8.1 Purpose

This policy prescribes the process and requirements for foreign trained environmental public health professionals who are seeking CPHI(C) designation.

8.2 Definitions

BOC means the Board of Certification of CIPHI.

BOC accredited programs means those environmental public health (EPH) programs recognized by the BOC of CIPHI as granting degrees that are acceptable to the BOC, subject to BOC Regulations 14(1)(a).

CIPHI Office means the administrative service company contracted by CIPHI’s National Executive Council.

Candidate means, exclusively in policy 8, a foreign trained environmental public health professional seeking CPHI(C) designation.

Discipline Specific Competencies means the set of competencies specific to the field of environmental public health. These competencies describe the essential knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for the ongoing success in the role of an EHO or PHI.

EHO / PHI means Environmental Health Officer or Public Health Inspector

Equivalency exam means an assessment designed to measure the academic competencies of a foreign trained candidate and equivalency to competencies that would be gained from the successful completion of a BOC accredited program in Canada.

8.3 Background

The recognition of qualifications and experience for foreign trained environmental public health professionals has been a discussion item for a number of years. The BOC has changed its position from allowing professionals from specific countries to access the BOC exam process, to reviewing individual applications on a case by case basis, to requiring all candidates to obtain a degree from a BOC accredited program in Canada. The development of a bridging program by an accredited school was also considered,
however with the small number of candidates does not make this a feasible option for the schools.

For the most recent version of this policy, the BOC has developed a multiple choice question equivalency exam to assess the academic competencies of a foreign trained environmental public health professional seeking CPHI(C) designation. The blueprint for the multiple choice exam is the same as what is used for the design of the oral exam: 40% food safety; 15% water, 15% non-communicable disease; 15% communicable disease, and 15% fixed premises (non-food). All questions selected for the multiple choice exam are based on the latest BOC Instructional Objectives in proportion to this blueprint. A consultant with experience in educational design and assessment was hired to verify the exam design and to verify that the multiple choice questions were written at a level appropriate and equivalent to a Canadian baccalaureate degree level.

8.4 Candidate requirements

(a) To ensure that only candidates with relevant education and experience qualify to sit the equivalency exam the BOC must review and approve the application of the candidate which contains the following proof of qualification and experience.

- A baccalaureate degree in environmental public health that allows for candidates to practice as an EHO / PHI in their country.
- Certification as an EHO / PHI from an association or organization who is a member of the International Federation of Environmental Health.
- A minimum of six months experience, as a certified EHO / PHI, in which the experience aligns with CIPHI’s Discipline Specific Competencies (http://www.ciphi.ca/pdf/dsc.pdf).
- Proficiency in written and spoken English or French.

(b) Candidates must also be familiar with the CIPHI Code of Ethics (http://www.ciphi.ca/pdf/codeofethics.pdf) and Standards of Practice (http://www.ciphi.ca/pdf/practice.pdf).

8.5 Application for eligibility to challenge the equivalency exam

a) Candidates, who have not successfully completed a BOC accredited program, must make an application for eligibility to challenge the equivalency exam.

b) Every application for recognition shall be submitted on Form H – International Candidate Application Form (Appendix J) and shall be accompanied by:

   a. The application fee as set by the BOC.

   b. Documented proof of qualifications obtained outside of Canada, such as an academic degree.

   c. Proof of past or current certification as a PHI / EHO from an association or organization affiliated with International Federation of Environmental Health.

   d. Transcript of marks.
e. Resume outlining professional experience.

f. One professional reference letter or proof of experience.

8.6 Equivalency exam for foreign trained candidates

(a) Every candidate whose foreign credentials are approved by the BOC through the application process is deemed eligible to proceed to take an exam designed to measure educational equivalency.

(b) Applicants who meet all the eligibility criteria will receive an acceptance letter (Appendix K) from the CIPHI Office which explains how to proceed to take the equivalency exam.

(c) Applicants who do not meet the eligibility criteria will receive a refusal letter (Appendix L) from the CIPHI Office which explains that the candidate is not eligible to take the equivalency exam.

(d) The equivalency exam will consist of 100 multiple choice questions, covering a cross-section of the latest BOC Instructional Objectives and 5 main learning areas: communicable disease, non-communicable disease, fixed premises (non-food), food, and water.

(e) The candidate will have up to 4 hours to complete the exam.

8.7 Exam locations and dates

(a) Equivalency exams will be convened on a regional basis based on the location of the applicants.

(b) Equivalency exams will be held at a date set by the BOC.

(c) Qualified candidates will be given sufficient advance notice as to the time and location of the equivalency exam.

8.8 Application fee and equivalency exam fee

(a) The fee for application shall be payable upon submission of the application and is non-refundable.

(b) The fee for the equivalency exam shall be:
   - set by the Board at its regular meeting,
   - paid by each candidate,
   - made payable to the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors,
   - sent to the CIPHI Office accompanied by the Form J - Payment Method Form (Appendix M), and
   - made at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of the exam.
(c) The fee for the equivalency exam shall be payable on each occasion that a candidate takes the exam.

(d) A person who takes any part of the equivalency exam shall be deemed to have taken the exam and shall not be entitled to any reduction or rebate in the fee.

(e) A person who fails the equivalency exam shall not be entitled to any reduction or rebate in the fee for the exam.

(f) If a candidate is adjudged to have successfully completed the equivalency exam, they shall be entitled to proceed to the next step of making an application for the BOC examination for the CPHI(C). All fees for the next step apply as it would to any BOC exam candidate.

(g) Notwithstanding anything contained in this administrative policy, the payment of the fee for the equivalency exam shall not entitle any person to take the exam unless such person:
   - has submitted an application in accordance with this policy, and
   - is eligible and approved to take the equivalency exam.

8.9 Examination scores

a) Candidates must achieve a minimum overall score of 75% to be successful on the equivalency exam.

b) Candidates who are successful on the equivalency exam will receive a letter from the CIPHI Office indicating that they may proceed to apply for a minimum twelve week practicum.

c) Candidates who are unsuccessful on their first attempt at the equivalency exam will receive a letter from the CIPHI Office indicating that they were unsuccessful and that they may apply to retake the equivalency exam.

d) Candidates may apply to retake the equivalency exam once only. In the event of a second failure, the candidate will be informed that they were unsuccessful and advised to apply to one of the BOC accredited programs to pursue the CPHI(C) designation.

8.10 Release of Information on Examinations

a) No information respecting marks, or rating, or success, or failure of any candidate in the equivalency exam shall be released to any person who is not directly connected with the exam of such candidate except under the direction of the Board.

b) Candidate’s requests for the return of exam materials shall be denied.

c) Under no circumstances shall any Examination Coordinator provide to any candidate or to any person who is not directly connected with the exam of candidates, any information which might be construed as an indication of a mark.
or rating achieved by a candidate or as an indication of success or failure in the equivalency examination.

d) This shall not be construed to prevent the transmission of information necessary to conduct of the exam or the marking of the exam.

8.11 Exam Security

a) Candidates must be supervised by the exam coordinator or by a designated proctor during the entire examination period.

b) Cell phones or other electronic devices are not permitted in the examination room at the time of the equivalency exam.

c) The candidate must leave all notes and exam materials in the room upon completion of the exam. All notes must be destroyed upon completion of the exam.

d) The equivalency exam must be scanned and sent electronically to the CIPHI Office with the exam results upon completion of the exam. The paper copy of the exam must also be sent to the CIPHI Office and retained for a minimum of one year. After one year, the paper exam can be destroyed.

8.13 Appeal

a) Candidates who receive an application refusal letter or a letter indicating that they failed the equivalency exam may appeal the decision within 30 days of the date appearing on the letter.

b) Candidates who appeal must include a $75 fee with their appeal submission.

Reference & Related Documents

The Board of Certification Regulations
Appendix A: CIPHI Board of Certification Instructional Objectives, 2018
Appendix J: Form H – International Candidate Application Form
Appendix K: International candidate application acceptance letter
Appendix L: International candidate application refusal letter
Appendix M: Form J – Payment Method Form

Version History

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