

COMING SOON

A course for professionals trained abroad

The Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec (hereafter the "Ordre") is currently developing a brand new course exclusively intended for immigrants who have studied and earned their engineering degree in their home country and hope to practise in Québec. Thanks to this training, "professionals trained abroad" (PTAs) will not only gain a better understanding of the principles and background relating to the practice of engineering in Québec but will be better equipped to join the work force in their adopted country. Quite an innovation!

Integrating PTAs is a crucial issue for the Ordre. Faced with the ever increasing number of applications from these professionals, the Ordre strives to simplify the formalities they must complete by being more effective in answering their questions and meeting their needs, which are often very different from those of candidates trained locally.

In fact, for an individual having grown up and studied in a different country, the prospect of practising engineering in Québec raises several issues which need to be addressed, understood and mastered, such as our social culture and values, the values inherent to our profession, the reasons underlying the need for a professional framework and the terms of employment in force in Québec. These are considerable challenges one must meet while coping with the day-to-day of integrating into one's host society...

AN EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGE

Seeking to offer meaningful assistance to PFAs, the Ordre signed a memorandum of understanding in February 2008 with the ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles, which provides for a financial contribution aimed at implementing a program for various initiatives. Since that time, several projects have been launched including the development of a training course for PTAs who have already immigrated and wish to become members of the Ordre.

As per its outline, this course will deal with professionalism, ethics and professional conduct, the regulatory framework and our cultural context in the workplace. More specifically, this training will aim to:

- allow PTAs to understand the context of professional practice in Québec (regulatory framework, rights and obligations which arise from the status of being an engineer, the Code of ethics);
- raise their awareness with respect to the profession's core values in Québec;
- promote their professional integration by making them responsive to the level of professionalism to which engineers are held in Québec's socio-professional environment;
- raise their awareness with respect to the social and cultural requirements at play in the Québec workplace, motivate them to be aware of and understand their own cultural patterns as

well as those of their host society, and define new coping strategies allowing them to adapt to their new socio-professional environment.

To take this course, PTAs will be invited to attend class where instructors will provide many examples taken from our professional context and day-to-day practice. They will also get a range of instructional tools, including an electronic "workbook" accessible online through the Ordre's site.

Currently, the greatest challenge faced by those in charge of designing this training is to extract basic content from existing courses on professional guidance and structure in engineering and adapt it to questions relating to PFAs and integration, so as to roll out a "101" course on professionalism in Québec that is as interesting as it is useful. Once this training course is prepared, discussion groups will be formed to analyse and offer comments relating to it and instructors will in turn be trained.

The first version of this training will be given in the Spring of 2010, on an experimental basis. Participants are sure to benefit from this course since, upon completion, they will be able to:

- understand the global professional context of engineering practice in Québec and the way in which such practice is controlled;
- understand the usefulness of documents which speak to this context;
- be aware of and use the tools available to Québec engineers in order to foster their admission to the Ordre and improve their professional practice;
- understand the differences and similarities between the socio-cultural context of the engineering practice in Québec and that of their home land;
- equip themselves with personal strategies allowing them to adjust and build on these differences and similarities.

To all those who may be interested, this training will be optional and free.

ANOTHER PROJECT UNDER WAY: A WEBSITE FOR PTAS

Also planned for Spring 2010: the launch of a new website designed for professionals trained abroad. On this site, these individuals will be able to find a wide range of information, tailored to their needs, on the process of obtaining a permit, the engineering profession in Québec and the employment market. Among the tools at their disposal, a tutorial will be offered to prepare them for the professional examination namely by explaining the purpose, content and conduct of the exam.

This future site will be accessible through the Ordre's website (www.oiq.qc.ca). Until then, PTAs can still get useful information by visiting the Ordre's site and following this path: Practising in Québec > The path to obtaining a permit > You earned your degree in another country.

The future website for PTAs, to be continued...