



# Professional Standards Board for the Planning Profession in Canada PLAR Assessors Orientation

# Short History of PSB

- Part of CIP's Planning for the Future Project (2006)
- CIP signed administrative services contract December 2011
- Board named March 2012
- Inaugural Board meeting April 30, 2012
- PSB incorporated September 10, 2012

# PSB Board

- Gary Buchanan, Chair
- Bruce Singbush, Vice-Chair
- Greg Birch, Secretary-Treasurer
- Janice Harper; Chair, PEEC
- Dana Kripki, Director; Chair, APC
- Lloyd Talbot, Director
- Lindsay Chase, Director



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# Legal Structure

- Federally incorporated
- Members are API, APPI, MPPI, OPPI, PIBC, SPPI and CIP
- Operates under Shared Services Agreements with its members
- All Shared Services Agreements with member PTIAs and CIP have been signed
- PSB and CIP signed an Association Management Services Agreement for provision of administrative services



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# PSB Structure

- Reporting to the Board of Directors, PSB has two standing Committees:
  - Professional Education and Examinations Committee (PEEC)
    - Members nominated by PSB members and appointed by PSB Board
    - Oversees Ethics & Professionalism Course and Professional Exam
  - Accreditation Program Committee (APC)
    - Members nominated by PSB members and by ACUPP and appointed by PSB Board
    - Oversees accreditation of university planning degrees
- PSB implements and administers standards approved by the Professional Standards Committee, which consists of representatives of CIP and all PTIAs except OUQ

# PSB's Mandate

- Under the Shared Services Agreements, PSB is responsible for:
  - Administration of certification process leading to full membership in CIP/PTIA
    - Assessment of applications for Accredited Degree, Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) and Reciprocal Agreement applicants
    - Administration of the Ethics & Professionalism course and test
    - Supervision of Sponsors and Mentors
    - Administration of the semi-annual Professional examination
  - Accreditation/re-accreditation of University planning degree programs
    - Initial site visit and development of report/recommendation for University programs applying for first-time accreditation
    - Annual reviews of currently-accredited programs
    - Intensive periodic (normally every five years) reviews of currently-accredited programs

**PSB**

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# Requirements and Entry Routes to PSB's Process

	Accredited Degree	Reciprocal Agreement	Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition
Must be currently employed in planning?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Prior planning experience required	No	No	Yes – 5 years
Education	Accredited degree	Degree and full membership in AICP, PIA or RTPI	At least an undergraduate degree, not necessarily in planning



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# Requirements for Certification

	Accredited Degree	Reciprocal Agreement	Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition
Work Logging (Responsible Professional Planning Experience)	2 years (backlogging allowed)	1 year (no backlogging allowed)	1 year (no backlogging allowed)
Mentorship	1 year for all		
Ethics & Professionalism Course	All must pass (minimum 70%)		
Professional Examination	All must pass (minimum 80%)		



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# General Notes on Applications

- Applicants with foreign degrees must have them evaluated against equivalent Canadian degrees
- Applicants must identify a Mentor and a Sponsor at the time of application or within 90 days of acceptance
- “Planning” is defined, for the purposes of employment, as “the scientific, aesthetic and orderly disposition of land, resources, facilities and services with a view to securing the physical, economic and social efficiency, health and well-being of urban and rural communities.”
  - Employment in planning is substantiated by a letter confirming employment and a job description



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# PLAR Applicants

PLAR applicants have a varied educational background:

- Degree in planning from a non-accredited Canadian planning program or from a foreign university
- Degree in a related field (e.g., geography) from a Canadian or foreign university
- Degree in an unrelated field from a Canadian or foreign university



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# PLAR Applications

- Applicants must submit:
  - Cover letter
  - Letter of employment and job description
  - University transcripts and evaluation of foreign degree(s)
  - PLAR portfolio, establishing 5 years responsible professional planning experience
  - Self-assessment grid and supporting evidence
  - Any additional evidence they wish to have considered



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# PLAR Applications (continued)

- Applicants must demonstrate the equivalent of 5 years of responsible professional planning experience through submission of a PLAR portfolio
  - “Responsible professional planning experience” is defined as experience that:
    - “Comprises analysis, projections, design or program development which specifically requires consideration of the inter-relationships of space and time among resources, facilities and activities, and which expresses this consideration in a manner to influence the deposition of land or the allocation of resources, facilities or services;
    - “Shows a specific relationship to public policies or programs for controlling or influencing the development of communities; and
    - “Comprises a substantive component of initiative, judgment, substantial involvement and personal accountability or definition or preparation of significant elements of the program of work.”
- It will almost certainly take more than 5 years of employment to accumulate 5 years of responsible professional planning experience



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# PLAR Assessors' Responsibility

- Review the self-assessment grid to determine:
  - Does the applicant have a reasonable balance of competencies?
  - Does the evidence supplied support the self-evaluation?
- Review the portfolio to determine:
  - Does the work experience match the grid?
  - Is 5 years responsible professional planning experience evidenced in the grid and portfolio?
- Does the applicant meet the criteria for PSB and membership in a PTIA and/or CIP?

# Self-assessment Grid

- Compares applicant's skills to the competencies established through Planning for the Future (PFF)
- Applicant is not expected to have knowledge/experience in all areas in the grid
- Applicant is expected to have a reasonable balance of competencies
  - Self-assessed at “medium” or better in at least a majority of both the functional and enabling competencies
- Applicant's claimed knowledge/experience should be borne out by the portfolio and other evidence



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# Self-assessment Grid (continued)

- Functional competencies demonstrate knowledge of the technical skills required of planners
- Enabling competencies demonstrate knowledge of the people skills required of planners
- “Good” applicants will be well-rounded, not narrowly focused

# PLAR Portfolio

- Applicant must establish, through the portfolio, a minimum 5 years responsible professional planning experience
- Portfolio should list projects on which the applicant has worked and his/her involvement in them
- Portfolio should substantiate knowledge/experience claimed in the self-assessment grid



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# Assessors' Judgment

- Assessors should ask themselves:
  - Does this applicant have a combination of education and experience equal to or better than an applicant with an accredited degree?
  - Will this applicant's education/experience provide an adequate base to permit him/her to complete PSB's process and become certified?
  - Will this applicant, having gone through PSB's process and having achieved certification, be a credit to CIP and his/her PTIA?
- If the answer to the first question is "yes" and to the second and third is "probably", the applicant should be admitted



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# PSB Staff Support for Assessors

PSB Staff will:

- Ensure the application is complete
- Determine, based on the guideline, whether the applicant is employed in planning
- Make an initial assessment of whether the applicant is likely to meet the 5 year experience requirement (applicants employed in planning for less than 5 years total will not pass this assessment)
- Handle the logistics of application review



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# Assessment Process – Long-term

- Two assessors will review each application
- If they agree on whether the applicant should be admitted, the applicant is advised of the decision
- If they disagree, the application is sent to a third assessor for review; the third assessor's decision will be determinative
- All assessors are asked to provide written reasons for their assessments



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## Contact PSB

Operations Manager

[operations@psb-planningcanada.ca](mailto:operations@psb-planningcanada.ca)

150 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 402

Toronto, ON M4P 1E8

Tel: 647.317.6924 Ext 2

Toll-free 1.844.202.9002



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