



Guide Book

Vocational Rehabilitation Association of Canada

The Vocational Rehabilitation Association of Canada

The Vocational Rehabilitation Association of Canada (VRA Canada) supports our members in promoting, providing and advocating for the delivery of vocational/prevocational rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities. Our members are from a variety of disciplines and are employed in many facets of rehabilitation. The Association recognizes the strength in the diversity of its membership and that rehabilitation is not specific to one discipline but influenced by many. This ensures an interdisciplinary approach and fosters transdisciplinary collaboration.

We are committed to promoting professional excellence in our members, who are recognized as the experts in the provision of vocational/prevocational rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities. Membership is open to anyone working in the field of rehabilitation and to those who are interested in furthering the cause of the Association.

Working as vocational rehabilitation professionals, our members provide unique services based on their specialized knowledge of disabilities, environmental factors that interact with those disabilities, and the processes that support an effective return to work and/or function. These members are committed to assisting and advocating for all individuals or groups experiencing or at risk or experiencing disabling conditions along the continuum of achieving or restoring optimum vocational and/or life goals. These outcomes are achieved through the application of education, experience, skills, interventions and strategies, and ongoing professional development, which are unique to the discipline and profession of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Our members are employed as rehabilitation counsellors and consultants, disability managers, return-to-work coordinators, vocational counsellors and consultants, case managers, vocational assessors and evaluators and job development / placement specialists. They also work in medical rehabilitation and include rehabilitation nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, chiropractors, kinesiologists, psychologists, medical doctors and other medical specialists.

Associate members are principally allied health professionals and/or people who are gaining work or educational experience to qualify to apply for their designation. This category also includes retired professionals who wish to remain active within the vocational rehabilitation field, as well as people who join the Association to access important networking and educational opportunities.

Student members are full-time students in a related field at a post-secondary college or university.

Professional members have the Registered Rehabilitation Professional (RRP[®]), Registered Vocational Professional (RVP), Registered Community Support Specialist (RCSS), Canadian Certified Rehabilitation Counsellor (CCRC), Certified Rehabilitation Counsellor (CRC), Canadian Certified Vocational Evaluator (CCVE) and/or Certified Vocational Evaluator (CVE) designations. They may also carry designations awarded by other bodies such as the College of Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals (CVRP) or by the International Disability Management Standards Council (IDMSC) which is the certifying board for the National Institute of Disability Management and Research (NIDMAR). IDMSC awards the Certified Disability Management Professional (CDMP) and the Certified Return to Work Coordinator (CRTWC) designations.

Membership inquiries are made through the VRA Canada office.



Table of Contents

| | | |
|------------|---|-------|
| Section A: | Introduction..... | 1 |
| Section B: | RRP® Application Process | 1 |
| Section C: | Academic Requirements | 1 - 2 |
| Section D: | Criteria for Evaluating Academic Credentials..... | 3 - 4 |
| Section E: | Rehabilitation Employment Experience | 5 |
| Section F: | Qualifying Areas of Employment | 5 - 7 |
| Section G: | Applicants with other related designations | 7 |
| Section H: | Reference Forms..... | 7 |
| Section I: | Application Fee..... | 8 |
| Section J: | Reporting Results of the RRP® Review Process..... | 8 |
| Section K: | Appeals Process..... | 8 |
| Section L: | Certificates of Registration | 8 |
| Section M: | Maintaining the RRP® Designation..... | 9 |
| Section N: | Reinstating the RRP® Designation | 9 |
| Section O: | Change of Address | 10 |
| Section P: | Contacting the Association | 10 |



Section A: Introduction

The Vocational Rehabilitation Association of Canada (VRA Canada), in furthering our objective of ensuring professional standards for our members, administers a registration process. The registration process is an effective means of communicating that members have achieved and demonstrated a recognized level of professional excellence in the field of rehabilitation.

VRA Canada awards the Registered Rehabilitation Professional (RRP®) designation in keeping with our Mission Statement:

“The Vocational Rehabilitation Association of Canada (VRA Canada) is a national association that supports members in promoting and providing the professional delivery of vocational rehabilitation services.”

The decision to grant the RRP® designation is based on a careful review and evaluation of the applicant’s:

- Education
- Employment experience directly related to the rehabilitation field,
- References from peers and supervisors.

The authority for granting the designation is given to the National Registration Review Committee, a sub-committee of the National Standards and Credentials Committee. The Review Committee is comprised of independent, knowledgeable professionals who safeguard the neutrality in the granting of designations.

Section B: RRP® Application Process

1. The applicant must be a member **in good standing** with VRA Canada and the required membership fee must be paid in full before the application can be reviewed.
2. Only fully completed application submissions will be presented to the National Registration Review Committee. Applications incomplete after one year from the date of submission will no longer be considered.

Section C: Academic Requirements

In order to qualify for the RRP® designation, **a minimum of an undergraduate degree** is required and it must include certain academic core competencies (as outlined below):

1. **Official academic transcript(s) must accompany the application.**

Photocopies, electronic documents and scanned copies will be accepted as long as the transcript includes the official seal of the university, signature of the registrar, and verification that **the program was successfully completed.**

Fulfillment of the academic core competency courses may have been:

- Taken within the degree, post-graduate degree, or a degree credit external to the degree
- Must be at least half-credit (minimum 20 hour) courses
- A course catalogue description or syllabus for each course must be included to enable the Registration Review Committee to review the course content.
- Credits acquired from external degree courses, university post-graduate diploma and certificate courses, recognized specialty courses, and college courses or equivalent may be used in addition to the degree course but may not exceed 25% (30 hours) of the required core competency credit hours.

Please note that a course may only be entered once toward core competencies requirements. Courses with higher credit values (6 credits, 18 credits, etc.) may be considered toward multiple core competencies.



2. Other academic programs not listed in the following chart will be reviewed individually for relevancy and required work experience by the National Registration Review Committee.

| Registered Rehabilitation Professional (RRP•) | |
|---|---|
| Related Undergraduate and Graduate Degrees | Unrelated Undergraduate and Graduate Degrees |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Rehabilitation (Master's) • Disability Studies • Special Education • Kinesiology • Nursing • Occupational Therapy • Psychology • Physiotherapy • Rehabilitation Counselling • Social Work • Vocational Counselling • Other programs that include the academic core competencies listed below. <p>Degrees must include the following academic core competencies to be considered approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Approaches • Disabling Conditions • Interventions and Strategies • History, Values and Systems Related to Human Services • Professional Ethics • Communication Skills/Interviewing/Helping Skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Administration • Communications • Education • Engineering • English • History • Physical Education • Physics • Sociology • Other programs that do not include the academic core competencies listed below. <p>With an unrelated degree, applicants must have completed the following academic core competencies to be considered approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Approaches • Disabling Conditions • Interventions and Strategies • History, Values and Systems Related to Human Services • Professional Ethics • Communication Skills/Interviewing/Helping Skills |
| <p>Employment Experience</p> <p>24 months (two years) experience working with persons who have a disability within the qualifying areas of employment.</p> <p>12 months (1 year) experience for graduates of the York/Seneca Vocational Rehabilitation Program.</p> <p>No (0) experience if a graduate of a master's degree in vocational rehabilitation or a related doctorate.</p> | <p>Employment Experience</p> <p>48 months (four years) experience working with persons who have a disability within the qualifying areas of employment.</p> |



Section D: Criteria for Evaluating Academic Credentials

Applicants must have obtained an undergraduate degree or higher from:

- A government-approved or authorized degree-granting institution of higher education in Canada, OR
- A regionally accredited institution of higher education in the United States, OR
- A university in another country that has been recognized or authorized by an appropriate authority of that jurisdiction.

In addition to an undergraduate degree, the minimum of **one** undergraduate half-credit course (minimum 20 hours) in **each** of the following six (6) core competency areas must be completed before eligibility for the designation will be considered. Field Study/Experience is **not** eligible as a core competency course. Neither are workshops, seminars and conferences, as there is no measurable outcome.

It is expected that each course taken to achieve the academic core competencies will provide applicants with general knowledge in each of the following core competency areas.

1. Assessment Approaches

A course in Assessment Approaches will address the theory, practice and terminology of the assessment process and the context in which assessment occurs. The course may include instruction in the administering, scoring and interpreting assessment tools and statistical data. The content of the course may encompass the use of standard tests in areas that include:

- Achievement
- Aptitude
- Behaviour
- Physical and Cognitive Functioning
- Intelligence
- Interests
- Personality
- Situational Testing and Analysis.

Example of a relevant course: “Intro to Psychology”

2. Disabling Conditions

A course in this area will address disabling conditions from a lifespan perspective (child, adolescent, adult, or senior). The study of each disabling condition makes reference to:

- Causes (genetic/medical/social)
- Incidence Rates
- Prevention
- Adaptive Devices
- Amelioration or Expected Improvement.

Example of a relevant course: “Abnormal Psychology”

Impacts and responses to a disability on the individual with the disability, their families, social groups and society may also be presented.

3. Interventions and Strategies

This course will present approaches and strategies to support and rehabilitate individuals seeking intervention. The course may include theories such as:

- Learning and Behaviour



- Counselling
- Developmental, psychoanalytical, and ethical criteria for interventions and strategies.

Example of relevant courses: “Community Health: Alcohol and Drugs” or “Rape Crisis and Intervention” or “Body Image and Eating Disorders”

Models of intervention may include:

- Transition,
- Community Support
- Early Intervention
- Adaptation (practice, rule adaptation, technology, structural analysis, physical therapy, and enrichment)
- Traditional areas of intervention and language
- Cognition
- Physical, emotional and social relationships.

Course content may also include:

- Working partnerships and roles in planning (working with specialist, multi-disciplinary, interdisciplinary, and trans-disciplinary teams, individual program planning, case coordination and management, community relationships)
- Crisis Intervention
- Prevention and follow-up
- Recording the intervention process and outcomes.

4. Values, History and Systems Related to Human Services

This course will address personal values and beliefs about individuals who have a disability and will consider how societal attitudes have developed over the years. Historical practises and paradigm shifts will be studied with resulting service provision changes as well as current issues and trends affecting individuals with disabilities in rehabilitation. Other concepts discussed within the context of this course are:

- Social role valorisation
- Ethics
- Client's rights
- Professional Responsibility.

Example of a relevant course: “Social Policies in Canada”

5. Professional Ethics

A course in ethics will cover topics such as:

- Informed consent
- Confidentiality
- Professional Boundaries
- Limits of Competence
- Record-Keeping
- Advertising Practises
- Research Methodologies
- Jurisprudence
- Ethical decision-making processes (e.g., resolution of ethical conflicts, integration of ethical principles and legal requirements).

Example of relevant course: “Research Methodology” or “Philosophy: Moral Issues”



6. Communication/Helping/Interviewing Skills

Course content will include the theoretical explanation and practical experience of functional interpersonal skills with an application of these skills in the context of interviewing and conducting an effective counselling relationship. The course will utilize didactic skill practise and lab simulation coordinated with theoretical presentation and usually includes sequencing from self-awareness to interpersonal competence to effective helping.

Example of a relevant course: “Family Counselling” or “Interpersonal Communications”

Section E: Rehabilitation Employment Experience

VRA Canada defines “individuals with disabilities” to include those who have limitations in life functions as a result of physical disability, sensory impairment, mental illness, developmental or learning disability, neurological illness/condition, and/or chemical dependency (Adapted: Commission on Rehabilitation Counsellor Certification - CRCC). According to Stats Canada guidelines, full-time work includes employed persons who usually worked 30 hours or more per week, at their main or only job, and part-time work includes employed persons who usually worked fewer than 30 hours per week, at their main or only job.

Applicants MUST Include:

1. Be currently employed in one of the qualifying areas of employment (As outlined in Section F). Rehabilitation employment experience must include working directly with people who are disabled and must be in one (1) of the qualifying areas of employment. VRA Canada recognizes a life span approach to rehabilitation and, therefore, members may work with children, adolescents, adults and/or seniors.
2. For those applicants working within a clearly defined employment position in the public or private sector, a copy of the current job description must accompany the RRP® application.
3. For those applicants who are self-employed, a current résumé must accompany the RRP® application.

DO NOT Include:

4. Work placements and/or practicums that are a required component of a university degree curriculum are **not** eligible for employment experience.
5. Volunteer activities are not eligible for employment experience.

Section F: Qualifying Areas of Employment

1. Counselling

Counselling is the central function that must be continuously provided throughout the rehabilitation process. Counselling individuals with disabilities can occur on a one-on-one or group basis and include vocational and/or affective or personal adjustment counselling.

- a) Vocational (Career) Counselling involves developing an accurate identification of skills, abilities, interests and aptitudes to assist in formulating a comprehensive and realistic vocational rehabilitation plan in collaboration with the client.
- b) Affective/Adjustment Counselling focuses primarily upon psychotraumatic, psychosocial impacts of the injury/disability on the client, as well as family members and society. Counselling may involve (but is not limited to) helping individuals understand, accept and adjust to the disability, advocate for support (financial, emotional, and other) and empower the individual in the rehabilitation process.



2. **Assessment**

Assessment is the process of collecting information about the disabled person's situation and functioning in order to identify needs and develop a comprehensive rehabilitation plan. This process may include understanding the functional capacities of the individual, recommending appropriate intervention resources (e.g., assistive devices and technology) and seeking related social and cultural adjustments within the home, employment site and community. This process involves ongoing information gathering and decision-making.

Client Needs Assessment involves evaluating client needs through interviewing, arranging or conducting standardized testing, interpreting test results and synthesizing reports and recommendations from others.

3. **Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment**

Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Specialists systematically use work (real or simulated), as the focal point for assessment and vocational exploration to assist individuals in vocational development. The process includes reviewing a person's education and/or training, work experience, residual capacity for performing the pre-injury tasks, analysis of transferable skills, learning capacity, work interests, and the family situation / support.

4. **Job Development / Placement**

Job Development / Placement assists persons with disabilities to seek and obtain appropriate employment in the most integrated setting possible. It may include assistance with vocational decision-making; job seeking skills such as résumé completion, job interviewing skills and general employment preparation; job analysis, work-site modification, job accommodation including the application of appropriate technology, as well as developing, conducting and monitoring work hardening programs.

5. **Job Analysis and Evaluation**

Job Analysis defines the functions of a job and identifies the tasks, using established methods as well as the environmental and physical demands of the job, equipment used, products or services that result, summarizes job tasks and the skills and/or abilities (physical, mental and emotional demands) required to perform the job. Job modifications may be recommended, where required.

6. **Case Management / Rehabilitation Services Coordination / Return to Work Coordination**

Case management involves assessing, planning, implementing, coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating options and services. The goal is to integrate medical, vocational and avocational plans and stakeholder communication into a holistic, individualized program with the intention of achieving the agreed upon rehabilitation outcome(s) through communication and available resources to promote quality, cost-effective outcomes. Clients may return to their current or to a new employer.

7. **Planning, Developing, Implementing, Monitoring and Evaluating Programs and Services**

This job task involves developing, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing programs and services that have been implemented. It compares actual changes (results) with desired changes (goals), and identifies outcomes achieved. Ongoing evaluation must occur in order to revise goals as the needs of the client and employer are met. This will ensure that appropriate levels of intervention or services are being provided. The overall goal is to ensure the implementation and maintenance of sound disability management and vocational rehabilitation programs and the cost-effective use of resources.

Monitoring is described in the VRA Canada Code of Ethics (Section B, No. 7): "Members will persistently monitor rehabilitation plans to ensure their continued viability and effectiveness, remembering that people have the right to make choices."



8. Education and Research

As post-secondary education opportunities expand in Canada, an increasing number of members are becoming involved in the delivery of rehabilitation education and research applications at the university and/or college level.

Rehabilitation professionals may also provide education/training to persons with a disability and/or may deliver educational seminars/workshops. This training may be focused in areas such as: early and safe return to work, assessment and evaluation of the home and work place to identify and resolve barriers to recovery, and independence and further injury or illness. Applicants who are providing education or who are involved in research must meet the defined RRP[®] educational and employment application criteria.

9. Rehabilitation Director/Manager/Supervisor

A Rehabilitation Director/Manager/Supervisor may provide direction, supervision, and/or training to rehabilitation service providers, as well as direct case/file supervision on an ongoing basis.

Applicants who are in management positions must meet the RRP[®] educational and employment application criteria.

Section G: Applicants with the CCRC, CRC, CCVE and/or CVE Designation(s) or with Designations from the CVRP or IDMSC / NIDMAR.

VRA Canada[®] members who also have acquired designations from other certifying bodies related to the VRA's domains and competencies may also qualify for the RRP[®] designation. The following criteria **must** be met:

1. The applicant **must** be a member **in good standing** with VRA Canada[®] and the required membership fees must be paid in full.
2. The applicant **must** complete only the first-page of the RRP[®] Application Package (Application Form) along with payment of the one-time processing fee of \$131.25 (including GST) or \$141.25 (including HST).
3. Applicants **must** submit evidence of successfully passing the CCRC, CRC, CCVE, CVE, CVRP, CDMP and / or CRTWC examinations. Correspondence and/or a copy of the certificate from the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselling Certification (CRCC), the College of Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals or the International Disability Management Standards Council must be submitted along with the certification number.
4. Applicants must include two (2) current references following the guidelines specified in this document.

Section H: Reference Forms

1. Applications for registration **must include two (2) references** on the original VRA Canada forms. References may not be relatives of the applicant, subordinates or receiving services from the applicant. References must have known the applicant for a minimum of three (3) months.
2. References must be current, **dated within a year of the date** of the RRP[®] application.
3. Where applicable, one (1) letter of reference should be requested from a current manager/supervisor and the remaining reference must be requested from a rehabilitation professional that currently holds the RRP[®], CCRC, CRC, CCVE, CVE, CVRP or CDMP designation(s). Where an applicant does not know or has not worked with another professional member, a letter of explanation should accompany application.



4. Where an applicant does not report to a Manager/Supervisor (e.g., self-employed), a letter of reference can be requested from a physician, psychologist, social worker or a person with whom the applicant has completed contractual rehabilitation services and who knows the applicant's work well and can describe their knowledge and competence in the field.
5. See RRP® Confirmation of Employment form at the end of this document.

Section I: Application Fee

The required application fee of \$131.25 (includes GST) or \$141.25 (includes HST) must accompany the application. VRA Canada accepts payment by VISA, MasterCard, or by cheque made payable to the Vocational Rehabilitation Association of Canada (VRA Canada). This application fee is a one time, non-refundable fee and a receipt will be provided to the applicant.

Section J: Reporting Results of the RRP® Review Process

Applications are reviewed on a first come basis without exception. Attempts are made to review the application within 2 weeks of submission providing the application is complete. Once a decision has been reached, the applicant will be notified of the Committee's decision in writing only. If the application has been deferred or denied, the applicant will be provided with a written explanation to this affect.

Where an application for registration is deferred, it is the applicant's responsibility to submit the additional information requested in writing within one year's time. If a deferred application is unfinished after one year lapses, the applicant must resubmit the application and all accompanying fees.

Section K: Appeals Process

Where an application for registration is denied, the applicant has the right to appeal. If the National Registration Review Committee upholds its original decision, further consideration of the applicant's appeal will be handled by an Appeals Panel of the National Board of Directors.

1. Within 21 days of receiving the Committee's written decision the applicant may file a written appeal.
2. The National Registration Review Committee will again review the original application, along with any additional information that may accompany the letter of appeal.
3. Where the National Registration Review Committee confirms its original decision, the applicant will be so advised and the appeal will be directed to an Appeals Panel of the National Board of Directors.
4. The Appeals Panel is normally comprised of the President and two (2) registered members. Where necessary, the President may appoint an Appeals Panel of three (3) registered members.
5. The Appeals Panel will be provided with the applicant's file in order to render a final decision. The decision of the National Registration Review Committee will not be revealed until the Appeals Panel has completed its review and made a recommendation.
6. The Appeals Panel will render its decision within 30 days and advise the applicant in writing.

Section L: Certificates of Registration

Designation certificates and letters will be automatically sent through the member's profile on the website. They can be stored and printed at any time. A new certificate is available whenever a member renews their membership and / or their designation.



Certificates of Registration identify the date registration was granted. Providing the member remains in constant good standing with VRA Canada, certificates are valid for a five (5) year period and may be renewed following continuing membership with VRA Canada and documentation of 100 clock hours of approved continuing education.

All Certificates of Registration remain the property of the VRA Canada, and are null and void should the member's registration be revoked.

Section M: Maintaining the RRP® Designation

Registered members must be a member in good standing with the Association, adhere to the Association's Code of Ethics and submit proof of 100 approved Continuing Education Units (CEU's) over a five (5) year period.

1. A registered member's designation will be revoked when the member ceases to be in good standing with the Association and may be revoked when it is proven the member has failed to comply with the Association's Code of Ethics.
2. A registered member's designation will be revoked when the member ceases to provide evidence of accumulating 100 approved Continuing Education Units (CEU's) within a five (5) year period of achieving the RRP® designation or a five year period following a process approved by the National Board. Continuing Education Units (CEU's) for those who have their CCRC, CRC, CCVE, CVE or CVRP designations will be recognized as equivalencies for maintenance of the RRP® designation.
3. Details related to the continuing education process will be included with correspondence following approval of the RRP® application.

Section N: Reinstating the RRP® Designation

1. At the discretion of the National Registration Review Committee, a member who allows their registration **designation to lapse must reapply in writing for reinstatement.**
2. A letter describing additional employment experience or education achieved since the designation lapsed must be sent to the National Registration Review Committee. Copies of job descriptions and/or educational transcripts may be requested for clarification.
3. Applicants must complete the Education Application and the Academic Core Competencies Forms.
4. A reinstatement fee of \$131.25 (including GST) or \$141.25 (including HST) applies and must be paid in full before the request for reinstatement will be reviewed.
5. The annual professional VRA Canada membership fee (as mentioned in section I) must be paid in full for the year in which the re-instatement has been requested.
6. Two (2) current references should be submitted on the original VRA Canada forms. References from relatives, subordinates or individuals receiving services from the applicant are not acceptable. One (1) reference should be requested from an immediate manager/supervisor and the remaining reference must be requested from a rehabilitation professional that currently holds the RRP®, CCRC, CRC, CCVE, CVE, CVRP or CDMP designation(s).
7. Applicants re-applying for registration **must** qualify under the guidelines that are in place at the time of the application for reinstatement.
8. Members **must** renew their membership by February 28 of each year to validate the RRP®.



It is the member's responsibility to re-register at the appropriate time. Failure to receive the required information for renewal is not considered grounds for an extension.

Section O: Change of Address

Keeping the Association up to date is important. It is the applicant's responsibility to notify the Association of any change to their contact information (name, address, phone, fax, and e-mail). This can be achieved through the "edit my profile" function on the website.

Section P: Contacting the Association (VRA Canada)

All questions should be directed to:

VRA Canada
3 – 247 Barr Street
P.O. Box 370
Renfrew, Ontario

Toll-free: 1-888-876-9992
Fax: 613-432-6840
E-mail: info@vracanda.com
Website: www.vracanada.com

