



Ontario  
College of  
Teachers

Ordre des enseignantes  
et des enseignants  
de l'Ontario

# OCT

## Your Professional Designation



## About Your Professional Designation



### Recognizing teacher professionalism

The professional designation Ontario Certified Teacher (OCT) was first approved by the Ontario College of Teachers in 2008. Then, as now, the goal was to recognize the unique skills and specialized training required to be an educator and encourage broader respect for the teaching profession.

Enseignante agréée de l'Ontario, enseignant agréé de l'Ontario (EAO) is the equivalent French terminology.

Public recognition of professional designations such as RN for nurses, CPA for chartered accountants, and P.Eng. for engineers is widespread. As stewards of student learning, teachers are leaders in their communities. The OCT designation provides public recognition of their professional standing.

### Entrenched in law

In December 2021, the Government of Ontario formally acknowledged the value of teacher professionalism by enshrining the OCT professional designation in the College's governing legislation. This ensures that only individuals who are members in good standing with the Ontario College of Teachers are legally permitted to use the designation in any situation.



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This guide is intended to help you, as a member of the Ontario College of Teachers, use your professional designation to reflect your membership in a community of professionals.

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Ontario's Teaching Regulator

Cette publication est également disponible  
en français sous le titre *EAO Votre titre  
professionnel*.





### What the OCT designation means

Your professional designation identifies you as a qualified teaching professional who is certified to teach in Ontario's publicly funded schools. It also signifies that you are a member of the College in good standing who upholds the ethical and professional standards of practice.

The OCT designation helps protect the public interest in public education. It is a statement of accountability that, as a member of the College, you:

- are licensed by Ontario's teaching regulator
- possess a distinct knowledge base and specialized skill set
- pursue professional learning throughout your career
- belong to a community of highly educated, responsible and caring practitioners who are committed to the growth, development and well-being of Ontario students.

### How the College uses your designation

The College is committed to strengthening the teaching profession, and that commitment includes respecting its professional designations.

We use the OCT professional designation when communicating with our members and the public. The professional designation also appears on an OCT's Certificate.

### Your use as a member of the College

College members in good standing use the OCT professional designation in a wide variety of correspondence. The OCT designation should immediately follow your name, separated by a comma, and without periods or spaces. The designation should also precede other academic and professional qualifications you may have earned.

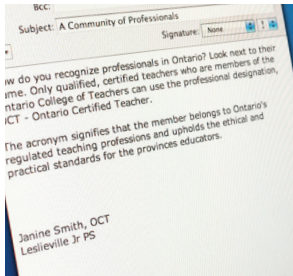
For example:

- Ravi Agarwal, OCT
- Jasmine Barnes, OCT, BA
- Handwritten notes, report cards, and email signatures

Many teachers prefer to correspond with parents and guardians by sending handwritten notes. You may include your designation when signing your name to these notes, or other similar handwritten correspondence.

Including your designation signals that you are a certified member of a regulated profession, and possess the unique knowledge, skills, trust, experience, and responsibility that teachers continually display inside and outside the classroom.

This includes using your designation next to your name on report cards, and as part of your signature in professional emails.



### Additional uses

Your professional designation is a representation of your profession and the status of teachers as trusted figures and community leaders. It should always be used with care and in a manner that does not discredit you, your fellow OCTs, or other self-regulated professions.

It is every College member's responsibility to ensure they are guided by sound professional judgment when choosing where and how they identify themselves as an Ontario Certified Teacher.

There are many other contexts where it would be appropriate to identify yourself as a member of the profession by using your designation.

These can include:

- When submitting articles to publications
- When attending conferences and industry events as either a speaker or an attendee
- Publications and other media where you are offering professional advice.

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