



BC INSTITUTE OF  
AGROLOGISTS  
Cultivating Natural Resource Professionals

# Articling Journal



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## *Section 1*

### *The Articling Program*

*Introduction to the Articling Program*

*Articling Program Overview*

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*First Steps – Establishing a Mentoring Relationship*

*Elements and Expectations of the Articling Program*

*Requirements for Completion of the Articling Program*



## *Introduction to the Articling Program*

***Congratulations*** on becoming a registrant of the British Columbia Institute of Agrologists (BCIA). As an articling registrant you will now participate in a program that fosters professionalism in your career. Through the Articling Program you will learn about the profession of agrology and the responsibilities and benefits of being a professional registrant of the BC Institute of Agrologists.

You will have received a **Letter from the BCIA Registrar** conveying to you the articling designation, assigned articling term and specifying your obligations to participate in both the Articling Program and the Continuing Professional Development Program of the Institute. It is the expectation of the Institute that you will complete all requirements of the Articling Program within a maximum of **three years (2 year term is assigned; 1 year if applicable)**. An extension fee will be applied to your annual fee if 3+ years is maintained as an articling registrant.

The Articling Program is of major importance to the Institute. Developing professionals who are responsible, personally independent, and maintain competency in their Practice Area(s) is critical to the function of the Institute and is expected by the wider community. The Articling Program was revised by the BCIA Board in February 2006 to reflect the *Agrologist Act* that came into force in May 2004 and now the new *Professional Governance Act* enacted in 2018. Since the Institute was established in 1947 a program has been in place to develop new professionals.

A key component of the Articling Program is the participation of full status professional registrants as mentors to articling registrants. Your mentor should support you as you progress through the various requirements of the program.

**Articling registrants must submit their signed mentoring agreement in the two months since being notified of their notice into BCIA. If not in compliance, the articling term may be extended for however long the mentoring agreement is outstanding.**

The chart on the following page shows how elements of the Articling Program fall within three general themes which progress concurrently. These three themes are then integrated at the end of the program through the Program Review, the Articling Program Checklist, the Mentor Letter of Recommendation, and the two Letters of Reference when advancing to full status.

# Articling Program Overview

For articling registrants and Mentors

## Establish a Mentor and Submit a Signed Agreement

### Fostering Professionalism

*Articling Program Requirements*

- Complete "Introduction to the Profession of Agrolgy" and "Orientation to BCIA" courses
- Provide a brief oral report at a branch AGM
- Meet with your mentor at least 2X per year
- Attend a branch Annual General Meeting
- Volunteer at a branch/BCIA event OR attend a branch executive meeting OR serve on *any* professional group
- Attend a BCIA Annual General Meeting
- Attend a branch PD event

### Continuing Professional Development

- Complete the "Professional Negligence and Regulatory Offences" webinar - Module 1 of Professional Liability
- Attend BCIA Ethics for Professionals Workshop
- Document a Professional Development (PD) Report online in the BCIA profile
- Complete Indigenous Foundational Knowledge training

### Working in Agrolgy

- Work in the field of agrolgy during the time assigned as outlined in the acceptance letter (FULL TIME or an accumulation to equal full time)
- Develop a professional network (attend branch and BCIA events)
- Work within your identified Practice Area(s)

## Articling Program Completion

- Obtain two letters of reference from supervisors, clients, or any registered professionals
- Obtain letter of recommendation from mentor verifying Articling Program is complete
- Submit Articling Program Review & Articling Program Checklist

## *Articling Journal Overview*

This Articling Journal (and the BCIA website) is a key resource to an articling registrant.

This journal:

- Explains the various requirements that must be met during the program
- Provides mechanisms to collect key information needed to complete the program
- Provides key documents associated with the profession
- Provides links to key resources and reference materials
- Provides a checklist used to record key “milestones” within the program.

The journal is divided into five sections.

**Section 1** introduces the program and provides details on the requirements for each component of the program.

**Sections 2, 3 and 4** align with the three general themes of the program – Fostering Professionalism, Continuing Professional Development, and Working in Agrology.

**Section 5** highlights resources available on the BCIA website and provides additional information regarding registrant obligations. Pertinent forms such as the Articling Program Checklist and Mentoring Agreement are included.

Once all elements including the minimum articling term working in agrology outlined in your Letter from the Registrar, are satisfactorily completed and submitted for review, the articling registrant will then be considered for full status designation.

## *First Steps - Establishing a Mentoring Relationship*

A critical component of the Articling Program is the establishment of a mentoring relationship between a full status registrant (PAg/TAg) or PAg(Retired)/TAg(Retired) registrant of the Institute and the articling registrant entering the program.

Some considerations when establishing a mentoring relationship:

- Usually both the mentor and the articling registrant are of the same branch, but this is not a requirement.
- It is not essential that the articling registrant and mentor have expertise in the same area of practice. The primary role of the mentor is to guide the articling registrant through the nontechnical aspects of professionalism.
- The articling registrant's immediate supervisor at work can be a suitable mentor if:
  - the articling registrant prefers to have such arrangement, and
  - there be no ethical quarrel between the articling registrant's job description and the development of professional ethics at work.
- The success of the mentoring relationship will be an outcome of the trust between the two parties. Trust will generate an openness to discuss ideas, problems, deficiencies, and achievements.

The Articling Coordinator of your branch may contact you regarding branch participation. The Articling Coordinator can work with you to select a suitable mentor if needed yet it is encouraged to access the Mentor Directory at [www.bcia.com/mentoring-directory](http://www.bcia.com/mentoring-directory). Contact information for all branch positions are on the Institute website's contact page at [www.bcia.com](http://www.bcia.com). Support for mentors includes the "Articling Program Guide", a companion document to this journal for mentors and Articling Coordinators available as a download from the Institute's website. The Articling Coordinator is also a resource for mentors within the branch.

Once you have been welcomed as a BCIA registrant and have secured a mentor, you will work with your mentor to schedule an initial meeting. At that meeting you and your mentor will:

- review the requirements of the program as described in this journal and in your letter from the Registrar,
- discuss in general a timeline for meeting these requirements,
- commit to frequent meetings either in-person or electronically, and
- sign and submit the Mentoring Agreement

The **Mentoring Agreement** can be found on the BCIA website and once a mentor is secured the signed copy of the agreement is uploaded to the registrant's Articling Program page in the BCIA account.

Download the Mentor/Mentee Talking Points guide to help facilitate discussions at <https://www.bcia.com/how-apply/programs/articling-program> (bullet point #3).

The Elements and Expectations of the Articling Program included on the following pages provide a summary of the current requirements for the Articling Program. *(Note: These requirements may differ depending on your acceptance date – please check your acceptance letter.)*

## Elements and Expectations of the Articling Program

For articling registrants accepted after January 1, 2021.

<b>Element of Program</b>	<b>Expectations/Comments</b>
<p><b>Complete 'Intro to the Profession of Agrology' and 'Orientation to BCIA' courses with follow up questions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ These are online courses are self-paced and located behind the registrant log-in of the BCIA website</li> <li>○ Topics include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● "What is Professionalism?"</li> <li>● History of BCIA</li> <li>● Development of a professional body</li> <li>● Professional Governance Act, Bylaws, Code of Ethics</li> <li>● Duty to Report</li> <li>● The scope of Agrology</li> <li>● Issues facing Agrologists today</li> <li>● PD Requirements</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>*Complete the two declarations in the online PD Report stating the courses have been completed; 2.5 PDHs earned</i></p>
<p><b>Attend a Branch Annual General Meeting</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Branch events familiarize the registrant with how BCIA functions at a branch level</li> <li>○ Encourages volunteerism</li> <li>○ An articling registrant is encouraged to let their name stand for positions on the branch executive. Branch Director is a good "entry position" that exposes the registrant to decision making within a professional organization.</li> </ul> <p><i>*To be "signed off" on program checklist by mentor; 2 PDHs earned</i></p>
<p><b>Brief oral report at a Branch Annual General Meeting</b></p>	<p>The articling registrant is to make a <u>short</u> oral report at a branch AGM. Indicate this when registering online for an event if available. Scope of the oral report should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● who your mentor is</li> <li>● your academic background</li> <li>● your area of practice within agrology</li> <li>● your work experience to date</li> <li>● a description of your current employment</li> </ul> <p><i>*To be "signed off" on program checklist by mentor</i></p>
<p><b>Attend a branch PD event</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Branch events familiarize the registrant with how BCIA functions at a branch level</li> <li>○ Encourages volunteerism</li> <li>○ The articling registrant is encouraged to attend branch PD events and become involved in branch activities. Branch PD activities and events are excellent forums for professional development and expanding your professional network.</li> </ul>



<b><i>Element of Program</i></b>	<b><i>Expectations/Comments</i></b>
	<i>*To be "signed off" on program checklist by mentor; PDHs earned</i>
<b><i>Volunteer at a Branch/BCIA event* OR sit in at a Branch Executive Meeting/ Conference Call* OR serve on any Professional Group</i></b> <i>(*contact your Articling Coordinator)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Choose one of three options</li> <li>○ Allows the articling registrant to become more engaged with BCIA, their local branch and it's executive</li> <li>○ Increased networking and learning about other like-minded professionals</li> </ul> <p><i>*To be "signed off" on program checklist by mentor</i></p>
<b><i>Attend a BCIA Annual General Meeting</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An opportunity to network with registrants of the Institute from across the province and to see the workings of your Institute at the provincial level.</li> <li>○ Reports and submitted resolutions are discussed</li> <li>○ The BCIA AGM may be a virtual event - all registrants have the opportunity to attend online</li> </ul> <p><i>*Completion of element is verified by staff; 2 PDHs earned</i></p>
<b><i>Complete the BCIA Ethics for Professionals Workshop – BCIA hosts a formal course every few months</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The intent of the Institute is to allow this workshop available to all registrants as a PD opportunity and is a requirement of the Articling Program.</li> <li>○ This workshop will be delivered in regional settings and/or in conjunction with BCIA Annual General Meetings <u>OR</u> <u>presented as an online version</u></li> <li>○ This workshop is approximately 6-8 hours in length and will use case studies and scenarios to initiate discussion on issues of professional ethics</li> <li>○ Fostering the ethical behavior of professionals is a foundation activity of BCIA</li> </ul> <p><i>*Complete the declaration in the online PD Report stating the course has been completed; 6-8 PDHs earned</i></p>
<b><i>Complete Indigenous Foundational Knowledge training – BCIA may host a formal course OR check the approved course listing online for alternatives</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Indigenous foundational knowledge training is a requirement relating to directives from the Professional Governance Act and therefore forms a mandatory component of the Articling Program</li> <li>○ Encourages reconciliation with Indigenous peoples</li> <li>○ A minimum of 6 hours of training with a certificate is required;</li> </ul> <p><i>*Complete the declaration in the online PD Report stating a course(s) has been completed; 6+ PDHs earned</i></p>
<b><i>Complete the Professional Liability webinar - module #1: Professional Negligence and Regulatory Offences</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Available to all registrants as a PD opportunity and is a requirement of the Articling Program</li> <li>○ Webinar is self-paced and located behind the registrant log-in of the BCIA website</li> </ul> <p><i>*Complete the declaration in the online PD Report stating the webinar has been completed; 1.5 PDHs earned</i></p>

<i>Element of Program</i>	<i>Expectations/Comments</i>
<p><b>Document Continuing Professional Development and Practice Area</b> in BCIA account</p> <p>Both must be completed before paying renewal fees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Documenting your participation in continuing professional development activities is required of all registrants of the Institute. Report your PD hours as you go along in the year rather than waiting until paying annual fees.</li> <li>○ Ensure the required annual and three year minimums are met; annual minimum is waived in first year of registration</li> <li>○ Reference the PD Guidelines for guidance</li> </ul> <p>Regulated registrants are required to complete and accurately report a minimum of 125 PDH over a three-year period ending with the current reporting year with <u>no less than 30 PDH</u> annually. 42 PDH on average.</p>
<p><b>A minimum of 2X/year meetings between articling registrant and mentor</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The expectation of mentors is to provide guidance for articling registrants and monitor their progress through regular meetings. Meetings can occur in-person or electronically</li> <li>○ Mentor to encourage completion of the Articling Program in a timely manner</li> <li>○ <i>*To be "signed off" on program checklist by mentor</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Track using the BCIA Articling Program page in your BCIA account</b></p>	<p>Documenting your progress through the Articling Program is important and tracks completion of the program elements. End of program documents are uploaded including the mentor letter and two other references by the articling registrant.</p>

## ***Program Checklist***

The Program Checklist is available on the BCIA website. The checklist is to verify the completion of elements or milestones throughout the program of which were outlined on the previous pages 7-9. Ensure to keep your checklist updated as you move along in the program.

There are selected elements of which will require a mentor signature to sign-off on the particular element.

As a recap, the Articling Program includes the following elements:

- Completion of “The Introduction to the Profession of Agrology” self paced, online course
- Completion of the “Orientation to BCIA” self paced, online course
- Attendance at a branch Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- Completion of a brief oral report at a branch meeting
- Attendance at a branch PD event
- Volunteer at a Branch/BCIA event OR sit in on a Branch Executive Meeting/Conference Call OR serve on any professional group
- Attendance at a BCIA Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- Completion of the BCIA Ethics for Professionals workshop
- Completion of Indigenous Foundational Awareness training
- Completion of the Professional Negligence and Regulatory webinar
- Meet with mentor a minimum of 2X per year to discuss progress of Articling Program

***“Signed off”*** as indicated on the checklist is the signature of your mentor to show engagement in both the mentoring process and the Articling Program.

**Verification of program elements is done by BCIA staff once final documentation is submitted for the advancement of full status.**

## Requirements for Completion of the Articling Program

Once you have completed your articling term with working full time (1 year or 2 years as per your letter of acceptance) and all Articling Program elements, the following must be submitted. These are submitted via the Articling Program page in the BCIA account.

<p><b>Completed Articling Program Checklist</b></p>	<p>The Articling Program Checklist is an engagement document between the mentor and mentee. Verification of all program elements is done by BCIA staff when final documentation is submitted for the advancement of full status. Upload the completed checklist with mentor signatures to the 'Articling Program' page in the BCIA profile.</p>
<p><b>Articling Program Review – an essay of 1500 to 2000 words</b></p>	<p>The Review should not focus on initial academic training, but rather focus on your development as a professional during the Articling Program. The review should integrate all elements of the Articling Program, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An articulation of your Practice Area(s) within the scope of the agrology profession</li> <li>• A discussion of current issues and potential ethical challenges within your Practice Area(s) in British Columbia</li> <li>• A summary of your work experience and responsibilities in agrology during the articling program</li> <li>• An overview (perhaps using a diagram) of your developing “professional network” within your area of practice where, as a professional, you need to maintain and foster dialogue and communication</li> <li>• A strategy for your continuing professional development over the next year</li> <li>• Comments on how the Articling Program has met your needs as an aspiring professional and suggestions for how the Articling Program can be improved including commentary on the relationship with the mentor.</li> </ul> <p><i>Upload the written review of the Articling Program to the 'Articling Program' page in the BCIA account.</i></p>
<p><b>Letter of recommendation from the Mentor</b></p>	<p>The letter should confirm the mentoring relationship and that all requirements of the program have been met to the mentor’s satisfaction and that the articling registrant has completed the required amount of work experience within</p>

	<p>the program based on the mentee’s acceptance letter; confirm if 2X/year meetings occurred and PD reports were discussed.</p> <p>The letter should describe briefly the qualities and qualifications being brought to the Institute by the articling registrant and recommend formal consideration of the articling registrant’s advancement to full status.</p> <p><i>Articling registrant to upload the mentor letter directly to the ‘Articling Program’ page in the BCIA account.</i></p>
<p><b>Two letters of reference</b></p>	<p>The intent of these letters is to confirm a professional approach to working in the field of agrology. These letters should confirm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• your Practice Area(s)</li> <li>• that your work experience during your articling term was undertaken in an ethical manner</li> <li>• that you demonstrated technical expertise in your Practice Area</li> <li>• that your work completed was to an acceptable level.</li> </ul> <p>These letters can be submitted by your supervisor, clients, or other professionals in good standing who are in a position to comment on your work experience.</p> <p><i>Articling registrant to upload the two reference letters directly to the ‘Articling Program’ page in the BCIA account.</i></p>

***Once all documentation has been submitted:***

The Registrar determines if all requirements for completion of the Articling Program have been met, that includes:

- completed Articling Program Checklist, indicating all program elements have been completed
- satisfactory Articling Program Review
- satisfactory Letter of Recommendation from mentor
- two satisfactory Letters of Reference
- confirmation by Registrar that registrant is currently working in the field of agrology; the articling registrant is expected to have worked full time in agrology during their term – can be an accumulation of time to equal full time work.

On successful completion of the Articling Program, the Registrar will inform the registrant of their elevation to full status and registration status will be changed in the profile and the BCIA listing of registrants.

## Section 2

### *Important Documents*

*Letter(s) from the Registrar*

*Mentoring Agreement*

*Code of Ethics – Bylaws Schedule A*

*BC Institute of Agrologists Bylaws*

*Professional Governance Act (PGA) & Office of the  
Superintendent of Professional Governance (OSPG)*

*Duty to Report*



## Letter(s) from the Registrar

A key document associated with the Articling Program is the **Letter of Acceptance**, indicating you are a registrant of the Institute, and conveying articling status. Keep your letter in a safe place in your personal records or place at the back of this journal with FORMS if printing. The letter is posted to the Articling Program page within your BCIA account.

This letter stipulates:

- the length of full time work experience in the field of agrology (articling term) to be met within your articling program
- commencement date of your program
- instruction to seek a mentor
- branch Articling Coordinator's contact
- required Articling Program elements

It is the expectation of the Institute that you will complete the Articling Program within **three years** of commencement; a two year articling term is assigned, or one year if applicable. An extension fee will be applied to your annual fee if articling status is maintained for more than three years.

If one becomes unemployed at anytime during the articling term and it's an extended period of time, requesting on leave status is an option. It best reflects the current situation and places the articling term on hold with all program elements still available to complete. It is the requirement of working in agrology for two years (or one year if applicable) that will need to be fulfilled prior to submitting documentation for full status, by extending out the articling term.

## Mentoring Agreement

The Mentoring Agreement can be found on the BCIA website or place at the back of this journal with FORMS if printing.

Once your mentoring agreement is completed and signed by both yourself and your mentor **within 2 months** of being notified of registration, you must *immediately* upload the agreement to the Articling Program page in the BCIA account. **Articling registrants who are not in compliance may have their articling term held in abeyance (put on hold) until the mentoring agreement is received. This, in effect, will extend the articling term to however long the signed agreement is outstanding.**

The mentor relationship is the key point of the Articling Program and will not function effectively without it. Be engaged with your mentor and learn from your mentor, asking questions regarding ethics and conduct in the workplace.

**It is your responsibility to complete the Articling Program with the mentor guiding you along.**

## *Code of Ethics - Schedule A of BCIA Bylaws*

### **Introduction**

The practice of agrology is a privilege and is regulated by BCIA pursuant to the terms of the *Professional Governance Act* (SBC 2019). In compliance with this legislation the BCIA is mandated under Section 22(h) and Section 57(2) to establish, monitor and enforce standards of professional ethics of all registrants.

The profession demands and holds registrants accountable for integrity, competence and objectivity in their conduct as they fulfill their professional responsibilities to the public, the employer/client, the profession and courts or tribunals.

### ***Duties and Responsibilities:***

All BCIA registrants **must** exercise integrity, competence, and objectivity in their professional conduct at all times and **must**:

1. Hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public, including the protection of the environment and the promotion of health and safety in the workplace;
2. Practice only in those areas of practice where their training, education, experience and ability make the registrant professionally competent;
3. Have regard for the common law, relevant federal and provincial legislation and regulations, BCIA Bylaws, sound scientific principles, recognized standards of practice and policies relevant to the practice of agrology;
4. Maintain competence in relevant specializations, including but not limited to active participation in continuing education and technical upgrading to ensure knowledge of advances in regulated practice and relevant science.;
5. Provide accurate information in respect of qualifications and experience;
6. Provide professional opinions that distinguish between facts, assumptions and opinions;
7. Avoid situations and circumstances in which there is a real or perceived conflict of interest and ensure conflicts of interest, including perceived conflicts of interest, are properly disclosed and necessary measures are taken so a conflict of interest does not bias decisions or recommendations;
8. Maintain the confidentiality of all information concerning the business and affairs of the client and employer acquired in the course of the professional relationship, and must not divulge any such information unless disclosure is expressly authorized by the client or employer or is required by law or by the duty to report outlined in Paragraph 11 below;
9. Not engage in dishonourable or questionable conduct, in professional practice, extra-professional activities or private life, that casts doubt on the Agrologist's professional integrity or competence, or reflects adversely on the integrity of the profession of agrology;



10. Abstain from making unwarranted, undignified and misrepresentative statements in public about other registrants, BCIA, or registrants of other professional bodies and must ensure their communications with other Registrants and other professionals are characterized by respect, courtesy, honesty and good faith;
11. Report to BCIA and, if applicable, any other appropriate authority or professional regulatory body, if the registrant, on reasonable and probable grounds, believes that the continued practice of a regulated practice by another registrant or other person, including firms and employers, might pose a risk of significant harm to the environment or to the health or safety of the public or a group of people;
12. Present clearly to employers and clients the possible consequences if professional decisions or judgments are overruled or disregarded;
13. Clearly identify each registrant who has contributed professional work, including recommendations, reports, statements or opinions;
14. Undertake work and documentation with due diligence and in accordance with any guidance developed to standardize professional documentation for the profession of agrology;
15. Abide by any additional ethical principles and directives as determined by the Lieutenant Governor in Council from time to time.

## *BC Institute of Agrologists Bylaws*

The Bylaws guide BCIA forward as the profession of agrology upholds its protection of the public interest and assists in the responsible development of British Columbia's natural resources and environmental sectors under the *Professional Governance Act (PGA)*.

BCIA Bylaws provide rules by which the Institute operates. They state the manner in which the BCIA governing Council is established (i.e. composition, nominations and elections processes including that of Board officers). Non-practicing registration categories and the rights (e.g. voting) for all registrants are established in the Bylaws.

Bylaws may be changed by the Board including changes to the Fee Schedule, without a vote by registrants.

### **BCIA Bylaws, including:**

- **Schedule A – Code of Ethics,**
- **Schedule B – Oath of Office, and**
- **Schedule C - Fees**

All documents are available on the BCIA website. Please take the time to read the information.

<INSERT BCIA BYLAWS AFTER PAGE 17>

## *Regulated Practice, Reserved Practice, and Title Rights*

As of February 5, 2021, the definition of agrology is prescribed as the "Regulated Practice" of the profession and is intended to outline the activities in which agrologists are allowed to practice within British Columbia. The definition of the regulated practice of agrology under the Professional Governance Act is outlined in the Agrologists Regulation which is available on the BCIA website at [www.bcia.com](http://www.bcia.com) and here:

[https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/10\\_2021](https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/10_2021)

By an Order in Council dated September 13, 2021, the government of BC granted practice rights to the profession of agrology within the province. The definition of the reserved practice of agrology under the Professional Governance Act is outlined in the reserved practice definition which is available on the BCIA website at [www.bcia.com](http://www.bcia.com) here:

<https://www.bcia.com/resources-publications/resources/public-resources/reserved-practice-announcements>

Those rights, which became enforceable on September 1, 2022, ensure that certain agrolgy services can only be provided by Registrants of BCIA or by a Registrant of other professions that have reached an agreement with BCIA concerning overlapping jurisdiction.

Anyone practicing agrolgy as defined in the Agrolgists Regulation must be registered with the BC Institute of Agrolgists.

The Agrolgists Regulation maintains exclusive use of the title for registrants in good standing with the BC Institute of Agrolgists. These include:

- Professional Agrolgist (PAg)
- Articling Agrolgist (AAg)
- Technical Agrolgist (TAg)
- Articling Technical Agrolgist (ATAg)
- Limited License Agrolgist (LLAg)

No individual may present themselves with any of these titles without being in contravention of the Professional Governance Act.

## *Professional Governance Act (2018) & Office of the Superintendent of Professional Governance (OSPG)*

The *Professional Governance Act (the PGA)* enacted in 2018, provides a new regulatory framework for professions in BC. The Office of the Superintendent of Professional Governance (OSPG) was established under the Ministry of the Attorney General in June 2019. The OSPG strengthens government oversight while being independent from the ministries that regulate sectors in which professionals practice. It provides the impartiality needed to create an effective and trusted framework for professional governance.

The PGA brings regulatory bodies under one act and provides a consistent governance framework for their professions that incorporates best practices of professional governance. The OSPG is responsible for administering the PGA and for ensuring that best practices for professional governance are implemented. The *Agrolgists Act* of which BCIA has been operating under for many years was repealed in February 2021 when the PGA became fully in force.

The new legislation standardizes how regulatory bodies govern their registered professionals. This includes expectations on codes of ethics, continuing education, reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and transparency in their organizational governance. It increases public access to information on the governance of the regulated professions and ensures

professionals continue to be held to the highest ethical and technical standards. For a background pathway of implementation of the PGA please reference the BCIA website.

The Professional Governance Act is available on the BCIA website and here:

<https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/18047>

As mentioned above, under the PGA, “Reserved Practice” (or practice rights) have been granted to BCIA with enforcement effective September 2022. Once enforced, any person providing any of the stipulated services **must** be a registrant of BCIA or be subject to prosecution for unregistered practice (or, in certain circumstances, registrants of another profession). It is expected that there will be statutory exemptions.

As per directives relating to the PGA, all BCIA Registrants must provide the following information on the BCIA register:

- name
- status
- Practice Area(s)
- region
- employer/business and employer/business contact.

In order to have this information available to the public, BCIA registrants are required to verify that their employer information is **current, complete and correct**. **At log in, your current registrant information will appear on screen.**

## *Duty to Report*

The Professional Governance Act (PGA) was fully enacted on February 5, 2021 by the provincial government and enforceable effective September 2022. One of the additional significant duties that have been placed upon the registrants of BCIA prescribes what is colloquially known as the “Duty to Report”. That duty has two related aspects of which BCIA registrants need to be aware now. This brief summary is taken from the current “BCIA Ethics for Professionals” course which is a requirement for all articling registrants as part of their respective articling period.

**PGA Section 57 (2) requires codes of ethics for resource professionals to include the duty to,**

- “report to the regulatory body and, if applicable any other appropriate authority, if the registrant, on reasonable and probable grounds, believes that the continued practice of a regulated practice by another registrant or other person, including firms and employers, might pose a risk of significant harm to the environment or to the health or safety of the public or a group of people”. Please note that the current BCIA Code of Ethics adopted as of March 1st, 2020 includes this aspect.

**PGA Section 58 goes beyond the ethical responsibility of Section 57 as it prescribes a duty to report,**

- 58(2) “If a registrant has reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a identified registrant (which means a registrant of any regulatory body subject to the PGA) is engaged in the regulated practice that may pose a risk of significant harm to the environment or to the health or safety of the public, or a group of people” then, they must report this to the registrar even if the information on which the belief is based is confidential.

**Comments**

- This wording sets a high standard for reporting. It is meant to increase the number of serious concerns about competence or unprofessional or unethical conduct being brought to the attention of regulatory bodies, while not requiring reporting for lower level misconduct.
- A significant caveat to this standard is that Registrants should be able to reasonably identify unethical behaviour of another Registrant, regardless of profession or area of expertise but may only be able to identify incompetent behaviour of a Registrant with similar areas of practice and expertise.
- The Registrant should take reasonable steps to make that identification, but failure to do so is not a breach of the duty, and the reporting duty is not triggered.
- This duty is NOT meant to require Registrants to raise concerns about the risk of significant harm arising from government policies or authorization decisions a Registrant may be operating under. Registrants however may bring their concerns respecting a certain policy or practice (rather than the work of a Registrant) to the attention of the regulatory body which may forward the concern to the government.
- This duty is NOT triggered by non-registrants engaging in regulated practice as agrology does not yet have practice rights. Once practice rights have been confirmed there will be a new duty added to the Code of Ethics requiring the reporting of non registered practice.
- The test or standard for “reasonable and probable grounds” considers what a reasonable person would conclude based on objective and credible information. “Reasonable” is a subjective assessment which means fair, just, moderate, suitable under the circumstances, rational, governed by reason, not immoderate or excessive. “Probable” means supported evidence strong enough to establish presumption but not proof.
- A Registrant must believe the identified registrants practice may pose a “significant harm to the environment or to the health and safety of a group of people”. Applied contextually “Significant” means a noticeably or measurably large amount; “Harm to the environment” means damage or detriment to external conditions affecting the growth of plants or animals.

- Failure to meet the statutory duty to report could result in many different sanctions including but not limited to deregistration of a Registrant, imprisonment or a fine up to \$200,000.

### **Filing a Report**

- If a Registrant is unsure of whether they should be reporting, they may seek advice from their own regulatory body or the regulatory body of the identified registrant. An employer/partner may seek advice from the Office of the Superintendent of Professional Governance or from a regulatory body.
- The regulatory body must treat a report under s.58 as a complaint. Wherever possible the regulatory body shall be the complainant rather than the Registrant that filed the initial report
- When a regulatory body receives a complaint, they will follow the steps outlined in their complaint and discipline process, which may lead them to:
  - Dismiss the complaint if the registrar determines there are no grounds for a complaint, or if the complaint is deemed to be frivolous, vexatious or made in bad faith;
  - Initiate an investigation;
  - Take extraordinary action to protect the public by imposing limits or conditions on the registrant's practice, or by suspending the registration of the registrant; or
  - Refer the complaint to a different entity if the complaint is outside the regulatory body's jurisdiction

### **Reprisals**

The PGA specifically prohibits any reprisals being taken as against a Registrant who acts in accordance with the duty to report as follows:

- 58(4) "If a person terminates the employment of an identified Registrant; revokes, suspends or imposes restrictions on the privileges of the identified Registrant or dissolves a partnership or association with the identified Registrant based on a belief described in subsection (2), the person must promptly report this in writing to the registrar of the identified Registrant's regulatory body."
- 103 "A person must not evict, discharge, suspend, expel, intimidate, coerce, impose any pecuniary or other penalty on or otherwise discriminate against a Registrant because that Registrant (a) has reported a matter as described in Section 58 with respect to a Registrant or other persons"....
- If a registrant is experiencing reprisals for their role in making or assisting in a complaint or prosecution, they may talk to their regulatory body (through the complaint intake process) or to the OSPG through [OSPGEnquiries@gov.bc.ca](mailto:OSPGEnquiries@gov.bc.ca); and/or may seek legal recourse.

## *Section 3*

# *Working in Agrology*

*Continuing Professional Development*  
*Professional Development Requirements*  
*Examples of Professional Contributions & Case Studies*  
*Professional Development Audit Program*  
*Developing a Professional Network*



## *Continuing Professional Development*

It is the responsibility of each registrant to accurately record an ongoing record of participation in professional development activities in order to assure the public of their expertise in their declared Practice Area(s). Registrants can and should choose professional development activities that maintain, improve and expand their skills and knowledge, and are relevant to their area of practice or support the development of a new area of expertise.

Continuing competence through on-going professional development is critical in meeting the registrants' responsibility to **uphold the public interest**. Through lifelong learning, registrants remain up-to-date in their specialized areas of practice, and are informed about the current issues involving the profession of agrology.

The **PD Reports** section under the BCIA profile section of the website allows registrants to report PD activities on an ongoing basis. In addition to reporting Professional Development activities under **PD Reports**, registrants are encouraged to maintain a personal detailed record of all professional development activities, including the dates, locations, subject material and a rationale on what was learned and how that relates to the registrant's Practice Area(s).

The Professional Development Guidelines of the Institute and case studies illustrating the application of the guidelines are provided on the BCIA website and under PD Reports of your BCIA login. Your PD information that is entered online will be referenced in the event you are randomly selected for a registrant PD audit or if chronic low PD reporting is exhibited. For additional information regarding the PD Audit process go to the BCIA website.

### *Articling registrants may claim the following PD hours for Program Elements*

- 1.5 PD hours for "The Introduction to the Profession of Agrology" course via the declaration
- 1 PD hour for "Orientation to BCIA" course via the declaration
- 8 PD hours for the BCIA Ethics for Professionals course via the declaration
- 2 PD hours for the BCIA AGM
- 2 PD hours for a Branch AGM
- 1.5 PD hours for the Professional Liability online webinar via the declaration
- 6+ PD hours for Foundational Indigenous Awareness Training via the declaration

Additional PD hours may be claimed according to the event when attending branch PD events, BCIA conference presentations and field tours.

**Prior to payment of annual renewal fees, practicing and on leave registrants are required to:**

- **record the reporting year's PDH online and**
- **declare their current Practice Area(s) for the reporting year**

When Reporting PD, registrants should be sure to document:



- topic or title or article
- type of activity (ie. webinar, tour, seminar)
- date of activity
- length of activity
- area of practice / relevancy to profession

## Professional Development Requirements

**Practicing (PAg, AAg, TAg, ATAg & LLA g) registrants are required to complete and accurately report a minimum of 125 PDH over a three-year period (an average of 42 PDH per year), with no less than 30 PDH annually.**

On leave registrants are required to complete and accurately report PD hours but at a minimum of 50% of the PDH annual requirement (three year requirement is waived while on leave), and the reduction is only during the time on leave. Registrants must declare their **Practice Area(s)** annually.

*If you require additional clarification interpreting the Professional Development guidelines, please contact the Provincial Professional Development Coordinator at [PD@bcia.com](mailto:PD@bcia.com).*

<b>Minimum Requirements</b>		
	<b>Annual (hours)</b>	<b>Three Year Period (hours)</b>
Continuing Education	10 PDH	50 PDH
Total PDHs (including Continuing Education)	30 PDH	125 PDH

*Registrants must maintain an ongoing record of participation in professional development activities.*

Continuing competence is demonstrated through recorded professional development. Regularly recording Professional Development in your online PD Report under the BCIA account allows registrants to track professional development under the categories of:

1. **Professional Practice**
2. **Continuing Education**
  - 2.1. **General Professional Learning**
    - 2.1.1. **Formal**
    - 2.1.2. **Informal**
  - 2.2. **Agrology Professional Learning**
    - 2.2.1. **Formal**
    - 2.2.2. **Informal**
3. **Professional Contributions**

## 4. Professional Service

### **On Leave Registrants**

Registrants who are temporarily on leave for education, parental, medical or other reasons are required to report no less than 50% (15 PDH) of the annual professional development minimum requirement only while they are on leave. On leave registrants returning to regulated status should ensure that the 3-year professional development requirement is met within the following reporting year.

### **Retired Registrants**

Registrants with retired status are not required to maintain or report their PD activity. Retired registrants remain bound by the provisions of the Professional Governance Act and Bylaws. Retired registrants choosing to return to practicing status will be required to demonstrate on-going Professional Development.

## *Examples of Professional Contributions & Case Studies*

Pages 6-9 of the Professional Development Guidelines outlines examples of when to and when not to claim professional development units or hours. Following this are case studies that are meant to further illustrate what constitutes PDH along with some concluding remarks. *A table showing what would be reported follows these case studies. Reference pages 3 & 4 of the guidelines for Categories numbering.*

Claiming professional development hours can be very straightforward or it can be a bit of a grey area for others. If any doubt contact the BCIA office for assistance.

## *Professional Development (PD) Audit Program*

The Professional Governance Act requires that the British Columbia Institute of Agrologists (BCIA) include programs to continue the education of its registrants. BCIA is committed to a Professional Development (PD) Program and policies that assist registrants in ensuring and making evident their professionalism. On-going professional development is a basic tenet of professionalism. Thus, it is the responsibility of all BCIA registrants to maintain competence through ongoing professional development.

### **Professional Development Audit Program - A Program to Ensure BCIA Registrants Maintain Professional Knowledge, Abilities, and Skills**

1. Registrant must have adequate substantiation of professional development activities that have been included in annual PD reports.
2. Practicing registrants are required to report a minimum of 125 PDH over a three-year period (annual average 42 PDH) with no less than 30 PDH annually.
3. A minimum of 50 PDH over a three-year period with no less than 10 PDH should be declared annually under the Continuing Education category.

4. The declared PDHs must be relevant or pertinent to the registrant's stated area of expertise and competency or support development of a new area of expertise.
5. Identification of non-compliance and suggested requirements to bring professional development up to at least minimum standard within a given period of time.

Documents to download from the BCIA website that are useful:

- PD Audit Information Brochure
- PD Audit Program Guide
- Enforcement of Compliance with PD Requirements (Council Approved)

**<INSERT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES AFTER PAGE 25 >**

## *Developing a Professional Network*

### **Record your contacts**

- Collect business cards of Agrologists and other professionals that work within your Practice Area(s).
- Record the expertise and experience of these individuals, and other contact information of their businesses or agencies. Visit their websites and learn more about them.

### **Set up a LinkedIn account and link to BCIA**

### ***LIKE* the BCIA Facebook**

### **Attend your branch social, PD activities and AGMs**

### **Check out the BCIA Events listings.**

- Be aware of potential opportunities for continuing professional development.

### **Volunteer on your local branch executive or a BCIA Standing Committee/Working Group**

## *Section 4*

### *Fostering Professionalism*

*The Profession of Agrology*

*Orientation to BCIA*

*Professional Negligence and Regulatory Offences*

*BCIA Ethics for Professionals*

*Foundational Indigenous Awareness Training*



## *The Profession of Agrology*

*Articling Course as noted on Page 7*

The **Profession of Agrology** workshop consists of the following topics:

- “What is Professionalism?”
- History of BCIA
- Development of a professional body
- Professional Governance Act, Bylaws, Code of Ethics
- Duty to Report
- The scope of Agrology
- Issues facing Agrologists today
- PD Requirements
- An overview of other resource professions and their governance

Following the course, you will be directed to complete a short assessment. Once you have successfully completed the assessment, you add the declaration of completion to your PD Report.

To view the course, log-in as a registrant to the BCIA website.

## *Orientation to BCIA*

*Articling Course as noted on Page 7*

This webinar covers topics all registrants must become familiar with and incorporate into their professional life. It introduces you to the Institute, the Professional Governance Act and Bylaws, where to find information on the governance model used by Council, an introduction to the profession and professionalism, the need for continuing professional development and the requirements of ethical behavior.

Following the course, you will be directed to complete a short assessment. Once you have successfully completed the assessment, you add the declaration of completion to your PD Report.

To view the course, log-in as a registrant to the BCIA website.

\*It is highly encouraged to complete these two articling courses at the start of the Articling Program.

## *Professional Negligence and Regulatory Offences webinar*

### *Articling Webinar as noted on Page 8*

This 73-minute webinar was developed specifically for BCIA registrants.

The presentation covers:

- the concepts of negligence and negligent misrepresentation
- defences to negligence claims
- regulatory offences and the defence of due diligence
- minimizing the risks of both types of liability

The Professional Negligence and Regulatory Offences is Module 1 of the Professional Liability series.

Articling registrants are encouraged to also view Module 2 – An Overview of Governance and Professional Conduct. Each webinar is 1.5 PD hours.

To view the course, log-in as a registrant to the BCIA website.

Once you have successfully completed the assessment, you add the declaration of completion to your PD Report.

## *BCIA Ethics for Professionals workshop*

### *Articling Workshop as noted on Page 8*

Using case studies and examples, this course takes a look at professionalism, the code of ethics, and responsibilities of professional registrants.

The BCIA Ethics for Professionals is delivered as a two part online workshop with group discussions of a number of case studies relevant to registrants. BCIA may offer this course every 2-3 months. It may be presented as an in-person workshop in conjunction with the annual BCIA conference.

Notices are sent out to articling registrants regarding the workshop dates with registration posted on the BCIA website.

To view the course, log-in as a registrant to the BCIA website. Once you have successfully completed the course, you add the declaration of completion to your PD Report. 6-8 PD hours may be claimed.

## *Foundational Indigenous Awareness Training*

### *Articling Training as noted on Page 8*

Indigenous foundational knowledge training is a requirement relating to directives from the Professional Governance Act and therefore forms a mandatory component of the Articling Program. Having the training encourages reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

For additional guidance, log-in as a registrant to the BCIA website to view a pre-approved listing of courses.

**All new articling registrants** are required to complete a foundational knowledge course respecting Indigenous peoples (including the foundational content as outlined by BCIA) as part of their Articling Program.

**Acceptable foundation courses on Indigenous Awareness should be no less than** one-day (6 hours) or a combination which totals 6 hours.

Once you have successfully completed a course, you add the declaration of completion to your PD Report.



## *Section 5*

### *Useful Information, Resources & Forms*

*Registrant Status and Obligations*

*Website Resources and Branches/Districts*

*Navigating the BCIA Registrant's Section*

*Registrant's Resources*

*Forms*



## *Registrant Status and Obligations*

Registrants in good standing, with the exception of student members and honorary agrologists, shall be eligible to vote at elections or on motions at an AGM and can hold office in the Institute. In addition to the requirements of the Professional Governance Act and Bylaws, BCIA registrants shall be subject to the continuing professional development guidelines and policies.

### ***Professional Agrologist (PAg), Technical Agrologist (TAg), and Limited License Agrologist (LLAg) Status***

Professional Agrologists, Technical Agrologists, and Limited License Agrologists have full rights and privileges as registrants, including the use of a seal and the titles “Professional Agrologist” or “Technical Agrologist” or “Limited License Agrologist” and the respective designations “PAg” or “TAg” or “LLAg” and must report professional development hours annually at the required minimum amount of 30 PD hours per year, and 125 PD hours over a three-year reporting period ending with the reporting year.

### ***Articling Agrologist (AAg) or Articling Technical Agrologists (ATAg) Status***

Articling Agrologists and Articling Technical Agrologists have full rights and privileges as Registrants without the use of a seal but are authorized to use the titles “Articling Agrologist” or “Articling Technical Agrologist” and the respective designations of “AAg” or “ATAg” and must attend professional development activities specified by the Institute during their articling terms, plus report professional development hours annually at the required minimum amount of 30 PD hours per year, and 125 PD hours over a three-year reporting period ending with the reporting year.

***If registration is changed to an on leave category the articling term is put on hold and the articling registrant will be required to extend their articling program accordingly in order to reach the equivalent of 24 months (or 12 months if applicable) of working in the field of agrology. The articling registrant is welcome to attend events as part of the articling program while on leave and continue to engage with their mentor.***

### ***Non-Practicing Status - Parental Leave / Educational Leave/ Medical Leave / Agrologist On Leave***

Non-Practicing registrants have the right to receive information circulated to the active registrants of BCIA and to attend BCIA events but cannot practice agrology, use their seal (if applicable), nor use their professional title or designations, but must continue to report professional development hours annually and pay a reduced annual fee. Registrants who are temporarily on leave for parental, education, medical or other reasons are required to report no less than 50% of the annual professional development minimum requirements only during

the time on leave. Ideally, those who are on leave and returning to a practicing status should attain the 3 year professional requirement within the following reporting year. A registrant may remain non-practicing for up to 3 consecutive years and can return at any time by paying the associated fee for the year (may be pro-rated) and submitting the appropriate form online.

## *Website Resources*

The BCIA website offers essential information and resources to registrants. Take time to familiarize yourself with the various sections of the BCIA website at [www.bcia.com](http://www.bcia.com)

### *About BCIA*

This section on the website includes information about:

- The Institute and Agrology
- Professional Governance Act & Bylaws
- Agrologists Agronomes Canada
- BCIA Council, Standing Committees & Working Groups
- Areas of Practice and Professional Development
- Protecting the Public, Duty to Report and the Complaint Process

### *How to Apply*

This section of the website provides information about:

- Registration Requirements and Applications to BCIA
- Articling Program and Mentoring Program
- Forms including Change of Status and all Articling Program forms
- Fee Schedule

### *Complaints and Discipline*

This section includes:

- BCIA Bylaws
- Code of Ethics
- Duty to Report
- How to Submit a Complaint

### *Resources and Publications*

This section includes:

- Newsletters, Quarterly Registration Updates
- AGM minutes
- Audited Financial Reports

### *Registrant Resources* (behind log-in)

The Registrant Resources provides access to information and resources available to BCIA registrants only. This area includes:

- Professional development materials and webinars
- Annual Budgets, Branch Resources
- And more!

### Branches

This section includes a listing of branch executives and upcoming branch events and a description of branch executive roles. Consider getting involved with your branch’s activities to support your local chapter. *If you have links to resources that you would like to share with others, please forward this information to the BCIA office.*

## *Districts and Branches*

Under the *Professional Governance Act (PGA)* and Bylaws, BCIA Board structure includes seven (7) Registrant Board members and up to four (4) Lay Board members plus the immediate past President, which will be a non voting position, and is comprised from three (3) districts based on numbers per branch as follows:

- **District 1 (2 Board Members)** - Peace River, Cariboo Central Interior, Kootenay Boundary Branches and Registrant at Large (those outside of BC)
- **District 2 (2 Board Members)** - Kamloops, Okanagan, and Fraser Valley Branches
- **District 3 (3 Board Members)** - Vancouver and Victoria & Islands Branches

To comply with the *PGA*, Council has directed that the election of Board Members(s) be done by District, via online voting.

BCIA has eight (8) regional branches throughout the province. Registrants are usually assigned to the branch in their region and attend the professional development events and AGM organized by their local branch. **Nonetheless, all BCIA registrants are welcome to participate in events hosted by other branches if desired.**

### Branch Annual General Meetings (AGMs)

Branches typically hold their AGMs in the following months:

Cariboo Central Interior - October	Okanagan - February
Fraser Valley - January	Peace River - January
Kamloops - November	Vancouver - February
Kootenay Boundary - October	Victoria & Islands - October

## *Navigating the BCIA Registrant's Section*

The Registrant section on the BCIA website provides registrants with access to their personal profile, professional development reporting and record of PD hours reported. Registrants can pay renewal fees and print off their invoices. Your BCIA account allows you to add a photo and bio and change your contact information. You can also view all past BCIA events you have registered for.

### ***BCIA Profile***

Within your BCIA account, you can view your status, branch, mentor, position (on a BCIA committee or branch) and educational information. However, you are unable to change this information yourself thus if there are changes or inaccuracies, please contact the BCIA office.

Under your BCIA account you **can add and edit** your contact information and employment, plus add any organizations you might belong to and awards you have received. As well, you can add and edit a personal bio and upload a photo. The email you have set as your primary email in 'Account Settings' will be the one BCIA sends all the email notices to.

When logged in as a Registrant, you will also see the blue menu banner of which includes:

- Invoices/Receipts
- PD Reports
- Registered Events
- Registrant Resources
- Account Settings
- Sign Out

When you are logged in as an articling registrant, you are still able to navigate the public part of the BCIA website.

**Under Invoices & Receipts** – you are able to review and print all past renewal fee receipts, plus any invoices for unpaid fees.

**Under Registered Events** – you can view all BCIA events that you registered for, as well as any receipts.

**Under Account Settings** - you can change your login ID and/or your password.

The **PD Reports** is the most important section of your BCIA account. Every practicing registrant is required to record a minimum of 30 PD hours each year, with a required 3-year total minimum of 125 PD. As well, BCIA requires that a registrant declare Practice Areas.

**Under Articling Program** – this is the portal where you will enter and upload all details and documentation to complete your articling program.

***You CANNOT pay your annual renewal fee until you have entered the reporting year's PD hours AND Areas of Practice AND a renewal declaration.***

## *Registrant Resources*

The Registrant Resources section under your BCIA account provides you with webinars and materials not available to the general public. This is the section where you will find the Professional Negligence and Regulatory Offenses webinar, courses for the Articling Program that includes the BCIA Ethics for Professionals.

Other Professional Development resources, such as webinars and PowerPoints from past branch events and activities are available.

Registrants can also view all approved Council minutes, BCIA budgets and financial reports. BCIA policies, branch executive information and information on group coverage Liability Insurance are also included in this section. Take time to look over the Registrant Resources.

## *Forms*

- *Mentoring Agreement*
- *Program Checklist*

These forms are available on the BCIA website and were provided to you by the Deputy Registrar when notifying you of successful registration. If printing this journal for your records place the forms at the back of the journal or keep in your personal records.

Your success in the Articling Program is based on how engaged you are with your mentor and the ability to fulfill the requirements in a timely manner. We wish you all the best as you achieve your goals and aspirations as an agrology professional with the BC Institute of Agrologists.

