Additional Qualification Course Guideline
Kindergarten, Part I

Schedule D
Teachers’ Qualifications Regulation

April 2011

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Additional Qualification Course Guideline
Kindergarten, PART I

1. Introduction

Three-session specialist Additional Qualification courses identified in Schedule D (Teachers’ Qualifications Regulation) are intended to:

- enhance professional practice, and extend knowledge and skills in the delivery of Kindergarten courses (Part I)
- enhance professional practice, and extend and apply knowledge and skills in the design and delivery of Kindergarten courses (Part II)
- enhance professional practice, and extend and apply knowledge and skills in the curriculum leadership of Kindergarten courses (Specialist).

The Additional Qualification Course: Kindergarten Part I explores the theoretical foundations, the development of learners, program planning and implementation, assessment, the learning environment and ethical considerations related to teaching and learning.

Critical to the implementation of this course is the modeling of a positive learning environment that reflects care, professional knowledge, ethical practice, leadership and ongoing learning.

The Ontario College of Teachers recognizes that candidates working in the publicly funded school system, independent/private institutions or First Nations schools will have a need to explore in an integrated delivery model, topics and issues of particular relevance to the context in which they work or may work.

2. Regulatory Context

The College is the self-regulating body for the teaching profession in Ontario. The College’s responsibility related to courses leading to Additional Qualification includes the following:

- To establish and enforce professional standards and ethical standards applicable to members of the College.
- To provide for the ongoing education of members of the College.
- To accredit Additional Qualification courses and more specifically
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. (Regulation 347/02, Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs, Part IV, Subsection 24).

Additional qualifications for teachers are identified in the Teachers’ Qualifications Regulation. This regulation includes courses that lead to Additional Qualifications, the Principal’s Qualifications and the Supervisory Officer’s Qualifications. A session of a course leading to an Additional Qualification shall consist of a minimum of 125 hours of work that is approved by the Registrar. Accredited Additional Qualification courses reflect the Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession, the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession and the Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession.

Successful completion of the course leading to the Additional Qualification: Kindergarten, Part I listed in Schedule D of the Teachers’ Qualifications Regulation, is recorded on the teacher’s Certificate of Qualification and Registration.

In this document, all references to “candidates” are to teachers enrolled in the Additional Qualification course. References to “students” indicate those enrolled in schools.

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

A commitment to a clear vision of what it means to be a teacher is at the core of teacher professionalism. The Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession and the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession (Appendix 1) provide the focus for ongoing professional learning and are the foundation for the development of the Additional Qualification Course: Kindergarten Part I. In addition, the Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession is underpinned by the standards, articulates the principles on which effective teacher learning is based and acknowledges a range of options that promote continuous professional learning.
Standards Resources

The College has developed resources to support the effective integration of the standards within Additional Qualification courses. These resources explore the integration of the standards through a variety of educative and inquiry-based processes. A list of these resources can be found in Appendix 2 and are available through the College web site (www.oct.ca). This guideline has been designed to reflect the Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession and the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession.

4. Course Components

The design, course content and implementation of the Additional Qualification Course Guideline: Kindergarten Part I support effective teacher education practices. The following course components of this guideline support and inform effective professional knowledge and practice within the Additional Qualification Course: Kindergarten Part I.

The Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession and the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession are embedded within the overall expectations of this guideline.

This Additional Qualification course has the following overall learning expectations for candidates:

- understanding and interpreting Ontario Ministry of Education curriculum, policies and guidelines
- developing awareness of First Nations, Métis and Inuit (Aboriginal) ways of knowing and perspectives
- applying the theoretical understanding necessary to implement and assess programs and/or practices related to Kindergarten
- having awareness and integrating expectations, strategies and assessment practices in response to the individual needs of students, and the promotion of student success
- enhancing awareness of holistic learning environments (intellectual, social, emotional, physical, environmental, linguistic, cultural, spiritual and moral)
- exploring strategies for collaboration with in-school personnel, parents/guardians and the community
• becoming aware of a variety of appropriate resources, including technological and communication resources, to enhance professional knowledge in support of student learning
• exploring professional practice through ongoing inquiry, dialogue and reflection
• developing an awareness of ethical practices
• understanding the role of professional learning communities in enhancing professional knowledge and supporting student learning
• integrating environmentally respectful perspectives and practices
• creating and sustaining safe, healthy, equitable and inclusive learning environments that honour and respect diversity
• exploring and implementing an inquiry and play-based approach.

Candidates will explore and deepen their understanding of the following:

A. Ontario Curriculum and School Policies

The Additional Qualification Course: Kindergarten Part I is aligned with current Ontario curriculum, relevant legislation, government policies, and resources. These documents inform the development and implementation of the Additional Qualification Course: Kindergarten Part I. These resources can be viewed at www.edu.gov.on.ca.

B. The Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession and the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession:

• understanding and embodying care, trust, respect and integrity
• demonstrating commitment to students and student learning
• integrating professional knowledge
• enriching and developing professional practice
• supporting leadership in learning communities
• engaging in ongoing professional learning.

C. Theoretical Foundations of Kindergarten Part I

• understanding theories of early childhood development within the context of global and diverse communities
• critically exploring a variety of conceptual frameworks for early childhood education
• understanding the interconnected domains of holistic growth and the variability amongst children in progression along that developmental continuum
• develop an awareness of current brain research regarding play and learning
• understanding diverse theories in types and stages of play
• exploring and understanding new theories in how young children contribute to their own learning and developing an awareness of the rights of the child
• understanding the importance of exploration, active engagement, imaginative play and authentic opportunities for problem-solving in inquiry-based learning environments
• understanding Ontario curriculum and government policies relevant to the teaching and learning of Kindergarten
• reflecting critically teaching practice and engaging in professional dialogue on the relationship of theory and practice in the teaching of Kindergarten
• understanding developmentally appropriate expectations, teaching/learning, and assessment practices that are based on a developmental continuum
• understanding specific needs of individual children and characteristics of the kindergarten learning environment
• creating learning communities that are sensitive to the cultural identities of the children and that foster strong cultural identities in young children
• exploring the stages of oral language, reading and writing development in young children
• understanding instructional implications for children whose first language is different from the language of instruction.
• exploring the Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession and the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession as the foundation for teacher professionalism within the Additional Qualification Course: Kindergarten Part I.

D. Planning for and Creating a Play-based Learning Environment
• exploring the creation of positive, equitable, accepting and safe learning communities
• deepening understanding of how the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* and the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* can inform a program planning framework

• identifying factors in a diverse and changing society that impact on students

• deepening understanding of curriculum planning, development, implementation strategies and frameworks related to Kindergarten

• deepening understanding of differentiated instruction and universal design in the planning, development and implementation of learning experiences in Kindergarten

• identifying and accessing community, print, electronic and collegial resources related to Kindergarten

• understanding of teachers’ roles in facilitating assessment-driven learning in a play-based learning environment

• planning for and supporting transitions in the kindergarten program

• exploring integrated and balanced planning approaches to inquiry-based learning opportunities to meet expectations in all learning areas

• using knowledge and observations of children in play-based programs to choose materials, develop the classroom environment, and plan developmentally appropriate learning activities

• planning a variety of forms of play that is connected to learning and developmental expectations

• creating programs that allow for a young learner’s multiple ways of representation when communicating ideas, concepts and observations.

**E. Instructional Strategies and the Early Learner**

• fostering a collaborative community of learners based on equity and honouring diversity

• exploring information and communication technology to support student learning

• understanding a variety of research-based instructional strategies to support the early learner in a play-based learning environment

• understanding a variety of strategies for adapting, modifying and accommodating instruction to meet the needs of all learners
• implementing strategies for the creation of a learning environment that reflects the ethical standards and standards of practice and affirms the need to respect and conserve resources in the environment
• using pedagogies that reflect the professional identity of educators as described in the ethical standards, the standards of practice and in the Foundations of Professional Practice
• understanding how to apply the gradual release of responsibility model to meet individual learning needs
• providing a variety of opportunities for instruction through large group, small group and individual play-based activities across the curriculum
• exploring a variety of instructional strategies to meet the needs of the whole child.

F. Observations, Assessment and Evaluation
• exploring observation-based strategies as a key component of assessment in the Kindergarten program
• exploring the development of ongoing, appropriate and equitable assessment and evaluation methods that honour the dignity, emotional wellness, cognitive development and support facility with the language of instruction of all students.
• understanding and implementing formative and summative assessment (for example, assessment as learning, assessment for learning and assessment of learning) strategies that employ a variety of methodologies for the study of Kindergarten
• exploring a variety of strategies for assessing, evaluating and reporting.

G. Shared Partnerships
• exploring how to collaborate with parents/guardians to determine effective methods to provide continuous, meaningful and detailed information to support student learning
• exploring a variety of effective communication strategies with parents/guardians to support a successful transition into kindergarten and grade one
• understanding and respecting the importance of shared responsibility and partnership as conveyed in the Foundations of Professional Practice
• identifying and accessing district school board, school and community resources to support learning in a kindergarten context
• exploring strategies for collaboration between the school and other groups such as early learning program, child care services, community and parenting supports to promote learning
• exploring strategies for building shared understanding of play-based programs in kindergarten
• understanding the importance of professional collaboration that supports student learning in kindergarten.

5. Instructional Practice in the Additional Qualification Course Kindergarten PART I

In the implementation of this Additional Qualification course, instructors use strategies that are relevant, meaningful and practical in providing candidates with learning experiences about instruction, pedagogy and assessment and evaluation. These include but are not limited to, small group interaction, action research, presentations, independent inquiry, problem solving, collaborative learning and direct instruction.

Instructors model the standards, honour the principles of adult learning, recognize candidates’ experience and prior learning and respond to individual needs. Important to the course are opportunities for candidates to create support networks and receive feedback from colleagues and instructors and share the products of their learning with others. Opportunities for professional reading, reflection, dialogue and expression are also integral parts of the course.

Where possible, experiential learning and authentic school-based experiences are included in the course such as: classroom observations, practicum experiences and action research projects. Instructors model effective instructional strategies and formative and summative assessment that can be replicated or adapted in the candidate’s classroom.

6. Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates

At the beginning of the course, candidates are provided with the specific learning expectations and forms of assessment and evaluation that will be used throughout
the course. Opportunities will be provided by instructors for regular feedback regarding candidates’ progress throughout the course.

A balanced approach to candidate assessment and evaluation is used. It includes the combination of self and peer assessment and instructor evaluation, and models effective practices. A variety of assessment approaches will be used that enable candidates to convey their learning related to course expectations. The course provides opportunities for both formative and summative assessment and evaluation.

Central to teachers enrolled in Additional Qualification courses is the opportunity to be engaged in relevant and meaningful work. Assignments, artefacts and projects enable candidates to make connections between theory and practice. At the same time, assignments must allow candidates flexibility, choice, and individual inquiry opportunities.

Part of the evaluation process may include a major independent project or action research component over the duration of the course. This project is an opportunity for candidates to illustrate a high level of professional knowledge, communication skills, pedagogy, ethical practices and instructional leadership. Similarly, if a portfolio assignment is used, it will also include reflections and analysis of a candidate’s learning over time.

A final culminating experience in the course is recommended. This experience may take the form of a written assessment, a research paper, a performance, an inquiry project or a product that is genuinely new, meaningful and practical.

The following list of assessment strategies is not exhaustive; it is intended to serve as a guide only.

a) Performance assessment: designing a sample unit which includes a culminating activity and appropriate assessment and evaluation tools, incorporates a variety of technologies and resources relevant to teaching in Kindergarten and is based on Ministry of Education curriculum expectations

b) Written assignment: reflecting critically on issues arising from articles, publications, research and/or other resources related to teaching in Kindergarten

c) Presentation: developing a digital story, presenting an issue related to teaching in Kindergarten
d) Portfolio: creating a portfolio of practical resources, artefacts, photographs and recording critical reflections for each component related to Kindergarten

e) Action research: engaging in action research by reflecting and acting upon a specific inquiry into teaching practice related to Kindergarten

f) Independent project: addressing any aspect of the course that is approved by the instructor

g) Instructional resource: developing a meaningful resource that will support instruction and pedagogy related to teaching in Kindergarten

h) Reflective writing: reflecting on professional practice through journal writing, or writing a case or vignette that will support instruction and pedagogy related to teaching in Kindergarten
Appendix 1

The Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession

The Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession represent a vision of professional practice. At the heart of a strong and effective teaching profession is a commitment to students and their learning. Members of the Ontario College of Teachers, in their position of trust, demonstrate responsibility in their relationships with students, parents, guardians, colleagues, educational partners, other professionals, the environment and the public.

The Purposes of the Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession are:

- to inspire members to reflect and uphold the honour and dignity of the teaching profession
- to identify the ethical responsibilities and commitments in the teaching profession
- to guide ethical decisions and actions in the teaching profession
- to promote public trust and confidence in the teaching profession.

The Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession are:

Care
The ethical standard of Care includes compassion, acceptance, interest and insight for developing students' potential. Members express their commitment to students' well-being and learning through positive influence, professional judgment and empathy in practice.

Respect
Intrinsic to the ethical standard of Respect are trust and fair-mindedness. Members honour human dignity, emotional wellness and cognitive development. In their professional practice, they model respect for spiritual and cultural values, social justice, confidentiality, freedom, democracy and the environment.

Trust
The ethical standard of Trust embodies fairness, openness and honesty. Members' professional relationships with students, colleagues, parents, guardians and the public are based on trust.

Integrity
Honesty, reliability and moral action are embodied in the ethical standard of Integrity. Continual reflection assists members in exercising integrity in their professional commitments and responsibilities.
The Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession

The Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession provide a framework of principles that describes the knowledge, skills, and values inherent in Ontario's teaching profession. These standards articulate the goals and aspirations of the profession. These standards convey a collective vision of professionalism that guides the daily practices of members of the Ontario College of Teachers.

The Purposes of the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession are:

- to inspire a shared vision for the teaching profession
- to identify the values, knowledge and skills that are distinctive to the teaching profession
- to guide the professional judgment and actions of the teaching profession
- to promote a common language that fosters an understanding of what it means to be a member of the teaching profession.

The Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession are:

Commitment to Students and Student Learning
Members are dedicated in their care and commitment to students. They treat students equitably and with respect and are sensitive to factors that influence individual student learning. Members facilitate the development of students as contributing citizens of Canadian society.

Professional Knowledge
Members strive to be current in their professional knowledge and recognize its relationship to practice. They understand and reflect on student development, learning theory, pedagogy, curriculum, ethics, educational research and related policies and legislation to inform professional judgment in practice.

Professional Practice
Members apply professional knowledge and experience to promote student learning. They use appropriate pedagogy, assessment and evaluation, resources and technology in planning for and responding to the needs of individual students and learning communities. Members refine their professional practice through ongoing inquiry, dialogue and reflection.

Leadership in Learning Communities
Members promote and participate in the creation of collaborative, safe and supportive learning communities. They recognize their shared responsibilities and their leadership roles in order to facilitate student success. Members maintain and uphold the principles of the ethical standards in these learning communities.

Ongoing Professional Learning
Members recognize that a commitment to ongoing professional learning is integral to effective practice and to student learning. Professional practice and self-directed learning are informed by experience, research, collaboration and knowledge.
Appendix 2

Standards Resources

Information pertaining to the following standards resources is available through the College web site at www.oct.ca. [http://www.oct.ca/](http://www.oct.ca/)


