit Checklist

Unit V: Training institution Site Visit Checklist

5.1 Preparation for the Site Visit

- Assign a site visit coordinator who has extensive knowledge of the program. Familiarize all faculty and staff involved in program delivery with the elements being audited. (Section 3.3)
- The Program Development Specialist may request specific faculty or staff are made available during the site visit. If requested, ensure they are available and are prepared for the accreditation team visit. Please note, that current students, instructors, graduates, and employers have been interviewed by a team member prior to the site visit.
- Ensure coffee, tea and water is available for the team, preferably in the same room that contains the course portfolios.
- Program staff should conduct a general safety inspection of all the labs/shops and classes at least a month before the site visit to ensure that any safety findings are taken care of.
- The internal safety person should conduct a quick safety inspection of labs/shops the day before the site visit. This will catch any obvious findings like non inspected fire extinguishers, blocked exits, missing machine guards, etc.
- A large room should be designated for use by the accreditation team to review the course portfolios. It is preferable that course portfolios be available to view electronically. If hard copies are used, they be placed on tables around the room. The material should be clearly labeled.
- Resource materials including, but not limited to, textbooks, videos, and online sites, must also be made available during the site visit.
- Before the site visit, ensure that hard copies of student admission and retention records, faculty evaluations by the students, student complaint and resolution files, etc. are available for review. If applicable, on-the-job training evaluation forms completed by the employers should also be accessible to the team. In accordance with the **Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act**, personal information belonging to the student, such as the name, should be hidden/removed from these records.
- Arrange to have a representative from the training institution available to guide the team on a tour of the site. The tour should include, but not be limited to, student services, the resource centre, classrooms, and the computer room. On the day of the site visit, the PDS will inform the representative if the team wishes to tour other areas.

UNIT VI

ACCREDITATION TEAM ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Unit VI: Accreditation Team Roles and Responsibilities

For initial program accreditation applications, the accreditation team normally consists of the Program Development Specialist (PDS) and **two** team members from the business/industry sector to conduct the site visit.

For five-year program renewals or verification site visits, the accreditation team is normally comprised of the PDS and **one** team member, although circumstances may warrant the inclusion of a second team member. For some verification site visits, the PACB may assign just the PDS.

6.1 Program Development Specialist (PDS)

The PDS will make direct contact with the training institution. This will be necessary to coordinate dates for the site visit, seek clarification on any items submitted in the documentation or other issues as they arise.

The PDS is responsible for:

- reviewing the Apprenticeship Accreditation Application documents to determine compliance with PACB standards.
- reviewing and approving meeting schedules and agendas with the training institution representative.
- interviewing instructors, current students and graduates by phone or email prior to the site visit.
- reviewing a random selection of essential skills course portfolios and resource materials to ensure objectives are being taught.
- auditing student files, instructor evaluations, instructor credentials and other documentation to ensure compliance with accreditation standards.
- examining the site facilities including student services, learning centers, classrooms, computer labs, etc. to confirm that they meet accreditation standards.
- preparing the draft and final accreditation reports for submission to the training institution and PACB, respectively.
- providing accreditation training to staff of the training institution and members of the accreditation team on their respective roles.
- helping the training institution as needed throughout the accreditation process.
- Continuous monitoring of accredited programs via annual maintenance report review and random document and/or site checks

The PDS must keep the accreditation team focused on its mandate while ensuring open dialogue between the accreditation team and the training institution personnel. A key role is that of spokesperson for the team.

6.2 Team Member (Industry Representative)

The team member must be knowledgeable in the industry and about the education process. In occupations where an Interprovincial (Red Seal) Certificate exists, a team member must hold that level of certification. Otherwise, the team member must hold a Provincial Certificate of Qualification. The team member will be impartial.

The team member is responsible for:

- interviewing employers by phone or email prior to the site visit
- discussing with the PDS prior to the site visit their individual reviews of the course portfolios submitted by the training institution and ensure there are no concerns prior to the site visit. Other items to be discussed include employer feedback and the previous site visit report for re-accreditations,
- auditing the facilities to determine their adequacy and actual use in the program
- reviewing a random selection of core course portfolios and resource materials to ensure objectives are being taught.
- assisting the PDS in compiling the information for the preparation of the draft and final accreditation reports.

6.3 Observers

At the discretion of the PDS, observers are permitted to follow the accreditation audit but have no vote in the progress of the review. These observers are usually team members in-training but may include EECD personnel.

UNIT VII

After The Site Visit

Unit VII: After the Site Visit

7.1 Verbal and Draft Reports

At the end of the site visit, the training institution representative in attendance at will be given a verbal report by the PDS. It is important to confirm the ratings and results being presented by the PDS because it is possible, for example, that:

- the team identified an isolated problem that is not typical to the training institution; or
- the team missed a significantly relevant piece of evidence.

The draft report will be sent to the training institution within two weeks of the site visit; however, it will not contain a decision. It will contain the information verbally given by the PDS at the exit meeting. It provides an opportunity for the training institution to comment on the written facts. Any facts significantly different from those stated at the exit meeting should be questioned. It is appropriate and correct that the training institution be in contact with the PDS for clarification.

7.2 Interpreting the Accreditation Decision

When the training institution and the accreditation team agree on the facts, a final report including a recommendation on accreditation will be prepared by the PDS and forwarded to the PACB for review. The PACB will approve, defer, or deny the initial accreditation or re-accreditation.

The training institution will be informed of the Board's decision in writing and will receive a copy of the final report noting the decision and signature of the Board Chair.

A three-year or five-year accreditation is granted when there are no findings. There may be concerns that would have to be corrected or addressed prior to the submission of the first Annual Maintenance Report (AMR).

Deferred accreditation is given when there are findings. The training institution is given another opportunity to provide evidence that the findings are not substantiated. The evidence must be drawn from the year and graduating class that were the focus of the accreditation visit. Since the necessary evidence is derived from previous activities and should entail minimal effort to locate, the window for submitting the required documentation must not exceed **sixty (60) days**.

Accreditation denial results when the training institution is unable to provide the required evidence. Institutions denied accreditation may reapply after a new class has graduated.