

Guide to the Validation of Experience

HRPA's Experience Requirement

The Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA) is the regulatory body for HR professionals in Ontario in accordance with the *Registered Human Resources Professionals Act, 2013* ("the Act"). The Act, and the regulation made under the Act, give HRPA the exclusive statutory authority to grant the Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL) designation, and to establish the CHRL requirements.

One of the requirements to obtain the CHRL designation is the [Experience Requirement](#). This guide is intended for registrants who are preparing their [Validation of Experience](#) (VOE) application and provides insight into how experience is evaluated. Please note that registrants preparing an [Alternate Route – Experience](#) stream application may also use the guidelines below.

There are four aspects to the Experience Requirement. The experience must be:

- (1) in HR,
- (2) at an appropriate professional level,
- (3) cover a minimum of three years, and
- (4) have been acquired within the previous 10 years with at least three months' experience in the previous two years for recency.

What is HR experience?

The definition of HR experience is any experience which falls within the scope of practice delineated in HRPA's [Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct](#).

The *Scope of HR Practice* is the creation and implementation of all policies, practices and processes to effectively organize and manage all human capital resources in the workplace in service of the ultimate goal of enhancing business outcomes. Human resources management involves maintaining or changing relations between employees, between employers or between employers and employees.

The *Practice of Human Resources Management* includes, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:



1. The development and implementation of human resources policies and procedures;
2. Consultation in the area of human resources management;
3. Providing advice to clients, managers and employees in matters pertaining to management of human resources;
4. The representation of clients and organizations in proceedings related to human resources management;
5. Program development and evaluation in the area of human resources management;
6. The supervision of other human resources professionals whether registered or non-registered;
7. Coaching of employees, managers and other individuals in matters relating to work and employment;
8. The conduct of research in the area of human resources management;
9. Teaching in the area of human resources management.

What is professional experience?

Human Resources experience at the 'professional level' refers to the applicant's direct responsibility and accountability for the strategy, design, implementation, and co-ordination of one or more areas in the scope of practice of HR. This level of experience should also indicate that there is considerable independent decision making and the incumbent receives limited supervision.

In determining whether HR experience is at the professional level, the following factors are taken into consideration:

- **Independence of actions** – relates to the amount of planning, self-direction, decision-making and autonomy involved in the work experience;
- **Depth of work requirements** – relates to the extent to which work experience requires information analysis and interpretation of relevant information;
- **Level of interaction** – relates to the degree to which the individual interacts with a broad spectrum of contacts, including decision-makers; and
- **Responsibility for work outcome** – relates to the level of accountability for work and decisions.

To be clear, professional does not mean supervisory or managerial. Also, it does not matter whether you are working in a specialist position or a generalist position, as an

independent practitioner or as an employee of a company. Professional does not require that you have overall responsibility for the HR function.

Experience General Guidelines

The following guidelines are based on the Experience Assessment Committee's (hereafter called the Committee) experience and past practices. These guidelines are not all inclusive. Other circumstances, similar experiences or work experiences may or may not qualify for consideration. The objective of the Committee is to maintain consistency.

If you are working full-time but your position is not one hundred percent (100%) HR, you must determine what proportion of your time is spent on HR activities. If this proportion is less than fifty-one percent (51%), the position will, unfortunately, not count towards meeting the Experience Requirement. For a position that is between fifty-one percent (51%) and one hundred percent (100%) professional level HR, time credited towards the Experience Requirement will be pro-rated accordingly. For instance, if a position is deemed to comprise seventy-five percent (75%) HR activities at a professional level, time in that position will be multiplied by .75. It would take four years of experience in such a position to be equivalent to three years of fulltime experience in human resources.

Work experience can be full-time or part-time at the professional level in HR. If you are working part-time at the professional level in HR, you can apply to have your experience evaluated using the following criteria:

- Part-time work must add up to a minimum of 36 months of professional level HR experience using the guide of a minimum of 30 hours per week = one week of work.
- Regardless of how many hours are worked each week above 30 hours, one week = one week. For example, if two part-time jobs add up to 50 hours per week, those 50 hours constitute one week, and the applicant will be given credit for one week of experience.
- Part-time work will be pro-rated accordingly based on how many hours/days of work/week and how much time is spent doing HR. For example, at 2.5 days per week it takes two weeks to get one week of work experience.
- Whether full-time or part-time, the position must be at least fifty-one percent (51%) in HR to be submitted. For example, two days per week in a position that

is sixty percent (60%) HR could be used, but a full-time position that is only thirty percent (30%) HR does not meet the requirement.

If you have a significant absence from work (i.e. maternity/paternity leave), you must note this absence on your application as time spent away from the job; which does not count towards meeting the three years of experience.

General management work may be considered if the human resources work comprises at least fifty-one percent (51%) and there is no HR department or manager in the workplace where the general management work takes place. The general manager must be the person who has direct responsibility and accountability for the strategy, design, implementation, and co-ordination of one or more HR functional areas for the organization.

Small business owners/operators may gain suitable work experience towards the Experience Requirement provided that the business is established to provide HR advice. Time spent on business development and supervising staff for example, are not applicable towards the experience criteria. The remainder of the HR work will be prorated accordingly.

Employment lawyers are able to meet the Experience Requirement, however, work experience advising clients or conducting litigation is not eligible. Applied human resources work experience for the law firm or a client, such as conducting labour negotiations or conducting downsizing activities, would be considered. Such activity must comprise a significant part of the applicant's work experience and will be pro-rated accordingly.

HR consultants can receive time for their consulting work. However, only the time spent advising clients on HR-related matters can be counted and time should be pro-rated accordingly.

A trainer can receive time for their training experience if they are part of an HR team within an organization and the experience is specifically linked to an HR function as defined in the HRPA's Scope of Professional Practice. Full ownership of the training must be demonstrated showing evidence of direct responsibility and accountability for the strategy, design, implementation and co-ordination of the training (e.g. full development, assessment, testing, implementation and evaluation).

Teaching experience alone can be used to accumulate all three years of required professional level HR experience. In order to meet the requirement of being at the professional level in HR, courses taught must be:

- HPRA-approved courses (Please refer to the [School Search Tool](#) on our website, www.hrpa.ca for a list of current HPRA approved courses.), or
- HR courses taught at an accredited college or university.

If your course and corresponding academic institution are not currently pre-approved, you will need to complete an application through Comparative Education Service to determine if the college or university where you provided HR instruction was accredited at the time you were teaching. Once you have received the report from Comparative Education Service, you will need to send it in along with your application.

Teaching “full-time” means teaching a course load of at least three HR courses per semester. Faculty will need to send in a course outline so the Committee can determine if the course is an HR course. HR instructors who are not teaching at least three HR courses per semester will have their time pro-rated as follows:

- Teaching one HR course per semester – 1/3 of 100%
- Teaching two HR courses per semester – 2/3 of 100%

As mentioned above, no applicant can earn more than full-time credit for their HR experience. This means that an HR professional who has full-time HR employment and who teaches in addition to that employment will not get credit for more than a full-time job. However, part-time work in HR and part-time teaching can be combined to equal full-time HR experience (minimum 30 hours per week).

Levels of work experience which are not considered to meet the requirement of being in HR at the professional level include the following:

- Junior levels within a human resources department performing administrative functions that are clerical in nature are not considered at the appropriate level. Time spent in these positions will not be credited towards the work experience component of the CHRL.
- Transactional work is not considered to meet the professional level. Transactional means work that is of an administrative or support function,



meaning, there is no judgment, analysis or interpretation done to the data or information in the scope of your work.

- Work experience gained while serving as a labour union representative or a union employee (such as a Grievance Officer) is not considered to meet the criteria towards the Experience Requirement unless these activities fall within a position clearly identified as an HR position.
- Work experience in a line capacity will not be credited towards the Experience Requirement; for example, a position at a managerial level with human resources responsibilities but not a human resources management position, i.e. Manager of Engineering, would not be considered as HR experience.
- HR management work is not considered if all policies and procedures are developed at a corporate level and not by the on-site HR management. The individual is in effect administering the managerial decisions made elsewhere. This may be applicable in such situations as a branch plant, mine or mill location.
- Payroll is not considered to be within the scope of practice of HR. Time spent on payroll activities should not be counted towards the experience requirement and the remainder of the time spent on HR activities should be pro-rated accordingly.
- Unless they are counselling fellow employees on work-related and HR matters, employment counsellors would not meet the requirement of working within the scope of practice of HR.
- Most individuals in military positions are in line positions, unless the position is clearly in a role that defines the activities as HR, e.g., Recruitment Officers, Assessment Centre Officers where recruits are assessed for occupational qualifications. The General Manager who has no HR position reporting to it

would not qualify because the military is highly regulated with policies and procedures that are established at the Central Command. Line managers are following policy and procedures that are highly regulated, developed and policed.

The Experience Assessment Committee

Determinations with respect to the Experience Requirement are made by panels constituted from among the members of the Experience Assessment Committee. This committee consists of volunteers with the CHRL designation from a variety of professional backgrounds. Only the Experience Assessment Committee is able to assess experience – for this reason, please note that Office of the Registrar staff are

not able to give an opinion as to whether your experience will count towards the requirement.

Timing and sequence of the Validation of Experience

You can submit a Validation of Experience application at any time during your pursuit of the CHRL designation. The only exception is that you need to be an active registrant of HRPA. For many though, the Validation of Experience will be the last requirement to be met.

The Validation of Experience follows a monthly submission schedule, and the deadline to submit is the last business day of every month. The results are released via email within eight to ten weeks from the submission deadline date. Please note there is no submission deadline in December. Applications received after the November deadline will be submitted to the committee on the last business day in January.

The Experience Requirement and Internationally Educated Professionals (IEPs)

Simply, it does not matter where the experience has occurred; if it meets the criteria elaborated above, it can be submitted towards the Experience Requirement. Experience in human resources at a professional level is also a component of the Alternate Route process. For more information about the Alternate Route, please review our [Alternate Route](#) website.

Applying for the Validation of Experience

An application for Validation of Experience is decided on the merits of the written application and supporting documentation. Accordingly, you must submit all

requested information, explanations and materials supporting the contention that Experience Requirement has been met.

The application form was designed specifically to give panel members the information that is most relevant to the determinations they are tasked to make (that the experience is in HR, at the appropriate level and the amount of time in each submitted position).

Your Validation of Experience Application package must include the following:

- Completed Validation of Experience Application Form, including a questionnaire for each job position you are submitting for review, showing how your position(s) meet the criteria for professional level experience, as well as confirming the proportion of your job activities that fall within the scope of HR
- Chronological résumé
- Job Description for each position you are submitting for review
- Organizational chart for each position you are submitting for review

Official documents are preferred, but you can create your own job descriptions and organizational charts if needed. Please note that, while not required, you can also submit any additional supporting documentation you believe would assist the panel in assessing your HR experience, such as reference letters.

As part of your Validation of Experience application you must attest that all information provided is accurate and complete. You should be aware that the Experience Assessment Committee will not contact you for further information – it is your obligation to ensure your application contains all relevant information for the Committee to fairly assess your experience. The Panel may review information available in the public realm though to assist in making their decision – such as LinkedIn profiles and company pages.

Your completed application should be submitted via email to registrar@hpra.ca. While email is the preferred submission method, you can also mail a hardcopy application to:

HRPA – Office of the Registrar
150 Bloor Street West, Suite 200
Toronto, ON M5S 2X9

Once we receive your application, it will be reviewed by staff for completeness before it is forwarded to the Experience Assessment Committee for review. It is the job of the Panel to determine whether the experience is both within the scope of HRPA and at the professional level. If those criteria are met, the panel will add up the cumulative duration of the approved experience to determine whether it spans a minimum of three years.

If the credited time for the current position is less than the required three years, the panel will consider the prior position, and so on, up to a maximum of 10 years back. The majority of panel members must be in agreement as to the decision.

The Experience Assessment Committee will make one of the following decisions, which will be provided to you via email:

- (1) Determine that your experience meets the requirement and confirm that the Experience Requirement has been met, or
- (2) Determine that your experience falls short of the requirement in some respect, in which case the Committee will provide feedback to you and confirm how many months, if any, of your current HR experience qualifies for the Experience Requirement, or
- (3) Determine that the panel has insufficient information to make a determination regarding the experience you submitted and fail your application.

Please note that if your application is unsuccessful for any reasons, you can resubmit a new or updated application at any time, but an application fee will apply.

Appeals Process

All decisions of the Experience Assessment Committee can be appealed within thirty days of the release of the decision. Appeals should not be construed as a second opinion. Appeals will be considered on the grounds of denial of natural justice or deficiencies in the decision. The fact that the Experience Assessment Committee's decision was not the one hoped for is not grounds for appeal. For more information about appeals, please visit the [Appeals](#) section on our website.

Early Assessment Opinion

In some circumstances, it may be possible to get an Early Assessment Opinion, where the Experience Assessment will provide feedback as to whether specific experience is at the required professional level and if it will therefore count towards the Requirement. To learn more about Early Assessment Opinions, please contact the [Office of the Registrar](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

General

1. How long should answers for the questionnaire portion be? What if more space is needed to complete the answers?

Each answer should be direct and to the point but should provide enough information to give the Experience Assessment Committee a clear picture of your daily responsibilities/duties. Point-form answers are preferred over paragraph style. You are not limited to the space provided. If more space is required, a separate sheet, or separate Word document, can be submitted with your application.

2. Is there an online version of the form?

The application form is a fillable PDF which can be filled out electronically and submitted via email to registrar@hrpa.ca along with the required supporting documents. Alternatively, this form can be printed out and hard copy submissions can be mailed to the Office of the Registrar at the following address:

HRPA - Office of the Registrar
150 Bloor Street West, Suite 200
Toronto, ON M5S 2X9

3. When submitting a hardcopy, what should the document size be and should the pages be printed single or double-sided?

It is recommended to submit applications via email. However, if email is not available hardcopy submissions should be printed single-sided on 8½ X 11 paper. Please do not staple individual documents.

4. Are there any other general tips?

- Spell out any business or organizational acronyms
- Have another person review your application and ask them to describe your jobs back to you. If any important details are left out, be sure to add them to your application. Remember, the Committee doesn't know you or anything about your job positions and cannot make assumptions.
- Be sure you have included all required documents for submission (employer documents are preferred but if they are not available, you must create your own):
 - Chronological résumé



- Job description for each position you are submitting for review
- Organizational chart for each position you are submitting for review
- Other documents that would support your application, such as a letter from your employer, may also be submitted

Regarding Full-time / Part-time, Professional Level and in HR

1. How many hours a week is considered full-time work?

Both Statistics Canada and the Ontario government define "full-time" employment as 30 or more hours per week.

2. What is meant by work that is transactional?

Transactional work means work that is of an administrative or support function, meaning, there is no judgment, analysis or interpretation done to the data or information in the scope of your work. Transactional work is not considered to meet the professional level.

3. Will my job title influence whether experience is at a professional level?

The Experience Assessment Committee makes determinations based on responsibilities, not title.

4. Does experience need to span all of the functional areas of HR to be counted, or can specialized HR experience count?

It does not matter whether one is working in a specialist position or a generalist position or if you are an independent practitioner or an employee of a company. If you determine that your work falls into one of the nine dimensions of HR and is at the required professional level, you can submit this experience for review. It is up to the Experience Assessment Committee to determine if it meets the requirements to be counted towards the 36 months of professional level HR experience.

5. Can I meet the experience requirement from teaching only, or do I need to have other HR experience?

Teaching experience can be used to accumulate all three years (36 months) of required professional level HR experience. Please see the Experience Evaluation Guidelines above for further details on how teaching experience is reviewed.

6. Can volunteer or co-op experience apply?

Volunteer and co-op experience can be submitted if you determine that it was done on a full-time basis and is at the required level in HR. It is up to the Experience Assessment Committee to determine if it meets the requirements to be counted towards the 36 months of professional level HR experience.

7. If I held a position that had some professional responsibilities and some administrative responsibilities, would the committee take a % of that position towards the 36 months?

You must indicate in your questionnaire what proportion of your time is spent doing HR work. Fifty-one percent (51%) or more of an applicant's time must be in human resources at the professional level for a position to be credited towards the Experience Requirement. Beyond this, time will be credited proportionally. Please see the Experience Evaluation Guidelines above for further details.

8. In an executive level position, such as Vice President, does the HR component of the job need to be 51%?

Yes. No matter the position level, fifty-one percent (51%) or more of an applicant's time must be in human resources to be credited towards the experience requirement.

9. How does maternity leave or another leave from work affect the time limits you have to validate current experience (i.e. if you're not currently working)?

Individuals can write the CHRL Knowledge Exam (CHRL-KE) before achieving a degree, but once the CHRL-KE is passed, registrants have 15 years from that time to show proof of a completed recognized degree and to meet all other requirements for the CHRL designation. If you need more time to meet the Experience Requirement due to a parental leave or other leave of absence, you may be eligible for a deadline extension. For more information, please review our Deadline Extension Policy on our Designations webpage.

10. Do I need to have three years of HR experience consecutively or all from within my current role?

The requirement is three years of professional level HR experience within the last 10 years, of which a minimum of three months must have been completed within the last two years. It does not have to be done consecutively or all come from within one position.

11. Do you have to be in an HR management role to be considered at the professional level?

No. Professional does not mean supervisory or managerial. Professional does not require that one has overall responsibility for the HR function. Professional level refers to meeting the four dimensions: independence of actions, depth of work requirements, level of interaction and responsibility for work outcome.

12. Does international experience count?

Yes, experience outside of Canada can qualify for the Experience Requirement as long as it is deemed to be within the scope of HR and at the professional level. The criteria are exactly the same regardless of where the experience was gained.

13. Can someone in the Office of the Registrar guide me as to whether or not my experience will count?

The Office of the Registrar staff cannot comment on whether individual experience will be accepted, other than to use the guidelines provided on the Validation of Experience application form and within this Guide. Only our Experience Assessment Committee members have the knowledge and expertise to assess your experience and determine whether it meets the Experience Requirement criteria.

Regarding Supporting Documentation (Résumés, Job Descriptions, Org. Charts)

1. What if the job description provided by an employer does not accurately represent the scope of my responsibilities or special projects? How can other responsibilities be accounted for?

You should review your job description before submitting to ensure that it is an accurate representation of your current job responsibilities, accountabilities and qualifications and if it's not, you may have it updated to include any items that are not currently reflected, such as special projects.

Employer documents are preferred, but if they're not available or are not up-to-date and you cannot get an updated version from your employer, you should develop

your own job descriptions to be submitted with your application. Job descriptions are required to show the Experience Assessment Committee that all responsibilities line up to all of the other required supporting documents.

2. If the company doesn't have formal job descriptions or organization charts, or the department is currently re-structuring, can I create these documents myself?

Employer copies of documents are not required. Employer documents are preferred, but you can develop your own job descriptions and organizational charts for consideration.

3. How detailed does the organizational chart need to be?

Organizational charts should detail what position you reported to and the position(s) reporting to you, if any. Please include the size of the organization(s) and circle your position.

4. Do I need to submit work samples with my application?

Work samples are not required for the application. The only documentation required for a complete application is the questionnaire, job descriptions and organizational charts for each position being submitted, as well as a chronological resume and the completed declaration and payment information. You may also wish to submit supporting documents such as a letter from your employer.

Regarding the Payment and Declaration on the Form

1. Is the \$525 fee on top of my annual HRPAs membership or student registration dues?

Yes, the cost for the Validation of Experience Application is separate from other costs. The fee of \$525.00 plus HST reflects the fact that Validation of Experience applications are reviewed by the Experience Assessment Committee and thus incur additional costs. Please note that the fee is broken down into two parts. An initial application fee of \$100.00 plus HST is payable upon submission of the application. Should the application be successful, the remaining \$425.00 plus HST becomes due – once the remaining application fee has been paid, the applicant is deemed to have met the

Experience Requirement. Should the experience fall short and not be deemed eligible by the Experience Assessment Committee, the applicant will not incur any further cost at that time. Please see the section below "Regarding Results" for information about submitting a revised application and associated fees.

2. Will I be contacted by the Experience Assessment Committee for an interview or further information if they have questions?

Applicants for the Validation of Experience must attest that all information provided is accurate and complete. Applicants will not be contacted for further information.

3. Can I submit a reference letter supporting my Validation of Experience application, such as from my manager, a stakeholder I worked closely with on a related HR project, or a VP?

You may submit a reference letter, but it is not required and cannot be submitted in place of any of the other required documents. You can also submit any other supporting documentation you deem relevant.

Regarding Timing and Sequencing for Submission

1. Can the Validation of Experience application be submitted at any time, or only at certain times in the year?

The Validation of Experience application can be submitted at any time. Submissions are batched and forwarded to the Committee once a month. To be included with the next submission deadline batch, please submit before the last business day of each month.

2. How long does it take for Validation of Experience applications to be reviewed?

Results for Validation of Experience applications are released within eight to ten weeks from the submission deadline.

3. Can I submit work experience I gained prior to passing the CHRL Knowledge Exam?

Yes. While there is a requirement to complete the experience requirement within 15 years after passing the exam, experience prior to writing the exam can be counted towards the three years. All experience submitted to the Experience Assessment Committee has to be within the last 10 years, with at least three months of experience occurring within the last two years.

Regarding Results and Submitting a Revised Application

1. If an application is not approved, will I be provided with reasons why?

Yes. You will be emailed a results letter stating how much time you were granted for your experience (if any) and why some or all of your experience did not meet the requirements of either being within the scope of HR or being at the professional level in HR.

2. If my initial Validation of Experience application didn't provide enough information to be successful and I wish to submit a revised application to provide more information, will my initial application be viewed as well?

If any part of your original application was successful, it will be submitted with the new application with a note to the Experience Assessment Committee as to what experience was previously approved. Experience previously approved cannot be overturned as part of a review of a resubmitted application.

3. How much does it cost to submit a revised application?

To resubmit, the cost is \$115 plus HST. If your application is successful, you would then be required to pay the remaining \$425 plus HST balance.

4. If my application is approved, how long are my results valid for?

Successful applications are valid for two years. If your results expire and you have not obtained the CHRL designation, you must resubmit a Validation of Experience application to meet the recency requirement which is at least three months of approved experience in the past two years. The cost to submit a recency application is \$115 + HST.