

BRAIN GAIN, WASTE, AND DRAIN: CANADIAN FOREIGN CREDENTIAL RECOGNITION

A comparison with Australia and New Zealand

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List of Frequently-Used Acronyms	
DEWR	Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
ESL	English as a Second Language
FCR	Foreign Credential Recognition
FCRO	Foreign Credential Referral Office
ISST	Immediate Skills Shortage List
LTSSL	Long Term Skills Shortage List
MODL	Migration Occupations in Demand List
NZQA	Skilled Occupations List
PASA	Pre-Application Skills Assessment
SOL	Skilled Occupations List
QRS	Skilled Occupations List

The shortage of skilled workers is a global phenomenon. This global shortage, which is particularly acute in the Western world, has been driven by demographic trends and declining economic conditions. It is in this context that the use of immigration as a means to contribute to the development of a skilled workforce has become a policy reality. In the Western world skilled immigrant recruitment and retention has taken on increasing importance as countries compete to enlarge labour supply while issues surrounding foreign credential recognition (FCR) have come more and more into the forefront of debate surrounding immigrant employment and integration.

This paper seeks to use best practices from the leading competitive models for FCR in Australia and New Zealand to make recommendations for FCR practices in Canada through highlighting areas for improvement, identifying alternative system mechanisms, and discussing considerations for implementation.¹ Composed of three sections, this paper will explore the current Canadian FCR system in section 1. Section 2 will then outline the Australian and New Zealand FCR systems and best practices before moving to a comparison of FCR practices with Canada. This paper will conclude with section 3, presenting recommendations for improving FCR practices in Canada.

Why is FCR important? In terms of numbers, research by Ikura has found that “[...] regardless of their level of education, 60% of all employed immigrants (i.e. high and low-skilled) do not work at the same occupation level they occupied before they came to Canada” (2007, p.17). Furthermore, the unemployment rate for all immigrants who have been in Canada for 5 years or

¹ This report presents a snapshot of FCR systems and best practices, and should be understood within the current context and environment.

less was more than double the rate of the native born population (11% compared to 4.6%) in 2007 (Becklumb & Elgersma, 2008, p.2). This is especially worrying given that the majority of net Canadian labour growth is a result of immigration (70% in the last decade and predicted to be virtually all net growth before the middle of the next decade) (Thai, 2007, p.i). While good FCR can lead to both macro- and microeconomic benefits as “[...] the individual benefits from earnings in keeping with his/her skills and, and the employer and economy benefit from the full productive use of those skills” (Sangster, 2001, p.2), poor FCR can negatively affect the relationship between labour demand and supply. This lost macroeconomic opportunity has a surprisingly large impact; a 2009 Canadian House of Commons report on the effects of poor FCR estimated that in Canada this results in \$2.4-5.9 billion dollars (CAD) of lost economic opportunity annually (2009, p.1). The negative economic impact that skills discounting and labour market displacement has on the affected individuals and their families is seen in lower incomes and standards of living. This social–capital inequality (as experienced through lower incomes and standards of living and notwithstanding discrimination) contributes to a two-tier system, thus encouraging the creation of a socioeconomic ‘sub-class’ in Canadian society. The integration problems that arise from this social inequality have a causal relationship with a wider range of policy issues and problems. The problems arising from poor FCR affect not only immigrants regardless of high or low-skilled; they affect a wide range of stakeholders. For example, professional associations, regulatory bodies, and employers face lost potential employees and the innovation that would result from foreign knowledge and experience, while immigrant serving organizations and post-secondary educational institutions experience duplication and overlap of effort and assessment.

Australia and New Zealand have been selected for comparison with Canada as all three countries are Anglophone (Canada also being partially Francophone), first world developed economies built on immigration, and competitors for skilled immigrants as countries faced with skilled-labour shortages. Additionally, Australia and Canada are both federations and share similar jurisdictional complexity in the areas of licensing, immigration, and FCR. As well, a further justification for comparison is that despite the different methods and FCR practices in each country, the ultimate goal of each FCR system the same – immigrant employment.

Each of these three countries comprehensively tracks immigration and emigration data. This is accomplished through Longitudinal Immigration Surveys (LIS) – a longstanding practice in Australia, and a recent introduction in Canada and New Zealand.² Australia has completed three LSIA surveys (arrivals between (1)1993-1995, (2)1999-2000, and (3)2004-2005) and both Canada and New Zealand have completed their first surveys (2000-2001 and 2008-2009 arrivals respectively). Additionally, all three countries use Census data (collected every 5 years) to complement their respective LIS results. Lastly, Canada also has an Immigration Data Base which is used to monitor employment outcomes over a 20 year timeframe and by immigration category through the use of a longitudinal tax-file database.

Before moving to section 1 and the Canadian FCR system it is useful to outline several key definitions that should be kept in mind throughout this paper: foreign credential recognition (FCR), credentials, and competencies. FCR is defined as the process of assessing and verifying that a

² The Longitudinal Survey on Immigrants to Canada (LSIC); the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia (LSIA); and the Longitudinal Immigration Survey: New Zealand (LisNZ).

person's education/knowledge, skills, and work experience obtained outside of Canada are equivalent to Canadian professional standards (adapted from: House of Commons, 2009, p.1; Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2009, p.3). FCR is a two-step process; the first stage of this process encompasses pre-immigration selection, screening, and—while this varies from country to country—possible basic FCR evaluation (excluding licensing) and is typically assessed through a 'point system'. The second step of this process is the in-country FCR that takes place and any (re)certification and licensing procedures. FCR is carried out by assessing both *credentials* and *competencies*. Credentials refer to the paper qualifications that a person possesses (this includes certificates, diplomas, and degrees) while competencies are the measurable skills, behavioural practices, and levels of knowledge that indicate a person's ability to carry out profession-specific duties and tasks (Alliance of Sector Councils, n.d.(a)).

1. Foreign Credential Recognition in Canada

Within Canada there is an increased importance on skills and education that has arisen from globalization and a shift towards a more knowledge-based economy. This is compounded by the current demographic crisis – aging workers (the average worker is over 40 years old), a demographic deficit (the Canadian fertility rate is at 1.5), and current labour and skills shortages in many sectors (Thai, 2007, p.4). As a result, Canada is looking once more outside its borders to maintain the labour resources required to remain competitive internationally.

Table 1.1 outlines immigrant profiles in 2010; this applies to all immigrants who became Permanent Residents of Canada in 2010.³ The rationale behind presenting data for all Permanent Residents and not just immigrants entering under the Skilled Worker Program (SWP) is that while SWP immigrants have their human capital assessed through the points system, the majority of immigrants entering the labour force have entered Canada under another visa category (e.g. family or humanitarian classes). Regardless of immigration category all immigrants entering the labour force will have their credentials assessed, formally or informally (this will be discussed in greater detail on p.11).

Table 1.1 Immigrant Profiles in 2010

Immigrant Profile	Numbers	%
Total Immigrants in 2010	280,681	100.0
Ethnicity		
Africa and the Middle East	66,691	23.8
Asia and the Pacific	135,004	48.1
South and Central America	28,354	10.1
United States	9,242	3.3
United Kingdom and the European Union	41,318	14.7
Location of Education		
High School	46,558	21.2
Trade Certificate	12,029	5.7
Non-University Diploma	26,436	12.0
Bachelor's Degree	68,496	31.1
Master's Degree	29,312	13.3
Doctorate	5,120	2.3
Age		
15 to 24 years of age	37,052	16.8
25 to 44 years of age	141,151	64.2
45 to 64 years of age	34,595	15.7

³ 2010 data was used as Citizenship and Immigration Canada has not yet posted data beyond the preliminary tables for 2011. Additionally, please note that this level of information was only available for Permanent Residents; therefore Temporary Foreign Workers were automatically excluded from this data set.

Language Capacity ⁴		
English and French	28,950	10.3
English	160,340	57.1
French	16,836	6.0
Neither	74,548	26.6

Source: Adapted from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2010a.

The above table clearly demonstrates that Canada is now predominantly receiving well educated immigrants (46.7% with a bachelor degree or more) from non-traditional source countries (namely 48.1% Asia and the Pacific and Africa and 23.8% from the Middle East). Additionally, these immigrants are primarily of prime working age (64.2% are between 25 and 44 years of age); however more than a quarter of these immigrants speak neither French nor English. The implications these trends will be discussed later on this chapter.

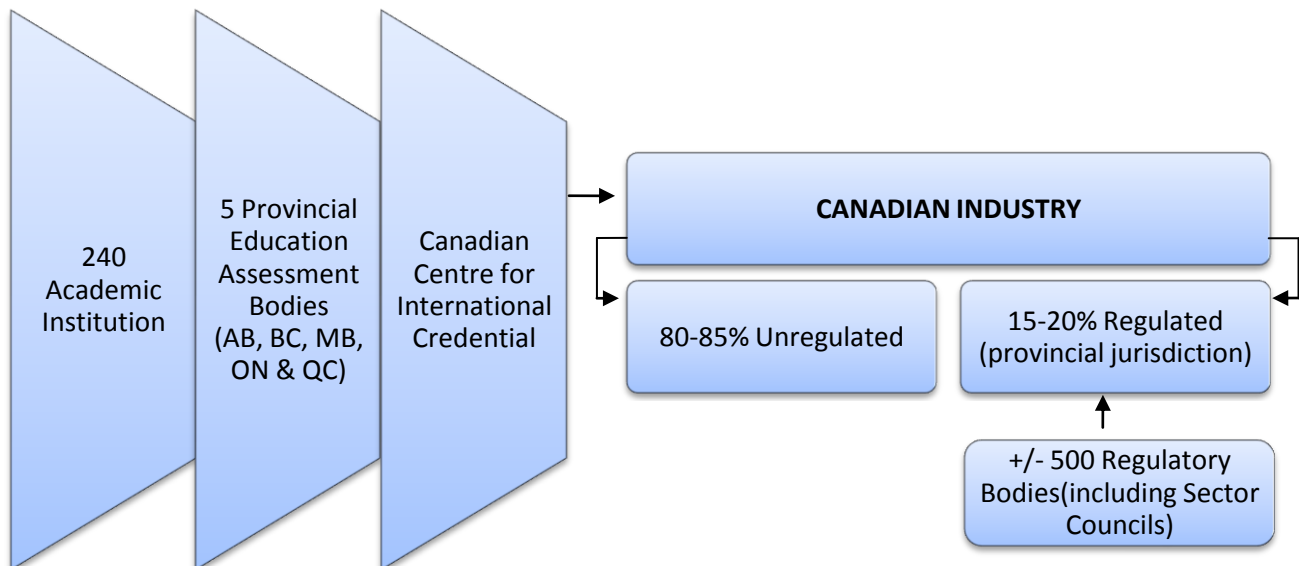
Canada selects skilled immigrants using an approach that is focused on human capital accumulation and government led, as opposed to the alternative leading approach which is demand driven and employer led. While the human capital accumulation approach is based on addressing long-term national human capital needs, the alternative demand driven approach is labour market centric and enables employers to actively seek individuals abroad who are then nominated for a visa. Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are all countries which use the human capital accumulation approach whereas the United States, Sweden, and Norway favour the demand driven approach (Papademetriou et al., 2008, p.3). The human capital accumulation

⁴ It is not possible to confirm the level at which these immigrants speak English and/or French as this is self-declared during the immigration process. However, what this data highlights is that significantly more immigrants speak neither English nor French than do immigrants in the categories for 'French' and 'French and English' (26.2%:16.3%).

approach takes either the form of intergovernmental agreements or point systems (Canada's approach). Point systems are the first stage in the FCR process and are defined as "[...] a form of immigrant selection that admits or denies an individual entry into a country for temporary or permanent residence and employment on the basis of how many points that person scores on a test measuring such characteristics as age, education, skills, experience, and language ability, among others" (Papademetriou et al., 2008, p.6). At the heart of the point system is the desire to accrue human capital; its advantages include that it allows for strategic vision, that it is transparent and flexible, and that the government is able to appear firmly in control. However, disadvantages of the point system include: 1) policy makers not being able to meet employer's real-time needs; 2) the effectiveness of immigrant selection is contingent on the effectiveness of the defined categories; 3) only select immigration categories are evaluated; and 4) higher education is often over-sought at the expense of critical trade shortages. In Canada, the point system allows policy makers to accrue human capital in a manner that is thought to advance long-term economic interests while reflecting current labour market needs. In reality, this approach has struggled to successfully match the dynamic and specific labour needs of employers with the abstract skill sets recognized through the point system. The universality of this problem among countries practising a human capital accumulation approach to immigration has led to the development and promotion of hybrid systems. Although still a relatively new innovation hybrid systems draw from both human capital and demand driven approaches to combine the advantages of market selection with government control. Appearing in many different forms, the key features of hybrid systems are that they are highly adaptable and simple, and focus point systems on strategic growth areas (this will be discussed further in chapter 3).

FCR in Canada has been shaped by the division between federal and provincial jurisdiction over immigration as laid out in Section 95 of the *Constitution Act 1987*; the federal government is responsible for the immigration system and national labour market policies while provincial and territorial governments are responsible for the licensing of professions and trades in Canada (the latter are self-regulating) (Girard & Smith, 2012, p.5). The result of this division is a complex agglomeration of overlapping jurisdictions, which are overseen by close to 500 regulatory bodies for 55 professions and 50 trades, and 5 provincial education assessment bodies operating in conjunction with over 240 academic institutions (Foreign Credentials Referral Office, 2011, p.16: Construction Sector Council, 2006, p.20). However, all of these regulatory and assessment bodies only regulate 15-20% of Canada’s workforce. As detailed below in Figure 1.2, the myriad of regulatory players contributes to the excessive complexity of the system as well as duplication and overlap.

Figure 1.2 Canadian Industry Regulation Framework (13 Jurisdictions)



Adapted from (Ikura, 2007, p.18; Becklumb & Elgersma, 2008, p.5; Girard & Smith, 2012, p.5)

A further distinguishing feature of the Canadian FCR system is the division between regulated and unregulated industry. Regulated industry is licensed by a professional association or government agency (these are provincially and territorially mandated) whereas unregulated industry has no such restrictions on practice.⁵ This distinction is very important as the 80-85% of industry which is unregulated typically sees employers carrying out the FCR process. Considering that immigrants are underrepresented in regulated occupations and overrepresented in unregulated industries, the implication of this is that the vast majority of immigrants will not have their credentials formally assessed by an FCR body.⁶

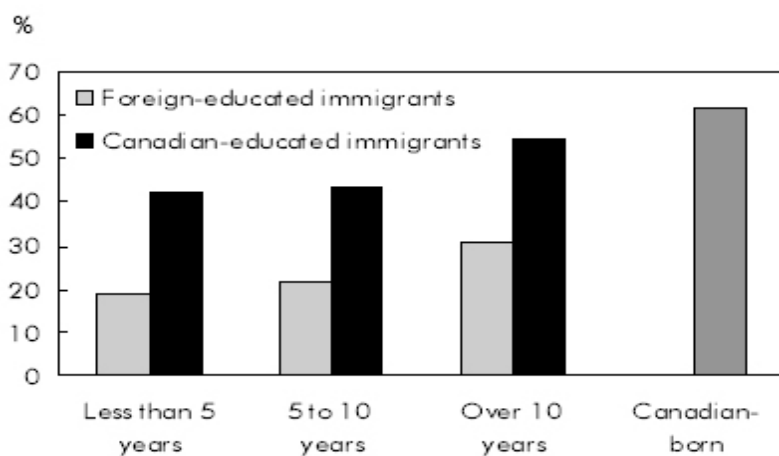
Keeping in mind that the majority of immigrant credential assessment is being carried out by employers in unregulated industry, the shift in immigrants from traditional source countries to non-traditional source countries has further complicated FCR in Canada. This shift from European to predominantly Asian and African immigrants moves employers away from assessing relatively comparable and familiar credentials to being confronted with credentials that are both unfamiliar and difficult to assess. Without the resources to assess these unfamiliar credentials many employers discount the skills and credentials of immigrants from these non-traditional source countries. Further consequences of this shift include more immigrants arriving with non-English or French first languages, and that there has been a dramatic increase in visible minority populations in Canada.

⁵ Please see Appendix 1 for the number of regulated occupations per province and Girard & Smith (2012, Table 7) for complete list of all of the regulated occupations in Canada by province.

⁶ *Regulated industry*: 19.5% of immigrants compared to 23.5% of native-born Canadians. *Unregulated Industry*: 80.5% of immigrants compared to 76.5% of native-born Canadians (Girard & Smith, 2012, p.9).

As the vast majority of FCR assessments are not completed formally, one way to approximate FCR performance is through immigrant employment rates. However, it is important to also note that employment alone may not be a good indicator of success due to frequent skilled immigrant underemployment. In their research on immigrant FCR performance Houle and Yssaad have found that employment outcomes for immigrants are more likely to recognize and value foreign work experience than foreign credentials (2012, p.22). Therefore research and studies seeking to approximate FCR performance by matching immigrant fields of study to Canadian employment outcomes should also factor in foreign work experience to more accurately reflect actual FCR processes. Using 2006 Census data, Zietsma has found that skilled immigrants are 20% more likely to be overqualified than native-born Canadians (2010, p.19). Furthermore, when compared with native-born Canadians, immigrants have a lower labour force participation rate at 75.6% compared to 79.6% (2010, p.14). Figure 1.3 below illustrates match rates (i.e. field of study to employment) found by Zietsma for foreign-educated and Canadian-educated immigrants compared to native-born Canadians.

Figure 1.3 Match Rates by immigrant type, location of study and period of landing (2006)



Source: Zietsma, 2010, p.15

Figure 1.3 clearly illustrates the penalty faced by immigrants who are educated outside of Canada compared to Canadian-educated immigrants. This penalty is the lower match rate between the type of education to type of occupation for immigrants, and results in a higher percentage of immigrants working in occupations unrelated to their field of study. Also, that Canadian-educated immigrants are penalized compared to native-born Canadians educated in Canada is suggestive of systemic discrimination and/or discounting in the FCR process.

While this is by no means an exhaustive list of what contributes to or causes poor FCR many of the main factors contributing factors and barriers are listed in Table 1.4 below:

Table 1.4 FCR Barriers

Barriers for Immigrants

A lack of consistent and clear information on pre-application requirements, admission requirements, professional standards, the Canadian FCR process, and on the skill base reflected in credentials.

A lack of reliable advice from professionals who have gone through the FCR process to acquire the same credentials.

A lack of timely and specific labour market information.

A lack of opportunities to demonstrate competence in lieu of or in complement to credentials.

The lack of a formal review and appeal process.

The frequent lack of immigrant proficiency in one or both official language.

Protectionist barriers raised by professional associations in the form of highly restrictive licensing programs.

The cost of processing fees, licensing, and/or recertification.

The lower market value attachment to immigrant human capital which arises from the misconception or attitude that the content of foreign education is less relevant to the needs of the Canadian labour market than the degree issuing country.

Persistent racial attitudes.

Barriers for Employers

A lack of familiarity with foreign degrees.

A lack of skills and resources to assess international credentials and experience.

Systemic Barriers

The multiplicity of stakeholders and the decentralized structure of the federal/provincial division of powers and associated effects on regulation.

A lack of formal, structured response to FCR by employers and industry.

The division in policy and practice between the immigration process and the employment process.

Increased immigration from non-traditional source countries (i.e. a lack of familiarity with equivalency credentials in an increasing number of non-traditional source countries).

Absence of accountability mechanisms to ensure that funded programs which facilitate accreditation are effectively delivered.

Sources: Adapted from Becklumb & Elgersma (2008, pp.3-5); Girard & Smith (2012, p.2); Houle & Yssaad (2010, p.31); Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (2011b, p.2) Li (2001, p.23); Rietz (2004, p.8:13); Sangster (2001, pp.2:4:20); and Wayland (2006, p.4).

Two of the biggest accreditation barriers faced by immigrants are a) obtaining relevant and up-to-date information on FCR prior to immigration; and b) the lack within Canadian institutions to adequately capably analyze these foreign credentials. Both of these barriers are in large part determined by the complex jurisdictional framework of FCR in Canada which involves “[e]mployers, regulatory bodies, educational institutions, immigrant service agencies, local community groups, and government departments dealing with immigration, labour, and education at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels [...]” (Thai, 2007, p.1). Lastly, Zietsma and Houle & Yssaad identify the following as key factors impacting an immigrant’s FCR experience: country of education, profession, gender, age, visible minority status, language capabilities, length of time in Canada, and province of assessment (Houle & Yssaad, 2012, p.21; Zietsma, 2010, pp.16-17).

The paragraphs above outline the Canadian FCR process and illustrate some of the outcomes and challenges for immigrants undergoing FCR in Canada. Reitz points out that while Canada has relied on immigration as a strategy for development, the current emphasis on “[...] human capital points-based immigrant selection, and in particular on ever higher educational standards, clearly is not having the desired impact” (2004, p.5). This is in large part due to the fact that, as applied to immigrants in the context of a knowledge based economy, human capital theory

presupposes the presence of an effective institutional mechanism which provides employers with an accurate assessment of the skills of prospective workers (Reitz, 2004, pp.5-6). The present high level of immigrant skill underutilization clearly demonstrates that the Canadian FCR system is struggling to fulfill this function. This is concerning as Canada has and continues to be a country defined by its patterns of immigration. Not only does immigration shape the development of large cities (particularly Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal), it also currently accounts for the majority of Canada's population growth and is projected to be the sole source of growth by 2030 (Thai, 2007, p.i). Canada's poor FCR policies are resulting in reverse brain drain (immigrants leaving Canada as they are unable to obtain appropriate work), checking full immigrant contribution to economic and social development, and impairing Canada's ability to attract skilled immigrants (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2011a; Thai, 2007, p.8).

In order to improve the current FCR system Canada must streamline the process of credential recognition for all immigrants. In order to be effective this process will require coordination of the overarching elements of the immigration process; these were identified in by the Business Council of British Columbia in a 2007 report as: "[a] labour market needs analysis that reflects employer need; [an] immigration process and the options under which skilled worker scan enter Canada; [a] foreign credential recognition process; and [...] employment opportunity" (p.2). Recognizing that the FCR set-up is not sufficiently flexible in its current form and that for many regulatory authorities the development of formalized FCR processes is outside their resources and capabilities, the Canadian government has utilized departmental resources at Citizenship and Immigration Canada and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada to develop and

implement federal programs directly addressing FCR-related issues. These programs and initiatives have been complemented by similar provincial undertakings. While these federal and provincial initiatives share a common goal – transforming the FCR process and providing assistance to immigrants and employers – they approach this with a wide and diverse range of programs. Table 1.5 lists a selection of the most recent large-scale federal and provincial initiatives and programs implemented across Canada.

Table 1.5 Federal and Provincial FCR Initiatives

Implemented By	Title	Description
Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Alliance of Sector Councils	Employer’s Roadmap	A guide for SME employers on hiring foreign trained workers
Citizenship and Immigration Canada	Enhanced Language Training Initiative	Delivers labour market language training
Citizenship and Immigration Canada	Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications	Creates a standard Canadian qualification level required for select professions
Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Association of Canadian Community Colleges	Canadian Immigrant Integration Program (CIIP)	Free pre-departure orientation to Federal Skilled Worker and Provincial Nominees and their families (three year pilot, 2010-2013)
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada	Foreign Credential Recognition Program (FCRP)	Strategic financial support to stakeholders involved in credential recognition
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Citizenship and Immigration Canada	Foreign Credential Referral Office (FCRO)	Provides information and referrals to credential recognition services
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada	Working in Canada Tool (WiC)	Provides information about occupations and regulation
Health Canada with the Provinces and Territories	Internationally Educated Health Professionals Initiative (IEHP)	Addresses accreditation barriers for health professionals

Industry Canada, Campus Canada	Learning Assessment and Recognition Network	Assistance with recognition of formal and non-formal learning
Alberta	Alberta Ministry of Advanced Education and Technology	Assists with certification and fast-tracking in apprenticeship programs
Alberta and Saskatchewan	International Qualifications Assessment Service	Compares foreign and domestic qualifications
British Columbia	International Credential Evaluation Service	Compares foreign and domestic qualifications
British Columbia	Ministry of Economic Development – International Qualifications Unit	Provides capacity building, information services, and networking
Manitoba	Academic Credentials Assessment Service	Compares foreign and domestic academic qualifications
Manitoba	Credentials Recognition Program	Offers assessment and wage assistance, counselling, and referral services
Ontario	Ontario Immigration Working Guide	Provides information about working in Ontario
Ontario	World Education Services Canada	Evaluation services for qualifications
Ontario	Access to Professions and Trades Initiative	Reduces and removes barriers to trade and professional certification and licensing
Quebec	Travailler au Québec	Information about the job market in Quebec
Quebec	Office des professions du Québec Information	Information on the professional system in Quebec

Source: Alliance of Sector Councils, n.d.(b). For a full list of completed projects please see Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (2011c).

The many programs and initiatives listed in this table illustrate that credential assessment continues to be highly fragmented due to complex federal and provincial jurisdiction, and that much of the focus remains on regulated professions. However, what is promising is the emergence of steps towards the creation of Canada-wide framework for FCR assessment. The development of the Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications is one such step although it remains limited to select regulated occupations at present.

2. Foreign Credential Recognition in Australia and New Zealand

This chapter will describe FCR practices in Australia and New Zealand, and analyze and compare the advantages and disadvantages of each country's FCR system, as well as the opportunities each FCR system offers. These practices seek to integrate and streamline skilled migration in Australia and New Zealand, and redress the unintended negative consequences of previous practices. After looking individually at the immigration mandate, FCR organizational structure, and FCR activities in Australia and New Zealand, a comparative chart will detail the main points of each system against Canadian FCR practices to better illustrate the advantages and disadvantages of each system. These highlighted points will be used to inform recommendations for improving the Canadian FCR system in Chapter 3.

2.1 Australian FCR

Acknowledged as one of the world leaders in FCR Australia has spent the last decade seeking to improve labour market outcomes for immigrants. While other countries (including Canada) have experienced declining outcomes for recent immigrants, Australia has been successful in improving outcomes largely due to policy changes which tightened up the immigrant selection process and introduced the pre-immigration assessment of qualifications (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2010; Walker, 2007, p.22). The central purpose of Australian immigration policy is to match the supply of skilled workers to occupations in demand and to address skilled shortages while enhancing overall human capital in the Australian workforce (Birrell, Hawthorne & Richardson, 2006, p.70).

At its essence the Australian FCR system is based on a weighted 'points' program, labour market shortages lists, and a mandatory pre-immigration qualifications assessment for permanent immigrants. The first defining feature of the Australian FCR program is the formalized linkages that are seen between immigration approval, qualifications assessment, and labour market demand (Birrell, 2005, p.31). This is a result of skilled migration being driven and determined by labour market needs in a flexible manner, and that credential assessment occurs prior to immigration. A second defining feature of this system is that the Pre-Application Skills Assessment (PASA) process is able to clearly and transparently evaluate immigrant qualifications, experience, and skills into their Australian equivalents. While the policy objective of PASA is to ensure that selected immigrants are able to rapidly integrate into the Australian workforce, this process of reviewing qualifications before applying to immigrate applies mainly to skilled independent visa applicants—with minor exceptions it does not apply to unskilled immigrants applying outside of this class (e.g. family class and refugees)—and is therefore limited in the scope of its application. PASA is part of the pre-immigration process and works in conjunction with the Australian point system. Thirdly, the system utilizes occupational lists which correspond to the multiple visa categories for permanent migration. Fourthly, Australia has the 'principle of mutual recognition' – meaning that once an immigrant is registered in one state they are recognized all over the country which facilitates labour mobility (Business Council of British Columbia, 2007, p.44).

Like Canada, Australia is a confederation of states defined by multi-layered jurisdiction in labour market needs and professional qualifications assessment and regulation.⁷ The outcome of this shared jurisdiction is also similar to Canada in that there is no single government authority carrying out FCR. Most regulated occupations are governed at the state level in Australia (registration and licensing) while pre-immigration FCR assessment is done at the national level (Business Council of British Columbia, 2007, p.43; Construction Sector Council, 2006, p.15).⁸ In a two-step process prospective migrants have their credentials assessed federally as part of their evaluation in the points system, and again after immigrating to Australia. If they are applying to a regulated industry this assessment is carried out by state regulators while unregulated industry is assessed by employers, educational institutions, and other assessment institutions. Within this system it is the responsibility of the immigrant to contact the correct assessment authority upon immigration to obtain a skills assessment and/or licensing and regulation (Walker, 2007, p.22). Part of the weighting of the new points system is related to the level of demand for specific labour industries. The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) is responsible for gathering labour market information and for preparing two key lists monthly: the Skilled Occupations List (SOL) and the Migration Occupations in Demand List (MODL). As outlined in Appendix 3 (Skilled Migration Systems) certain visa categories are linked to the demand for

⁷ There are six independently governed states (New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, and Western Australia) and two territories (the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory) in Australia's federal system.

⁸ Unfortunately an exact number stating the percentage of regulation vs. lack of regulation in the Australian labour market could not be located.

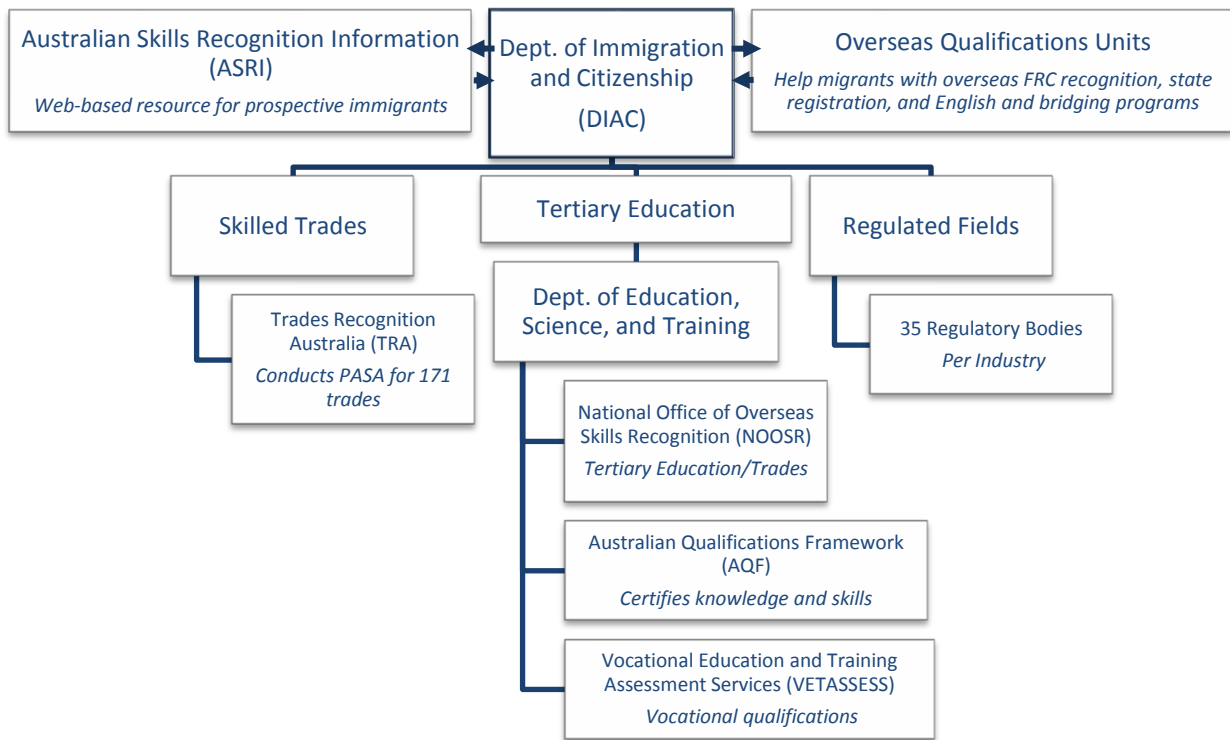
occupations on these lists. Furthermore, while the skilled migration program is not necessarily predicated on a potential immigrant having a job offer prior to immigrating, under the points systems a job offer is rewarded with additional points (p.45).

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship is responsible for conducting PASA reviews; through the use of several departments, programs, and 35 Regulatory bodies it is able to assess and regulate skills trades in regulated fields and tertiary education. The key programs in Australian FCR include:

- *Trades Recognition Australia (TRA)*. TRA conducts PASA for 171 skilled trades in Australia. Additionally, it is the licensing body for 49 traditional skilled trades and can provide accreditation to immigrants in these trades.
- *National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR)*. Focusing on post secondary education, NOOSR maintains a database of over 100 country education profiles which are available to subscribers for FCR and assessment. These profiles group and document foreign educational institutions.
- *Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)*. AQF recognizes tertiary and secondary qualifications in Australia and sets the standard against which all foreign qualifications are assessed. It also certifies knowledge and skills, and lists a registry of institutions, accreditation authorities, and courses.
- *Vocational Education and Training Assessment Services (VETASSESS)*. VETASSESS is responsible for overseas vocational qualifications and conducts PASA services for NOOSR.
- *Australian Skills Recognition Information (ASRI)*. ASRI is a web-based one-stop information site which explains pre-arrival assessment and the requirements for post-arrival licensing and registration for select occupations.
- *Overseas Qualifications Units*. Units have been launched in most Australian states to provide guidance and assistance to immigrants on FCR, registration and licensing, English courses, and bridging programs. The Units also act for immigrants in an advocacy role with assessment authorities.

The above components of the PASA process and post-immigration assessment are illustrated in Figure 2.1 on the following page.

Figure 2.1 Components of the PASA process and post-immigration assessment



Source: Adapted from British Columbia Business Council, 2007, pp.33-49; Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2012.

The Australian point system is employer driven in the sense that before an immigrant qualifies to immigrate they must first apply to regulatory screening bodies. A high percentage of points are awarded for this (Assessment of Qualifications) and for English test scores (Official Language Proficiency). Points are also awarded on age, visa category (i.e. temporary vs. permanent), overseas skilled employment in a nominated or related occupation, study in Australia (extra points for regional study), partner skills, completion of a professional year, recognized community language ability (i.e. a minority-spoken language such as Urdu, Japanese or Arabic),

and nomination or sponsorship by a state/territory government (Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2011). For a full list of the category points please refer to Appendix 2: Point Systems.

Although the Australian FCR system has been credited with significantly improving immigrant employment outcomes since its implementation, it also has several drawbacks. Firstly, the principle of mutual recognition has the potential to encourage strategic behaviour in that potential migrants will apply to the province or territory with the least rigorous requirements and after obtaining licensing or registration will move to the state of their choice. Australia is currently attempting to discourage this behaviour by harmonizing requirements in select professions with the end goal of this extending across all occupations (Business Council of British Columbia, 2007, p.44).⁹ Secondly, as there are 35 regulated bodies which are responsible for the accreditation in their specific industry, there is the potential for ‘professional gate-keeping’. Birrell states that “credential recognition problems are far more serious with registrable professions” (p.32) and that gate-keeping may be a result of professional concern to limit numbers or expressions of local prejudice. Thirdly, Birell, Hawthorne, and Richardson point out that using MODL runs the risk of developing gluts in certain occupations and overlooking regional disparities in occupational needs (2006, p.120). These drawbacks to the Australian FCR system are the result of operation within a small number of harmonized jurisdictions (7) and have the potential to influence one another. For example, were a MODL glut to develop for carpenters, the regulatory body for Carpentry could

⁹ “The Council of Australian Governments (COAG), representing primarily state-level governments, is presently consulting to harmonize standards for registration and accreditation across regulated fields” (Business Council of British Columbia, 2007, p.77).

raise the standards for licensing in an attempt to reduce the increasing number of licensed carpenters. Although overall they may face a more challenging licensing program, new immigrant carpenters may continue to immigrate to the state which has the least rigorous licensing requirements, and afterward immigrate to the state of their choice. Should Canada choose to adopt harmonization measures or simplify present jurisdictional complexity, it will be important to keep in mind the inherent drawbacks above, and that although these drawbacks may influence one another, different solutions are required for each problem.

In a comparison of Australian and Canadian point systems (see Appendix 2), the Australian point system is more demanding in its requirements which is clearly seen in the categories of official language proficiency, age brackets, and assessment of qualifications. For example, immigrants to Australia are required to undergo mandatory ESL testing (unless they arrive from an English speaking country) and face an upper age limit for skilled migrants. Additionally, immigrants to Australia have their credentials assessed pre-immigration (rather than post-immigration as in Canada), the results of which are valid across all Australian territories and states (again, unlike Canada). It has been argued that these more stringent Australian measures have contributed to the success of the Australian model (Richardson and Lester, 2004, p.40) These measures have resulted in an increase in the official language proficiency, the prime working age of immigrants (25-45), and a higher percentage of employed immigrants—both overall and in occupation of choice (p.2). While both countries are similar in that FCR lies mainly with employers, educational institutions, and professional and regulatory bodies, the main difference between these two systems is that the Australian point system seeks to match up employer demand with labour while

the Canadian system seeks to accumulate general human capital and a flexible workforce (Walker, 2007, p.23).

2.2 New Zealand FCR

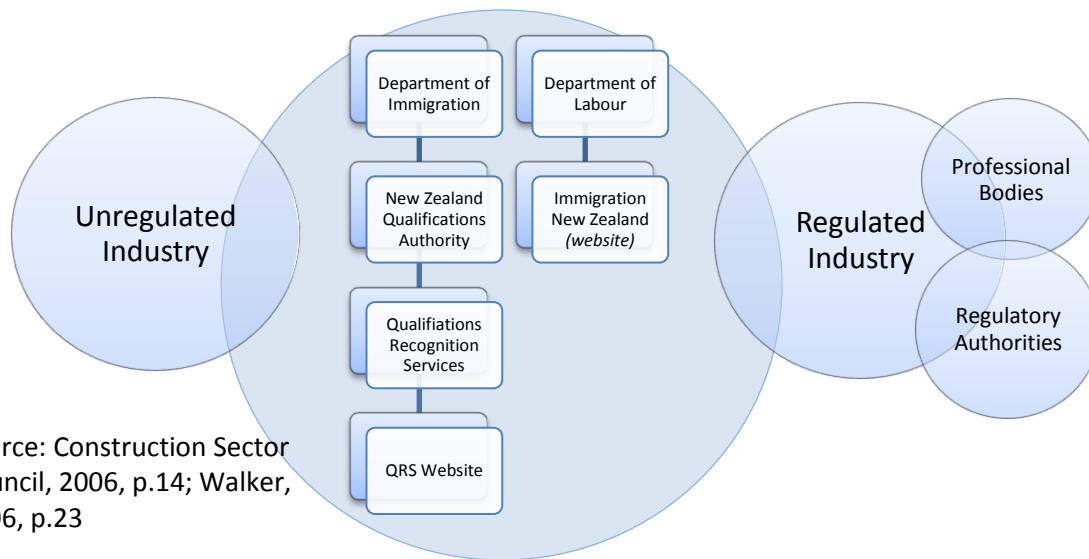
Similarly to Australia and Canada, New Zealand is a country founded on immigration and one which continues to rely heavily on immigration as a source of continued population and labour market growth. However, while Australia and Canada see minimal emigration and are net importers of labour, immigration policy in New Zealand is largely concerned with “replacement migration” (Birrell, Hawthorne & Richardson, 2006, p.229). For example, in the 2010-2011 fiscal year 2,555,039 immigrants (of which 1,267,869 were visa holding) arrived in New Zealand. During this same period a total of 2,547,704 people emigrated leaving a net population gain of 7,335 people or 0.29% (Immigration New Zealand, 2012a). These numbers illustrate that for every 10 immigrants who arrive in New Zealand, 7 people will have emigrated from New Zealand in the same time period. Much of this replacement immigration is initially temporary; immigrants arrive with short-term work visa status which is later used to apply for permanent residence due to the highly flexible nature of New Zealand’s immigration system. This blurring between temporary and permanent migration in New Zealand is an issue that has seen much domestic debate on whether these high emigration and immigration levels are problematic or could present an advantage. According to Birrell, Hawthorne and Richardson “the domestic policy context remains complex, involving debate as to whether ‘immigration policy should be linked to the labour market situation or to other factors [...]’ (2006, p.132).

Immigration policy and FCR in New Zealand is highly streamlined due to a lack of jurisdictional complexity. As New Zealand is a nation without states, policy is generated at a single government level by Parliament and the Minister of Immigration (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2010). These policies are applied uniformly at the regional level by regional and district councils (Birrell, Hawthorne & Richardson, 2006, p.228). New Zealand has adopted an FCR model that is similar to Australia's for skilled immigrants, introducing a new point system and a more rigorous selection process for prospective immigrations (for a diagram of this process please refer to Appendix 4: Skilled Migration Process in New Zealand). In the pre-arrival stage of FCR New Zealand's point system now resembles the Australian system with considerable weight on language competence, age, qualifications, and employment experiences. However, New Zealand has chosen to implement a higher range for age approval (55 compared to 45 in Australia) and does not require immigrants from English speaking countries to take English language testing (Australia requires this for all immigrants). As is the case in Australia, New Zealand's FRC process is comprised of pre-immigration FCR assessment through a qualification body and post-immigration licensing and certification through a regulatory body. While this process is mandatory in Australia, New Zealand has chosen to keep the pre-immigration FCR assessment voluntary and as an incentive awards bonus points to immigrants applications if they undergo this assessment (Walker, 2007, p.23).

In New Zealand, FCR is carried out by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) for unregulated occupations and by professional registration bodies for regulated occupations. If an immigrant chooses to undergo pre-immigration assessment the Qualification Recognition Service

(QRS) –administered by the NZQA and legislated to assess international education credentials–will issue a non-binding Pre-Assessment Report. Immigrants who are seeking professional registration, residence, employment, or study opportunities are required to obtain a formal verified Qualifications Assessment Report (Construction Sector Council, 2006, p.14; Walker, 2006, p.23). However, the NZQA and QRS only assess the educational component of an immigrant’s foreign credentials and not work experience or competencies. Immigrants seeking licensing in regulated occupations are often required to apply for assessment under the NZQA and to the specific professional body and regulatory authority for their profession (Walker, 2006, p.23). Information about this process is available to prospective immigrants through the Department of Labour’s web-based ‘Immigration New Zealand’ as well as a supplementary website run by the QRS.¹⁰ Figure 2.2 below lays out the players involved in New Zealand’s FCR process.

Figure 2.2 Players in New Zealand’s FCR process



Source: Construction Sector Council, 2006, p.14; Walker, 2006, p.23

¹⁰ Unfortunately an exact number stating the percentage of regulation vs. lack of regulation in New Zealand’s labour market could not be located.

Working in conjunction with the New Zealand point system are its two occupations in demand lists which again are modelled on the Australian system (MODL and SOL). These two skill shortage lists are the Long Term Skills Shortage List (LTSSL) and the Immediate Skills Shortage List (ISST). Occupations on these lists are awarded points under the point system and are used to match immigration labour supply to labour market shortages. Both the LTSSL and the ISST list the details of the qualifications required for the occupation (credentials and/or work experience) and the regions with vacancies. There are 64 occupations listed on the LTSSL and 70 on the ISST (Immigration New Zealand, 2012b). At present, a third list containing 21 occupations, the '*Canterbury Skills Shortage List*', has been temporary introduced to bolster occupations required during the Canterbury rebuild as a result of the 2011 earthquakes in that region (Immigration New Zealand, 2012b).

FCR practices in New Zealand are very straightforward when compared to the Australian and Canadian FCR practices and offer more flexibility than either alternative system. This is largely the result of the jurisdictional simplicity offered by having one level of immigration authority (Parliament and the Department of Immigration) where policy is developed and implemented. However, one drawback of the top-down way FCR is structured in New Zealand is that there is limited consultation with special interest groups and local authorities as policy debates are conducted at national level and not the sub-national level (Birrell, Hawthorne & Richardson, 2006, p.228). When comparing FCR practices between New Zealand and Canada, the differences and similarities between the two countries are strongly reminiscent of outcomes for the above Canada and Australia comparison due to the modeling of much of New Zealand FCR system on Australia's.

However, as in Canada, New Zealand's pre-immigration FCR assessment is voluntary (unlike Australia), both countries have refrained from imposing ESL testing, and both have more relaxed age restrictions than those seen in Australia. Despite these similarities there is a fundamental difference in the two system; Canada seeks to accrue human capital with its FCR policies (for the purposes of nation building) while New Zealand seeks to directly match labour market demand with labour market supply to improve economic growth (like Australia) and for demographic equilibrium.

2.3 A Side-By-Side Analysis and Comparison of the Three Systems

The Australian, New Zealand, and Canadian FCR programs have multiple differences between them as well as several areas of similarity. Table 2.3 on the following pages highlights these differences, commonalities, and the shared limitations for each respective FCR system and provides a short comparative analysis:

Table 2.3 A Comparison of FCR in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand

	Australia	Canada	New Zealand	Comments
Main driving factor behind FCR policy:	Labour market trends	Human capital accumulation	Labour market trends	[Different] While all three countries' FCR policies reflect labour market trends (i.e. through the respective 'market shortages' lists) and HC accumulation, the emphasis for each differs as seen through when the FCR process occurs (i.e. pre-immigration in Australia and New Zealand and post-immigration in Canada).
Influence of the points system on FCR (skilled immigrants only):	Strong – impossible to enter under certain streams without it.	Strong – impossible to enter under certain streams without it.	Strong – impossible to enter under certain streams without it.	[Similar] Under the Skilled Migration Systems for Australia (General Skilled Migration), New Zealand (Skilled Migrant Category) and Canada (Permanent Skilled Worker Program) it is impossible for immigrants to enter outside of the points system. However, there are other skilled migration visa streams for Australia (3), New Zealand (2) and Canada (2) that operate outside of the points system for both temporary and permanent workers. ¹¹
Affect of 'market demand lists' on FCR (skilled immigrants only):	Visa granting is dependent on the SOL, MODL, ENSOL and gazetted list.	Immigrants gain points on the points system if their occupation is on a list of 'occupations under pressure'.	Immigrants gain points on the points system if their occupation is on either the LTSSL or the ISSL.	[Different] It is extremely difficult for skilled migrants to immigrate to Australia without an occupation on one of the 'market lists'. Thus skilled immigrant FCR is almost entirely contingent upon market demand lists in Australia. However, this affect is far less pronounced in Canada and New Zealand as skilled immigrants only gain points towards their acceptance if their occupation is listed on a provincial 'occupation under pressure' list. These lists typically do not apply to immigrants arriving under family reunification or refugees classes.

¹¹ **Australia:** Employer nomination (permanent), Temporary Business (Long Stay) "457", and Labour Agreement (temp or permanent).

Canada: Temporary Foreign Worker Program and various Provincial Nominee Programs (temporary and permanent).

New Zealand: Employer Accreditation (temporary) and Work to Residence (temporary).

	Australia	Canada	New Zealand	Comments
Pass mark on the points system	65 out of 125; 52%	67 out of 115; 58%	100 to 140 out of 210; 48-67% (NOTE: a score of 100 is the eligibility cut-off – it does not guarantee a visa)	These figures are surprising given Canada’s human capital approach; while they are currently mid-range it would be rational to expect a higher cut-off level to ensure immigrants are able to successfully perform their role within the human capital model.
Who conducts FCR assessment, licensing, and registration for regulated industries? When does FCR occur?	Mandatory assessment is done federally pre-immigration (skilled migrants) by TRA. Licensing and registration occur provincially post-immigration (35 regulatory bodies) for all immigrant categories.	Assessment, licensing, and registration are done provincially post-immigration with the help of +/-500 regulatory bodies for all immigrant categories (excluding immigrants in the TFWP).	Voluntary assessment is done pre-immigration by QRS. Licensing and registration is granted by professional associations post-immigration for all immigrant categories.	[<i>Different</i>] Assessment takes place prior to immigration in Australia (mandatory) and New Zealand (voluntary) and post-immigration in Canada. As this is done federally in Australia it not only allows immigrants some certainty in their ability to find employment post-immigration but the use of national standards also creates country-wide common occupational norms which is also the case in New Zealand but not in Canada. Also, Canada’s +/- 500 regulatory bodies are clearly excessive against Australia’s 35 regulatory bodies.
Who conducts FCR assessment for unregulated industries? When does FCR occur?	Assessment is done federally (TRA) prior to immigration where possible. FCR is carried out by individual employers post-immigration and immigrants may apply to NOOSR for educational qualifications assessment.	Assessment and FCR is carried out by individual employers post-immigration and immigrants can apply to one of 200 academic assessment bodies for educational qualifications assessment.	Voluntary assessment is carried out federally (QRS) prior to immigration where possible. Unregulated industry is assessed by employers post-immigration and immigrants can apply to NZQA for educational qualifications assessment.	[<i>Similar assessors, different outcomes</i>] Again, the advantages listed above for having federal pre-immigration assessment are applicable. However, Australian and New Zealand employers have an advantage here in the form of the AQF and the NZQA (qualification frameworks). The lack of a national or even provincial qualifications assessment body means that Canadian employers have to apply their judgement on a case-by-case basis which can lead to bias, discrimination, and penalization.

	Australia	Canada	New Zealand	Comments
Clarity, consistency, fairness, and portability of FCR across the country	Australia has PASA and the AQF. It also has the principle of mutual recognition.	Canada lacks unified FRC recognition, a qualifications framework (QF), and the principle of mutual recognition.	FCR is unified in New Zealand and has only one jurisdictional layer. New Zealand also has flexible voluntary pre-immigration FCR assessment.	[<i>Different</i>] As mentioned in the above section, the result of Canada’s lack of a unified QF, common FCR recognition, and the principle of mutual recognition mean that the FCR process is unclear, unfair, inconsistent, convoluted, and un-portable. The Australian FCR system is much more portable, fair, consistent and clear as a result of the AQF, PASA, and the principle of mutual recognition. However, it is New Zealand which has the most flexible and straightforward system due to its lack of jurisdictional complexity and voluntary components.
Potential for employer abuse (in FCR and in the immigration system)	Reduced due to the AQF. Concern for ‘457s’.	Many due to lack of a QF. Concern for TFW.	Reduced due to the NZQA.	[<i>Similar</i>] The presence of a common QF is clearly instrumental in preventing the outcomes listed above. The rigidity of all three systems calls for the use of temporary workers and the possibility of employer abuse.
Barriers to FCR participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None in assessment as FCR must occur pre-immigration. • Also, costs for licensing and registration are provincial (possible strategic behaviour) • Lack of formal review process for unregulated industry and employer familiarity with foreign degrees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment, licensing, and registration are provincial (possible limited strategic behaviour). • Lack of clear and consistent information. • Lack of formal review process for unregulated industry and employer familiarity with foreign degrees. • Language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of formal review process for unregulated industry and employer familiarity with foreign degrees. • Language barriers. • Cost of licensing. 	[<i>Different</i>] The costs of FCR are likely to be a larger barrier in Canada (and potentially New Zealand) due to the fact that immigrants have not been mandatorily assessed pre-immigration as in Australia. Canadian and Australian licensing systems and registration systems encourage strategic behaviour (i.e. increased immigration to the province with the least requirements/costs) although this less effective in Canada as the principle of mutual recognition is not present. New Zealand avoids this by having one layer of jurisdiction. None of these countries have any programs of significance in place to reduce the cost of assessment, licensing, and registration for new immigrants.

	Australia	Canada	New Zealand	Comments
		barriers. • Division between the immigration and employment processes.		
FCR Supporting Programs	Australian Skills Recognition Information (ASRI). Also, Overseas Qualifications Units (OQI), Outreach Offices, and Industry Offices	Foreign Credential Referral Office (FCRO), the CICIC, Service Canada, and individual provincial initiatives	New Zealand Qualifications Assessment (NZQA), Qualification Recognition Service (QRS), and “Immigration New Zealand” (Department of Labour)	[<i>Similar</i>] All three countries have programs in place to provide information to prospective immigrants (ASRI, OQI, FCRO). Both also have initiatives at more localized/regional levels. In Australia this takes the form of 12 Outreach Offices and 10 Industry Outreach Offices. In Canada there are multiple programs at the provincial level to obtain licensing and professional registration. As well, the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC) provides information and links to provincial sites for educational and professional assessment. Lastly, Service Canada has a website listing occupational classifications (NOC) which compares occupations across provinces (this is for informative rather than regulative purposes).

Shared Limitations (adapted from Becklumb & Elgersma, 2008, pp.12-13) :

- (1) All three countries share the possibility of reduced immigrant diversity due to embedded systemic and discriminatory preferences in immigrant credential recognition. Increased familiarity and commonalities with Franco- and Anglophone (Canada) and Anglophone (Australia and New Zealand) and Western/developed institutions facilitate equivalent or equal credentials. This may lead to the privileging of the above immigrant groups at the cost of non-Ango- and Francophone non-Western/less developed immigrant groups.
- (2) The current design of these FCR systems also severs the link between FRC responsibility (as demonstrated through selection) and immigrant integration. This is a result of employers having little to no role in the long-term integration of employees.
- (3) It should also be noted that changes cannot be made to the economic integration streams alone in efforts to target FCR improvements in Canada, New Zealand and Australia. As a result of significant (typically more than half of all immigration) immigration in family reunification and refugee classes, immigrants to both countries have FCR concerns that would not be addressed by measures targeted at economic classes alone.

While Canada, Australia, and New Zealand share immigrant employment as the fundamental goal underpinning their respective FCR systems, there are clearly different paths and options available in the pursuit of this goal. The greatest divide between these countries is the model used to reach this goal of attracting and utilizing skilled immigrants; human capital accumulation for nation building in Canada vs. economic growth and stability via matching labour market demand and immigrant supply in Australia and New Zealand (for New Zealand demographic equilibrium is also key). Unfortunately for Canada the human capital model has been repeatedly and continuously outperformed by FCR practices in Australia and New Zealand (Hawthorne, 2006, p.18). This new Oceanic model has been viewed as having the flexibility to allow governments to frame policy in a context where the power to withhold or offer work is held by employers. In conclusion, not only are the Australian and New Zealand FCR models more transparent and simple due to less jurisdictional complexity, they are also more effective, flexible, and efficient in their assessment of immigrant credentials. If Canada continues to pursue immigration as a means of nation building, the current Canadian FCR system would benefit from learning from and adopting best-practices and successes from the Australian and New Zealand FCR systems.

3. Recommendations for Canadian Foreign Credential Recognition

Pages 3 and 4 of the introduction touched on why good FCR is important. To briefly revisit this, everyone benefits when immigrant skills are effectively incorporated into the Canadian labour market; immigrant families assimilate and thrive, skill shortages are mitigated,

and the Canadian economy receives a boost. While immigration is not the only answer to Canadian labour market woes and demographic difficulties, it is a significant and important part of the answer. As such, immigration policy and FCR practices should be treated as areas of policy priority and with the aim of improving and refining existing practices. Although immigration policy and FCR practices have received much federal and provincial attention over the last decade, Alboim feels that the attention is poorly applied and inadequate for the issue at hand. She states that there is a strong need for an overall vision and public debate on this issue, and that “[i]n the absence of evaluation, good policy development and consultation, we may be creating worse problems, rather than fixing the ones we currently face” (2008, p.25). As she correctly points out, the decisions made today determine the Canada of tomorrow.

As outlined in Chapter 1 there is dramatic room for improvement in the Canadian FCR system. Problems in FCR are wide reaching in their impact and give rise to questions about the role of immigration in Canada as a source of economic growth through the importation of highly skilled labour. While the source of the dysfunction of the Canadian FCR can be attributed to many factors, key among them are the complexity and overlap arising from excessive jurisdiction and Canada’s continued commitment to a human capital approach to FCR. The following excerpt from Reitz succinctly captures the problem with this approach

“Canada’s current immigration strategy rests largely on human capital theory. This theory was developed to increase our understanding of labour markets in a knowledge economy, but its weaknesses when applied to immigrants have become evident. Whereas human capital theory suggests that workers’ earnings reflect the productive value of their skills — particularly skills based on formal education and work experience — immigrants’ recent labour market outcomes contradict that expectation. [...]One

reason for the weakness of human capital theory as applied to immigrants is that it assumes employers have effective means to assess the productive value of prospective workers' skills. The underutilization of immigrant skills reveals that they do not (Li 2000; Reitz 2001a)." (Reitz, 2005, p.6)

What is clear from this is that the problem with human capital theory (as applied to FCR) is that it is not the level of immigrant skills which are the issue but rather the degree of acceptance and utilization of these skills in the Canadian labour market. This is to say that the current approach taken by Canada—i.e. higher education standards and points-based selection of immigrants—is not producing the desired results.

Reitz tells us that if we wish to retain the distinctive Canadian institutional model of immigration, changes and adaptation will be necessary (2005, pp.12-13). This model currently has two main components: multiculturalism policies and immigrant selection (i.e. a human capital based point system). Reitz argues that it will be the ability to meet the challenge of reshaping Canadian immigration policy which will determine the future success of Canadian immigration policies. He points out the serious short term effects (e.g. reduction of the importance of immigration as a component of national development strategy and reduction of the size of the immigration program) and warns of potential social problems in the long-term if Canada does not take steps to improve its immigration policies and FCR practices.

Canadian immigration policy and FCR practices are at a crossroad; Reitz outlines three ways Canadian Policy makers can respond (2005, pp.4-6). One option is for policy makers to leave the system as is, accepting the downward employment trends of immigrants and instead focusing on improving the economic and employments outcomes of second generation

Canadians. Alternatively, policy makers could also reduce immigration levels in an attempt to mitigate the overall number of newcomers experiencing the negative economic impacts arising from continued decreasing economic and employment outcomes for immigrants (e.g. reduced quality of life due to lower incomes and standards of living). This approach was taken by Australia in the early '90s and resulted in lower overall education levels due to the increased proportion of family class immigrants relative to primary skilled applicants (Reitz, 2005, p.5). However, a third and more optimistic option remains; increase the effectiveness of immigrant skill utilization by improving on existing FCR practices. Improving FCR assessment would go far in addressing the negative trends surrounding immigrant employment and economic outcomes and could be accomplished by adopting and adapting Australian and New Zealand better practices to the Canadian FCR system.

Before moving into recommendations for the Canadian FCR system, there are several questions which should be addressed, namely: 'what are the key questions that should be asked about the system?', 'are there any global trends that should be identified?', and 'what are the overarching aims of changes to the system?'. These three questions are important to keep in mind and address as together they raise important considerations about FCR practices, contribute towards an understanding of what shapes successful FCR, and help frame what the ultimate end system and practices should look like. These questions will be raised in the following paragraphs and discussed in greater detail during the recommendations section of this chapter.

Systemic Questions

A key systemic question that should be addressed is ‘what are the key determinants of immigrant employment success?’. This in turn raises the question of how these determinants can be factored into the system and incorporated into changes to the system. Research by Reitz has identified seven key factors, the four most significant being: (1) immigrant selection policy and the characteristics and settlement patterns of immigrants; (2) “entry” effects and assimilation over time; (3) the lower value of immigrant human capital; and (4) the ethnic, racial or national origins of immigrants, and the possibility of discrimination based on such backgrounds (Reitz, 2007, p.13). The additional factors identified by Reitz include specific labour market niches, the social and cultural capital of immigrants, and institutional contexts (e.g. inter-ethnic relations, educational systems etc.) (Reitz, 2007, p.13).

When looking at the Australian and New Zealand FCR systems compared to the Canadian FCR system a fundamental difference between the two is when FCR occurs. Should FCR and information about the process occur prior to immigrant or post-immigration, and if prior what electronic systems are necessary? Australia and New Zealand have seen improved immigration employment levels with this model; however it should also be kept in mind that this is typically only applied to skilled and select economic immigrants. Therefore before any recommendation can be made on this, further study is required to determine what kind of impact this policy would have on low skilled immigrants. A further fundamental systemic question is who is best placed to conduct FCR? The private sector, public sector bodies (federal or provincial level?), or trade and professional associations? Clearly the current Canadian hodgepodge of overlapping assessors is not working well, however it must be questioned

whether a solution such as New Zealand's one national assessor is practical in the geo-political complexity of the Canadian division of federal and provincial jurisdiction. The question of who is best suited to assess is crucial for as Andersson and Guo warn, when an assessor has an epistemological misperception of difference and knowledge "[it] can lead to a belief that differences are deficiency, that the knowledge of immigrant professionals, particularly those from the Third World countries, is incompatible and inferior, hence invalid" (2006, p.16). The result of this type of misperception is an increase in unfounded immigrant underemployment and unemployment.

The final systemic question pertains to the Canadian human capital approach to FCR and immigration. Should Canada retain this system (perhaps with improvements) or alternatively turn to an Australian style demand-driven system? Before a decision is reached, a third alternative should be considered—the hybrid model discussed in chapter 1. The analysis by Papademetriou et al. of demand driven and human capital approaches to immigration and FCR suggests that hybrid models are the future of immigration policy. Rather than emphasizing human capital accumulation at the cost of labour market needs or vice versa, hybrid models "[...] combine the advantages of both currently dominant systems by allowing market forces to remain at the core of selection while providing thoughtful government controls" (Papademetriou et al. ,2008, pp.31).

Global Trends

Two prominent trends which are currently affecting immigration policies worldwide are the rise of two-step migration and hybrid immigration systems (as mentioned above). Two-step

migration is the process by which immigrants arrive as temporary workers and after a time apply to become permanent residents. This is particularly prevalent in New Zealand, and has so far been limited in Canada due to restrictions placed on the temporary foreign worker programs (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012).¹² According to Papademetriou et al. hybrid systems are on the rise globally and are “[...] *the future in immigration policy*” (2008, p.31). Respective application of hybrid systems takes into account the larger picture of a country’s human resources, demographics, and education and training institutions, producing an adapted and relevant system. Individual countries must concern themselves with several shared considerations when considering immigration policies. These include but are not limited to: (a) the degree of responsiveness and competitiveness desired; (b) the needs of employers in the labour market; (c) creating employer oriented program objectives; (d) retaining skilled immigrants; and (e) identifying an FCR qualifications framework. The appropriateness of the policy selected will be determined by whether national trends (e.g. poor economic outcomes) are determined by changes in the labour market or in the characteristics of recent immigrants.

Overarching Objectives of Changes to the System

Changes to a system should reflect the overarching aim of these changes. The objectives of the following recommendations for improvement to the Canadian FCR system are based on four key areas listed in Table 3.1 on the following page:

¹² In Canada a small number of Temporary Foreign Workers are able to transition to permanent residence through the Federal Skilled Worker Program, the Canadian Experience Class, and the Provincial Nominee Program.

Table 3.1 Improvement objectives of changes to Canadian FCR

<i>Access to Information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to information flow, clarity, quality and timeliness for all FCR participants (with the main emphasis on immigrants).
<i>Labour Market Needs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better reflection of Canadian labour market needs in the selection of immigrants. • Extend strategic Labour Agreements and Occupations Under Pressure Lists across <u>all</u> provinces and territories.
<i>National Harmonization</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Immediate) Extend the Canadian Qualifications Framework across all regulated Canadian occupations. • (Long-term) Extend the Canadian Qualifications Framework across all unregulated Canadian occupations.
<i>FCR Assessment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplify and reduce the number of FCR actors and evaluators within jurisdictional limitations. • Introduce greater emphasis on FCR in the immigration process.

The last decade has seen many suggestions for improvements to FCR practices in Canada. After considering recommendations and implementation strategies by many of the experts in this field—such as Alboim, Green and Green, Hawthorne, Papademetriou et al., Reitz, Sweetman et al.—this paper adopts Alboim’s 2008 framework which promotes a three pronged approach to recommendations for action and adapts it to the above objectives for improvement to the Canadian FCR system. Alboim’s 2008 framework is based on dividing action areas into three areas of focus: the immigrant; programs and services; and the systems and attitudes of host societies and institutions (pp.12-13). Table 3.2 on the following page outlines this paper’s recommendations for improvements to the Canadian FCR system and illustrates how Alboim’s framework is applied. Implementation of these points is discussed in the following three sections.

Table 3.2 Targeted changes to Canadian FCR practices

Improvements to:	Alboim's Framework:	Achieved by:
<i>Access to Information</i>	<i>Focus on the immigrant</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to improve and offer on-line and overseas services, as well as pre-arrival assessment tools. • Begin FCR assessment for skilled arrivals prior to immigration. • Consolidate web-based FCR information sources. • Continue to provide pre-arrival and post-arrival orientation to Canada programs.
<i>Labour Market Needs</i>	<i>Focus on systems and attitudes of host society and institutions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide occupation specific and basic language training. • Increase the number of bridge-to-work and bridge-to-license programs, as well as internships and mentorships. • Increase multi-stakeholder cooperation. • Increase employer FCR awareness and engagement.
<i>National Harmonization</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring regulatory bodies within the National Qualifications Framework. • Partnership development (including comprehensive community initiatives).
<i>FCR Assessment</i>	<i>Focus on the immigrant</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidate the number of FCR assessors • Develop alternative FCR assessment options. • Increased information sharing and collaboration. • Increase financial support for FCR. • Begin FCR assessment for skilled arrivals prior to immigration. • Change the selection criteria for immigrants. • Move away from a human capital immigrant selection system to a hybrid system.

NOTE: The above recommendations are based exclusively on political and economic considerations.

Focusing on the Immigrant

In focusing on the immigrant in the FCR process there are two policy options for intervention: either the selection criteria change be changed (e.g. language, credentials, education, age), and/or the immigrant composition (e.g. levels of immigration, mix of immigration classes, source country). These policy options take place during immigrant selection and prior to immigration. As discussed earlier FCR is a two-step process which takes place prior to immigration (the point system) and after immigration (accreditation and licensing). Changes to FCR practice can be made at both stages. The following are the recommend policy actions for improving FCR assessment by focusing on the immigrant specifically:

1. *Place increased weight on FCR in the immigration process and begin the process overseas.* If Canada were to introduce a PASA-like approach much of the problems associated with determining equivalency would happen pre-immigration and immigrants would be better able to self-select. For this to happen there must be a) improved access to information and b) streamlining of the FCR system. This would also require provincial cooperation unless policy makers choose to emulate Australia and implement federal assessment. Furthermore, unless this applied to all immigrants, it will only affect those arriving through skilled immigrant streams. As such there is also a critical need for improvements to the post-arrival FCR process (this will be discussed in the programs and services section). A further option would be to include a New Zealand-modeled voluntary PASA process for immigrants arriving in other immigration streams (e.g. family reunification).

2. *Shift the selection criteria by moving to a hybrid approach of immigrant selection.*

Changing the selection criteria is a valid option to address the increasing numbers of underemployed and unemployed immigrant arrivals in order to secure national development goals, as well as improved immediate and long-term economic outcomes. Research by Aydemir and Skuterud has found that much of the wage gap between immigrants and native-born Canadians can be explained by a penalty to foreign experience as well as foreign credentials (2003, p.641). If the current human capital approach to immigration falsely assumes that employers have the ability to assess credentials and work experience, then the shift to a hybrid system will help to mitigate some of these negative outcomes. Hybrid systems emphasize many of the requirements of demand-driven immigrant selection while still expanding the human capital pool by identifying immigrants with underutilize skills (Papademetriou et al., 2008, pp.31). In the Canadian context, the adoption of a hybrid system should include linkages to existing job offers (through points or another mechanism), increased language standards, refined FCR abilities to assess education level, quality, and type, and the introduction of probationary or provisional visas as well as pathways for visa movement (i.e. student to worker) as part of the two-step trend process discussed above.

Focusing on programs and services

In focusing on programs and services in the FCR process there are multiple policy options for intervention. These options touch on Canada's National Qualifications Framework, consolidating FCR assessors, improving access to information, developing alternative assessment options, improving coordination between immigrant selection and labour market

needs, increasing employer engagement, providing second language support, and financial support of FCR. The following are the recommend policy actions for improving FCR assessment by focusing on programs and services specifically:

3. *Bring regulatory bodies within the National Qualifications Framework.* Canada should expand its qualifications framework from select regulatory occupations to a model similar to the existing Australian program (the AQF). This recommendation is complicated by the division of regulatory powers in Canada and may have to be approached in an industry by industry manner. Introducing the principle of mutual recognition would be helpful although difficult to implement. However, this could be facilitated by the development of a single national database listing equivalent foreign institutions and through the creation and promotion of inter-provincial Trade and Mobility Agreements. National harmonization will address much of the un-portability, convoluted, inconsistency and lack of clarity in the current FCR system.
4. *Consolidate the number of FCR assessors.* In conjunction with the recommendation above, provinces should coordinate with federal initiatives to streamline the number of operatives in the assessment and regulatory processes. Provincial participation and coordination is necessary given the structure of the federal/provincial division of powers. Also, Australia's decision to award regulation oversight on an industry basis (i.e. one regulator per industry) may prove rewarding to emulate as it reduces unnecessary complications and redundant players. Again, an industry by industry approach may prove a useful starting point. Ultimately it might be beneficial to have FCR be a provincial responsibility given that licensing is regulated provincially. Within

this framework the federal government would take on a coordinating and liaising role rather than direct responsibility. As well, unregulated industry and academic assessment would benefit also from consolidation. Here it would be beneficial to create a federal body to take on a coordinating and liaising role with current assessors and individual employers conducting FCR, providing both common assessment standards and a final say on equivalency. Since these occupations are unregulated, federal standards could be accepted by the province, enabling reciprocity in assessments and a single point of assessment authority with provinces keeping the lead on the actual assessment monitoring and oversight of individual assessors and employers.

5. *Develop and promote alternative assessment options.* Across Canada assessment alternatives are being developed by various FCR assessors and immigrant support services. However, the majority of these innovative assessment alternatives are being carried out ad hoc by individual programs and groups without support from larger federal, provincial, or national FCR bodies. The FCRO (or an alternative lead) should monitor these developments, singling out best practices to be refined and promoted. Furthermore, this could be used to build partnerships with industry training authorities and employer-based associations. Among current best practices are:

- The Diploma Supplement: a tool to demonstrate what a person has done, their practical experience, and a description of educational qualifications (as well as an overview of the system qualifications were achieved in).
- Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR): is used to assess an individual's specific skills and knowledge in a particular area. From this a portfolio of the immigrant's

skills is created and can be used in academic, employment, and licensing settings. PLAR is carried out by some public colleges and universities.

- Module bridging programs: bridging programs which test immigrant theoretical and practical field knowledge and technical language abilities. Modules are developed in blocks so that the immigrants needs to take only what is necessary to be brought to Canadian standards and avoid duplication and high cost. Examples include University of Toronto International Pharmacy Graduate Program, a Roofing and Architectural Sheet Metal apprenticeship Training Program, and the Bridge to Canadian Nursing Program.

6. *Provide greater second-language support.* As the majority of immigrants reach Canada in immigration streams outside of the skilled employment stream, it is the case that they are able to immigrate with less than proficient English or French abilities. Poor language ability is tied into the problem of FCR assessment by contributing to mismatch and undervaluing in immigrant employment (Boyd, 2009, p.5). Whether this falls under the auspice of the provinces or the federal government, the provision of occupation specific and basic language training is absolutely necessary for the labour success and integration of many of these immigrants. Addressing the language gaps and needs of immigrants in these areas is of crucial importance and should be a high priority for policy makers.

7. *Continue to improve access to information.* The flow and clarity of information available for both employers and immigrants needs to be improved both in terms of timeliness and quality. For example, this could be the continued implementation and expansion of pre-departure FCR services in priority locations or improved domestic immigration offer

outreach similar to the Australian Outreach Office and Industry Outreach Office programs.¹³ Pre-departure services provide immigrants with the information they need, enable immigrants to begin acculturation and integration while still in the country of origin, and aid immigrants in managing post-arrival expectations. These overseas information services could also be used to provide a PASA-like process. However, given current departmental downsizing and resource constraints it is highly unlikely that these services would be offered through anything more than a website. Reducing this to one website managed by the FCRO from the many websites currently operating would reduce duplication or the posting of misleading or inaccurate information. This website would need to include information on:

- The Canadian FCR process and immigration process; a national database for workplace programs; information on employer services; and a preliminary FCR testing process (like PASA);
- Language programs and preliminary language testing;
- Current and accurate labour market information; information on national standards and provincial trade agreements; and
- An e-forum and discussion board for questions.

8. *Improved coordination between labour market needs and immigrant selection.* This should be supported with some level of coordination between CIC and industry, associations, or employers to address the disconnect between immigrant entry and

¹³ As referenced in Table 1.5, the three year Canada Immigration Integration Program pilot is currently being delivered in China, India, the Philippines, and the United Kingdom.

employment. One way to approach this through the adoption of a hybrid immigrant selection system.

9. *Introduction of and increased support for FCR financial support programs.* The cost of FCR assessment, retraining, and certification is prohibitive for many immigrants. Reducing this financial barrier through financial support grants or loans would lead to decreased immigrant employment discounting and structural unemployment. This assistance could take the shape of a provincial/territorial and federal partnership loan program, or individual provincial or federal loan initiatives. Considerations would need to include the financial needs of immigrants who are seeking to augment their current credentials as well as the long-term sustainability of these programs.

Focusing on systems and attitudes of the host society and institutions

In focusing on the systems and attitudes of the host society and institutions of the FCR process there are multiple policy options for intervention. These options include increasing the number of bridge-to-work programs, bridge-to-license programs, mentorships, and internships, as well as targeting practices for employers, regulators, stakeholders, and the federal government. The following are the recommend policy actions for improving FCR assessment by focusing on the systems and attitudes of the host society and institutions programs and services specifically:

10. *Increase the number of bridge-to-work programs, bridge-to-license programs, mentorships, and internships.* Immigrants are frequently caught in a catch-22 situation where they require Canadian work experience in order to get Canadian work experience. Internships and co-ops provide a way to overcome this barrier and provide

an immigrant with easily recognizable experience in later FCR assessment by other employers. The federal government currently offers the Young Newcomers Internship Program and the Immigrant Pilot Program; however, these are only offered to a small number of immigrants and could be expanded to provincial and public-private partnerships. Expansion of both programs should be encouraged as well as extended to include provincial governments and private sectors. While internships address gaps in experience, bridge-to-work and bridge-to-license programs target educational gaps. Universities and colleges should be encouraged to use competency based assessment to offer the individual courses required to fill accreditation and learning gaps rather than requiring retaking full diploma and degree programs. Additionally, a further program which should be encouraged is the mentorship program. Although many of the current mentorships in place are small scale and ad hoc, the benefits derived from these programs make mentorship worthy of expansion and promotion. Linking immigrants to successful practitioners within their designated field provides the immigrant with a guide to accreditation and Canadian field practice, and have the potential to lead to employment opportunities. Conversely, mentorships also provide Canadian employers with a chance to become familiar with foreign accreditation and work experience. All of the programs above provide immigrants with ways to break down barriers to accreditation and should be promoted in both the public and private sector.

11. *Increase employer FCR awareness and engagement.* Promotion to employers on FCR awareness and engagement should include emphasis on the programs outlined above. Incentives for participation should be offered, potentially through tax breaks, continued

funding for bridging programs, and program subsidies, as well as emphasizing positive public relations image outcomes. Awareness can be targeted through sector councils and associations, as well as through regulatory bodies for regulated fields. Additionally, within these licensed professions review of regulatory requirements should be encouraged. Review should encompass standards for FCR assessment, the principals used in assessment (e.g. fairness, relevancy, comparability etc.), competency-based assessment tools, and international best practices for the assessment and licensing of immigrants.

12. *Increase multi-stakeholder cooperation.* Given the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration on this issue it is critical to create linkages between the needs of employers (and immigrants) and the activities of immigrant service organizations. With multi-stakeholder cooperation, collaboration, and participation, the right mix of quality programs, practices, and services can be used to help immigrants transition into the labour market. With shared goals and proprieties, the players in the FCR process will be able to better support and reinforce one another, and reduce duplication and gaps.

As outlined through the twelve recommendations above there is a need for action in many areas of Canadian FCR. The biggest challenge now facing the federal government is the challenge of creating policies which are based on specific labour and product markets within select sectors rather than broad policy based on immigrant labour market outcomes. Other challenges include providing adequate post-immigration support, and the development of better assessment tools for the initiatives and projects being developed to better transition immigrants in to the Canadian labour market. While no catch-all solution exists to solve the

complex problems of Canadian FCR, the twelve recommendations above do outline ways in which to improve access to information for FCR, to address FCR labour market needs, to move towards FCR national harmonization, and to improve FCR assessment.

4. Conclusion

As was outlined in the introduction and chapter one of this paper the current Canadian FCR system is not able to adequately address the needs of immigrants and employers; this has resulted in a continued trend of declining immigrant economic performance, misallocation and underutilization of immigrant skills, and lost macroeconomic growth. If Canada continues to pursue immigration as a solution to the national shortage of skilled workers, declining economic conditions, and aging demographics, the shortfalls of Canadian FCR practices must be addressed. While there are many challenges to improving the Canadian FCR system, tried and tested best practices from similar FCR systems (Australia and New Zealand) present possible answers to some of underlying problems in Canadian practices.

In Canada the two biggest barriers faced by immigrants in the accreditation process are a) obtaining relevant and up-to-date information on FCR prior to immigration; and b) the lack within Canadian institutions to capably analyze these foreign credentials. These key problems have been in large part determined by Canada's the complex jurisdictional framework and the division of federal and provincial powers. However, a further compounding factor has been Canada's human capital approach to immigration. This is one of the fundamental differences between the FCR practices in Australia and New Zealand and in Canada. The more successful Oceanic practice is based on selecting immigrants who will easily have their credentials

recognized in Australia and New Zealand while Canada selects immigrants on a perceived (and sometimes demonstrated) ability to integrate into the workforce. The effectiveness of recruitment and employing immigrants is mainly dependent on the level of integration between the FCR process and the immigration process. As this is highly separated and disconnected in Canada, the utilization of a human capital model is neither effective nor efficient. A further fundamental difference is the lack of jurisdictional complexity and high number of mutual recognition agreements in Australia and New Zealand which together, have been highly effective in increasing the integration of immigrants into their respective labour markets.

Using best practices from the leading competitive models for FCR in Australia and New Zealand, this paper has made recommendations for FCR practices in Canada by highlighting areas for improvement and identifying alternative system mechanisms. These recommendations are:

1. Place increased weight on FCR in the immigration process and begin the process overseas.
2. Shift the selection criteria by moving to a hybrid approach of immigrant selection.
3. Bring regulatory bodies within the National Qualifications Framework.
4. Consolidate the number of FCR assessors.
5. Develop and promote alternative assessment options.
6. Provide greater second-language support.
7. Continue to improve access to information.
8. Improved coordination between labour market needs and immigrant selection.
9. Introduction of and increased support for FCR financial support programs.
10. Increase the number of bridge-to-work programs, bridge-to-license programs, mentorships, and internships.
11. Increase employer FCR awareness and engagement.
12. Increase multi-stakeholder cooperation.

Given the policy reality of immigration as a means to contribute to the development of a skilled workforce in Canada, the implementation of a strong FCR policy is taking on increased importance. Policy makers are facing a crucial decision in Canadian FCR practices; the decisions made by today by policy makers on FCR will influence the Canada of tomorrow, with either significant repercussions on or improvements to immigrant integration and Canadian macroeconomic performance. As things currently stand Canada is being held back by a flawed and poorly implemented FCR system. However, with revision and the adoption of some of the best practises of our cousin's down-under there is hope for improvement.

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6. Appendices

Appendix 1: The number of regulated occupations per province

Province*	Number	%
Alberta	84	16.28
British Columbia	61	11.82
Manitoba	63	12.21
New Brunswick	61	11.82
Newfoundland	44	8.53
Ontario	71	13.76
Prince Edward Island	50	9.96
Saskatchewan	60	11.63
Quebec	91	17.64

* Data for the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and the Yukon was not available.

Source: Girard & Smith, 2012, p.5

Appendix 2: Point systems

The Australian Point System		
FACTOR	DESCRIPTION	POINTS
Age	18-24	25
	25-32	30
	33-39	25
	40-44	15
	45-49	0
English language	Competent in English – IELTS 6*	0
	Proficient in English – IELTS 7*	10
	Superior in English – IELTS 8*	20
Australian or overseas skilled employment in nominated occupation or a closely related occupation undertaken in the past 10 years.	One year in Australia	5
	Three years in Australia	10
	Five years in Australia	15
	Eight years in Australia	20
	Three years overseas	5
	Five years overseas	10
	Eight years overseas	15
Note: Maximum points that can be awarded for any combination of Australian or overseas skilled employment is 20 points.	Five years	10
Qualifications (Australian or recognized overseas)	Australian Diploma or trade qualification or other qualification recognized by a relevant Assessing Authority	10
	At least a bachelor degree	15
	Doctorate	20
Australian Study Requirement	Minimum two years full-time (Australian study requirement)	5
Study in a Regional Area	Must meet the Australian Study Requirement while studying in a regional area	5
Professional Year	Completion of a recognized Professional Year	5
Credentialed Community Language	NAATI accreditation	5
Partner Skills	Primary applicants partner meets the threshold requirement for skilled migration visa	5
Nomination by state/territory government (subclass 176 or 886 visa)	Nomination by a state or territory government under a state migration plan	5
Designated area sponsorship or nominated by state/territory government (subclass 475 or 487 visa)	Sponsorship by an eligible relative living in a designated area or nominated by a state or territory government under a state migration plan	10

*Or equivalent standard in a specified test.

Source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2011, p.5.

The Canadian Point System		
FACTOR	DESCRIPTION	POINTS
Age	16 and younger; or 54 and older	0
	17; or 53	2
	18; or 52	5
	19; or 51	6
	20; or 50	8
	21-49 years old	10
Languages (English and/or French)	First official language – high	4
	First official language – moderate	2
	First official language – basic proficiency	1
	Second official language – high	2
	Second official language – moderate	2
	Second official language – basic proficiency	1
Education	Master’s Degree or Ph.D. AND at least 17 years of full-time or full-time equivalent study	25
	Two or more university degrees at the bachelor’s level AND at least 15 years of full-time or full-time equivalent study	22
	Three-year diploma, trade certificate or apprenticeship AND at least 15 years of full-time or full-time equivalent study	22
	Two-year university degree at the bachelor’s level AND at least 14 years of full-time or full-time equivalent study	20
	Two-year diploma, trade certificate or apprenticeship AND at least 14 years of full-time or full-time equivalent study	20
	One-year university degree at the bachelor’s level AND at least 13 years of full-time or full-time equivalent study	15
	One-year diploma, trade certificate or apprenticeship AND at least 13 years of full-time or full-time equivalent study	15
	One-year diploma, trade certificate or apprenticeship AND at least 12 years of full-time or full-time equivalent study	12
Work Experience in an occupation listed on the National Occupations List (NOC)	Completed high school	5
	One year of work experience	15
	Two years of work experience	17
	Three years of work experience	19
Arranged Employment in Canada	Four or more years of work experience	21
	Job offer in Canada	10
	Presently working in Canada on a valid work permit (HRDC approved)	
Adaptability NOTE: you may receive no more than 10 points overall for the Adaptability factor.	Presently working in Canada on a valid work permit (exempt from HRDC approval)	
	Partner’s education	3-5
	Previous work in Canada	5
	Previous study in Canada	5
	Arranged employment	5
Relative in Canada	5	

Source: Adapted from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2010b.

The New Zealand Point System		
FACTOR	DESCRIPTION	POINTS
Age	20-29 years	30
	30-39 years	25
	40-44 years	20
	45-49 years	10
	50-55 years	5
Close Family	Close family in New Zealand	10
Qualifications	Recognized level 4-6 qualification (e.g. trade qualification, diploma)	40
	Recognized level 7 or 8 qualification (e.g. bachelor degree, bachelor degree with honours)	50
	Recognized level 9 or 10 post-graduate qualification (masters degree, doctorate)	60
	<i>Bonus points for qualifications</i>	
	Two years full-time study in New Zealand completing a recognized bachelor degree New Zealand qualification	10
	One year full-time study in New Zealand completing a recognized post-graduate New Zealand qualification	10
	Two years full-time study in New Zealand completing a recognized post-graduate New Zealand qualification	15
	Qualification in an identified future growth area	10
	Qualification in an area of absolute skill shortage	10
	If your partner holds a level 4-6 qualification	10
If your partner holds a level 7+ qualification	20	
Work Experience in Skilled Employment	2 years	10
	4 years	15
	6 years	20
	8 years	25
	10 years	30
	<i>Bonus points for qualifications</i>	
	One year work experience in New Zealand	5
	Two years work experience in New Zealand	10
	Three or more years work experience in New Zealand	15
	2-5 years work experience is in an identified area of future growth	10
	6 years or more work experience is in an identified area of future growth	15
	2-5 years work experience is in an area of absolute skills shortage	10
6 years or more work experience is in an area of absolute skills shortage	15	
Skilled Employment	Job offer	50
	Working in a skilled job in New Zealand for less than 12 months	50
	Working in a skilled job in New Zealand for more than 12 months	60
Bonus Points	Work in an identified future growth area	10
	Work in an area of absolute skills shortage	10
	Work in a region outside of Auckland	10
	If partner has a skilled job or job offer	20

Source: Adapted from Immigration New Zealand, 2010.

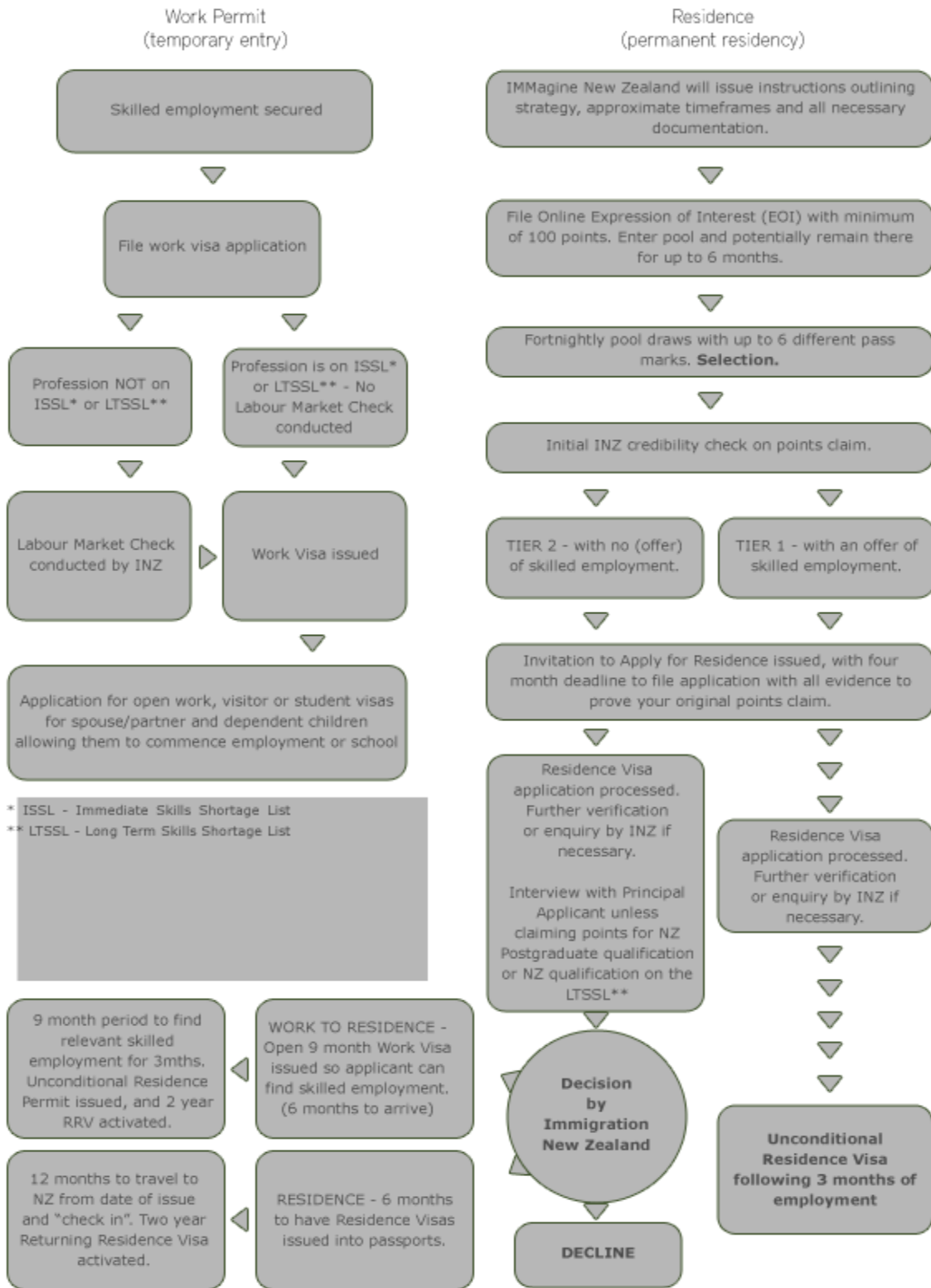
Appendix 3: Skilled Migration Systems

New Zealand Skilled Migration System Summary				
	<i>Points Based</i>	<i>Long Term Shortage List</i>	<i>Labour Market Test</i>	<i>Path to Permanent Residence</i>
Skilled Migrant Category (permanent)	Yes	Bonus Points Available	Not if occupation on Immediate or Long Term Shortage Lists	Yes, immediate upon approval
Work to Residence (temporary)	Yes	Not Required	May be required	Can apply after two years
Employer Accreditation (temporary)	Yes	Not Required	Conducted by local Dept. of Labour branch	Can apply after two years
Australia Skilled Migration System Summary				
	<i>Points Based</i>	<i>On Skill Shortage List</i>	<i>Labour Market Test</i>	<i>Path to Permanent Residence</i>
General Skilled Migration - Skilled Independent (permanent)	Yes	Must be on SOL ¹⁴ , may be on MODL	Not if on SOL or MODL	Yes, immediate upon approval
Employer Nomination (permanent)	No	Must be on ENSOL	Not if on SOL/ENSOL	Yes, immediate upon approval
Temporary Business (Long Stay) "457"	No	Occupation/Min. Salary List is gazetted	Not if on Gazetted List	Not directly, but possible
Labour Agreement (temp or permanent)	No	Not required	Not required	If temporary, not directly
Canada Skilled Migration System Summary				
	<i>Points Based</i>	<i>Labour Market Test</i>	<i>Path to Permanent Residence</i>	
Permanent Skilled Worker Program	Yes	Not required	Yes, immediate upon approval	
Temporary Foreign Worker Program	No	Required – min 7 days on Job Bank if on BC/AB occupation lists under pressure Two weeks if not on lists	Yes, expedited via PNP or visa onshore Skilled Worker application	
Various Provincial Nominee Programs	No	Not required – priority occupation list developed by PNP officials	Yes, immediate upon approval	

Source: Adapted from the Business Council of British Columbia, 2007, p.vii

¹⁴ SOL (Skilled Occupations List), MODL (Migration Occupations in Demand List), and ENSOL (Employer Nomination Scheme Occupation List)

Appendix 4: Skilled Migration Process in New Zealand



Source: Immagine, 2012.