

INDIGENOUS CERTIFICATION BOARD OF CANADA



ICBOC EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

2023

Our Vision

Building on the teachings of our Indigenous ancestors, communities have an abundance of recognized traditional knowledge, skills and competencies based on indigenous worldview that supports and validates the indigenous helpers who bring cultural richness for nation wellness and sustainability.

Our Mission

To support and validate helpers' knowledge, skills and competencies that affirm traditional Indigenous cultures and healing practices leading to a compassionate holistic support system for healthy communities.

1. Education/Training Accreditation

Accreditation of training through ICBOC serves to demonstrate a level of excellence in providing culturally appropriate education/training to First Nations learners. ICBOC accredits education and training programs offered by Indigenous and mainstream educational institutions, government agencies, non-profit or corporate organizations, and by conferences organizers and independent trainers.

This type of accreditation should not be confused with the accreditation granted by institutional accreditation bodies, for example the three main Canadian bodies, CARF (<http://www.carf.org>), Accreditation Canada (<http://www.accreditation.ca/>) and the Canadian Accreditation Council (<http://www.cacohs.com>)

ICBOC's education and training programs accreditation ensures the standards sets for our certifications are met, so that the graduates of these programs can obtain their certification with us (provided they meet the work experience requirements).

ICBOC's culturally-based accreditation process not only considers the relevance of training against our training/education standards but also verifies that the training is conceived, planned, delivered, and evaluated with Indigenous input, thus enhancing the cultural competence and safety of this training.

2. Link between ICBOC's education/training accreditation and professional certification

ICBOC accredits training and education programs to ensure they meet the standards sets for our certifications, so that the graduates of these programs can obtain their certification with ICBOC (provided they meet the work experience requirements).

The Indigenous Certification Board of Canada is the first and only Certification body in Canada that uses a certification process developed by and for Indigenous unregulated workers and that implements the following principles and values:

- ICBOC's certification system is embedded in a unique workforce capacity development model that honours and reflects the realities of Indigenous workers, employers and the people they serve
- Based on the recognition that Indigenous communities have unique and legitimate philosophical and spiritual healing beliefs, needs and solutions
- Standards for the certification of indigenous practitioners in the fields related to mental wellness, addictions and community development established by indigenous people themselves
- Certification and training honour and support traditional Indigenous healing practices

- ICBOC recognizes the special skills and knowledge necessary to work effectively with Indigenous individuals, families and communities.
- Certification based largely on knowledge, skills and practice in mental wellness, alcohol/ drug addiction and with Indigenous peoples rather than on an emphasis on academic achievement.
- Authority for First Nations certification comes from a range of Indigenous partners, professionals and employers, who share a common vision of the professional standards of excellence and competence required to establish and nurture the development of a qualified indigenous unregulated workforce in various fields related to community wellness.
- Certification opportunities are developed on an ongoing basis for a range of unregulated occupation in the mental wellness, addictions and community development fields

3. ICBOC Education and training Accreditation - Principles and Values

The criteria for ICBOC accreditation are based on the principle and values of our organisation. These principles and values must be reflected in the own values and principles of the education/training provider or facilitator, in the development, delivery and evaluation process of the training and in the content of the training offered by accreditation applicants. ICBOC evaluates the match between education/training providers' values and principles and those of ICBOC by examining accreditation applicants' own statement of values and/or code of Ethics

We expect that education/training providers who seek accreditation with ICBOC will also support values and principles that are focused on the best interest of Indigenous workers who receive their training, so that these workers, in turn, can integrate those values in the services they provide to their Indigenous clients.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Cultural competence is an integral part of ICBOC accreditation criteria. It demonstrates a training provider's capacity to function in the context of Indigenous cultures.

Culture, cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity, cultural safety and cultural competence are all concepts relevant to the integrity of ICBOC's vision in regard to its professional certification, education and training accreditation process.

These concepts are also part of the larger goal of ICBOC: to ensure that professional certification serves to redress the health, economic and social inequities experienced by Indigenous peoples and to accelerate they progress towards a state of autonomy, wellness and prosperity.

In agreement with the concepts and objectives expressed by several individuals and organizations such as the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation¹ the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada, the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing and the Canadian Nurses Association in their document "Cultural Competence and Cultural Safety in First Nations, Inuit and Metis Nursing Education"², ICBOC gives full recognition to the important role cultural competencies play in effectively reducing both the inequities and the disparities in health.

¹ Honouring Our Strengths: Culture as Intervention in Addictions Treatment – TPF <http://nnapf.com/about-tpf/scope-of-work/honouring-our-strengths-culture-as-intervention-in-addictions-treatment/>

² Cultural competence & cultural safety in First Nations, Inuit and Metis Nursing Education – Making it Happen – Strengthening First Nations, Inuit and Metis Health Human Resources – 2009 – Aboriginal Nurse Association of Canada http://www.cna-nurses.ca/CNA/documents/pdf/publications/Review_of_Literature_e.pdf

These competencies are summarized as follows:

- Awareness and acceptance of other forms of knowledge (traditional Knowledge, oral Knowledge, Indigenous knowledge)
- Awareness of one's own cultural values and privileges
- Understanding the dynamics of difference
- Respect of the cultural integrity of First Nations, Inuit and Metis Peoples
- On-going development of client cultural knowledge
- Honoring, respecting clients cultural values, belief and practices
- Ability to adapt and implement practice skills to fit the cultural context of the clients being served
- Ability to engage community members and work collaboratively within communities promoting, implementing and supporting prevention, intervention, resilience and recovery and wellness
- Ability to establish reciprocal relationships – training and learning as a two-way process

Definition of the concepts related to these capacities are expanded in Cultural Competence and Cultural Safety in First Nations, Inuit and Metis Nursing Education, pages 20 to 25, at http://www.cna-nurses.ca/CNA/documents/pdf/publications/Review_of_Literature_e.pdf

1. The link between cultural competence, cultural safety and culturally safe learning

A component of the ICBOC accreditation criteria is the ability of the provider to understand the link between cultural competence and cultural safety: the impact that culturally safe training will have in improving the wellbeing of a practitioner's client and community, and their sense of trust and safety.

It is a well-known fact that Indigenous people will not access a health care system (including counselling) if they do not feel safe doing so. According to the National Aboriginal Health Organisation³ (see chart below - NAHO - 2008), the need for culturally safe care for First Nations, Inuit and Metis is matched by the need for culturally safe learning.

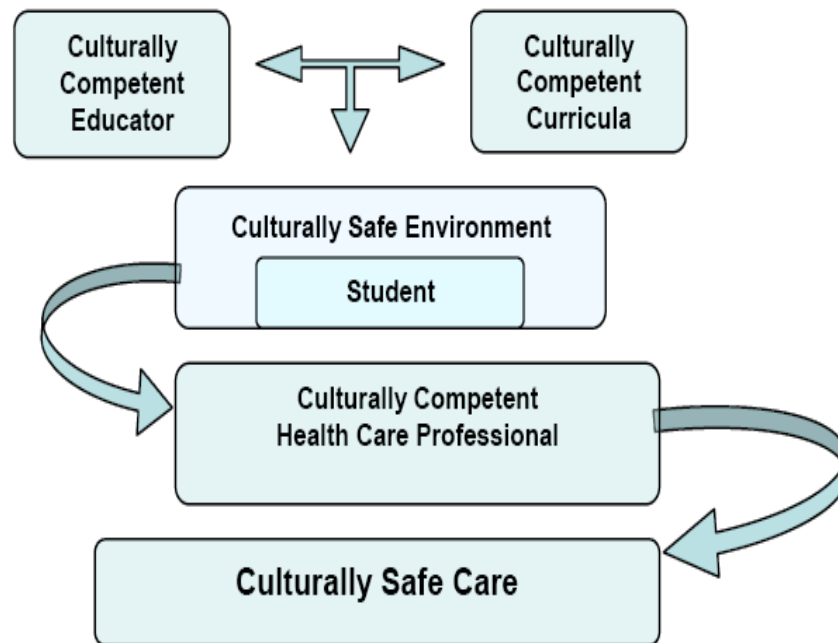
In its fact sheet on Cultural Safety, NAHO summarizes the historical evolution and key concepts of the cultural safety (<http://www.naho.ca/documents/naho/english/Culturalsafetyfactsheet.pdf>)

The National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health (NCCAH) offers several publications on cultural competency and cultural safety in health services and education.

One of their reports, "*Cultural Safety in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Public Health*" provides an in-depth look at the state of cultural safety knowledge in Aboriginal health care, including such things as terminology, core competencies, accreditation standards, undergraduate and graduate level curriculum, professional development and continuing education opportunities, and provincial and national projects engaging with the issue.

³ Cultural Competency and Safety: A Guide for Health Care Administrators, Providers and Educators
<http://www.naho.ca/documents/naho/publications/culturalCompetency.pdf>

Cultural competency/safety education continuum



2. Assessment of cultural competence/safety

The cultural competence of education and training providers is assessed in regard to the following aspects of the training offered:

- Planning/development process
- Delivery process
- Evaluation process
- Language

a) Planning/Development process

An Indigenous-designed or Indigenous-informed planning/development process is the process that will best insure that the training sessions, once ready to deliver, are culturally competent/relevant.

Cultural competence at this phase of the training project is demonstrated by soliciting the Indigenous contribution and/or participation, in a spirit of genuine belief in their expertise and in respectful consideration of their input. Community Elders should always have a place in this planning/development stage.

This participation might also be, for example, directly involving indigenous workers, employers, recognized professional experts, forging partnerships, consulting with elders from other communities, forming a consultative focus group, distributing/collecting a survey or an evaluation to/from First Nations stakeholders. Evidence of this process must be provided with the application.

b) Delivery process

The delivery process of culturally competent/safe training includes several aspects: the awareness, attitude and cultural knowledge of the instructor/facilitator, a culturally meaningful learning environment including, for example, the use of cultural protocols, cultural symbols and objects, and culturally relevant teaching/learning methods. The integration of Elders in the training delivery process should be a primary goal.

One of the means to demonstrate attention to a culturally competent delivery of training is to develop and implement a set of corporate/organisational guidelines that the training providers and instructors/facilitators can use to insure the cultural safety of those who take part in the training. An example is to ensuring the availability/presence of a qualified person able to assist in case a student is triggered is also a must.

1) Facilitators/instructors

While there are many definitions of cultural competence as they apply to educators and trainers, one important aspect of this competence is the understanding that cultural and interpersonal competences are virtually inseparable, as ultimately, it is the perceptions of the participants that will dictate the outcome of the interaction.

It is not mandatory that programs and sessions accredited by ICBOC be always delivered by First Nations facilitators, but it is strongly recommended, especially when the topics of the sessions demand the kind of personal and/or professional experience and understanding that only a person from an Aboriginal culture can possess. Some of these topics relate, for example, to the dynamics in Aboriginal families and communities or to the traditional and or ceremonial base of healing knowledge and practice.

The training provided by a non- Aboriginal Facilitator, employed by an education-training provider can be accredited, provided their cultural competence is demonstrated:

1. Knowledge and practice of methods reflecting Aboriginal epistemology
2. Knowledge of the people, their history and realities (Ex: Native Education certificate, thesis, published papers/articles etc...)
3. Knowledge of the subject (addictions/wellness)
4. Sensitive delivery style and attitude anchored in the awareness, honouring and respect of the cultural beliefs and realities of the participants (letters of reference, evaluation forms from a training session)
5. Work experience in an Aboriginal context, for example an aboriginal organisation or community

Facilitators should also be knowledgeable about Aboriginal epistemology (ways of knowing), so that the content, format and delivery of training are aligned with the receptiveness of the training participants.

"In Aboriginal educational tradition, the individual is viewed as a whole person with intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical dimensions. Each of these aspects must be addressed in the learning process. Holistic education is the term used to describe the kind of education traditionally used by Aboriginal peoples. Such education is organized to develop all aspects of the individual".⁴

⁴ Aboriginal Education Research Centre – Aboriginal Education

The document "*Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Essential to Cultural Competence*" available at <https://www.scahec.net/courses/PH%20Modules/Mod4CCRead.pdf> , offers a useful reference.

Cultural competence is now recognized as important by many service providers, including health service providers. Local, regional, provincial, national and international agencies have developed training on this topic. The "San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Training" (ICS), provided by the Provincial Health Services Authority in BC is one example: this training is designed to increase Aboriginal-specific knowledge, enhance individual self-awareness and strengthen skills for any professional working directly or indirectly with Indigenous people.
<http://www.sanyas.ca/>

Documents required for non-Aboriginal Facilitators:

- Copy of diplomas showing knowledge of history, culture, situation and worldview of Aboriginal people
- Copy of diplomas or certificates showing knowledge of the subject being taught
- CV showing work experience with Aboriginal people
- 1 letter of reference from a previous client community organisation/treatment centre
- 2 Letters of references from persons who have known the trainer for at least 3 year. 1 of the references must be from an aboriginal person, for example from an employer, supervisor, colleague, Elder
- 1 letter of reference from a participant who attended a session delivered by the trainer
- A short self-written biography
- Supervisor's evaluation

Documents required for Aboriginal facilitators:

- Copy of diplomas or certificates showing knowledge of the subject being taught
- CV demonstrating work experience
- 1 letter of reference from a person who can vouch as to the competency of the trainer
- 1 letter of reference from a participant who attended a session delivered by the trainer
- A short self-written biography
- Supervisor's evaluation

2) Learning Environment

Another competence related to the delivery process is the ability to create a culturally safe learning environment. This can be included in the corporate/organisational set of guidelines. A safe learning environment may include an Aboriginal collaborator willing and able to co-facilitate or participate in the session or act as a resource; adapted material to suit the local/regional circumstances; insuring the suitability/acceptability of objects used during the session, setting-up the training room appropriately; ensuring the respectful inclusion of cultural protocols such as opening prayers, ceremonies, sharing circles etc...

Important: A safe learning environment also include the provision of professional psychological support for learners who may be triggered during classes

<http://aerc.usask.ca/education/education.html> Source of the quote:
Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996). The Framework: Lifelong, Holistic Education. Vol 3. Ch.5. Retrieved from
http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sg/si43_e.html#2.%20The%20Framework:%20Lifelong,%20Holistic%20Education

3) Teaching methods

a) Experiential Learning

"Although practiced in many cultures, experiential learning could be described as essential First Nations traditional teaching and learning since this process entails the making of meaning from direct experiences, through reflection on doing or action. Learning through experience is a tried and true method of learning, -one that every person on the planet engages in from infancy and onward. Yet, the mainstream educational system does not universally accommodate this very rich approach to learning, one that is ideal for all learners, of any age or culture. "

First Nations Pedagogy online <http://www.firstnationspedagogy.ca/experiential.html>

Although no one study has been able to determine which method is most effective in a cross-cultural setting or which methods are most effective for particular situations, the literature does indicate that Indigenous people are more receptive to experiential approaches than to didactic approaches. The lecture or didactic approach is adequate if the only objective is to transmit surface knowledge of the subject.

Designing structured experiences and carefully instrumented exercises, paying close attention to the sequencing and mix of activities and allowing learners' time to process their experiences in groups are all critical to the success of experiential training.

The validity, legitimacy and effectiveness of experiential learning as a core indigenous approach to life and work is one of the distinguishing features of ICBOC's workforce capacity development model.

Our use of experiential learning as a foundational principle for ICBOC training accreditation process and professional certification system is aligned with the "four villages"⁵, as interpreted by Susan Weill and Ian McGill. <http://www.firstnationspedagogy.ca/experiential.html>

Village One: ICBOC assesses and accredits learning from life and work experience as the basis for creating new routes into higher education, employment and training opportunities, and professional bodies

Village Two: ICBOC focuses on experiential learning as the basis for bringing about change in the structures, purposes and curricula of mainstream and indigenous post-secondary and vocational education

Village Three: ICBOC emphasizes experiential learning as the basis for Indigenous group consciousness raising, community action and social change.

Village Four: ICBOC is concerned with Indigenous individuals' personal growth and development and experiential learning approaches that increase their self-awareness and group effectiveness.

"Experiential learning, including learning from the land, Elders, traditions and ceremonies, community, parental and family supports, as well as the workplace, is a widespread and vital—but often unrecognized—form of Aboriginal learning." ([Canadian Council on Learning](#)).

⁵ Susan Weill and Ian McGill- the four villages of experiential learning - <http://www.firstnationspedagogy.ca/experiential.html>

Although the methods enhancing experiential learning are highly regarded by ICBOC, other methods that use or combine different western approaches have their place and are not discounted .

To be considered for accreditation, the content of training programs and/or training sessions must also be directly related to ICBOC training requirements. Each certification has its own requirements in terms of core, related technical topics and in terms of cultural knowledge and skills.

Education/training providers seeking accreditation must also ensure that the content presents concepts, terminology, and socio/historico/politico/context/ examples and learning activities in a culturally appropriate manner.

b) Language

The ability to present training in the language of the participant is a significant cultural competence. This can be done in a variety of ways, for example: support written material in the language, use of a resource person in the session who speak the language and can provide clarifications if needed.

Another aspect of language as a cultural competency is the ability to present content in a way that is adapted to the participants' life and work experience, level of comprehension, using words and concepts that are easily understood.

4) Evaluation process

As indigenous nations and communities emerge from imposed sociological models, and establish and regain their own, their approach to training and education will continue to evolve. ICBOC considers that the evaluation of education and training offered in various formats is an important way to maintain their relevance and effectiveness, both in terms of their technical and their cultural aspects. Education/training providers seeking accreditation with ICBOC must ensure that they have an evaluation and monitoring evaluation process in place.

This evaluation process will differ, depending on the format of the education/ training. Formal diplomas programs from Universities and colleges will need higher level, lengthier and more substantial evaluation processes that those offered in a more informal or shorter training format.

a) Program level evaluation (university or college undergraduate or undergraduate diplomas)

As for the development and delivery stages, the regular evaluation of an education or training program at undergraduate or graduate level should involve indigenous contributors. ICBOC also asks to be informed on how this evaluation input is recorded and the recommendations implemented.

b) Participants' evaluation (short courses, workshops, in-house training, conference programs etc.)

This evaluation must be as close as possible to ICBOC following evaluation expectations

- Quality of the learning environment (all aspects cited in this guide)
- Relevance of the training
- Cultural awareness/sensitivity of the trainer
- Learning outcomes
- Strength of training session
- What could be done better
- Overall participants' satisfaction

If you need more information on the ICBOC’s education/training criteria, please contact the Registrar by email at adminasst@icboc.ca or by phone at 1 450-983-8444.