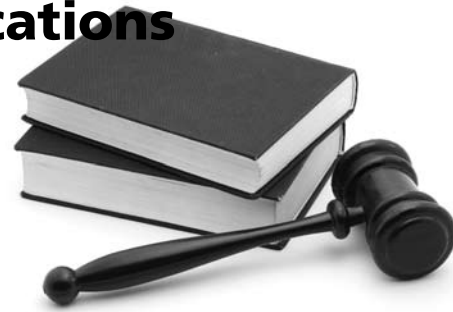


Changes to Supervisory Officer Qualifications

Part of Wider Effort to Remove Barriers

By **Brian McGowan**
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*There is a global movement towards providing appropriate recognition of professional credentials wherever they are earned and acknowledging the experience gained in professional practice.*  
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Legislation like Ontario's *Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act*, passed in 2007, and national and international agreements such as the Agreement on Internal Trade and the Lisbon Convention, confirm the scope of the changes being implemented.

The College has taken a number of actions in recent years to meet the expectations that have motivated these changes, primarily in how we evaluate internationally acquired credentials and certify internationally educated teachers.

In consultations on registration practices, we have heard from our members and other education stakeholders that helping applicants understand and navigate unfamiliar processes is the right thing to do.

Boards, federations, the Ministry of Education, professional organizations for principals and supervisory officers and others have been key in helping us develop fairer and more accessible policies and procedures for certification.

The College now certifies thousands of teachers whose original teaching credentials were granted outside of Canada.

Reducing barriers also benefits those with extensive experience in leadership positions in other jurisdictions, such as supervisory officers, whose combination of qualifications and experience may not align with those set in Ontario regulation.

The provincial government recently made regulatory changes that enable boards to employ an experienced administrator who is a member of the College for up to two years in a position requiring supervisory officer qualifications if the teacher meets specific requirements – five years of teaching experience, a postsecondary degree, a masters or doctorate and at least two years of education-related leadership experience. The candidate filling the position will have two years to acquire supervisory officer qualifications.

At the request of Minister of Education Kathleen Wynne, the College has approved changes to the Teachers' Qualification Regulation that will align with those made by the government.

How do the new requirements differ from the old?

Teaching experience requirements for entry to the Supervisory Officers' Qualification Program (SOQP) have been reduced from seven to five years, but it is now specified that the experience must be grounded in the classroom.

Previously legislation said that candidates were required to have a master's degree; the regulation now allows a doctorate as an alternative to that requirement.

The amendments also outline the combination of qualifications and experience a candidate may have earned in other jurisdictions that are equivalent to principal's qualifications or to qualifications such as honour or honour specialist and additional years of experience as a board co-ordinator or consultant, or as a program or education officer in the Ministry of Education or comparable education organization.

These changes are in line with other steps the profession has taken to recognize valid professional qualifications and experience in keeping with the introduction of the *Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act* and labour mobility agreements that will come into force next year.

The recognition that the teaching profession has received for its leadership in this area is also a recognition of the ethical values that we bring to our classrooms and our practice.

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