

TAC adopts CTAC as new accreditation standards

Technology Accreditation Canada (TAC) has made further progress in the accreditation process by officially adopting the Canadian Technology Accreditation Criteria (CTAC) as its new standards for accrediting educational institutions' engineering technology and applied science programs. Current TAC accreditations will not be affected as CTAC will apply to new accreditations only.

CTAC is based on existing standards which were revised to achieve consistency in style and verb usage. Changes relating to the writing style and some of the verbs were previously requested by stakeholders, including all the provincial professional associations (PPAs), the council of registrars (COR), and educators. When the standards currently in use were first developed, they were written by multiple authors and, as a result, lacked a common style.

These revised standards now form CTAC.

TAC also confirmed a commitment to review all 37 criteria within CTAC every five years with a standards council designated to oversee this. The highly detailed standard setting process – for use in the creation of new standards as well as in the revision of existing ones – is posted on the TAC website at:

http://www.technologyaccreditation.ca/NationalAccreditation/National_Accreditation_Standards_Development_and_R.

CSA joins TAC in reviewing the CTAC PGLO technologist standard

The Canadian Standards Association (CSA) has been enlisted by TAC to provide managerial support in reviewing and improving an existing Canadian Technology Accreditation Criteria (CTAC) standard, specifically the technologist program general learning outcomes criteria – also known as PGLOY. This review is being carried out in accordance with the CTAC development process, and will ultimately result in the publication of a revised TAC standard. CSA is a leading provider of standards development services.

Since November, TAC and CSA have been engaged in a six-month process, working together in the revision of the PGLOY criteria which provides the common set of minimum requirements that must be met by all TAC-accredited engineering technology and applied science programs at post-secondary educational institutions. In order to gain accreditation, a program must meet not only the PGLO criteria, but also the specific program discipline learning outcomes criteria (PDLO).

For the purpose of developing a revised standard, the existing PGLOY document will be reviewed and discussed by a technical committee of more than 20 expert members, comprising representation from industry, educational institutions, and provincial professional associations (PPAs).

Both CSA and TAC posted public notices on their websites of the intent to revise the criteria, and to invite stakeholder participation. The technical committee, known as the CTAC technical committee – PGLOY, has now been established and will be meeting soon to generate a draft of the revised criteria which will be made available for public consultation for at least 61 days. TAC encourages and invites stakeholder participation in the interest of fostering an open and transparent process for the revising and maintaining of quality standards.

Ontario colleges project is launched

The TAC board approved a study to examine if any duplication exists between the TAC accreditation process and the rigorous quality processes undertaken by educational institutions to meet their provincial government's requirements. Informally referred to as the "Ontario colleges project," the study will focus first on the Program Quality Assurance Process Audit (PQAPA) and the Ontario College Quality Assurance Service accreditation system (OCQAS).

TAC meets with NCDOT in Victoria

Directors from TAC's board were pleased to join the National Council of Deans of Technology (NCDOT) at one of their regularly scheduled meetings at the Empress Hotel in Victoria on Oct. 22. Being a new organization, this was TAC's first official opportunity to have a face-to-face meeting with deans and other academic representatives from educational institutions in Canada. It was also a chance to make new acquaintances and renew existing ones.

TAC board chair Peter Portlock gave a PowerPoint presentation detailing the projects under way and announcing that TAC will be using the Canadian Technology Accreditation Criteria (CTAC) as its standard going forward for accrediting engineering technology and applied science programs at educational institutions (see first article in this issue).

The presentation focused on four areas: use of Canadian Technology Accreditation Criteria (CTAC); the process for revising CTAC; the pilot revision project with the Canadian Standards Association (CSA); and the Ontario colleges project. TAC hosted a coffee break complete with a regional favourite, Nanaimo bars. A TAC board meeting was held in Victoria the night before.

TAC is happy to support NCDOT activities and is sponsoring a breakfast at their May 2016 meeting in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Holiday closure at TAC office

The TAC office will close at noon on Dec. 24 and reopen on Jan. 4, 2016. Phone and email messages will be monitored during this time. On behalf of the TAC board of directors and staff, we would like to wish you a happy and peaceful holiday season.

TAC conducts site visit in Western Canada

TAC conducted a site visit on Nov. 12 for the accreditation of an engineering technology program at a Western Canada educational institution. Adhering to normal TAC accreditation practices, the site visit involved a three-person team with one of the auditors a resident from the home province as is required by TAC. In addition, two auditors-in-training participated.

"We enjoyed the opportunity to conduct an accreditation site visit in a brand new province, as well as meet the alumni, faculty, staff and program advisory members. All in all, it was a terrific experience and another concrete example of TAC moving forward in the process of accrediting engineering technology and applied science programs at post-secondary educational institutions across Canada," said Sam DiGiandomenico, TAC executive director.

TAC continues to respond to enquiries for accreditation from other educational institutions with numerous accreditations scheduled in spring 2016.

Technology Professionals Canada incorporates

Technology Professionals Canada (TPC) signed papers leading to incorporation at a gathering of the four provincial professional associations (PPAs) in Ottawa in early November. The presidents of ASET, ASTTBC, OACETT and SASTT signed the documents as the next step in advancing their relationship and commitment to work together in service to the engineering technology and applied science profession.

TPC is an alliance of the PPAs from Alberta, BC, Ontario and Saskatchewan which together represent approximately



Technology
Accreditation
Canada

Agrement en
Technologie du
Canada

TAC TALK is published by Technology Accreditation Canada.
Editor: Michele Penz, Calico Communications, calicocomm@telus.net

85 per cent of the profession in Canada. Since its establishment in 2010, TPC has achieved a number of goals, most notably the development of TAC.

TPC is also studying a changing industry's demand for non-traditional engineering disciplines and emerging technologies in an effort to ascertain whether new standards are required.

As well, TPC has joined forces with the Conference Board of Canada – an independent, evidence-based, not-for-profit applied research organization – to examine the economic impact of the engineering technology and applied science profession.

TAC TALK profile: board chair Peter Portlock

It's no surprise that Peter Portlock's consulting practice is named The Renaissance Group because he is the embodiment of a Renaissance man and a master of many trades – some of which may surprise you.



As chair of Technology Accreditation Canada's (TAC) board of directors, Portlock has more accomplishments than a dozen people achieve in a lifetime. Recently retired from his role as registrar of the College of Alberta Denturists (CAD) and having temporarily served as its special advisor, he is a managing partner of The Renaissance Group, and a team leader and peer reviewer with the New York-based Council on Accreditation (COA).

All of this is a long way from when he joined the Air Force right out of university with the aspiration of becoming a career officer.

Moving around a lot during his military life nurtured his interest in engaging in multiple vocations and activities. He even had his first exposure to accreditation, conducting peer reviews/evaluations of the standard of personnel support services at the 25 Canadian radar stations in existence at the time.

And in the military, he not only met his wife, Linda, he launched a second career as a lounge pianist.

After leaving the Air Force, he returned to school to earn a Master's degree in health services administration. He went on to work in several leadership roles in amateur sports, health care, and arbitration and mediation. In 1988, he and his wife adopted three First Nations brothers who were each challenged by developmental disabilities.

He was the French announcer at national and international swim meets such as the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, the 1994 Commonwealth Games in Victoria, and the 2000 Canadian Olympic Swim Trials in Montreal.

Over a seven-year period while with Lethbridge Family Services and CAD, he was – and continues to be – a member of ASET's board. It wasn't long before he volunteered for TAC. An inveterate believer in accreditation, TAC presented to him the opportunity to do something new.

"I realized that there appeared to be other ways to accredit college technology programs and I thought this could be exciting and it is," said Portlock. "Colleges have exhibited tremendous faith in the innovation and fresh approach that is TAC. We have done everything right to get ourselves positioned properly – good policies and respected auditors. More and more organizations are showing interest in what we do. It's great to be part of something progressive."

When he isn't traveling the continent on TAC business or to conduct COA accreditations, he may be found playing piano at a lounge near you, directing a choir and performing as church organist, making appearances as Santa at various holiday events, or offering expertise as a vacation and cruise consultant, having recently completed the travel counselor certificate program at Medicine Hat College.



Technology
Accreditation
Canada

Agrément en
Technologie du
Canada

TAC TALK is published by Technology Accreditation Canada.
Editor: Michele Penz, Calico Communications, calicocomm@telus.net