



Ordre des géologues
du Québec

General guide for the training supervisor

*Overseeing the acquisition of competencies in a supervised
apprenticeship or training period*

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Preface

Overseeing the training leading to admission to the profession

The acquisition of professional experience under supervision constitutes a fundamental aspect of preparing for the practice of the geology profession. This experience enables the trainee¹ or Geologist-in-training (GIT) to develop essential competencies not acquired during academic training. Professional experience is acquired under supervision in the course of one or successive training periods in a work environment, generally with a private or public sector employer.

The legal framework is mainly given in the *Regulation respecting the conditions and procedures for the issuance of permits by the Ordre des géologues du Québec* and the *Regulation respecting the professional activities that may be engaged in by persons other than geologists*. The methodology is provided in the Portfolio Guide² and in associated assessment and confirmation forms.

This guide³ is intended for the training supervisor and describes the oversight during the acquisition of professional experience by the trainee. This document defines and clarifies the role and responsibilities of the training supervisor in conformity with the regulations. This guide also touches upon several related topics of interests to companies or organizations employing geologists-in-training, and also to all geologists that contribute to the training of GITs.

Developing competencies through practical experience

The training period represents a partnership between the geology profession and companies or institutions employing geologists. It constitutes an essential element in the process of preparation for and admission to the profession. The regulation stipulates the training objectives as follows:

“The purpose of practical training is to ensure that it allows the trainee to acquire the professional autonomy needed to practice the profession of Geologist. To that end, it must enable to trainee to apply the theoretical knowledge and techniques acquired during his or her studies in geology and must include the following activities:

1° geological data gathering and analysis;

2° management and leadership of a work team;

3° project management, including the financial aspects;

4° written and oral communication, with an administration, peers or the public, related to the practice of the profession. »

¹ Person registered as a GIT with the Ordre and thereby authorized to perform activities reserved to Geologists under supervision with the aim of acquiring experience necessary to be eligible to a Geologist's Permit.

² *Le Guide du portfolio*, Ordre des géologues du Québec

³ Other aspects of admission concerning academic training, the Professional exam, language requirements or prior judicial records are not covered in the present guide.

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The period with a training supervisor gives the GIT the opportunity to:

- Apply his theoretical knowledge and improve his technical knowledge;
- Develop and exert his judgment, his sense of initiative and his leadership and management abilities;
- Understand and adhere to professional ethics;
- Learn to fulfill the needs of a client and/or of a company; and to identify critical issues and solve problems in real-life situations;
- Develop an entrepreneurial spirit;
- Improve his/her skills in professional communication and interpersonal relations.

The expected behaviours result from the “competencies of the geologist”; i.e. the knowledge, skills and personal attitudes documented in the Compendium of competencies⁴. The “practical experience” components focus on acquiring competencies expected of a novice geologist⁵. It is expected that the GIT acquires, during the training, experience that is varied and significant with respect to the competencies of a geologist.

⁴ RÉFÉRENTIEL DES COMPÉTENCES INITIALES DES GÉOLOGUES DU QUÉBEC, Ordre des géologues du Québec, mai 2012

⁵Geologist with less than three years of relevant work experience after obtaining a Geologist’s Permit

1. Role of the training supervisor

1.1 The importance of supervision

It is essential to provide effective supervision to ensure the development of a trainee as a professional and an employee. The supervision gives the trainee the opportunity to acquire competencies, to produce quality work and to gradually assume greater responsibilities. The work generated by the trainee must be adequately supervised under the general guidance of a professional geologist⁶.

The training supervisor must ensure that each trainee is provided with adequate supervision which is constant, proactive and constructive. The process for oversight of the training provides tools for directing, monitoring and evaluating the progress accomplished by the future geologist

The host organisations commonly have their own internal procedures for supervision and evaluation of performance. The supervision proposed in this document is not intended to replace existing internal procedures.

The supervision of the training involves three distinct functions, as follows:

- the **training supervisor**;
- the **advisor**;
- the **direct supervisor**.

Although this guide deals essentially with the role of the training supervisor, a summary of the responsibilities of the advisor and direct supervisor is presented hereafter in order to show their contribution to the training of the apprentice. It should be noted that, notwithstanding the fact that all three functions are described separately, they can be (and frequently are) assumed by the same person, as outlined in the Portfolio Guide. This situation currently applies in multiple organisations.

1.1.1 Key contributors in the acquisition of practical experience by GITs

The training supervisor, in partnership with the Order, works to improve the process for the acquisition of competencies in order to produce better Geologists. The training supervisor is responsible for supervising the apprenticeship of the Geologist-in-training. He works directly with the trainee and, when he delegates his supervisory tasks, remains available and able to closely monitor the evolution of the GIT. He places the trainee in a work environment conducive to his development and ensures that the GIT is inducted into all aspects of the practice of the profession. In performing his functions, the training supervisor can communicate with the Ordre so as to address any questions or discuss concerns or suggestions with respect to the training of a GIT. Also, the training supervisor periodically evaluates the progress of the trainee and, at the end of a successful training period, recommends awarding a Geologist's Permit.

The advisor contributes to ensuring that the practical experience that the GIT is exposed to is sufficient, pertinent and high quality, and that it allows the acquisition of the competencies expected of a novice geologist at an adequate depth and breadth. The advisor is a member in good standing of a professional provincial order; he is called upon, periodically or if necessary,

⁶ or a legally authorized professional

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to meet the training supervisor or the trainee to discuss all matters pertaining to the training period. His role is to support the training supervisor when necessary. The training supervisor may directly call upon an advisor for help in supervising a trainee. The Ordre may, if necessary, recommend an advisor to assist a training supervisor in his functions.

The **direct supervisor** is responsible for the day to day supervision of the trainee and must be deemed competent by the training supervisor to supervise a task or an assignment. The direct supervisor is responsible for:

- evaluating the performance of the trainee during his assignments;
- making recommendations to the GIT, and; informing the training supervisor of the acquisition of competencies by the GIT, normally by using the performance management system already in place and, as required, based on the Portfolio.

The **host organisation** (consulting firm, company, public sector institution) has the duties and responsibilities of an employer. Furthermore, the host organisation assumes an important role by welcoming trainees and by integrating into its procedures the supervised training process implemented by the Ordre.

The **trainee** is responsible for establishing and preserving his Portfolio, while assuming the responsibility for his personal learning during the training period. He must document and record in his portfolio all situations of practical experience he was exposed to which were instrumental in the acquisition of competencies. This process includes self-evaluation of key learning and monitoring of the acquisition of competencies during the training period. The GIT is expected to: acquire and expand professional skills; develop professional judgment; show adherence to professional ethics and values, and develop a sense of belonging to the geology profession.

1.2 Characteristics of the training supervisor

The training supervisor must:

- Be a member in good standing of a professional provincial order (In Quebec, he must be a member in good standing of the Ordre des géologues) licensed for at least 5 years; an engineer authorised to practice in geology may act as training-supervisor;
- Have sufficient authority and the support of the host organisation, to:
 - Ensure the implementation of professional requirements related to supervised training and to the acquisition of practical experience;
 - Influence the training of GITs.
- Be familiar with the regulations and procedures that govern the practical and theoretical training within his organisation; be able to apply the professional requirements with respect to supervision of training, to the acquisition of practical experience, and to the application of the geologists' Professional Code of ethics.

1.3 Obligations of the training supervisor

The training supervisor takes general responsibility for the supervision and training of the trainee in the training period. The participation and obligations of the training supervisor with respect to the organisation of the training period will depend on the size and nature of the host organisation. For example, an organisation with multiple establishments or a large staff and human resources department may plan and manage training periods at a corporate level, and

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the training supervisor could then perform his role under the procedures of the organisation and be responsible for training supervision in the (his) local business unit or work group. As required under the *Regulation respecting the conditions and procedures for the issuance of permits by the Ordre des géologues du Québec*:

The training supervisor must:

1° provide the trainee with a work environment that is conducive to learning and to the development of competencies;

2° promote the trainee's integration into the workplace;

3° inform the trainee about how the workplace operates and the resources available;

4° determine the trainee's tasks and state how the work is to be performed and the deadlines to be met; 5° help the trainee organize his or her work and acquire management skills;

6° progressively enable the trainee to practice the professional activities reserved for Geologists;

7° regularly evaluate the tasks accomplished by the trainee;

8° provide the Board of Examiners with all the information it requires and, at the appropriate time, produce the trainee evaluation report specified in the regulation.

To fulfil his responsibilities, the training supervisor must, among other things:

- Commit to taking charge of the trainee and to producing the required reports;
- Help the trainee to grasp all facets of the profession, notably the obligations resulting from the Code of Ethics;
- Ensure that the work environment and professional situations to which the trainee is exposed are suitable for his knowledge and skill level and allow the development of his competencies as expected;
- As required, be in contact with the advisor or the direct supervisor to verify that:
 - The trainee is met with regularly to monitor his progress;
 - The work environment and professional situations remain appropriate;
 - The trainee meets expectations in terms of progress vs the training program;
- Periodically review the documents in the trainee Portfolio and evaluate his progress with respect to the defined objectives;
- Ensure that the host organisation keeps an up to date and adequate work record and that these records are open for auditing by the Ordre; ensure that the host organisation authorises the incorporation of all necessary documents in the apprentice's Portfolio in compliance with the organization's confidentiality policy⁷.

The training supervisor must immediately notify the trainee of any situation preventing him or her from acting in that capacity. Moreover, the training supervisor must inform the Ordre of any significant change to his/her status or to the training program.

⁷ see Appendix II for suggestions on how to deal with confidentiality issues.

2. Offer of Training period

The training supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the host organization provides training designed for geology trainees based on the following components:

- trainee positions providing a sufficient range of assignments of growing complexity, with increasing responsibilities and high quality practical experiences related to the required competencies;
- required personnel and processes to supervise, monitor and advise trainees for the purpose of acquisition of competencies; compliance with requirements of the Ordre concerning evaluation reports and constitution of the Portfolio.

2.1 Practical experience

The training period must allow the trainee to acquire and demonstrate the competencies expected of a novice geologist. The minimum duration of training is three years⁸, which can be completed in one continuous period or by combining several distinct periods (in accordance with trainee employment). The training period must meet the minimum requirements concerning the depth and breadth of competencies to be acquired. Please consult the Portfolio Guide and associated documents for more information.

2.2 Characteristics of the host organisation

The organisation accepting geology trainees (host organisation) provides the following:

- support of the geology profession by the upper management of the organization, a commitment to training, a vision as a learning organization, and a commitment at upper echelons to the training of the GITs;
- availability of geologist(s) to create an ethical environment, to teach, to act as role models and explain the rules of the Code of ethics, and to provide adequate supervision for the trainee;
- a work environment with appropriate ethical values, expressed as follow:
 - a written code of ethics, and/or an acceptance of the Code of ethics of the profession;
 - support for the development and application of professional judgment and integrity and objectivity in work at all times;
 - supervision and provision of guidance on concrete ethical questions or issues, in the context of training through practical experience and continuous evaluation of progress made.

The host organisation must commit to:

- providing an training period offering a varying and progressive range of situations so as to allow the trainee to acquire and increase his competencies relative to the level achieved and the objectives defined in accordance with the regulations;
- providing an adequate supervision for all trainees, including those working offsite or abroad;
- providing practical training or ensuring that it is provided.

⁸ The effective duration of the training period may be reduced if the candidate can demonstrate equivalency of training through advanced degrees or prior work experience.

Organisations accepting trainees in more than one location ideally provide a training supervisor at each venue. An organisation may also designate one training supervisor responsible for the training program for the whole organisation while acting within the parameters of the internal management

2.3 Quality of the Work Environment

To provide a positive practical experience to future geologists, the host organisation must offer a working environment that defines, encourages, supervises and rewards work performance, the acquisition of professional competencies, personal qualities, ethical behaviour, and professionalism expected from a geologist.

The host organisation must:

- provide a suitable work environment that prepares trainees to become geologists;
- facilitates the ethics, values, independence, objectivity and cooperation essential to the practice of the geology profession;
- provide a proactive and constructive supervision by seasoned professionals;
- encourage trainees to participate in tasks which engage their competencies in various domains;
- favour a commitment towards continuous learning and the continuous acquisition of competencies;
- ensure that the training supervisor and the advisor (if applicable) can have regular constructive meetings with the trainee to specifically discuss the acquisition of competencies;
- ensure that offsite trainees are in appropriate work environments.

The training supervisor retains the responsibility of ensuring that a trainee working offsite or abroad benefits from continual supervision, in compliance with the fundamental principles conveyed in this document. When the training supervisor gives a trainee the opportunity to work offsite or abroad, he must ensure that the trainee will benefit from a work environment applying the best practices for training, including adequate direct supervision.

In general, the direct supervisor (if applicable) is normally on site where the trainee carries out the majority of his daily tasks. The advisor (if applicable) could work at the office to which the trainee is seconded and will be in regular communication with the direct supervisor.

2.3.1 Policies and Practices

The host organisation must have in place suitable policies and practices under which the trainee can:

- carry out his work in compliance with the values of ethical behaviour and professionalism expected from geologists, acquire and implement personal attributes and professional competencies, and become acquainted with a range of specific competencies;
- acquire a diversified practical experience combining depth and range, which implies working on projects and initiatives that are both diverse and of increasing complexity;
- assume tasks of increasing complexity requiring higher levels of responsibilities and/or knowledge and expertise.

2.3.2 Terms of employment

The geologist-in-training must be an employee of the host organisation and adhere to a mutually agreed contract, which can be of limited duration. A GIT cannot offer consulting professional services unless under the direct supervision of a training supervisor. As a trainee and with respect to employment in geology, the GIT does not have the necessary autonomy to be considered “self-employed” in accordance with current regulations and laws pertaining to employment.

The work assigned to the trainee must correspond to the expected level of responsibilities and tasks expected of a GIT and must be subject to adequate supervision.

The job designation or title of a trainee must not give the impression that the candidate is a (registered) geologist.

In addition, it is expected that the host organisation will allow the trainee to take legitimate leaves of absence to take part in training activities by the Ordre or to prepare for and/or take the Professional Exam. The extent of any authorized leave of absence is to be decided by the training supervisor and the apprentice.

2.3.3 Training

The host organisation must take into account the fact that the GIT has to satisfy considerable demands from the Ordre with respect to professional training. The organisation is committed to supporting the professional development of the GIT leading to the issuance of the geologist permit. The host organisation or an approved subsidiary office must:

- inform the trainee of the policies, practices of the organisation and the requirements of the geology profession with respect to professionalism, ethical behaviour, personal attributes, professional and specific competencies and to professional training processes;
- inform the GIT as to how the policies and practices of the organisation define, promote, favor and supervise the acquisition and practice of ethical behaviour, professionalism, personal attributes, professional and specific competencies of geologists.

3. Communication with the Ordre and Training Period Documentation

The training period involves the production of various documents and reports by the trainee and supervisor. Beyond the production and retention of these documents, various communications with the Ordre may be required.

In general, this process includes communications linked to the three steps: enrollment as a trainee, support during the training period, and conclusion of the training period.

3.1 Obligations of the Training supervisor

According to his/her professional obligations, the training supervisor commits to providing the Ordre with all required information regarding the training period and the trainees under his responsibility. The supervisor must also ensure that the Ordre has access to all necessary files and information.

The production and transfer to the Ordre of documents relating to the training period is the full responsibility of the trainee. The training supervisor has the responsibility of verifying and certifying these documents, and annotating them as required. The training supervisor must also ensure that authorisation for the retention of these documents is in place.

Finally, the training supervisor is responsible for supervising any trainee under his authority, as long as he or she remains under his authority, and until such time as the trainee is admitted to the Order as a Professional Geologist, where applicable. In case of a material change in the training supervisor's circumstances, or those of the trainee, which results in a rupture in the supervisor-trainee relationship, the training supervisor must complete all formalities and reports, and facilitate the transfer of oversight to his/her successor (the new training supervisor).

3.2 Enrollment in the Training period

Anyone engaged to undertake geological work to gain experience (with a view to obtaining a license to practice geology) must register as a trainee with the Ordre, in order to obtain authorization to practice geology. The candidate's application must be certified by a qualified geologist who, in signing the request for registration, assumes the responsibility of a training supervisor.

After the enrollment of the trainee, the first undertaking of the training supervisor is to orient the trainee in his future tasks and responsibilities. Guidance given by the training supervisor will be reflected in the trainee's planning which is to be recorded by the latter in form J10.

As required, the training supervisor may communicate with the Ordre, which may communicate with the training supervisor for any purpose related to the registration process.

3.3 Communications and periodic monitoring during a Training Period

The training supervisor may, if necessary, communicate with the Ordre to obtain or transmit any information over the course of the training period. The Ordre may also communicate with the training supervisor for similar reasons.

The training supervisor must regularly verify the apprentice's progress through:

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1. defining suitable objectives and giving appropriate tasks to the apprentice;
2. monitoring the work of the trainee (supervision, advice, etc., see appendix I...);
3. evaluating, objectively and equitably, the progress in terms of competence and personal qualities;
4. authenticating the various documents in the apprentice's Portfolio.

3.4 Training period Report

The trainee is required to produce a report on his training period, to which the training supervisor should contribute, under the following three distinct circumstances:

1. Annually, to allow the renewal of registration for the training period.
2. On an interruption of the training period, due to termination of the trainee's position, or on the termination of the trainee-training supervisor relationship, due to the reassignment of either party to a different position.

At the end of the training period; that is, when the trainee has completed the minimum period of practice under supervision, and has demonstrated attainment of the required competency objectives to the satisfaction of the training supervisor.

The trainee must then complete and produce a declaration under Article 9 of the Regulation. This declaration is to be accompanied by the monitoring evaluations prepared in the course of the training period (see Chapter 3.3) and a final update on production of the training period report.

The training supervisor is to complete the report prepared by the trainee by adding a statement confirming the period that the trainee was employed under his authority, and attests that:

- the trainee has progressed and reached the levels declared;
- (where applicable) the trainee satisfies the requirements with respect to the number of working hours constituting pertinent experience, and indicates the total number of working hours.

The statement also includes an assessment of the trainee with respect to:

- a) attitude and behaviour in terms of personal discipline and human relationships;
- b) good character, professional awareness, integrity, respect of ethics;
- c) competence in communication, an accurate and informed application of pertinent knowledge and professional judgment.

4.0 Additional Comments and Clarifications

The trainee is responsible for documenting his training period in the Portfolio that he establishes and maintains for the duration of his training period, and for a minimum of one year after the issuance of his permit. The trainee is responsible for safeguarding his Portfolio, and must be able to produce it, in whole or in part, at the request of the Ordre.

The trainee must advise the Ordre's secretary within 30 days of any change to the information provided in his application for or renewal of registration.

The trainee is responsible for the production of the training period report at the appropriate time for the renewal of his registration; however, the training supervisor must plan for and allocate the time required for meetings and evaluation.

At the close of the training period allowing the trainee to satisfy the practical experience requirements for the issuance of a Geologist's Permit; the training supervisor is to recommend specifically that the trainee be admitted as a professional member of the Ordre.

Where applicable, the training supervisor must ensure that the trainee's advisor or direct supervisor is satisfied with the trainee's progress, and that there is no impediment to recommending the issuance to the trainee of a Geologist's Permit. The training supervisor should not sign the final training period report without being certain that the objectives of the training program were realized.

If the training supervisor declines or is unable to produce the required assessments or complete the training period report, the trainee can call upon the Secretary of the Ordre, who will take the appropriate action.

To be eligible to a Geologist's Permit, one must document fulfillment of the requirements for professional training as per the applicable regulation. Therefore, a GIT is required to produce a report stating that the GIT has completed the training period and attained the stated objectives. This report includes the following parts:

- the respective declarations of the GIT and the training supervisor (on Form J11), confirming the time period and the tasks accomplished by the GIT under the responsibility of the training supervisor;
- assessment of the professional competences and personal qualities of the GIT (on Form J12);
- certification that the GIT has attained level 2 for a Contextual Competency (on a Form of the J13 series).

During the training period, progress reports have to be submitted periodically at least once a year.

Appendix I: Supervisor feedback and notes in portfolio documents

During the training period, the trainee is to create a Portfolio containing various progress reports approved by the training supervisor and copies of documents corroborating the work accomplished by the trainee plus relevant notes on the ongoing development of competencies and personal qualities.

A portfolio document is significant if justified and annotated by the training supervisor. Relevant work documents and assessment reports are annotated as soon as possible by the training supervisor, thereby allowing the GIT to make the necessary adjustments without delay and avoid waiting for the end of a long training period to get feedback.

During the training period, the portfolio and the follow-up assessment aim at supporting the GIT in the practice of the profession. Annotations by the training supervisor are essentially explicative and descriptive in order to facilitate the progress of the GIT in his/her training. A written note must therefore be understood by the GIT to whom it is addressed and also be linked to the development objectives of the GIT.

In effective feedback, a note should clearly target and specify the nature of the error to be corrected, provide advice or suggest appropriate methods so as to guide the improvements. In this manner, the GIT will be informed on improvements to be sought in his/her work.

Effective feedback is characterized by:

- 1) quality of annotations
- 2) timeliness of interventions; and
- 3) precision of required adjustments specified.

During the training period, the training supervisor communicates verbally or in writing with the GIT for the following purposes : to get the GIT to make necessary adjustments to his/her practice; to document the assessments; and to ensure comprehensive training of the GIT at the end of the training period.

Appendix II: Confidentiality Issues with Respect to Document Safekeeping by the Trainee

Within the framework of the training program, the trainee is to produce a Portfolio containing various progress reports approved by the training supervisor and copies of documents corroborating the work accomplished by him/herself: the artefacts.

The trainee must keep the Portfolio for the duration of the training period and for at least a year after getting a geologist's permit. The trainee must maintain the confidentiality and security of the Portfolio and its contents, and must be able to present the complete Portfolio to the Board of Examiners upon request. This obligation applies until the completion of the training period, and for a minimum of one year after the initial registration with the Ordre.

Any confidential information contained in the Portfolio is to be destroyed after the GIT has attained professional status or when training is abandoned.

The trainee is normally bound by a non-disclosure agreement with his employer, and is held by confidentiality obligations contained in the geologist's Code of Ethics. The Board of Examiners and staff of the Ordre are all bound by non-disclosure agreements, and are also bound by the Geologist's Code of Ethics. However, the training supervisor has access only to documents completed or acquired under his direction.

Since the trainee and all others that could be authorized to access the Portfolio documents are bound by a non-disclosure agreement, there should be no restriction on preserving the documents demonstrating the GIT's work during the training period.

However, some organisations may be reluctant to permit the preservation of such documents, due to the possibility that they may contain information the organisation wishes to keep secret. In this case, it is the responsibility of the training supervisor, in consultation with the organisation, to define guidelines for the safeguarding of relevant attesting documents without risking breaches of confidentiality.

An initial approach is to choose public documents (many documents are public, such as claim holder work reports). A second approach is to identify all types of documents that contain no confidential information (e.g., work safety procedures). If necessary, it is acceptable to blank identification information included in the documents to be kept in the Portfolio.