

ASET News



Windfall of Accreditation Activity for TAC this Autumn

The groundwork prepared by Technology Accreditation Canada (TAC) over the last several months is resulting in a busy and fruitful autumn with a number of new accreditations in the offing and one recently completed.

Cambrian College in Sudbury, Ontario is the latest Canadian college to join the ranks of TAC through the accreditation of its mining engineering technology program. Cambrian College's accreditation is fairly fast on the heels of Georgian College whose electrical engineering technology program was the focus of TAC's pilot project that ran from 2014 to 2015. While Georgian College is the first Canadian college to ever be awarded a TAC accreditation, Cambrian College is the first to have a program accredited by TAC that previously received accreditation from another accrediting body.

"We were pleased to work with TAC's auditors; we found them approachable and knowledgeable. Equally important, the process was efficient and our faculty and administrators enjoyed an excellent relationship with TAC's team. The resulting accreditation is beneficial for our graduates because it ensures that they are well prepared for industry. We look forward to working with TAC in the future," said Louise Turcotte, dean of the school of engineering technology and environmental studies.

The TAC site visit took place at Cambrian College in spring 2015 and involved the TAC audit team which was comprised of a lead auditor and two auditors – two from Ontario and another from British Columbia – in keeping with TAC's policy requiring at least one auditor to be from out of province. TAC's executive director and OACETT's registrar attended as observers.

The audit team met with the dean, faculty and staff from Cambrian College's school of engineering technology and environmental studies. Their interaction with some graduating students, advisory committee members and employers was both fulfilling and educational. After TAC's governance and audit council's review of the audit team's final report, the accreditation was awarded effective April 15, 2015. In that report, the audit team noted numerous best practices by Cambrian College.

"It was a real pleasure to work with a dedicated team of auditors to review the mining engineering technology program at Cambrian College and give positive feedback that will certainly be advantageous to the program over the long term. Along with the other members of the audit team, I enjoyed discovering unique features of the learning experience of students in the program which were due to activities we identified as best practices," said Gary Closson, lead auditor for the TAC audit team.

In addition to having implemented accreditations with two Ontario colleges, TAC has a pending accreditation this fall in Western Canada. TAC continues to respond to applications for accreditation from other educational institutions with numerous accreditations scheduled for spring 2016.

TAC's executive director Sam DiGiandomenico and the board of directors are pleased with the momentum achieved by the new accreditation model since operations were launched in April 2015. TAC acknowledges the support of the provincial professional associations (PPAs) of Technology Professionals Canada (TPC). ■



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Provincial professional association presidents from Alberta, BC, Saskatchewan and Ontario sign filing documents for the incorporation of Technology Professionals Canada (TPC). Pictured left to right are: Norm Kyle, P.L.(Eng), P.Tech,(Eng); Keith Trulson, ASCT, Eng.L; Mike Sazynski, ASCT; and Bob van den Berg, C.E.T.

Technology Professionals Canada Officially Incorporates

Technology Professionals Canada (TPC) was officially incorporated 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 incorporation 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 85 per cent of the profession in Canada.

“The incorporation of TPC represents the culmination of a long and thoughtful process. We took the time to build an association from strength, to understand what we needed to be for the future. When we were satisfied that we understood that, and had become that, it was time to formalize it through incorporation,” said ASET CEO Barry Cavanaugh.

Since its establishment in 2010, TPC has achieved a number of goals, most notably the development of Technology Accreditation Canada (TAC) – a new, world-class accreditation model for the engineering technology and applied science profession in Canada.

In the interest of public safety and for the benefit of members moving between jurisdictions, TPC has reviewed the certification practices of all provinces in an effort to harmonize standards. TPC is also studying a changing industry’s demand for non-traditional engineering disciplines such as electro-mechanical and nanotechnology.

And 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 profession. ■



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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 the 2012 National Technology Benchmarks (NTBs) 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 technology associations, the Council of Registrars (COR), and educators. When the NTBs were first developed, they were written by multiple authors and, as a result, lacked a common style. These revised or "enhanced" 2012 NTBs 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 (www.technologyaccreditation.ca). Comments from stakeholders are welcome.

The Canadian Standards Association (CSA) was enlisted by TAC to launch the review of a CTAC in a pilot project, using the above-mentioned standard setting process. The pilot project will focus first on the technologist program general learning outcomes criteria as it is one of the most debated of all the criteria. Both CSA and TAC have posted public notices on their websites of the intent to revise the criteria, and invited

stakeholder participation. A committee of interested stakeholders will be established to generate a draft of the revised criteria which will be made available for public consultation for at least 60 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.

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. The study will focus on the Program Quality Assurance Process Audit (PQAPA) and the Ontario Quality Assurance Service Accreditation System (OCQAS). ■

