



FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions about the College Audit Process

January 2, 2020

1. Why does the College do audits?

To proactively monitor members' practice of applied biology to ensure that standards are being met. The audit program is one mechanism for the College to meet its legislated public interest mandate.

Relevant sections in the [Act](#) and [Rules](#):

- Under Section 21 of the *College of Applied Biology Act*, the College is authorized to establish an Audit and Practice Review Committee (APRC), and establish the audit process by way of a Rule.
- Rule 14: sets out the rules for the establishment and conduct of the Audit and Practice Review Committee.
- Under Schedule 6: a description is provided of the Audit program which includes a link to the member form used during the audit process.
- Under Schedule 4: information on associated CPD program and a template CPD form that can be used for tracking activities is provided.

2. How does the College select people for an audit?

The Director of Practice (Deputy Registrar) will randomly select registered members from the eligible pool of members. Registered members of the College may also volunteer to be audited.

Under Schedule 6 there are allowances for a process to be other than simple random selection. This may occur as a recommendation of the Discipline Committee or based on another committee recommendation. The selection of auditees may also be stratified by membership category to ensure equitable representation.

3. How do I find out if I will be audited?

College staff will email auditees advising them of their upcoming audit and provide related details (i.e. name of auditor, deadlines, required forms). Notifications will be sent in January.

4. What happens in an audit?

The audit process examines how members:

- generate and administer their work products;
- remain current with changing legislation;
- manage their records;
- adhere to the College's Code of Ethics; and,
- track and document Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities

Once the auditee is notified they will be audited, the auditee may declare any real or perceived conflicts with their assigned auditor within 5 business days of being notified. If there are no conflicts, the auditee must submit completed forms and supporting information to the College. The assigned auditor reviews the information and upon completion of the audit, makes a recommendation to the Audit and Practice Review Committee (APRC). The APRC considers the recommendation of the auditor(s) and determines one of six possible outcomes (see Question 15). Once the outcome has been determined, a letter is mailed to the auditee with the results of their audit.

5. Do I have to participate if I'm selected for an audit?

Completing an audit is mandatory. Auditees must demonstrate cooperation and maintain a polite, professional demeanor with College staff and auditors. Failure to comply is a contravention of the College's Code of Ethics and could result in disciplinary action (refer to Section 21.2 of the *College of Applied Biology Act* and Rule 14).

In rare situations, an audit may be deferred due to extenuating circumstances. Auditees must notify the College of the reason(s) for the deferral. If the reason(s) are acceptable, the Chair of the Audit and Practice Review Committee will grant approval and specify the year in which the audit is to occur.

6. If I am a new member, do I still need to be audited?

Yes. Members of the College for less than three years are required to provide their CPD record for the duration of their membership, and are expected to demonstrate that they are on track to meet the College's CPD requirement of 100 points over three years.

7. If I am on-leave or retired, do I still need to be audited?

Yes. Auditees who were registered with the College as being on-leave during a portion of the three-year period for which their CPD records are reviewed must demonstrate compliance with the CPD requirements (Rule 7.11.5). Retired members can still be audited for their time as a practicing professional within three years of retirement and are subject to the same requirements as a non-retired member.

8. Can I resign to avoid an audit?

Members who resign to avoid an audit will be required to have a mandatory audit (including meeting CPD requirements) should they ever want to reactivate their membership. Members who have resigned are restricted from undertaking any work that requires Registered Professional Applied Biologist status.

9. Is the audit process confidential?

Yes. Consistent with Section 26(1) of the *College of Applied Biology Act*, all information generated during audits will remain confidential, including the names of auditees, and the auditees results.

10. Who conducts my audit?

The College matches each auditee with an auditor. All auditors are College members who have undergone an audit themselves. Auditors must have diverse and extensive experience in applied biology, be long-standing members of the College, and must also be mentored by an experienced auditor during their first year.

11. What information do I need to provide?

You must complete and submit the College Auditee Questionnaire and the College Continuing Professional Development (CPD) tracking form (provided to you by the College) along with a current CV to your auditor for review. Details will be provided in your audit notification letter.

12. When do I need to submit my forms?

Forms must be submitted to the designated auditor within 20 business days of the date of the notification.

If the auditor has additional questions or requests supporting information, auditees must respond promptly (i.e., within five business days unless otherwise directed). Failure to comply is a contravention of the College's Code of Ethics and could result in Disciplinary action (refer to Section 21.2 of the *College of Applied Biology Act* and Rule 14).

13. What happens if I cannot meet the deadline?

You must notify the College as soon as possible, provide a reason, and the requested extension period. If the reasons are acceptable to the Chair of the Audit and Practice Review Committee, the schedule may be amended.

14. How often can I be selected for an audit?

Following the successful completion of an audit, a member's name is removed from the random draw list for a period of five years.

15. What are the possible outcomes of an audit?

There are 6 possible outcomes:

- a) **Successful completion:** No further action required (Rule 14.14.1).
- b) **Additional information:** The auditee may be required to provide additional information (Rule 14.14.2).
- c) **Remedial action required:** When there is an isolated practice-related issue that can be addressed. The auditee must report to the College that the mandatory remedial action has been implemented within the required timeframe (Rule 14.14.3).
- d) **Referral for a practice review:** Required if the auditee fails to demonstrate their compliance with College audit requirements or if practice-related concerns become apparent (Rule 14.14.4).

- e) **Referral to the Discipline Committee for non-compliance:** When an auditee has failed to provide completed audit forms within 20 business days of being notified, or has not responded to requests for additional information within a reasonable timeframe, i.e. 5 business days unless otherwise indicated by the auditor (Rule 14.14.5), or has failed to meet the remedial action requirements.
- f) **Referral to Discipline Committee for breach of practice:** If the audit process reveals egregious breaches of professional conduct in contravention of the College's Rules and policies, the Discipline Committee may initiate an investigation of the member's conduct (Rule 14.14.6).

16. When do I find out the results of my audit?

Each auditee will receive an official letter explaining the result of their audit. The letters are sent by Express Post for guaranteed delivery and the College usually mails them by September.

17. Can I fail the Audit? And what happens if I do?

Yes. Audits are unsuccessful when the auditee fails to demonstrate compliance with the practice standards set out in the *College of Applied Biology Act*, Rules, and policies. There are various consequences for a College member who fails an audit, depending on the specific outcomes of the Audit and the severity of the issue. Refer to Question 15.

18. Who should I contact with questions about the process?

Please contact the College office with any questions about the audit program in general. Contact the Director of Practice at: (250) 383-3306 or email: practicedirector@cab-bc.org

If you are in the process of being audited, questions should be directed to your assigned auditor.