

Everything you
need to know about

EQAO

Secondary Assessments



Education Quality and
Accountability Office



Ontario students write curriculum-based province-wide assessments of the literacy and math skills they are expected to have learned at key stages in their education.

At the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), we understand a healthy approach to student learning involves cognitive, emotional, social and physical development. The insights provided by EQAO assessments empower parents, guardians and educators with the information needed to create success for students throughout their academic career and beyond.

The assessments are administered by EQAO, an independent agency of the Ministry of Education.



This brochure will help you understand the two EQAO assessments Ontario students write in secondary school and how the results can be used to evaluate and support learning.

What is on the EQAO assessments?

EQAO assessments are based on *The Ontario Curriculum*.

Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics

This assessment evaluates the math skills students are expected to have learned by the end of Grade 9. Different versions of the assessment are administered in the academic and the applied math courses. Students in locally developed math courses are not part of the EQAO assessments because their curriculum isn't provincially developed.

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)

The successful completion of the OSSLT satisfies a graduation requirement. This assessment evaluates the literacy skills students are expected to have learned across all subjects up to the end of Grade 9.

When do the assessments take place?

Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics

Students in first-semester math courses write the two-hour assessment over two days during the month of January; students in second-semester or full-year courses write the assessment in late May through early June.

OSSLT

A student is eligible for the OSSLT in Grade 10. Each year, all students across Ontario write the OSSLT on the same date, usually in late March or early April. Students must be successful on the OSSLT to graduate high school.

Do students have to study for the assessments?

Not at all. EQAO assessments are based on *The Ontario Curriculum* and do not require additional preparation (e.g., tutoring, extra books). Students who would like to do some additional preparation to become familiar with the format of the assessment, and the types of questions that can be asked, can find examples of assessment materials at www.eqao.com.

Do all students have to take the EQAO assessments?

Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics

All students working toward their academic or applied Grade 9 math credit are required to take this assessment.

OSSLT

All students working toward an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) must take this assessment.

Successful completion of the OSSLT is the primary way to satisfy the literacy requirement for graduation. Students may write the OSSLT more than once. Students who are unsuccessful on the OSSLT may be eligible to take the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC) offered by schools in order to satisfy this graduation requirement.

Students with special education needs are permitted some accommodations that are consistent with their regular classroom assessment practices. Special provisions may also be permitted for English language learners.

Why does Ontario conduct province-wide assessments?

Ontario conducts provincial assessments in order to

- inform the improvement of instructional programs and strategies to help all children succeed and
- strengthen the accountability of the public education system.

And the assessments provide you with an opportunity to see how your child is progressing compared to the provincial level of achievement.

When and how are EQAO results released?

Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics

Results are released in the fall of the next school year.

OSSLT

Typically, student results are released in June of the same school year.

Students will receive an EQAO Individual Student Report directly from their school.

How are EQAO results reported?

Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics

Achievement is reported according to the province's four achievement levels. These are the same levels teachers use in the classroom and on report cards to report student achievement. The provincial standard is Level 3, which corresponds to achievement in the 70 to 79 percent range. Students meeting or exceeding the standard (i.e., achieving Level 3 or 4) on the assessment have demonstrated most or all of the math knowledge and skills expected at the current stage of their education.

OSSLT

The OSSLT is a minimum-competency assessment. Achievement is therefore reported as “successful” or “unsuccessful.” Students who are successful have demonstrated the minimum level of literacy that is expected by the end of Grade 9.

Do EQAO results count toward students' grades?

Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics

Schools and/or school boards decide whether to count the provincial assessment and for how much of the final course grade (up to 30%). Educators can select particular questions from the Grade 9 EQAO mathematics assessment to contribute to the final grade. The overall scores that EQAO provides are not part of the report card grade.

OSSLT

The results do not count toward students' grades, but successful completion is a requirement for a graduation diploma.

Why are EQAO assessment results important?

Students need to demonstrate fundamental literacy and numeracy skills before the end of high school. The assessments take place early enough in students' secondary schooling that more support can be provided to those who don't meet the minimum literacy level or the provincial math standard. EQAO results can inform improvement planning by helping to identify areas of learning that may need more attention.

How should EQAO assessment results be used?

EQAO assessment results should be reviewed alongside students' daily classroom work and other student-achievement-related assessment information to gauge student learning and determine where more support may be needed. For students who don't meet the provincial math standard or are unsuccessful on the OSSLT, it is particularly important for parents, guardians and educators to discuss how to work together to close learning gaps and improve student achievement before the end of high school.

Additional guides are available online in the following languages:



- Arabic
- Chinese
- Farsi
- French
- Gujarati
- Hindi
- Italian
- Korean
- Ojibway
- Ojicree
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Punjabi
- Russian
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Tamil
- Ukrainian
- Urdu
- Vietnamese

Visit www.eqao.com for more information.



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