

VALIDATION OF EXPERIENCE (VOE) FAQs

1. Why is there now a standard national requirement for professional experience in human resources to obtain the CPHR?

For years, individual provincial associations have set their own experience requirements, and the result was a lack of cohesion between provinces. The introduction of a standard national requirement ensures that every individual who is granted the CPHR designation has the knowledge and experience necessary to practice at the highest calibre in the field of human resources. A national requirement for professional experience ensures that HR professionals across the country are held to the same standard. The CPHR experience requirement is established in compliance with the national guidelines of the Chartered Professionals in Human Resources Canada.

2. Why were the enhancements made to the CPHR process?

Human Resource professionals are taking on increased responsibilities, making significant leadership contributions and helping to drive business objectives forward in organizations across Canada. In response to the changing professional development needs of HR professionals, CPHR Canada and its Members Associations including CPHR SK, are upgrading and unifying the qualifications that HR professionals must meet to earn the Certified Human Resources Professional (CPHR) designation in Canada.

In 2013, CPHR Canada undertook a professional practice analysis (PPA), which is a comprehensive analysis of the HR practice and the skills required in the field of HR today. As a result, in the summer of 2014, an updated Competency Framework was brought forward to reflect the aforementioned changes to the roles of HR professionals across Canada. Most significantly, the updated Competency Framework was embedded into the experience assessment that CPHR Candidates are required to pass to earn their CPHR designation.

3. What type and amount of work experience do I need to earn my CPHR designation?

CPHR candidates must have three (3) years of professional level HR experience relating to a minimum of two (2) of the nine (9) HR *Functional Knowledge Areas* of the [CPHR Competency Framework](#). Candidates must demonstrate that 51% or more of their experience is in HR at the professional level. In addition, they must demonstrate

proficiency in a minimum of three (3) of the five (5) *Enabling Competencies*. Finally, candidates must demonstrate that the total of three years' experience has been gained within the last ten (10) years.

4. Who does this requirement apply to?

All members who are CPHR candidates who have not written and passed the NPPA exam as of January 1, 2013, will be required to demonstrate three (3) years of approved professional HR experience to obtain the CPHR designation.

5. How are candidates assessed during the Validation of Experience (VOE) process?

The VOE process serves to assess the experience of applicants to determine if it has been gained at the professional level. This means, confirming that candidates are using technical HR knowledge and have a level of autonomy in the application of said knowledge. The VOE committee assesses candidates based on a VOE Questionnaire, relevant job descriptions, organizational charts, and resumes.

Given the enhancements mentioned earlier, the experience assessment will now require applicants to demonstrate that their experience aligns with competencies in at least **two (2) of the nine (9) HR Functional Knowledge Areas**. Please note, Specialized depth of experience in one functional knowledge area will be considered sufficient. The 9 HR *Functional Knowledge Areas* are as follows:

1. Strategy
2. Professional Practice
3. Engagement
4. Workforce Planning and Talent Management
5. Labour and Employee Relations
6. Total Rewards
7. Learning and Development
8. Health, Wellness, and Safe Workplace
9. Human Resources Metrics, Reporting and Financial Management



In addition, experience in a minimum of **three (3)** of the **five (5)** *Enabling Competencies* is also required to complete the professional's skillset. The five enabling competencies are:

1. Strategic and Systems Thinking
2. Professional and Ethical Practice
3. Critical Problem-Solving and Analytical Decision-Making
4. Change Management and Cultural Transformation
5. Communication, Conflict Resolution and Relationship Management

6. What constitutes professional level HR Experience?

Professional level experience refers to experience gained through intermediate and senior level positions taking 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 data analysis and interpretation.
- **Level of interaction** – relates to the degree to which the individual interacts with a broad spectrum of contacts, including decision-makers.
- **Responsibility for work outcome** – relates to accuracy and extent to which the individual is held accountable for his/her work and decisions.

Duties that are purely administrative requiring no HR knowledge do not count. You **do not** need to be a manager or a supervisor to be able to acquire the necessary experience.

The Scope of HR Practice is the creation and implementation of all policies, practices and processes to effectively organize and manage human capital resources in the workplace with 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;



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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.

7. Why is the specialist role now being recognized?

Individuals that chose to specialize in one functional area may have significant depth and breadth of knowledge through experience in that one functional area, however, may have limited experience in other functional areas due to the nature of being a specialist. This change recognizes the proficient knowledge acquired by some specialists.

Specialized in-depth knowledge is defined as achieving proficiency in every competency in a given functional knowledge area. For example, in order to qualify as a specialist in Total Rewards for the experience requirement, a member would have to demonstrate proficient level experience in each of the competencies detailed in the [CPHR Competency Framework](#). Please note: the requirement of at least 3 of the 5 enabling competencies is still required and is separate from the functional knowledge area requirement.

8. What is the timing and sequence of HR Experience required?

To be credited toward the experience requirement, fifty-one percent (51%) or more of an applicant's time must be in human resources as defined above. Beyond this, time will be credited proportionally. For instance, an applicant for whom seventy-five percent (75%) of their time is dedicated to human resources activities as defined above will have their time multiplied by 0.75. It would take four years of experience in such a position to be equivalent to three years of full-time experience in human resources.

The experience must have occurred *within the last 10 years* to count towards the experience requirement and the individual must have worked in HR for a minimum of 3 months within the last two years.

9. What types of work experience are accepted?

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.

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 Knowledge Area for the organization.

Small business owners/operators may gain suitable work experience towards the experience requirement provided that their business is established to provide HR advice. However, time spent on business development or supervising staff for example, are not applicable towards the experience criteria. The remainder of the HR work would be prorated to come to the three-year full-time equivalency.

Work experience gained while serving as a labour union representative or a union employee may not necessarily be considered to meet the criteria toward the experience requirement unless these activities fall within a position clearly identified as an HR position. An elected labour union position is excluded from qualifying for experience validation.

Employment lawyers may be able to meet the experience requirement depending on the type of work they do. Work experience advising clients or conducting litigation is not eligible. Applied human resources work experience for the law firm they are part of may qualify if it is professional-level and a significant part of their work day. Professional level work for a client, such as conducting labour negotiations, mediation, or conducting downsizing activities, would be considered. Negotiating the terms of a contract would be considered human resources work while writing out the contract at the direction of a client would not. Activities identified as practicing human resources must be a significant part of the applicant's work experience and will be prorated accordingly.

Chief Executive Officers (CEO) and Chief Administrative Officers (CAO) may meet the experience requirement if the organization they are leading does not have an

HR department or HR position and if they are spending at least 50% of their time performing professional HR work. This means they are going beyond line management work of supervising staff, assigning work, setting pay, approving sick days or vacations, etc. This means they must be doing this work independently of an HR professional and not acting on the HR advice of others.

Teaching in the field of human resources is a practice of human resources. 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 HR courses at an accredited college or university.

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 and/or syllabus so the committee can determine if the course is an HR course. Those 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%

Academic research conducted by professors in the field of human resources may be eligible for experience validation if it is a significant part of their work and/or replaces a course. Only primary research in the field of human resources is eligible for inclusion in the experience validation.

10. Must I have a management title to satisfy the work experience requirement?

No. Your experience is not dependent on your job title. Experience is reviewed based on the Required Professional Capabilities, which may be demonstrated in a variety of different positions.

11. How do I know what job opportunities will meet the work experience requirement?

The human resources field is very diverse and presents many opportunities to obtain both a breadth of experience and a specialization. Each individual experience submission presents a unique background and set of accomplishments. We recommend reviewing the CPHR Body of Knowledge to ensure your current position and any others you might consider, aligns with the competencies set out for an HR professional.

Remember, you will need to show evidence of experience in at least two (2) HR Functional Knowledge areas or specialized experience in one area.

12. Who assesses the work experience?

Experience is reviewed by the Validation of Experience (VOE) committee, a panel of CPHRs who have been selected for their expertise in various employment sectors. Work experience submissions are also subject to audit by a committee.

13. I am a CPHR Candidate now, how long do I have to submit my Validation of Experience Application?

As a current Candidate, you will now have ten (10) years to accumulate professional level experience after writing and passing the NKE.

Note- the longer timeframe (from the previous five (5) years) only applies to candidates who passed the NKE in May 2010 or later (i.e. had a candidacy expiry date of May 2015 or later).

14. When and how do I submit my experience for review?

Validation of Experience applications are submitted to the Assessment committee four times a year. Results are provided within 6-8 weeks of the submission deadlines.

Submission process open	Submission deadline
January 1	March 31
April 1	June 30
July 1	September 30
October 1	December 31



Once you have passed the NKE and satisfied the degree requirement, you are eligible to submit documentation of your experience for assessment.

Complete the Validation of Experience Application form and return it via Email or mail.

Email: info@cphrsk.ca

Mail: CPHR Saskatchewan Registrar
#210, 3501 – 8th Street
Saskatoon SK, S7H 0W5

15. What are the costs of the VOE process?

The VOE process costs \$500 plus GST. This is broken down into 2 fees:

- A \$100 non-refundable Validation of Experience Application fee payable upon submission of the VOE Application form.
- Upon Successful completion of the VOE Assessment the balance of \$400 is due.

16. How long does the application/review process take?

Successful candidates will be notified by email within 6 to 8 weeks of the submission deadline. For those applicants who are successful, CPHR certificates are issued twice a year, in January and September.

Unsuccessful candidates will be notified of the gaps in their experience assessment. Once the required experience has been gained, you will be eligible to re-submit. There is no limit to the number of times an individual may apply.

17. Is the degree requirement in place along with the experience requirement?

Yes, the degree requirement applies to CPHR candidates; one needs to complete a degree and have their university mail us their official transcripts before they can go through the Validation of Experience Requirement process.

18. What options do I have if my Validation of Experience application is not successful?

- A. Reassessment** - applicants can resubmit information to amend, and/or provide clarification. **No new information can be provided; only**



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clarification/validation on information already presented. The applicant has fourteen (14) days to request a reassessment from receipt of notification of their VOE Assessment.

B. Appeal - if the reassessment is denied, the member may appeal the reassessment decision. The applicant has thirty (30) days from receipt of notification of their reassessment not being approved to provide in writing the identified reasons for the appeal. He/she is required to provide reasons as they pertain to the submitted information in the VOE Assessment Application or reassessment application. **No new information can be provided; only clarification/validation on information already presented.**

B.1.A written response to the appeal will be provided within sixty (60) days of receipt of written appeal request, to the member in writing, from the Registrar. This is the final decision/end of the VOE appeal process.

C. Should the member not be satisfied and desire to pursue the item further, a complaint may be filed to the Complaints and Discipline Committee, using the existing process/terms of that committee if the appeal is linked to the requirements under the C&D process. To view the CPHR Complaints and Discipline Process and find the Complaint Form please visit:

www.cphrsk.ca – Public Interest – Complaints and Discipline Process – Process Document