# ASTTBC Continuing Professional Development Practice Guideline

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## Introduction

The Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program helps ASTTBC registrants achieve and maintain high standards of competency and professionalism.

Practising registrants, both full-time and part-time, must complete 12 hours of eligible CPD activities within the designated year. At least two of the 12 hours must include Indigenous Awareness training for newly practicing registrants in their first year where CPD is required.

ASTTBC's CPD program is flexible and allows registrants to meet the requirements in a way that matches their own professional goals and learning preferences. The CPD program is administered through an online self-reporting system and supported by the Professional Governance Act, ASTTBC Bylaws, and this guideline.

## 1.0 Defined Terms

The following definitions are specific to this guide. These words and terms are capitalized throughout the document.

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| **Act** | Professional Governance Act [SBC 2018], c. 47 |
| **ASTTBC** | Applied Science Technologists & Technicians of BC |
| **Bylaws** | Bylaws of the Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC made under the Act. |
| **Code** | ASTTBC Standards of Competence and Code of Ethics |
| **CPD** | Continuing Professional Development |
| **Document** | A document includes, but is not limited to, the following in any digital or hard copy format: letters, reports, tags, labels, designs, video recordings, memos, drawings, plans, specifications, calculations, technical and professional opinions on inspection and test results, estimates, quotations, maps or mapping, directions or instruction and general engineering technology and/or applied science advice offered or given. |
| **Guide** | A guide is a professional practice document published by the ASTTBC in accordance with the Act, Regulation, and Bylaws. Guides define the minimum standard of practice and standards of conduct and competence required by registrants of ASTTBC. |
| **Practising Registrant** | Practising registrant means a person registered with ASTTBC and who is permitted to engage in applied science and engineering technology practice but does not include trainees, students, honorary Registrants, retired Registrants, non-practising Registrants, inspectors in training, associate registrants, graduate technicians, and graduate technologists. |

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| **Registrant** | A registrant of the Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC who is registered in the following categories:<br>a. Applied Science Technologist;<br>b. Applied Science Technologist Trainee;<br>c. Certified Technician;<br>d. Certified Technician Trainee;<br>e. Registered Technical Specialist. |
| **Registrar** | Appointed officer of ASTTBC responsible for carrying out the duties, powers, and responsibilities set out in the Act, Regulation, and Bylaws. |
| **Regulated Practice** | As defined in the Act and Regulation, regulated practice is the carrying on of a professional by a registrant of ASTTBC, which for the purposes of this guide is the practice of applied science technology. |
| **Regulation** | Applied Science Technologists and Technicians Regulation O.C. 35/2021 |

## 2.0 Overview

### 2.1 Public Trust and Expectations

Registrants provide advice and technical guidance that will be relied upon by other members of engineering teams as well as the public. There is an expectation in all professionals that the information they provide is both accurate and current to the best of their abilities.

Registrants who fail to uphold currency in the technical codes, standards, and practices within the discipline and field of practice pose a risk to the public and undermine trust in not only themselves but their profession as a whole.

### 2.2 Role of the Office of the Superintendent of Professional Governance

The Office of the Superintendent of Professional Governance (OSPG) is the provincial government's administration and oversight body responsible for setting standards and requirements for regulatory agencies that oversee professional standards.

Under the direction of the Superintendent of Professional Governance, the OSPG sets requirements for registrants across all its professional fields, including the requirement to complete ongoing professional development and any training that is deemed to be in the best interest of the public.

2.3 Role of the Audit and Practice Review Committee

The Audit & Practice Review Committee (APRC) is a statutory committee of ASTTBC's Board of Directors. The APRC oversees ongoing audits of Registrant CPD records to ensure compliance with the PGA and Bylaws.

Additionally, the APRC provides direction on behalf of the ASTTBC Board of Directors in matters relating to registrants who have not completed their CPD requirements.

2.4 Role of ASTTBC

As it relates to CPD, ASTTBC's role as the professional regulatory oversight agency for technologists and technicians is to administer its CPD programs and Registrant requirements in a manner that protects the public while creating trust and confidence. This includes:

- Providing clear expectations on how registrants are to meet CPD requirements,
- Mandating specific professional development requirements in support of the public interest,
- Creating and maintaining systems for registrants to record their CPD hours,
- Providing resources and guidance to registrants for completing their CPD requirements,
- Validating CPD claims through ongoing audits, and
- Enforcing CPD requirements are met by each registrant.

2.5 Registrant Responsibilities

Registrants are expected to follow and comply with CPD requirements as outlined in the ASTTBC bylaws. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Submitting a declaration attesting that they are compliant with CPD requirements;
- Completing eligible CPD activities throughout the year
- Completing all mandatory CPD courses or requirements within the assigned year;
- Recording completed CPD hours and activities within the online self-reporting system;
- Maintaining records and certificates of completion for all courses and activities claimed for the CPD year; and
- Providing CPD records upon request by ASTTBC.

2.6 Registrants Requiring Continuing Professional Development

All Practicing Registrants are required to fulfill their annual CPD requirements to maintain their registration status.

Unless an accommodation has been granted by the Registrar or the Credentials Committee, a Registrant that re-registers or changes status (e.g., non-practising or retired status to practising) following a period of inactivity is required to complete all CPD requirements for the duration that they were unregistered.

2.7 Registrants Not Requiring Continuing Professional Development

Registrants with the following statuses are not required to complete CPD hours:

- Non-practising
- Retired
- Honorary
- Student
- Trainee

New Practising Registrants are not required to complete CPD requirements or record CPD hours for the period before their first renewal.

Moreover, individuals with multiple registrations with ASTTBC are not required to complete separate CPD requirements for each registration.

## 3.0 Continuing Professional Development Requirements

Each year prior to May 31, the ASTTBC Board will publish on the ASTTBC website the requirements of the following year's CPD program, which may include additional requirements to be met and specific courses to be taken during that year.

From June 1 to May 31 of each year, Practising Registrants are required to complete and record a minimum of 12 hours of eligible activities to fulfill their CPD obligations under the PGA. This includes:

1) Completion of all required training courses or activities as prescribed under the PGA or by ASTTBC.
   - **New registrants** will be required to complete a minimum of two hours of professional development that addresses Indigenous intercultural competency, history, engagement, conflict resolution, human rights, and Indigenous anti-racism as it relates to a registrant's applied science and engineering technology practice in their first year where CPD is required.

2) Completion of the remaining minimum required CPD hours through practice-related eligible activities identified below:

| Category | Restrictions or Limitations | Description | Eligible Activities |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Structured Learning** | Course must be taken at a post-secondary institution, private training provider, or other provider approved by ASTTBC | Learning is completed through a formal or structured learning process that supports or enhances a Registrant's practice. | 1) Courses |
| **Self-directed Learning** | *(maximum 4 hours per publication/journal/book) | Independent and unstructured learning completed by a Registrant | 2) Research and writing<br>3) Attending seminars, webinars, workshops |

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| | | that supports or is related to their practice. | 4) Reading books, journals or technical publications, web research* |
| **Profession-based Volunteering** | Maximum of 8 CPD hours claimable for this category per cycle. | Volunteering that enhances or supports the development of the profession and its registrants. | 5) Volunteering |
| **Industry Education, Outreach, and Engagement** | | Providing time outside of regular employment that provides opportunities for ongoing learning to registrants | 6) Participating on education boards, industry advisory committees<br>7) Teaching a course or training program<br>8) Presenting at conferences, workshops, or seminars<br>9) Creating instructional materials |

Under the CPD program, one hour of completed activity is equivalent to one CPD hour.

3.1 Eligible CPD Activities

ASTTBC's CPD program allows Registrants the flexibility to customize their professional development to suit their learning style. It is important to note that CPD-eligible activities are typically completed in addition to a person's full-time practice and not as part of their daily work activities.

Activities that are considered ineligible for CPD credit hours include:

- Activities that are completed as a key part of a Registrant's full-time employment or practice.
- CPD activities that are repeated within the same CPD cycle.
- Activities that are not related to a Registrant's practice or do not contribute to the betterment of their ability to carry out their practice.
- Activities that are undocumented or unverifiable when completed.
- Courses that are partially complete.
- Activities that are completed outside the June 1 to May 31 timeframe of the CPD year.

Furthermore, to illustrate what constitutes an eligible versus an ineligible activity under the CPD program, the following table provides guidance based on requirements as well as previous CPD submissions and inquiries:

| Eligible Activity | Description | Examples of Eligible Activities | Examples of Ineligible Activities |
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| **1. Courses** | Completing a structured course or online program. | Post-secondary technology course.<br><br>Code update training course. | Workplace course delivered by your employer.<br><br>Repeating a course twice in the same CPD year to gain additional CPD hours.<br><br>Unfinished or partially complete course. |

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| **2. Teaching** | Teaching a course or training program. | Teaching a code update course as a part-time lecturer. | Post-secondary lecturer claiming CPD hours for teaching a course as part of their full-time employment.<br><br>Volunteer lecturer claiming CPD hours more than once for teaching the same course repeatedly during a CPD year. |
| **3. Presenting** | Presenting at a professional symposium (conference, workshop, or seminar). | Presenting at a conference about a topic affecting your discipline at a conference. | Presenting findings at a routine workplace meeting.<br><br>Staffing a trade booth at a professional conference. |
| **4. Content Development** | Creating informational or instructional content related to a Registrant's practice. | Creating instructional materials, exercises, case studies, surveys, or exams for a course, training program, workshop, seminar, or webinar.<br><br>Writing technical papers, articles, chapters, or reviews that may be published in journals, books, or submitted for professional or commercial purposes.<br><br>Contributing to the development of codes, standards, innovative processes, applications of technology, and patents. | Content that cannot be shared or validated. |
| **5. Conducting Research** | Process of identifying a question, gathering information, analyzing and evaluating evidence, and drawing conclusions. | Reading books, journals, or technical publications including online web searches related to the work you do or plan to do. | Undocumented research (claiming CPD hours without providing a reading list or research parameters). |
| **6. Technical Training** | Receiving training from an informal structure or an unapproved training provider. | Attending seminars, workshops, webinars, technical field trips, or on-the-job training provided by your employer or a supplier of equipment or services | Receiving feedback on work completed under the direct supervision of another Registrant or professional. |
| **7. Volunteering** | Contributing to the development of the profession and the community of practice. | Participating on education boards, industry advisory committees, or similar profession-related organization or association activities.<br><br>Volunteering as a subject matter expert for ASTTBC (e.g., as an investigator, providing expertise or feedback on technical issues or practice-related inquiries). | Volunteering on a children's sports team (unrelated to the practice or profession).<br><br>Volunteering in a capacity that cannot be validated, or is undocumented, by the organization or association. |

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| | | Volunteering as a member of a statutory committee. | |

3.2 **Professional Development Supporting Public Interest**

Registrants are required to commit to a minimum of two hours annually in their first year where CPD is required to continuing professional development which addresses Indigenous intercultural competency, Indigenous history, Indigenous engagement, Indigenous conflict resolution, Indigenous human rights, and Indigenous anti-racism as it relates to a registrant's applied science and engineering technology practice.

This mandated portion of CPD must address a minimum of one of the following learning outcome areas:

Foundational awareness:
History and impact of colonialization in Canada; legal rights of Indigenous Peoples and relevant law; reconciliation actions.

Service-related skills:
Communication, consultation, engagement, relationship-building, and collaboration; understanding and respect for the contribution of Indigenous knowledge.

Organization approach:
Incorporate cultural safety and humility into meetings and events; employee onboarding; change leadership; outreach, recruit, retain, and develop qualified Indigenous employees.

CPD hours taken in these learning areas are inclusive of the 12 hours necessary to fulfill their annual CPD requirements.

## 4.0 Reporting CPD Hours

Registrants must record their continuing education activity in their online ASTTBC account on or before May 31 each year[1].

Registrants must provide sufficient information to support each CPD hour claimed. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Date CPD hour completed,
- Eligible activity completed,
- Title of any content created or researched, and/or
- Reference material accessed while conducting research.

4.1 Carryover of CPD Hours

Registrants who complete and record more than the required minimum CPD hours by the May 31 deadline may carry over a maximum of 6 CPD hours for application to the next CPD cycle. Carryover hours are calculated and applied automatically by ASTTBC.

[1] ASTTBC Bylaws, Section 55.2

## 5.0 Extensions and Accommodations

A registrant may submit a written request to the Registrar for an extension to complete annual CPD requirements if there are extenuating medical or other circumstances[2].

If an extension of time is insufficient to address the potential adverse impact of CPD requirements due to a protected ground enumerated under section 14 of the Human Rights Code (BC), the Registrar may consider other forms of accommodation.

All extensions and accommodations are governed by the ASTTBC Extension and Accommodation Policy (see Appendix A).

## 6.0 Audit and Compliance

Under the oversight of the Audit and Practice Review Committee (APRC), ASTTBC must conduct annual random audits of CPD hours recorded by practicing Registrants.[3]

Registrants selected for an audit are required to submit documentation to support all CPD hours claimed.

### 6.1 CPD Records and Supporting Documentation

Registrants are required to retain documents that support and validate all CPD hours claimed. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Certificates of completion for courses (including name, date completed, and course title),
- Content created (including writings, video content, examinations, case studies, presentations, etc.),
- Registration records for presentations given at professional symposiums,
- Course registration records for courses taught,
- Research records including topic research, dates, and materials referenced or accessed during research,
- Volunteer records, including name or organization, dates and times volunteered, name and contact information for the volunteer organization, and
- Employer letters, registration records, or certificates of completion for technical training received.

All documents and records that support a Registrant's CPD hours claimed should be retained for no less than 10 years.

### 6.2 Compliance and Enforcement

ASTTBC's Registrar may issue a written notice of non-compliance to a registrant who has not completed the annual CPD requirements by May 31.[4]

If a registrant does not complete the required CPD hours by June 30 after receiving a notice of non-compliance, the registrar may:

- suspend the registrant's registration until such time the Registrar is satisfied that the required CPD hours have been completed or

[2] ASTTBC Bylaws, Section 55.3
[3] ASTTBC Bylaw, Section 60.1
[4] ASTTBC Bylaws, Section 55.5

- impose a fine on the Registrant not to exceed $500.00[5].

Enforcement action (registration suspension or imposition of a fine) taken against a Registrant does not absolve their requirement to complete CPD hours for the given CPD year. Registrants are required to complete the CPD requirements from a previous CPD year if they remain unfulfilled.

Registrants who receive more than one fine, as noted above, must be reported to the APRC. The APRC may direct ASTTBC to conduct a practice review of the Registrant.

## 7.0 Reference & Relevant Documents

1. Professional Governance Act [SBC 2018], c. 47
2. Applied Science Technologists and Technicians Regulation, O.C. 35/2021
3. ASTTBC Bylaws
4. ASTTBC Professional Practice Guideline – Professional Practice & Conduct

[5] ASTTBC Bylaws, Section 55.6

# Appendix A: ASTTBC Continuing Professional Development Extension and Accommodation Policy

On or before May 31 of each year after their first registration renewal, ASTTBC registrants are required to complete CPD requirements under sections 54.1 and 55.2 of the ASTTBC Bylaws. Under section 55.3 of the ASTTBC Bylaws, a registrant may submit a written request to the registrar for an extension to complete annual CPD requirements if there are extenuating medical or other circumstances.

**Accommodations other than an extension**
If an extension of time is insufficient to address the potential adverse impact of CPD requirements due to a protected ground enumerated under section 14 of the Human Rights Code (BC), the Registrar may consider other forms of accommodation.

**APPLICABILITY**
Registrants who seek an extension or accommodation for completion of their CPD requirements.

**POLICY STATEMENTS**

1. **Definitions:**
   Extenuating circumstances refer to situations that are highly unusual, infrequent, and directly relevant to the registrant's ability to complete and record CPD requirements which are typically beyond a registrant's control.

   The following non-exhaustive list of circumstances may, at the discretion of the registrar, be regarded as exceptional circumstances with adequate supporting evidence:

   1. The registrant has, in the past year, experienced a period of serious illness, incapacity, and/or mental or physical disability within the meaning of the Human Rights Code (BC) of such a duration that it adversely impacted their ability to complete the annual CPD requirements;

   2. The registrant is currently seriously ill, incapacitated, and/or unable to complete the CPD requirement due to a mental or physical disability within the meaning of the Human Rights Code (BC);

   3. The registrant has in the past year been the primary caregiver of a seriously ill and/or incapacitated family member;

   4. The registrant has suffered the loss of a close family member for whom they were the primary caregiver within the last year which has adversely impacted their ability to complete the annual CPD requirements;

      The registrant has been unemployed for a prolonged period which has adversely financially impacted them in a significant way such that they cannot afford to take the CPD requirements;

   5. The registrant has been on parental leave in the past year or is currently on parental leave.

A request for an extension must be supported by sufficient **relevant** and independently verifiable evidence (for example, provided by a healthcare professional, an employer, or the Canada Revenue Agency) that clearly demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the registrar, how the circumstances have adversely impacted the registrant's ability to complete and record their annual CPD requirements.

**Matters unlikely to be considered extenuating circumstances**
Circumstances falling predominantly or entirely within a registrant's or applicant's control are unlikely to be considered extenuating circumstances.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of circumstances that are unlikely to be regarded as exceptional circumstances justifying an extension for completing CPD requirements:

1. Inadequate planning, inadvertent oversight in failing to meet the CPD requirement promptly, or inability to meet the CPD requirement on time due to a memory lapse;

2. Poor time or financial management;

3. Missing or not reading an email from ASTTBC;

4. Failing to ensure that ASTTBC has current contact information (maintaining current contact information with ASTTBC is an obligation under section 51 of the ASTTBC Bylaws);

5. Going on vacation or working at a remote work site;

6. Taking time away from work to pursue further education;

7. General anxiety or stress that is not diagnosed as a disability;

8. An administrative error made by the registrant's or applicant's employer or employee, colleague, family member, or friend.

**Accommodations other than an extension**
If an extension of time is insufficient to address the potential adverse impact of CPD requirements due to a protected ground enumerated under section 14 of the Human Rights Code (BC), the Registrar may consider other forms of accommodation.

An accommodation is a modification of a standard, requirement, practice, policy, or rule of ASTTBC that may adversely impact a registrant required to complete CPD, as a result of a disability or other ground enumerated in section 14 of the Human Rights Code (BC).

**2. Policy Statement:**
Under section 55.4 of the ASTTBC Bylaws, on receipt of a written request for an extension of time to complete and record CPD requirements, the registrar

a) may grant an extension if satisfied that there are extenuating circumstances to warrant additional time for completing and recording annual CPD requirements, and

b) must report any extension to the audit and practice review committee.

ASTTBC assesses requests for extensions and accommodation on an individual basis.

**3. Terms and Conditions:**

How to apply for an extension of time to complete CPD
Complete the CPD Extension Form and email it to registrar@asttbc.org.

**4. How to apply for an accommodation other than an extension**

Registrants seeking accommodation for CPD requirements other than an extension of time based on human rights grounds should apply before the November 30 CPD deadline whenever possible. However, ASTTBC recognizes that sudden and/or unexpected exceptional circumstances may prevent a registrant from making a timely application - for example, if a registrant is in an accident or hospitalized just before the CPD deadline.

*If the accommodation is in relation to a disability*

Requests for accommodation due to a mental and/or physical disability within the meaning of the Human Rights Code (BC) may be made in the Accommodation Request Form. For the purposes of this policy, a "health care professional" is a regulated health care professional who is registered or licensed to practise in Canada.

1. The Disability Accommodation Request Form must be completed by the registrant and their attending health care professional(s) and submitted to ASTTBC prior to December 31.

2. The attending health care professional(s) must be qualified to provide a disability diagnosis to the registrant and a medical opinion on the need for, and nature of, an accommodation.

3. The following information must be included in the Accommodation Request Form:
   a. Confirmation by the health care professional(s) of the specific nature of the disability for which the accommodation is sought (including a medical diagnosis and the duration of the disability);

   b. Verification by the health care professional(s) of the extent of the disability and any limitations and special requirements arising from the disability (including the specific aspect of the disability that requires accommodation);

   c) A medical opinion from the health care professional(s) establishing the effect of the disability on the registrant's ability to complete CPD requirements.

   d) A medical opinion from the health care practitioner addressing the steps that should be taken to accommodate the registrant in respect of their CPD requirements to address the limitations and/or special requirements arising from the disability; and

   e. Medical information establishing the effect of the disability on the registrant's ability to practise as an applied science technologist, technician, or technical specialist (as applicable).

   Documentation of the disability must be provided to ASTTBC directly from a health care professional with appropriate qualifications to diagnose the identified disability and opine on treatment and accommodation. Depending on the nature of the disability, a note from a registrant's general practitioner may not be sufficient for accommodation requests.