



Ontario
College of
Teachers

Ordre des enseignantes
et des enseignants
de l'Ontario

Additional Qualification Course Guideline Honour Specialist Religious Education in Catholic Schools

Schedule E – Teachers' Qualifications Regulation

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Preface

Additional Qualification (AQ) course guidelines are designed following extensive consultation and feedback from course providers, course writers and members of the teaching profession.

AQ course guidelines serve as the framework for providers and instructors to develop courses.

AQ course guidelines are organized in the following two sections:

Section A: Additional Qualification Course Foundations

This section outlines the fundamental contexts that are embedded in the content of the AQ course. Education in Ontario embodies these to support educator and learner well-being. These fundamental contexts are essential to foster safe, welcoming and inclusive learning environments for all learners and educators.

Section B: Additional Qualification Course Design

This section identifies the regulatory elements and core concepts that are accreditation requirements for all AQ courses. This section also outlines specific content that allows educators to gain in-depth knowledge and skills related to the AQ course.

In this document, all references to candidates are to educators enrolled in the AQ course. References to learners indicate those enrolled in school programs.

Introduction

The Ontario College of Teachers (the College) is the self-regulating body for the teaching profession in Ontario and is responsible for:

- establishing and enforcing professional standards and ethical standards applicable to members of the College
- providing for the ongoing education of members of the College
- accrediting Additional Qualification (AQ) courses.

The College supports teaching excellence by preparing educators to work in varied and diverse educational contexts and geographical settings:

- English language public school
- French language public school
- English language Catholic school
- French language Catholic school
- First Nations school
- Provincial school
- Private school
- Independent school
- Urban setting
- Rural setting
- Remote setting.

This AQ course guideline provides a framework upon which to develop courses that meet accreditation requirements established in Regulation.

Section A: Additional Qualification Course Foundations

Placing students' interests and well-being first is at the core of teaching in Ontario.

Professional Learning in Ontario

Professional learning is an integral part of the teaching profession. Educators participate in ongoing professional learning with the goal of improving outcomes for Ontario learners.

Educators complete a four-semester, pre-service teacher education program to become qualified to teach in Ontario. Throughout their career, they continue to engage in professional learning offered in various formats such as sessions offered by Ministry of Education, School Board or community partners, professional reading and Additional Qualification (AQ) courses.

The AQ Course *Honour Specialist Religious Education in Catholic Schools* reflects **adult learning theories and processes** that foster critical reflection, dialogue and inquiry. Instructors facilitate adult learning practice that provide candidates with professional learning experiences related to teaching, learning and assessment of learners.

AQ courses are designed by educators to inform and enhance professional practice. These courses allow educators to deepen their knowledge and skills in design and delivery of specific programs. They also support professional practice by preparing educators for specific roles within the educational community.

When engaging in professional learning, educators are guided by the *Foundations of Professional Practice*.

Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession

The *Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession* describes opportunities and processes that support ongoing professional learning for educators. AQ courses offer an opportunity for educators to inform and advance their professional knowledge, skills, practices and values.

Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession



Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession



Standards based resources can be found on the [College web site](#).

Ontario's Learning Context

Ontario educators recognize that student learning is influenced by the individual student's strengths, needs, interests and identity. Education in Ontario is complex and dynamic. Ontario's schools are learning communities that reflect the province's diversity. The *Ontario Human Rights Code* serves as the foundation for equitable, inclusive and accessible education.

The teaching profession in Ontario continues to evolve in response to the current and everchanging diversity of learners. Thus, educators are called upon to follow foundational principles that inform instructional practice. Through ongoing professional learning, educators deepen their understanding of the principles outlined below. In so doing, Ontario educators enhance their professional practice to support student learning and well-being.

Anti-Oppression Foundation

An Anti-Oppression Foundation acknowledges that systemic manifestations of power and privilege have led to multiple forms of oppression, injustices and inequalities. It recognizes that educator and student learning and well-being are impacted by biases and assumptions related to power and privilege. Educators have a shared ethical and professional responsibility to identify and challenge individual and systemic barriers to support the learning, well-being and inclusion of each learner.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action

Ontario's educators are responsible to uphold the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action* and align their professional practice with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP). They engage in authentic reconciliatory action by exploring and integrating First Nations, Métis, and Inuit histories, perspectives and knowledge systems, in teaching and learning. Educators, as treaty partners, acknowledge that conversation and collaboration with Indigenous communities will guide them on the reconciliation journey.

Aménagement Linguistique Policy (PAL)

Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees the French or English linguistic minority populations of a province the right to instruction in their own language.

In Ontario, the Aménagement Linguistique Policy (PAL) outlines the unique mandate of French-Language schools. Educators act as ambassadors and model the French language and francophone culture for learners. Educators deepen their understanding of learners' linguistic and cultural francophone identity. They collectively develop a provincial, national and international sense of belonging to *la Francophonie*.

Accessibility for All

Accessibility for all is rooted in the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. Accessibility, inclusion, equity and diversity are fundamental to everyday practice for teaching and learning. Accessibility creates opportunities for all learners to fully participate in their learning, showcase their abilities and benefit from all aspects of the education system. The implementation of adaptive strategies, accessible content and inclusive design for teaching and learning honours the strengths and needs of each learner.

Learning for All – Special Education

Educators believe that all students can learn. As stipulated in the Education Act, educators are required to provide programs and services that respond to each learner's unique needs and strengths. Evidence-based teaching and learning practices that are learner-centred provide equitable opportunities for all. Inclusive learning environments respect the identity of each learner and support their intellectual, social, emotional and physical development.

Accreditation – Program of Additional Qualification

Accreditation requirements for Additional Qualification (AQ) courses are articulated in O. Reg. 347/02: *Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs*, s. 24.

A program of additional qualification may be granted accreditation under this Regulation if the following requirements are satisfied:

1. The program content and expected achievement of persons enrolled in the program match the skills and knowledge reflected in the College's "Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession" and the "Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession" and in the program guidelines issued by the College.
2. The program satisfies the requirements of the teachers' qualifications regulation for entry of an additional qualification on the general certificate of qualification and registration of a person who successfully completes the program.
3. The program curriculum is current, references the Ontario curriculum, relevant legislation and government policies and represents a wide knowledge base in the program's area of study.
4. The course content of the program makes appropriate provision for the application of theory in practice.
5. The program's format and structure are appropriate for the course content of the program.
 - 5.1 The program consists of a minimum of 125 hours of work acceptable to the Registrar.
6. There is clear identification of the goals of the program, with a formal testing or assessment mechanism to determine the level of successful completion of the program.
7. The majority of the educators teaching the program have Ontario teaching experience relevant to the program.
8. The provider maintains adequate internal controls to preserve the integrity of student records relating to the program.
9. The provider is committed to continuous improvement and quality assurance of the program and, if the program is an existing program, has implemented measures demonstrating that commitment.

O. Reg. 347/02, s. 24; 2009, c. 33, Sched. 13, s. 3 (2); O. Reg. 182/10, s. 8.

Section B: Additional Qualification Course Design

Additional Qualifications (AQs) for educators are identified in O. Reg. 176/10: *Teachers' Qualifications Regulation*. This regulation includes courses that lead to AQs, the Principal's Development Qualification, the Principal's Qualifications, the Primary Division, the Junior Division, the Intermediate Division, the Senior Division and the Supervisory Officer's Qualifications. A session of a course leading to an AQ shall consist of a minimum of 125 hours as approved by the Registrar. Successful completion of the course is recorded on the candidate's Certificate of Qualification and Registration.

Honour Specialist Additional Qualification – Schedule E (Single Session)

Schedule E (see Appendix 1) *Honour Specialist Religious Education in Catholic Schools* allows educators with post-secondary studies in religious education to:

- apply knowledge and skills in a leadership role
- develop the capacity for curriculum leadership.

Additional Qualification Course Requirements

The AQ course *Honour Specialist Religious Education in Catholic Schools* enables candidates to advance their professional practice through focussed learning in the following areas:

- Curriculum Knowledge
- Pedagogical Strategies
- The Learning Environment.

This AQ course is designed and delivered using adult learning instructional practices.

In the AQ course *Religious Education in Catholic Schools*, the conceptual framework (Figure 1) outlines seven core course components for the development of an integrated, experiential and inquiry-based course. This conceptual framework supports and informs professional knowledge, practices and judgement and is intended to be an integrated representation of key concepts and direction associated with religious education in catholic schools. It is interpreted through the needs and realities of each language community.



Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for
Religious Education in Catholic Schools AQ courses

Symbolism of the Conceptual Framework for Religious Education in Catholic Schools

The conceptual framework for *Religious Education in Catholic Schools* is inspired by the biblical narrative of the road to Emmaus. This narrative reminds us that the development of a relationship with Christ is a personal journey accomplished by walking together in faith. The central stained-glass window represents the light of Christ illuminating the darkness and shows Jesus accompanying the two disciples to Emmaus. The surrounding windows with scriptural characters and sacred symbolic representations illustrate the 7 core course components to teach the worshippers about the sacred story. These depictions reflect the connection of the Emmaus narrative to *Religious Education in Catholic Schools*.

Honour Specialist Religious Education in Catholic Schools applies the subject-specific professional practice, knowledge and skills in a leadership role in the following required elements:

Anti-Oppression Foundation

- theories and pedagogies about multiple forms of oppression applied to the design, assessment and implementation of programs and practices
- addressing individual and systemic biases, discrimination and barriers as well as manifestations of power and privilege.

The Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession and The Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession

- integration of *the Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*, the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* as theoretical foundations
- ethical professional identity, knowledge and leadership, and collective practices as described in the *Foundations of Professional Practice* to inform program planning
- ethical decision making informed by Catholic teaching on ethical and moral issues.

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit histories, perspectives and knowledge systems

- meaningful inclusion of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit histories, perspectives and knowledge systems in teaching and learning processes
- knowledge of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action (TRC)*
- awareness of *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)*.

Current Ontario curriculum and related Ministry of Education policies, frameworks, guidelines, strategies and resources

- Ontario's curriculum, policies, frameworks, strategies, and guidelines, through the perspective of the mission of Catholic education and Catholic school board policies, guidelines and programs
- policies, processes and practices that foster openness to innovation, culturally inclusive pedagogies and the democratization of knowledge
- integration of religious education curriculum documents and programs to support teaching and learning
- meaning of the Church as expressed throughout history, official church documents, curriculum and pedagogy
- integration of Catholic Social Teaching and gospel values throughout the curriculum and educational experiences
- integration of the Catholic Graduate Expectations, and the policies and documents of the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario, The Institute for Catholic Education, and the catholic district school boards.

Current Ontario legislation and regulation

- relevant legislation (for example, Ontario Human Rights Code, Anti-Racism Act, 2017, S.O. 2017, c. 15 and Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act) and policies at the municipal, provincial, federal and international levels that support human rights, accessibility and privacy for all
- candidates' legal obligations and ethical responsibilities according to current provincial legislation and practices.

Accessibility for All

- ethical responsibilities related to *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* S.O., 2005
- assistive supports and technologies to facilitate learning and foster inclusion.

Learning for All - Special Education

- strategies (for example, universal learning design, experiential learning, differentiated instruction and inquiry) and services that respond to the interests and needs of each learner
- inclusive processes to support development and implementation of Individual Education Plans (IEP) including the transition plan for learners that include voices and perspectives of those involved
- interdisciplinary teams to support learning, advocacy and transitions.

Application of educational research

- current research and literature associated with professional practices, policies and pedagogies related to *Religious Education in Catholic Schools* Additional Qualification
- research that reflects society's diverse changing nature and influence on learning and well-being
- theoretical foundation for the design, assessment and implementation of programs and practices in support of learning.

Application of theories of learning and teaching

- theories and practices related to pedagogy and andragogy that support learning within a perspective of personal discipleship
- theoretical frameworks and fundamental principles underpinning religious education in catholic Schools
- theories of development and identity formation that support learner well-being, efficacy and agency
- learning theories to develop learner's profile and identities
- practical and theoretical understanding of faith to deepen teacher practice, leadership and learning strategies for religious education and pastoral care.

The Bible as Sacred Scripture

- understanding of the Word of God as revelation
- origins, structures, and elements of the shared scriptures (Old Testament) and New Testament
- exegetical methods and processes to critically interpret biblical texts
- relationship between biblical texts, core beliefs of the Catholic faith and the faith journey
- contemplating the revelation of God, the incarnation of Jesus and the meaning of creation through the Bible
- practice of using the Bible as a cross-curricular pedagogical tool
- reflection connecting the text to our history and personal story with real world application
- spiritual relationship with the living Word of God and praying the Scripture
- Bible as the Word of God, God's revelation to humanity, salvation history, the incarnation of Jesus and the story of God's relationship with the Jewish people and early Christian communities.

Sacramental, Liturgical and Spiritual Life

- importance of reflective prayer to encounter the movement of God in the lives of our learners and ourselves
- importance of the Sacraments in the Church and in Catholic life
- place of Scripture in prayer and sacrament liturgy, in daily living and creation
- components and origins of liturgy (for example, the Eucharist, Liturgy of the Word, Sacraments of Initiation)
- one's relationship with Jesus Christ as the core of the Catholic educator's spirituality and teaching
- different spiritualities as reflected in Scripture, Tradition and the world.

The Church: Past, Present and Future

- Catholic schools as instruments of the broader church and participating in the ecumenical mission
- history of Catholic Education in Ontario and in Canada in the recognition of the action of the Holy Spirit at work in the Church and the world
- Church history from the early Christian communities to the present
- significance of Scripture, beliefs and practices of the Catholic faith throughout the history of the Church

- official Church documents, including the documents of Vatican II, within professional practice and teaching on interfaith dialogue and ecumenism
- doctrines in the Nicene Creed and Apostles' Creed, recognizing that the Creeds are a profession of Catholic faith
- relationship between the Catholic Church, other Christian denominations and world religions.

Ethics and Morality

- biblical and theological texts related to ethics, morality, the moral discernment process, and the formation of conscience
- lived experiences related to the development of moral and social teachings of the Church
- analysis of current moral and ethical issues, and ecological responsibilities, from the perspective of Catholic Social Teaching.

Faith in Action

- integration of the principles and practices of pastoral service for Catholic education
- how faith in action calls us to share our faith, asks courageous questions and witnesses the Gospel through inquiry, community experience and theological reflection.

The Faith Journey

- understanding that it is our Baptism that confers on us our Christian identity and makes us disciples
- importance of celebrations of faith (spiritual and sacramental), joys, processes, challenges and responsibilities particular to the Catholic Christian spiritual journey for the Catholic educator
- spiritual discernment and reflection related to spirituality prayer, scripture, and personal experience
- forms of prayer that nurture the vocation and well-being of the Catholic educator
- importance of professional development and lifelong learning to enrich the faith journey for Catholic educators.

Learner-centred pedagogy

- processes and practices to understand learner's curiosities and experiences to empower them to reach their learning goals
- programs and processes that link curriculum to each learner's abilities, interests, strengths, inquiries and needs
- strategies that respect the development, identities, choices and well-being of each learner.

Supports for learners

- policies, processes, practices to support learners cognitive, social, emotional and physical development
- programs that respond to learners' lived experiences, identities, needs and well-being
- critical pedagogies and practices that support learners' well-being and efficacy.

Teaching, assessing and evaluating

- program design and implementation that align with the principles and processes of Ontario curriculum and related policies
- culturally inclusive processes and practices to provide learning opportunities that respect the learning styles, voice and perspectives of each learner
- assessment, evaluation processes and practices within faith education:
 - provide feedback to learners and adjust instruction (assessment *for* learning)
 - develop learners' capacity to be independent, autonomous learners (assessment *as* learning)
 - make informed professional judgments about the quality of learning (assessment *of* learning)
- instructional strategies to emphasize the importance of inquiry-based learning and transferable skills
- pedagogical practices and learning tools that support living out one's faith through religious education and pastoral school ministry
- instructional resources and practices to support Catholic education.

Pathway and transition planning

- processes and practices to support all transitions
- curriculum design using learners' career and life goals
- programs and learning opportunities for all pathways
- practices that develop the transferable skills to support lifelong learning.

Safe, equitable and inclusive learning environments

- policies and processes to create and maintain inclusive learning environments that respect diversity and encourage critical thinking
- inclusive learning environments that facilitate learning and foster learner agency and perspectives
- practices that support safe and healthy learning environments for learners as well as families, caregivers, guardians, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Knowledge Guardians
- learning and living environment that nourishes knowledge, skills and interpersonal qualities in light of Gospel values
- equitable and inclusive school climate based on the inherent dignity of the human person.

Teaching and learning through e-Learning principles

- integration of information and communication technology to enhance teaching and learning
- technological and communication resources to enhance professional knowledge in support of learning and agency
- ethical use of technology in support of learners' safety, privacy and well-being
- social media and technology through the lens of Catholic moral, ethical and social teachings.

Culturally responsive and relevant pedagogical practices

- culturally responsive and relevant practices that reflect understanding of learners' diverse identities
- culturally inclusive resources that support learning to foster engagement and well-being
- awareness of cultural appropriation and cultural appreciation
- how faith is a personally lived reality that is intimately linked to one's own culture
- similarities and differences between the basic tenets of Christianity and those of other world religions, while emphasizing the importance attributed by the Catholic Church to the ecumenical movement and interreligious dialogue.

Social justice and democratic citizenship

- policies related to democratic citizenship within local, national and global contexts
- processes and practices that foster learners' voice and choice, respect diversity and promote social justice
- strategies for consensus-building, participatory democracy and empowerment within schools and the community.

Environmental sustainability

- shared responsibility and partnership to foster ecological justice as conveyed in the *Foundations of Professional Practice*
- integration of environmentally sustainable policies, pedagogies and practices
- processes that engage learners as active global citizens in supporting environmental and economic sustainability
- meaning of creation and our ecological co-responsibilities as conveyed in the Bible and theology.

Shared responsibility for learning

- processes and practices to foster communication and collaboration with learners, families, caregivers, guardians, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Knowledge Guardians, the parish and the community to support learning
- partnerships with families, caregivers, guardians, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Knowledge Guardians and the parish that value shared decision-making, confidentiality, advocacy and leadership
- implications of “belonging” to a community as a theological reality in faith formation and community
- contribution of Catholic schools to society.

Communities of professional learning

- professional learning communities that promote critical pedagogy and collective efficacy
- research and leadership to advance professional practice through ongoing collaborative inquiry, dialogue and innovation
- processes, practices and strategies to foster collaboration with in-school personnel to support learning, well-being and leadership
- integration of scripture and prayer into personal and professional practice
- strategies for prioritizing religious education.

Resources

Resources to support the development of the AQ Course *Honour Specialist Religious Education in Catholic Schools* can be found on the [College](#) website and the [Ontario Ministry of Education](#) website.

Appendix 1

Schedule E Additional Qualification (AQ) Course – Leadership Components

Leading and Researching

- How do candidates become leaders in the subject area? - Develop leadership skills
- Candidate driven supported by instructor,
- Candidates develop learning goals to bring their knowledge to others
- Analyze pertinent legislation and policies and measure impact at school and system level
- Lead change related to curriculum and policy implementation
- Lead innovation in teaching and learning in the learning context (for example, investigate Standards of Practice, parent/guardian and community engagement strategies, learner identity)
- Develop leadership strategies to further research, theories and frameworks related to subject matter
- Apply leadership strategies and subject content research to lead instructional practice.



**Ontario
College of
Teachers**

Ontario's Teaching Regulator

For additional information:
Ontario College of Teachers
101 Bloor Street West
Toronto ON M5S 0A1

Telephone: 416.961.8800
Toll-free in Ontario:
1.888.534.2222
Fax: 416.961.8822
E-mail: info@oct.ca
oct.ca



oct-oeeo.ca/fb



oct-oeeo.ca/pi



oct-oeeo.ca/tw



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