FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS 2025

CACEJ | CYCEA
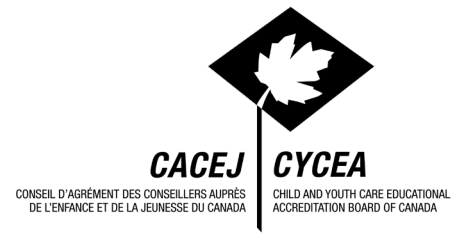CONSEIL D'AGRÉMENT DES CONSEILLERS AUPRÈS DE L'ENFANCE ET DE LA JEUNESSE DU CANADA | CHILD AND YOUTH CARE EDUCATIONAL ACCREDITATION BOARD OF CANADA

1. **Who is the Child and Youth Care Educational Accreditation Board of Canada?**
    CYCEAB is the acronym for this federally registered not-for-profit corporation. Its mission is "to promote excellence and ongoing quality enhancement in Child and Youth Care education through accreditation of post-secondary programs and advocacy for the Child and Youth Care profession."

2. **What is the purpose of accreditation?**
    Accreditation explores the question: **How does the CYC post-secondary program ensure quality in the delivery of education and training for those who serve children, youth, and families?** The accreditation activities and the site review are part of the process of answering this question.

3. **What is unique about CYCEAB accreditation?**
    CYCEAB's accreditation process is unique in comparison to many other disciplines due to the reflective nature of the narrative required for the Self-Study Report submission. In addition to the required documents on what should be done, reflective evidence of how and what is being implemented within the program is necessary. Reflective practice is essential in this process and requires program faculty to be both leading and fully engaged in the discussions initiated by the "**Engaging the Evidence"** questions. The collective perspective from faculty becomes evident in the responses, for it provides detail, CYC voice, and evidence of the link between theory and professional CYC practice.

4. **Who can apply for accreditation?**
    Accreditation is open to post-secondary Child and Youth Care programs who are members of CYCEAB.

5. **We are a CYCEAB-accredited program. Do we have to reapply when our accreditation expires and complete the entire process again?**
    Yes. Seven-year accreditation cycles ensure programs are aligned with a recognized set of competencies. Engaging in a new cycle ensures that programs respond to the evolving landscape of professional CYC practice as it relates to the changing needs, interests, and priorities of the communities served by the program. CYCEAB accreditation ensures education is current and relevant, and it sets out a process for regular, rigorous review of program goals, pedagogies, and outcomes. It facilitates dialogue and education within and across CYC programs about innovation and quality.

6. **What is the language used during the accreditation process?**
    Currently, services are offered in English.

7. **What is the cost of membership to CYCEAB?**
    Currently an annual fee of $400.00 is paid for membership from January 1 to December 31 of each year. Membership must be maintained throughout the accreditation process and thereafter, maintaining accreditation status. Accreditation and membership fees are separate. If the membership fee is changed, members are alerted in advance of invoicing for the new year of membership.

8. **Does CYCEAB have a website where I can get more information?**
   You will find additional information including an Accreditation Process flowchart under the "Accreditation" menu item at https://cycaccreditation.ca/.

9. **What is the cost to submit an accreditation application? Is there a deadline?**
   When the CYCEAB office receives your application for accreditation, they will issue an invoice for the accreditation fee. As of August 15, 2025, this fee is $6000.00. The fee is payable within 30 days of the invoice date. The application form can be found on the website under the "Accreditation" tab. The annual application deadline is September 15.

10. **Does my application for accreditation need to be approved by CYCEAB?**
    No. It is your decision on whether you are ready to apply and undertake the process to achieve accreditation. The FAQs and the checklist in Part I of the Application for Accreditation have been developed to assist a post-secondary institution and CYC program determine whether they are ready to apply for accreditation and complete it within the timeline of two years. It is crucial that the program has direct communication with the Accreditation Coordinator prior to deciding whether to apply for accreditation.

11. **How do I know when I can proceed with the accreditation process?**
    Your application will be formally received by the Board of Directors at the September board meeting following the September 15 deadline for applications. The President of CYCEAB will subsequently send you a letter identifying the two-year timeline and deadline to complete the accreditation process.

12. **Can I begin the accreditation process before my application is formally received?**
    Yes, but you will need to use and follow the versions of the accreditation documents that are dated the year you will make application. These documents are reviewed annually and may not be available until August 15 of the calendar year when the Board of Directors formally receives your application. These documents include the Application Form, the Self-Study Guide, the Site Review Guide, and the Accreditation Process Flowchart.

13. **Why is there an accreditation fee if CYCEAB is a non-profit corporation?**
    The accreditation fee of $6000 covers direct and indirect costs of accreditation. Direct costs include the one-on-one service that accreditation applicants or programs undergoing accreditation receive from the Accreditation Coordinator and the stipends paid to the reviewers and three members of the Recommendation Panel. These costs total 68% of each accreditation fee paid to ensure accreditation applicants have the support they need and that qualified reviewers are in place to conduct the site review and make recommendations to the board on accreditation.

    The remainder of the accreditation fee (32%) is directed towards other staff who assist in the accreditation process and operational costs or the day-to-day costs of operating the organization.

14. **Can accreditation fees be paid in installments?**
    Upon approval of a written payment schedule by the Board of Directors, accreditation fees may be paid in instalments if a program has submitted a written payment schedule at least 12 months in advance of their planned application for accreditation. The first payment must

be made at least 12 months prior to formal receipt of the application by the Board of Directors. Final payment must be paid upon the board's formal receipt of the accreditation application.

Applications must be submitted by September 15 of the year when the applicant is ready to start the accreditation process.

If the Board of Directors revises the accreditation fee prior to the formal receipt of a program's application for accreditation, the program shall be responsible for payment of the revised fee amount.

15. **Who will be my primary contact during the accreditation process? Who do I contact if I have any questions?**
Upon an expression of interest to the Accreditation Coordinator or the CYCEAB office (admin@cycaccreditation.ca), the Accreditation Coordinator will contact you. The Accreditation Coordinator can be reached at wendy.weninger@outlook.com or at 403-393-7254.

The Accreditation Coordinator works closely with the Operations Manager at admin@cycaccrditation.ca who will also support you throughout the accreditation process.

16. **What should our program think about when preparing for engagement in the accreditation process?**
Programs may wish to reflect on questions such as the following to determine if the "time is right" to apply for accreditation:
- Is there institutional support to engage in the accreditation process?
- What is important to us about this process?
- Are we prepared to do the work?
- Are we prepared to proceed with our current curriculum and processes?
- Will we ever be more prepared/ready?
- Are we prepared for external scrutiny by CYCEAB of our program?

17. **My institution is undergoing a program review. How do I align that with the accreditation self-study?**
There are options to ensure that institutions do not have to duplicate their work. Applicants are encouraged to discuss options with the Accreditation Coordinator.

18. **Is an institutional program review required to undertake accreditation?**
No. While it is not essential that there has been a recent institutional program review, it is important to note that information from institutional reviews provides background and support to what is required by CYCEAB. What is essential is that the program has at least four years of graduates in which the curriculum meets the CYCEAB requirements outlined in the Self-Study Guide in section "1.4 Program Structure and Course Sequencing."

There will be programs who have completed an institutional program review in the years immediately prior to engaging in the CYCEAB accreditation process, and others who have not. Still others will align their program review with the accreditation process and coordinate the two to run parallel, and there may be programs who complete the CYCEAB accreditation in place of the program review.

19. **With respect to CYCEAB, what is a diploma and what is a degree?**
A diploma refers to a two- or three-year post-secondary qualification from a college or university. A degree includes a Bachelors (four years), Masters, or Doctoral post-secondary credential.

20. **How long is the accreditation process, from start to finish? What are the deadlines, who sets the deadlines, what if I miss a deadline?**
The accreditation process may take up to two years, based on the process and requirements outlined in the Self-Study Guide and the Accreditation Process Flowchart. The deadline is set by CYCEAB. As mentioned earlier you will receive from CYCEAB a letter identifying the two-year timeline and deadline for completing the accreditation process after the board formally receives the application in September.

    The Accreditation Coordinator and Operations Manager will support you throughout the accreditation process and as situations arise, they will provide guidance. There are deadlines that are regulated as described in the Accreditation Process Flowchart, e.g., the Reviewers' Report is due to CYCEAB four weeks from the end date of the site review. Missed deadlines and options can be discussed with the Accreditation Coordinator.

21. **Can extensions of the accreditation process be granted?**
A request for an extension can be granted when an applicant provides written documentation to CYCEAB clearly detailing the circumstances surrounding the request. An extension can be issued up to a maximum of 90 days, as approved by the Accreditation Coordinator. The Accreditation Coordinator will then report the approval of this extension to the board.

    Requests for exceptions beyond the 90-day extension are to be submitted via written documentation to the Board of Directors at admin@cycaccreditation.ca. The board will, in turn, determine whether an extension should be granted and provide a written response to the applicant within ten business days of receiving a request for such an extension. If the request is granted, the written response from the CYCEAB Board of Directors will identify the revised timeline and an invoice will be sent for the extension fee.

22. **What are the resources and time that my program needs to complete the accreditation process? What should I expect?**
First, it is essential that there is institutional support to engage in the accreditation process. There must also be a primary program contact who can lead the accreditation process. Resources required depend on the size of the program, the number of people that will be involved, and the time the program team can dedicate to the accreditation process. The Accreditation Coordinator can help you and your program team identify required resources but recognize that unanticipated needs may arise.

    It is advisable that consideration be given to providing release time for the accreditation lead and/or faculty to engage in the process and to meet as a team at regularly scheduled times while the program is engaged in the process. Release time can also include time for compiling the information and writing the Self-Study submission, setting up and participating in the site review, etc. Successfully accredited programs suggest that team meetings focused solely on the accreditation process occur monthly at minimum.

Other institutional departments must also be available to assist in providing access to required policies, documents, and information as outlined in the "What You Need" sections of the Self-Study Guide.

23. **What if our program does not meet all the standards … should we still apply? For example, if CYCEAB requires two courses on "families" and we only have one course, is it even possible to be accredited? Or practicum hours are not enough, or maybe a program has a part-time faculty that does not meet the qualifications yet.**
Any variations to what is stated in the Self-Study Guide should be discussed prior to your application with the Accreditation Coordinator. For newer programs, what is essential is that the program has at least four years of graduates in which the curriculum meets the CYCEAB requirements outlined in section "1.4 Program Structure and Course Sequencing of the Self-Study Guide."

24. **I heard something about data gathering surveys and focus groups. What is their purpose and what support does CYCEAB provide?**
Surveys and focus groups are two methods for gathering feedback on your program. Gathering meaningful data from relevant individuals and groups is important for it will provide you insight into various facets of your program, helping you to recognize areas of strength and those that may need improvement.

You will be provided with mandatory questions to use in your own customized surveys and/or focus groups. You are required to include feedback from current students, alumni from the past five years, employment agencies, practicum sites, and advisory committees in your self-study submission.

Other options for collecting feedback can be discussed with the Accreditation Coordinator.

25. **Can we use our institution's already existing data, like KPI results? That is, can I just use what my institution already has in place?**
The questions you are provided by CYCEAB for your data collection and feedback methods are linked directly to professional practice. This may not be the information gathered in your institution's surveys. Other methods of feedback gathering, in place of surveys or focus groups, as discussed with the Accreditation Coordinator, will need to explore elements of professional practice. Institutional data, such as KPI results, are excellent additions to providing support to the narrative reflection responses you will provide in the "Engaging the Evidence."

26. **How long and/or comprehensive is the Self-Study Report expected to be?**
The Self-Study Report represents extensive reflection by the CYC faculty complement, often involving the program's administration and supporting departments who assist with providing content, reference documents, institutional reports, policies, institutional survey data, etc. The Self-Study Report must meet the requirements in the "**What You Need***"* and the **"Engaging the Evidence"** sections of the Self-Study Guide. The response to each numbered item in the "Engaging the Evidence" section must show evidence on how extensive reflection has contributed to a detailed, comprehensive narrative for each item. For example, how is what is being asked demonstrated in the curriculum, assessments, and learning spaces by faculty and students and by program policies, etc.?

Most accredited programs have submitted Self-Study Reports of 90-120 pages in length, PLUS the additional appendices from the "What You Need" listings in each section. It is

important to remember that the reviewers will not be familiar with your program, so anything they need to know to be able to conduct a site review must be included.

27. Is a Quality Enhancement Plan necessary?

Developing and maintaining a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is a required standard to achieve CYCEAB accreditation. It is a requirement found in section 1.8 of the Self-Study Guide. It provides an opportunity for post-secondary CYC programs to focus on ongoing program development and enhancement in alignment with professional practice.

Upon receiving the accreditation decision letter wherein recommendations for improvement are identified, it is important that the QEP is updated to include these recommendations. When applying for another cycle of accreditation, your previous QEP will be an important reference point for the development of your next self-study report and for the site reviewers. During the accreditation process, you will be asked to provide a detailed summary of the progress made on your previous QEP while engaging in the full self-study process. Also, accredited programs provide a summary of the progress made on their QEP at the two-year mark of accreditation.

A sample Quality Enhancement Plan can be found on the CYCEAB website. See [ACCREDITATION | Child and Youth Care Educational Accreditation Board of Canada (cycaccreditation.ca)](https://cycaccreditation.ca).

28. What is a submission review?

A submission review is a review of the Self-Study Report and its supporting documentation by the Accreditation Coordinator and assigned reviewers to ensure the report meets the requirements in the "**What You Need"** and **"Engaging the Evidence"** sections of the Self-Study Guide. A successful submission review will mean that all requirements have been met and that it is evident that extensive reflection has contributed to a detailed, comprehensive narrative in each of the numbered "Engaging the Evidence" sections.

An accreditation applicant proceeds to the site review stage of the CYCEAB accreditation process following a successful submission review of the Self-Study Report and its supporting documentation.

29. What if my submission review is not successful?

If the submission review reveals that further information is required in the Self-Study Report, the Accreditation Coordinator (AC) will advise the accreditation applicant that they have an opportunity to revise the report and submit it for another review. The AC will advise the accreditation applicant on the areas requiring revision, based on combined feedback from the reviewers and Accreditation Coordinator.

If the second submission does not meet the requirements outlined in the Self-Study Guide, the Accreditation Coordinator will advise the CYCEAB President and the Operations Manager and Senior Governance Officer. A letter under the President's signature will be sent via email to the accreditation applicant informing them that their Self-Study Report does not meet the requirements for them to proceed to the Site Review stage and consequently their accreditation application has been closed. Accreditation applicants can appeal the decision, or they can re-apply for accreditation in the future according to CYCEAB application deadlines.

30. **What is the purpose of the site review?**
    The focus of the site review is on identifying the evidence that confirms adequate articulation of educational practices in the context of the CYC profession and to confirm the successful adoption of these practices. It provides reviewers with the opportunity to explore further, during conversations they will have with various focus groups, the already provided information in the Self-Study Report and specifically what the information means with regards to student learning and engaging in the move to professional practice. It is an expansion of what the reviewers have already learned through reading the Self-Study Report. It is not a time to provide the reviewers first-time information which should have been included in the Self-Study Report. An accredited program must also demonstrate ongoing self-assessment, therefore active engagement in quality enhancement activities is required.

31. **Who selects the reviewers?**
    The Operations Manager and Senior Governance Officer (OM), in consultation with the appropriate board designate, selects the reviewers from a board-approved list once the accreditation applicant has provided a general scheduling block for a site review. The OM provides the names of the reviewers to the accreditation applicant before the submission review and the contact information following the submission review. Upon a successful submission review, the accreditation applicant works directly with the reviewers to schedule the site review on dates and times that are convenient to both the applicant and the reviewers. All site reviews are virtual.

32. **How many reviewers are required?**
    Two board-approved reviewers are required for each virtual site review. One reviewer must be from outside of the institution's geographical region as defined by CYCEAB.

33. **How are the regions defined by CYCEAB?**
    The regions are defined in CYCEAB bylaws as follows:
    - Western region includes British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.
    - Central and Northern region includes Ontario, Quebec, Nunavut, Northwest Territories, and Yukon.
    - Eastern region includes Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island.

34. **Are the reviewers compensated for each review?**
    CYCEAB pays each reviewer a stipend per submission review and upon completion of their responsibilities around a site review, including the submission of the Reviewers' Report and their meeting with the Recommendation Panel.

35. **Who needs to be involved in the site review (faculty, students, etc.)?**
    Please refer to the information provided in the Site Review Guide, which can be found on the CYCEAB website, under the "Accreditation" tab.

36. **Can we send our report to the reviewers by email or publish them on our own file sharing platforms?**
    No. Your Self-Study Report including supporting documentation is made available through the CYCEAB official file sharing site. The CYCEAB Operations Manager and Senior Governance Officer provides access to this site for the accreditation applicant,

Accreditation Coordinator, reviewers, and members of the Recommendation Panel. An accreditation applicant uploads the Self-Study Report and its supporting documentation to this site.

37. **What is the role of the Recommendation Panel?**
The Recommendation Panel, comprised of three experienced CYCEAB-approved reviewers, makes a recommendation to the Board of Directors on whether to grant accreditation or deny accreditation. This recommendation is based on a review of the accreditation reports and documentation that have been submitted by the accreditation applicants and reviewers. The panel can also make recommendations for improvement.

38. **Does the Recommendation Panel meet with the reviewers?**
Reviewers make an oral presentation to the Recommendation Panel. The presentation includes the following:
   - An overview of the site review.
   - Identification of the key strengths and challenges identified in the Reviewers' Report.
   - An explanation of key recommendations provided to the program based on the site review.
   - Further details or clarification as required by the Recommendation Panel.

39. **Are the members of the Recommendation Panel compensated for the work they do to make their recommendations to the Board of Directors?**
Members of the Recommendation Panel each receive a stipend upon the submission of their report to the Board of Directors.

40. **If successful, how long will our program be accredited before the next round?**
Seven (7) years. Institutions must always maintain active membership with CYCEAB during this period to preserve their accreditation status.

41. **Is there any follow-up post-accreditation?**
Yes. Two years after achieving accreditation status, CYCEAB-accredited programs provide a written report detailing the progress the program is making on its Quality Enhancement Plan including the recommendations made by the Recommendation Panel. This report is submitted to the board via the Accreditation Coordinator.