



Study of Registration Practices of the

**COLLEGE OF AUDIOLOGISTS AND SPEECH-
LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS OF ONTARIO, 2007**

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Office of the Fairness Commissioner

595 Bay Street, Suite 1201

Toronto ON M7A 2B4

Canada

416 325-9380 or 1 877 727-5365

ofc@ontario.ca

www.fairnesscommissioner.ca

The Office of the Fairness Commissioner is an arm's-length agency of the Ontario government, established under the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006. Its mandate is to ensure that certain regulated professions have registration practices that are transparent, objective, impartial and fair.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC) undertook a study of registration practices of Ontario’s regulated professions during the fall and winter of 2007–2008. The purpose of the study was to understand each regulated profession’s 2007 registration practices, and to establish baseline data and information to enable the OFC to measure progress as it fulfills its mandate under the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006.

This report reflects the registration practices of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario as of December 31, 2007. Information in this report was gathered from:

- face-to-face meetings with registration staff of the regulatory body
- additional documentation provided by the regulatory body
- relevant websites
- career maps for the profession posted on the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration’s website (where applicable).

The College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario also provided registration information and statistics for 2005, 2006 and 2007 through a standard spreadsheet designed by the OFC.

An analysis and summary of the findings for all of the regulated professions is contained in the OFC’s *Ontario’s Regulated Professions: Report on the 2007 Study of Registration Practices*.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE REGULATORY BODY

A. Legislation

The College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario (CASLPO) operates in accordance with the Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists Act, 1991, the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 and the college’s Registration Regulation, Ontario Regulation 543/94.

B. Protected Titles

The professional titles regulated by CASLPO are “audiologist,” “speech-language pathologist” and “speech therapist.”

C. Definition of the Profession

The practice of audiology includes the assessment of auditory function and the treatment and prevention of auditory dysfunction to develop, maintain, rehabilitate or augment auditory and communicative functions. Audiologists are concerned with the prevention, identification, assessment, treatment and (re)habilitation of hearing difficulties in children and adults. Audiologists also provide education and counselling services for people experiencing hearing difficulties and vestibular problems, such as dizziness and tinnitus. In Ontario, only audiologists and physicians are authorized to prescribe hearing aids.

The practice of speech-language pathology includes the prevention, identification, assessment, treatment and (re)habilitation of communication and/or swallowing disorders in children and adults. Speech-language pathologists also provide education and counselling services for people experiencing communication and/or swallowing difficulties.

D. Labour Market/Economic Trends

A study undertaken in 2003 by CASLPO found that the demand for audiologists and speech-language pathologists has been steadily increasing over recent years. CASLPO has projected a shortage of audiologists and speech-language pathologists into the next decade as the average age of practitioners increases and as Ontario's overall population ages.

The profession is not affected by changes in the economy to the same extent as some other professions. Demand for audiologists and speech-language pathologists is driven by population age rather than economic factors.

E. New Developments within the Profession

Increasing numbers of private manufacturers have been entering into the business of dispensing hearing aids. While only audiologists and physicians can prescribe hearing aids, anyone can dispense them. CASLPO is concerned about the dispensing of hearing aids by unregulated individuals, and would support the regulation of individuals dispensing hearing aids.

F. Staffing

The CASLPO staff consists of seven full-time employees, four of whom are involved in the registration process.

3. REGISTRATION PRACTICES

A. Registration Requirements and Application Process

CASLPO offers a General Certificate of Registration to applicants who have successfully completed a prescribed period of mentored practice in Ontario or satisfactorily completed a minimum of two years of professional practice in another jurisdiction, with a minimum of 500 hours of patient care or related work in audiology or speech-language pathology over the two years preceding the application.

The registration requirements are the same for Canadian and internationally trained individuals. To be eligible for registration, an applicant must meet the following requirements:

- Submission of a completed General Certificate Application Form, with all supporting documents including proof of citizenship, permanent residency or valid work authorization; official transcripts of undergraduate and graduate degrees; and certified translations of all materials that are not in English or French
- Submission of a detailed program syllabus describing the applicant's course of study
- Demonstration of reasonable fluency in either English or French
- Proof of professional liability insurance coverage of \$2 million per claim
- Completion of academic requirements
- Completion of a prescribed period of supervised practice in Ontario or completion of at least two years of satisfactory professional practice in another jurisdiction.

B. Documentation Required from Internationally Trained Individuals

i. Standard Documentation

Applicants must submit:

- A completed application form
- Proof of citizenship, permanent residency or valid work authorization
- Proof of language proficiency, if language of instruction is not English or French
- Form A: Course Work Requirements
- Form B: Supervised Clinical Practicum
- Academic Credential Assessment Report

- Official transcript
- Program syllabus
- Form C: Registration/Certification/License Verification
- Form D: Reference Request.

ii. Options for Applicants with Unavailable/Destroyed Documents

When applicants cannot obtain their official transcripts, verification of university-supervised clinical practicum hours and/or program syllabuses, they must provide a statutory declaration (prepared by a notary public or a lawyer) in which they swear that these documents are unattainable from their graduating institutions. A statutory declaration is a legal document in which a person swears that the information provided is true.

The Registrar refers applications containing statutory declarations to the Registration Committee.

Upon review of each application, the Registration Committee may direct the Registrar to take one or more of the following actions:

- Issue a certificate of registration
- Issue a certificate of registration if the applicant successfully completes examinations set or approved by the panel
- Issue a certificate of registration if the applicant successfully completes additional training specified by the panel
- Impose specified terms, conditions and limitations on a certificate of registration of the applicant and specifying a limitation on the applicant's right to apply under subsection 19(1) of Schedule 2 to the Regulated Health Professions Act
- Refuse to issue a certificate of registration.

C. Credential Assessment (Third Party and/or Internal)

All applicants who have completed their education outside of Canada or the United States must obtain an assessment of their academic credentials by a credential assessment agency, such as Comparative Education Services at the University of Toronto, World Education Services, International Qualifications Assessment Service or International Credential Evaluation Service.

D. Academic/Program Requirements

The coursework requirements for registration with CASLPO reflect the minimum academic hours necessary for practice in Ontario. An applicant may use both graduate and undergraduate university coursework to fulfill CASLPO's academic requirements. Coursework completed at community colleges is not considered to be equivalent to university-level courses, and thus not accepted by CASLPO. The clock hours listed below for each subject area refer specifically to the hours of instruction that the student must complete.

Basic Communication Processes: 270 hours of instruction

- Anatomical, physiological and neurological bases for the normal development of speech, language and hearing (e.g., neuroscience, anatomy, genetics)
- Physical bases and processes of the production and perception of speech and hearing
- Perceptual processes.

Related Areas: 200 hours of instruction

- Study of normal and abnormal human behaviour (psychology, sociology, anthropology, education)
- Statistics (basic statistics, research methods, research design)
- Administrative organization of speech pathology programs and professional practice.

Major Professional Area: 360 hours of instruction

- Students of audiology and speech pathology choose one concentration (audiology *or* speech-language pathology).
- Students in either stream must have taken nine courses of in-depth study in their respective major professional area.

Minor Professional Area: 90 hours of instruction

- Two to three specific courses taken from the other area of concentration.

Supervised clinical practice involving direct interaction with patients suffering from communicative disorders: 300 hours

- At least 225 hours in the applicant's major area of study
- At least 20 hours of university-accredited supervised practice in the minor area.

E. Work Experience Requirements

No work experience is required for an Initial Certificate of Registration. For a General Certificate of Registration, an applicant must have at least two years of professional experience.

CASLPO offers an Initial Certificate of Registration to applicants who are new graduates from a master's program in audiology or speech-language pathology; or to applicants who have less than two years of professional practice experience in another jurisdiction; or to applicants who have been absent from professional practice for more than three years. Initial practice registrants are mentored for a minimum of six months, during which they must complete a minimum of 500 hours of patient care.

CASLPO offers a General Certificate of Registration to applicants who have successfully completed a prescribed period of mentored practice in Ontario or satisfactorily completed a minimum of two years of professional practice in another jurisdiction, with a minimum of 500 hours of patient care or related work in audiology or speech-language pathology over the two years preceding the application. Holders of a General Certificate of Registration may provide patient care and/or related work in audiology or speech-language pathology autonomously and are permitted to engage in a broad range of activities within the scope of practice of audiology or speech-language pathology in Ontario.

F. Examinations

CASLPO does not have a mandatory registration examination. However, applicants with deficiencies in their course of study may be required to demonstrate their competency by taking an exam set or approved by the Registration Committee of the college.

G. Language Requirements

An applicant must be able to speak and write in either English or French with reasonable fluency. If the applicant's language of academic instruction was not English or French, the applicant must demonstrate language proficiency.

English Fluency

Fluency in English can be demonstrated by successfully completing one of the following:

- The Internet-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) with minimum scores of:
 - 100 overall
 - 26 in writing

- 26 in speaking.
- The paper-based TOEFL and Test of Spoken English (TSE) with minimum scores of:
 - 600 overall
 - 5 on the essay
 - 50 on the TSE.
- The computer-based TOEFL and TSE with minimum scores of:
 - 250 overall
 - 5 on the essay
 - 50 on the TSE.
- The Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB) and TSE with minimum scores of:
 - 85 on the MELAB
 - 50 on the TSE.
- The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) with a minimum score of 8.0.

French Fluency

Fluency in French can be demonstrated by successfully completing one of the following:

- TESTCan with a minimum score of 4.5 on each section, including listening, reading, writing, and speaking.
- Test of Business French, with a minimum score of 7 on oral and 2 on writing.

H. Fees

The fees listed below do not include GST.

Fee	
Application fee (applicants educated within Ontario)	\$75
Application fee (applicants educated outside Ontario)	\$100
Initial registration fee	\$200
Annual membership fee ¹ — General Certificate	\$500
Annual membership fee ² — Initial Certificate	\$250

I. Third Parties

Name of Third Party	Relationship to Regulatory Body
Credential Assessment Services:	<p>These credential assessment organizations assess the level of the academic credentials of applicants from outside Canada as compared with similar credentials offered in Canada.</p> <p>However, the content of the applicant’s program of study is assessed by CASLPO’s Registration Committee for equivalency in content and scope with the Ontario professional master’s degree in audiology and/or speech-language pathology.</p>
Comparative Education Services, University of Toronto	
World Education Services	
International Qualifications Assessment Service	
International Credential Evaluation Service	

J. Typical Length of the Registration Process

The registration process can take as little as three weeks, unless CASLPO’s review of an application identifies deficiencies in an applicant’s credentials. If a review by the Registration Committee is required, the entire process can take between four and six months.

¹ Annual membership dues will be prorated at \$41.75/month for individuals who are registered as general members partway through the year.

² Annual membership dues will be prorated at \$20.75/month for individuals who are registered as an initial members partway through the year.

K. Accredited Programs

A national process for the accreditation of university programs in speech-language pathology and audiology has been developed jointly by the Canadian Council of University Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CCUP-CSD), the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA) and the Canadian Alliance of Regulators (CAR), the joint group of licensing bodies in audiology and speech-language pathology, of which CASLPO is a member. Together, the elected representatives of these bodies make up the Accreditation Secretariat.

The Accreditation Secretariat oversees the accreditation process as a whole. The Accreditation Board of the Secretariat coordinates and oversees the accreditation of individual university programs. The Accreditation Secretariat and the Accreditation Board have been accrediting university programs in audiology and speech-language pathology across Canada since 2005.

In Ontario, the following universities offer accredited programs in audiology and speech-language pathology:

- University of Ottawa: Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology
- University of Toronto: Speech-Language Pathology
- University of Western Ontario: Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology

L. Internal Review/Appeal Process

The Manager of Registration Services conducts a review of an applicant's file and course content. A further review of the file by the Registration Committee is required if the application does not appear to satisfy the registration requirements.

The Registration Committee is composed of two registered speech-language pathologists, two registered audiologists and two public members. The committee meets five or six times per year.

After considering an application, the Registration Committee may make an order to direct the Registrar to take one or more of the following actions:

- Issue a certificate of registration
- Issue a certificate of registration if the applicant successfully completes examinations set or approved by the panel

- Issue a certificate of registration if the applicant successfully completes additional training specified by the panel
- Impose specified terms, conditions and limitations on a certificate of registration of the applicant and specifying a limitation on the applicant's right to apply under subsection 19 (1) of Schedule 2 to the Regulated Health Professions Act
- Refuse to issue a certificate of registration.

Beyond CASPLO, an applicant can contact the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board to appeal a decision made regarding his or her application.

4. BRIDGING PROGRAMS

Although no formal bridging program is in place at CASPLO, the college's staff work with applicants to identify opportunities to take courses or obtain clinical work experience. Opportunities to take additional courses to fulfill deficiencies are available at the Ontario universities. However, space is limited. Applicants may also fulfill deficiencies by presenting a university course outline to the Registration Committee for approval before they enrol in a course offered outside Ontario, to ensure that the deficiency is being addressed by the proposed course.

5. MUTUAL RECOGNITION AGREEMENTS

There is a mutual recognition agreement between all Canadian provinces. Even though the professions are regulated in only six provinces — Ontario, Quebec, Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and New Brunswick — the agreement is still in effect for other provinces where an audiology or speech-language pathology association is a signatory to the agreement.

Applicants seeking to practise in a new jurisdiction must hold registration in the jurisdiction in which they were trained that allows them to practise there. The details on academic training, foreign-trained registrants and “grandparented” members are set out in the agreement. Applicants may have to demonstrate competence in controlled acts specific to the new jurisdiction. In addition, applicants may be required to demonstrate knowledge of local legislation and the code of ethics specific to the new jurisdiction.

Not all signatories will be able to implement the provisions of the agreement immediately, as regulation changes may be required. However, all have agreed to move as quickly as possible.

CASLPO has proposed such regulations and is awaiting government approval to implement the agreement.³

6. APPLICANTS' INTERACTIONS WITH REGULATORY BODY

A. Nature and Frequency of Communication

The Registrar of CASLPO and the Manager of Registration Services are regularly in contact with applicants to let them know the status of their application.

B. Backlogs

Applications from internationally trained individuals must be reviewed by the Registration Committee, which convenes five or six times per year. Therefore, it can take four to six months for an application requiring review by the Registration Committee to complete the assessment and decision-making process.

C. Complaints Regarding the Registration Process

Applicants who are dissatisfied with the registration process may write to the Registrar of the college about their concerns.

7. CHANGES SINCE THE 2005 SURVEY

The Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration conducted a survey in 2005 to collect information about occupational regulatory bodies in Ontario.

There have been no changes to the registration process over the last few years. However, CASLPO is working with universities to develop courses for areas of deficiency common to many applicants.

³ See "Working in Ontario, Other Provinces, and the United States," *CASLPO Today* (August 2005). <http://www.caslpo.com/>.

8. REGISTRATION INFORMATION AND STATISTICS

Definitions used in these tables:

Alternative class of licence: a class of licence that enables its holder to practise with limitations; additional registration requirements must be met in order to be fully licensed. Alternative classes of licence granted by the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists are specified under the tables below.

Applicant: a person who has applied to start the process for entry to the profession.

Applicant actively pursuing licensing: an applicant who had some contact with CASLPO within the year specified.

Inactive applicant: an applicant who had no contact with CASLPO within the year specified.

Member: a person who is currently able to use the protected title or professional designation “audiologist,” “speech-language pathologist” or “speech therapist.”

Languages in which application information materials were available

Language	2005	2006	2007
English	Yes	Yes	Yes
French	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other(s)			

Countries where internationally educated applicants were initially trained in audiology or speech-language pathology

Applications Received	2005	2006	2007
Largest number	United States	United States	United States
Second-largest number	Australia	Iran	Iran
Third-largest number	Iran	India	India
Fourth-largest number	South Africa	Australia	Brazil
Fifth-largest number	Tied ¹	Colombia, United Kingdom	Tied ²

¹Tied among eight countries.

²Tied among nine countries.

Staff employed by the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists

Number of Staff	2005	2006	2007
Involved in registration process	3	3	3
Involved in appeals process	1	1	1

Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in audiology or speech-language pathology (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)¹

Members	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	TOTAL
Total members	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,087
Non-practising members	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	182

¹ CASLPO began tracking this information electronically in 2002 for new applications only. This information has not been tracked for applications received prior to 2002.

Applicants processed by the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists in 2005

Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in audiology or speech-language pathology (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)					
In 2005 (Jan. 1 to Dec. 31)	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	TOTAL
New applications received	83	27	44	17	171
Applicants actively pursuing licensing	84	28	46	20	178
Inactive applicants	0	0	0	10	10
Applicants who met all requirements and were authorized to become members but did not become members	0	0	0	0	0
Applicants who became members	75	26	48	9	158
Applicants who were authorized to receive an alternative class of licence but were not issued a licence ¹	1	1	0	0	2
Applicants who were issued an alternative class of licence ¹	71	19	36	7	133

¹ **Initial:** Members must be mentored for at least six months as they begin to practise in Ontario.

General with Mentorship: Members must be mentored for at least six months as they begin to practise in Ontario.

Applicants processed by the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists in 2006

Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in audiology or speech-language pathology (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)						
In 2006 (Jan. 1 to Dec. 31)	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	TOTAL	
New applications received	92	38	36	18	184	
Applicants actively pursuing licensing	93	38	36	27	194	
Inactive applicants	1	1	2	3	7	
Applicants who met all requirements and were authorized to become members but did not become members	0	2	1	0	3	
Applicants who became members	89	33	35	2	159	
Applicants who were authorized to receive an alternative class of licence but were not issued a licence ¹	2	1	0	0	3	
Applicants who were issued an alternative class of licence ¹	86	29	26	2	143	

¹ **Initial:** Members must be mentored for at least six months as they begin to practise in Ontario.

General with Mentorship: Members must be mentored for at least six months as they begin to practise in Ontario.

Applicants processed by the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists in 2007

Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in audiology or speech-language pathology (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)					
In 2007 (Jan. 1 to Dec. 31)	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	TOTAL
New applications received	83	27	54	18	182
Applicants actively pursuing licensing	85	29	55	32	201
Inactive applicants	1	0	0	9	10
Applicants who met all requirements and were authorized to become members but did not become members	1	1	2	0	4
Applicants who became members	79	23	54	7	163
Applicants who were authorized to receive an alternative class of licence but were not issued a licence ¹	1	0	0	0	1
Applicants who were issued an alternative class of licence ¹	76	15	41	4	136

¹ **Initial:** Members must be mentored for at least six months as they begin to practise in Ontario.

General with Mentorship: Members must be mentored for at least six months as they begin to practise in Ontario.

9. SOURCES

College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario website.

<http://www.caslpo.com/>. Last accessed: February 19, 2008.

Representatives of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario met with staff of the Office of the Fairness Commissioner on December 21, 2007, to provide further information for this study.

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