

patient  
motivate  
empathy  
responsive to learner need  
confident  
motivate

Competent  
digital competency

Respect

organized

engaged insightful  
Adult Language Learning

flexible

fun

kind Relevant

SLA designer Ethical  
compassionate

getting students on board dynamic

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TESL Ontario  
**Competency Framework  
for Adult ESL Teachers**



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TESL Ontario Competency Framework for Adult ESL Teachers  
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## Introduction and Guiding Principles

The TESL Ontario's Competency Framework identifies the categories of competence and the competencies required of qualified adult English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers in Ontario. The framework describes the key knowledge and skills required for effective adult ESL teaching in Ontario. To support the importance of competency frameworks, in a report by Canada West Foundation, *Match-up: A Case for Pan-Canadian*

*Competency Frameworks*<sup>1</sup>, researchers indicate that current Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition (PLAR) processes should expedite the matching of skills and jobs. Occupational approaches to conferring certification, registration or accreditation tend to be based on credentials and not on recognizing or assessing skills and competencies.

### In preparation for the development of TESL Ontario's Competency Framework, the Competency-and-Credit- based PLAR Project implemented a multifaceted research approach. The research included:

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection and review of internationally recognized competency frameworks for teachers of English as a Second Language</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparison of recognized international frameworks with TESL Ontario's Domains and Outcomes</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with TESL Training Program Providers</li> </ul>                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution of surveys to TESL Ontario's Accreditation Standards Committee and Accredited Training Providers</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Accredited TESL Program training topics</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted analysis of current job ads</li> </ul>                                     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus group presentation and discussion with program Administrators and Teachers from Adult English as a second language training programs provided by colleges, universities, school boards and private schools</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback by focus groups on a revised second draft of the Competency Framework</li> </ul>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of the Competency Framework by TESL Ontario's Standards Committee</li> </ul> |

<sup>1</sup> See Lane & Griffiths (2017) in the bibliography at end of document.

## Purpose

The Competency Framework was developed to support the new TESL Ontario's Competency-and-Credit-based PLAR process. As specified by the Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment<sup>2</sup> (CAPLA), fair, valid and reliable assessments are essential to any quality Recognition of Prior Learning process. All quality Recognition of Prior Learning processes require outcomes or competency statements that reflect what is required of a qualified PLAR applicant and are easy to understand.

### TESL Ontario's Competency Framework can also serve as a:

- 1 Clear guideline for developing TESL training programs
- 2 Resource for development and delivery of targeted workshops for internationally trained professionals (ITIs)
- 3 Resource for development of mentoring, practice teaching and observation activities
- 4 Tool for teachers to self-assess and articulate their own skills and competencies and to consider further professional development
- 5 Guideline for employers for hiring and for professional development of teachers

<sup>2</sup> See Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment (2015) in the bibliography at end of document.

## Framework Approach

Based on all research conducted during the Competency-and-Credit-based PLAR Project, six categories of competence have been identified. Each category includes subcategories and competency/performance statements that identify knowledge and application required to meet competencies.

### Categories that have been established in consultation with TESL Ontario for the new Competency Framework include:

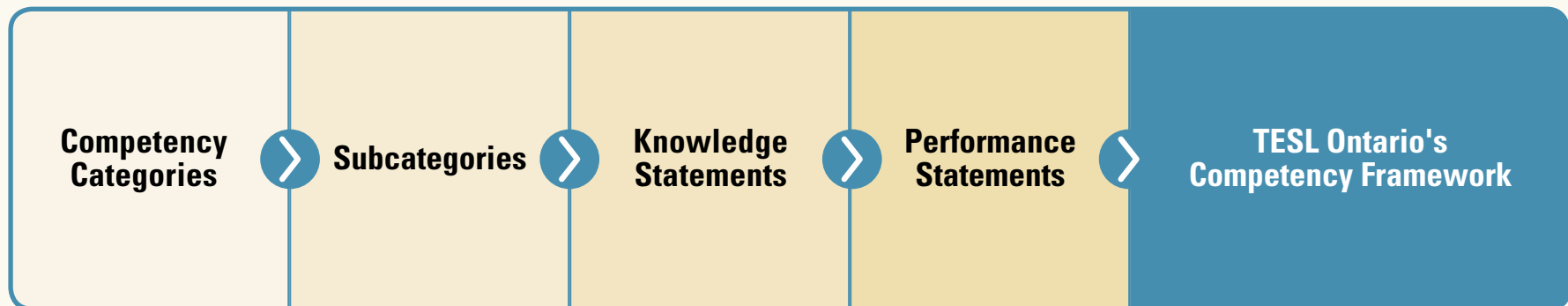
- › Adult Language Learning
- › Language Theory and Methodology
- › Instructional Design and Delivery
- › Digital Literacy
- › Assessment
- › Professionalism

## Organization of Framework Standards

Framework standards have been structured to include Competency Categories with a Competency Statement, Subcategories that further distinguish specific elements of each category, Knowledge Statements that define what applicants need to know to meet subcategory competencies

and Performance Statements that describe the requirements a qualified PLAR applicant or adult ESL teacher in Ontario needs to have in order to meet competency standards.

**TESL Ontario's Competency Framework outlines the knowledge and skills and attitudes an adult ESL teacher needs in order to teach.**



## Framework

Competency Categories	Subcategories	Knowledge Statements	Performance Statements
<p><b>1</b></p> <p><b>Adult Language Learning</b></p> <p><b>Competency Statement</b> Teachers understand the uniqueness of each adult learner (education, life experience etc.) and consider the individual perspectives and needs of learners in all teaching activities.</p>	<p><b>1.1</b> <b>The Learner</b></p>	<p>Be aware that the life knowledge and experience of an adult learner need to be valued and integrated into language training planning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a learner needs assessment.</li> <li>• Draw on learner experience, interests, goals and needs to design and implement relevant, authentic and inspiring content and learning opportunities appropriate for identified learner needs.</li> <li>• Construct learning activities that respect different learning preferences (visual, aural, kinesthetic).</li> </ul>
	<p><b>1.2</b> <b>Culture and Diversity</b></p>	<p>Recognize the multiple diversities in a class and the diverse cultural perspectives of adults (e.g. sociocultural, economic, gender roles) that impact communication and learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct learning opportunities (planning, learning and assessment) that respect the many identities of learners.</li> <li>• Create an inclusive, welcoming learning environment for diverse population of learners.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>1.3</b> <b>Inclusive Course Design</b></p>	<p>Understand why the development of syllabi, lessons, activities and assessment must reference the goals, needs and diversity of learners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize learner needs and diversities to inform development of syllabi, lessons, activities and assessment that support learners in achieving their learning goals.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>1.4</b> <b>Global Skills</b></p>	<p>Recognize that Canadian English has different conventions than other world English and other languages.</p> <p>Be aware of student support needed in developing the attitudes, knowledge and skills to live and work in today's interconnected world.</p> <p>Be aware of the conflict issues that can occur in a diverse setting (intra and inter).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model, demonstrate and select resources that establish appropriate language and non-verbal conventions used in Canada.</li> <li>• Design and deliver lessons explicitly examining the similarities and differences in verbal, para-verbal and non-verbal communication across and within diverse cultures.</li> <li>• Create class norms that align with Canadian classroom behaviour expectations (face to face and online).</li> <li>• Teach strategies to handle situations of conflict.</li> </ul>

Competency Categories	Subcategories	Knowledge Statements	Performance Statements
<p><b>2</b></p> <h2>Language Theory and Methodology</h2> <p><b>Competency Statement</b></p> <p>Teachers are familiar with models of communicative competence and understand the linguistic, psychological and socio-cultural factors affecting adult learning.</p>	<p><b>2.1 Theory</b></p>	<p>Be familiar with the principles and theories of adult education.</p> <p>Possess knowledge of the principles and theories of second language acquisition.</p> <p>Have an understanding of the communicative and learner-approach to teaching.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use knowledge of adult learning principles and theories to develop curriculum, units and lesson plans.</li> <li>• Manage the classroom environment respecting factors that impact adult learning.</li> <li>• Create units and courses that are learner-centered and explicitly involve learner participation.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>2.2 Linguistics</b></p>	<p>Have knowledge of English language linguistic systems, organizational patterns, pragmatics and strategic competence when planning, developing and teaching.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design learning opportunities that are accessible and engaging.</li> <li>• Demonstrate English language competence.</li> <li>• Provide feedback and practice for the learner in a variety of situations.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>2.3 Language Structure</b></p>	<p>Have knowledge of teaching strategies for the four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.</p> <p>Understand the English language sound system.</p> <p>Be familiar with strategies and activities for teaching grammar and increasing vocabulary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide practice in the different language skill areas in a variety of contexts.</li> <li>• Produce appropriate language in the four skill areas and in pronunciation.</li> <li>• Model coping strategies that learners can use when language competency is not fully developed.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>2.4 Pragmatics</b></p>	<p>Recognize that pragmatics is the context of a communication interaction.</p> <p>Be aware of the signs, symbols and words used to convey cultural or contextual language in Canada.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build activities for learners to listen for meaning (contextual and/or cultural).</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for learners to practice the nuances in oral interactions.</li> <li>• Embed culture specific context in planning and developing communication activities.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>2.5 Language Frameworks</b></p>	<p>Understand theoretical foundations of a language framework to build curriculum and activities.</p> <p>Be aware that that CLB (Canadian Language Benchmarks) descriptions of communicative competencies and performance tasks through which learners demonstrate application of language knowledge, are used in teaching.</p>	<p><b>Canadian Language Benchmarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use learners' language ability in terms of appropriate CLB when planning and delivering four skill areas.</li> <li>• Use CLB to inform lesson and course planning.</li> <li>• Use CLB for learner language assessment.</li> </ul> <p><i>Please note: While not all programs require CLB knowledge, this competency framework is a national language standard. CLB knowledge is also a requirement of TESL Ontario Accredited TESL Training Programs curricula.</i></p>



Competency Categories	Subcategories	Knowledge Statements	Performance Statements
<p><b>3</b></p> <p><b>Instructional Design and Delivery</b></p> <p><b>Competency Statement</b></p> <p>Teachers focus on learners’ needs and best practices for design and delivery of relevant and motivating lessons.</p>	<p><b>3.1 Unit Planning</b></p>	<p>Comprehend why learners’ needs and goals are fundamental to understanding principles and processes of unit and lesson planning.</p> <p>Be familiar with principles and processes of lesson planning for adult ESL learners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform planning with learners’ previous learning and knowledge.</li> <li>• Integrate learner needs and goals in lesson planning.</li> <li>• Develop appropriate lesson plans for teaching/learning, learning materials and activities to meet the needs and goals of learners.</li> <li>• Develop lesson plans that reflect curricula and program objectives within the specific program/teaching organization.</li> <li>• Develop lesson plans that include learning, review and assessment.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>3.2 Course Planning</b></p>	<p>Understand principles of course planning including learning objectives, content and expected outcomes.</p> <p>Be aware that a curriculum needs to meet different learner skill levels as well as learning needs for target learner groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide lessons/course materials that meet requirements of a program/course.</li> <li>• Deliver language instruction geared to meet different skill levels within a class according to CLB principles and potential multilevel classroom needs.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>3.3 Selecting, Adapting and Using Teaching Material</b></p>	<p>Be familiar with a wide range of teaching resources and materials (print, digital, realia).</p> <p>Have knowledge of how to collect, select and implement material to meet program goals and learner needs.</p> <p>Be familiar with how to select and adapt course material to reflect course and program goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use appropriate resources for lesson delivery (including web-based materials).</li> <li>• Choose materials and tools to enhance learners’ engagement and motivation.</li> <li>• Provide clearly presented, engaging instruction.</li> <li>• Incorporate real world tasks for instruction and practice in the four skill areas.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>3.4 Instruction</b></p>	<p>Be familiar with an appropriate selection of instructional strategies and resources aligning with students' diverse needs.</p> <p>Comprehend the importance of learner participation.</p> <p>Recognize instructional delivery that works for adult ESL learners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver relevant, current and appropriate lessons in interesting ways.</li> <li>• Use strategies to encourage participation.</li> <li>• Track the strategies and activities that garner the most participation.</li> <li>• Create a safe, welcoming and respectful environment for adult learners.</li> </ul>

Competency Categories	Subcategories	Knowledge Statements	Performance Statements
<p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>Digital Literacy</b></p> <p><b>Competency Statement</b></p> <p>Teachers take personal responsibility for continually enhancing technology skills as well as teaching using technology skills.</p>	<p>4.1 Educational Technology</p>	<p>Be familiar with the use of technology and digital resources in English as a second language teaching.</p> <p>Be informed about how technology resources can support and supplement learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use digital resources effectively and integrate them into lesson plans and classroom practice.</li> <li>• Develop e-learning resources and activities aligned with class modules.</li> <li>• Integrate online resources and delivery tools as appropriate.</li> </ul>
	<p>4.2 Teaching Modalities</p>	<p>Have knowledge of commonly used technology and resources needed for online and/or blended delivery of language instruction.</p> <p>Be informed of the changing teaching and learning environments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare content for online classrooms.</li> <li>• Deliver learning in an online environment.</li> <li>• Adapt teaching and assessment strategies to the online environment.</li> <li>• Adapt to changing teaching and learning environments as needed.</li> </ul>

Competency Categories	Subcategories	Knowledge Statements	Performance Statements
<p><b>5</b></p> <p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p><b>Competency Statement</b></p> <p>Teachers understand key concepts and principles of language assessment and their significance in the English as a second language learning process.</p> <p>Teachers develop, implement and report on learner progress using varied tools and methods of both formative and summative assessment.</p>	<p><b>5.1 Methodology</b></p>	<p>Be informed about key concepts of language assessment within the teaching/learning environment.</p> <p>Have an understanding of the role of assessment in language learning.</p> <p>Be informed about different types and purposes of assessment including diagnostic, formative and summative. assessment.</p> <p>Recognize the role of the CLB in assessment where applicable.</p> <p>Recognize the role of Portfolio-based Language Assessment (PBLA) where applicable.</p> <p>Have an understanding of the principles and methods of PBLA.</p> <p>Be aware that PBLA needs to be embedded in the teaching/learning cycle in publicly funded English as a second language training programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select appropriate methods to monitor learners’ language development.</li> <li>• Develop and employ a variety of assessment tools and activities to assess and report progress as required.</li> <li>• Provide clear and specific assessment feedback about current skills and areas for improvement to learners on a regular basis.</li> <li>• Select and use an appropriate English Language Proficiency</li> <li>• (ELP) framework.</li> </ul> <p><b>Canadian Language Benchmarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use CLB assessment tools where appropriate (e.g. Summative Assessment Manual [SAM], Exit Demonstrations).</li> </ul> <p><i>Please note: While not all programs require CLB knowledge, this is a national standard for all publicly funded programs. CLB knowledge is also a requirement of TESL Ontario Accredited TESL Training Programs curricula.</i></p> <p><b>Portfolio-based Language Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build tasks to measure learning reflecting the principles and methods of PBLA.</li> <li>• Explain and establish portfolios for learners to observe and record their learning progress.</li> <li>• Develop and implement language tasks and assignments for completion and inclusion in learner portfolios.</li> </ul> <p><i>Please note: While not all programs require PBLA knowledge, this is a national standard in publicly funded programs. PBLA knowledge is also a requirement of TESL Ontario Accredited TESL Training Programs curriculum.</i></p>

Competency Categories	Subcategories	Knowledge Statements	Performance Statements
<p><b>6</b></p> <p><b>Professionalism</b></p> <p><b>Competency Statement</b></p> <p>An adult ESL teacher demonstrates the knowledge, attitude and skills required to successfully meet their occupational responsibilities. These behaviours define their professionalism and reputation in the field.</p>	<p><b>6.1 Teaching Areas</b></p>	<p>Be aware of the multiple teaching opportunities in the TESL field.</p> <p>Recognize that because learners have diverse needs and pathways, organizations offer a range of specialty language learning opportunities.</p> <p>Be aware of professional development opportunities for additional qualifications.</p> <p>Be informed about additional areas of study needed to successfully meet the demands of unique programming.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the unique demands of particular language programs (for example, multilevel, English for Academic Purposes [EAP], ESL Literacy, and programs for specific purposes).</li> <li>• Participate in appropriate professional development.</li> <li>• Demonstrate professional relationships with colleagues and learners.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>6.2 Related Areas</b> <i>(some needing additional qualifications)</i></p>	<p>Be aware that there are different roles within the institution/organization and opportunities within the ESL field such as Assessors, TESL Teacher Instructors, Administrators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop personal pathways for professional growth.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>6.3 Work Environments</b></p>	<p>Be aware that there are a number of sectors that hire ESL teachers.</p> <p>Recognize that the learning needs of students may be different in a specific program environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore various ESL teaching sectors and programs.</li> <li>• Produce curriculum and lesson plans related to program and learner needs.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>6.4 TESL Organizations</b></p>	<p>Understand that there are provincial, national and international TESL organizations.</p> <p>Be informed of the designations available for ESL teachers.</p> <p>Be aware of the benefits of professional membership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select the appropriate membership organization.</li> <li>• Apply for designation.</li> </ul>

Professionalism continued on next page »

Competency Categories	Subcategories	Knowledge Statements	Performance Statements
<b>Professionalism continued</b>	<b>6.5 Professional Development</b>	Understand the role of professional development (PD) in sharing creative ideas, innovative techniques and new research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage in ongoing professional learning through collegial discussions and reflective practice.</li> <li>• Commit to ongoing engagement in collaborative learning as a means of contributing to professional learning and the development of the TESL field.</li> <li>• Collaborate and engage with stakeholders and partners for professional growth.</li> <li>• Participate in relevant PD activities to maintain the currency of TESL Ontario accreditation.</li> </ul>
	<b>6.6 Reflective Practice</b>	Be aware of the importance of reflecting on own teaching in order to evaluate strengths and challenges in teaching.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect critically on lessons and seek answers to questions regarding effectiveness of teaching and classroom management.</li> </ul>
	<b>6.7 Attitude</b>	Have an understanding of the professional, social and ethical responsibilities of teachers in the current world.  Realize the importance of professional and ethical responsibility and conduct in the teaching environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate good professional conduct.</li> <li>• Work collaboratively with others.</li> <li>• Demonstrate sensitivity to the needs of adult immigrants and refugees.</li> <li>• Demonstrate professional and ethical responsibility and conduct in their teaching environment.</li> </ul>
	<b>6.8 Commitment</b>	Recognize the importance of taking responsibility for good teaching practices and for working collegially.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commit to ongoing engagement in collaborative and independent professional activities as a way of contributing to the professional growth and development of the TESL field.</li> <li>• Take on roles and responsibilities within the workplace if needed to support development of other teachers and the organization.</li> </ul>
	<b>6.9 Ethics</b>	Be familiar with the requirements of TESL Ontario and the language training provider Code of Conduct/Code of Ethics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be familiar with the requirements of TESL Ontario and the language training provider Code of Conduct/Code of Ethics.</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://www.teslontario.org/uploads/aboutus/CodeofEthics.pdf">www.teslontario.org/uploads/aboutus/CodeofEthics.pdf</a></p>
	<b>6.10 Administration Responsibilities</b>	Know that language training programs require reporting on curriculum, lesson planning and learner progress in English language acquisition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compile and submit course planning material as required.</li> <li>• Prepare and submit learner progress reports.</li> <li>• Use student attendance and record systems accurately.</li> </ul>

## Glossary of Terms

### A

#### **Affective Domain**

Includes constructs such as attitudes, values, beliefs, opinions, interests and motivation.

#### **Assessment**

A systematic approach to assessing the (language) ability of a student. This can be done by test, interview, questionnaire, observation etc.

### B

#### **Be familiar with**

To have some knowledge about and some experience in the use of something.

### C

#### **CAPLA**

Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment. CAPLA is the national voice for the recognition of prior learning (RPL) in Canada. Members include adult learners, PLAR practitioners, researchers, employers, labour organizations, academic and training institutions, government, occupational bodies, settlement and integration organizations, NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and industry councils.

#### **Categories of Competence**

General areas of competence required of qualified teachers, which are specified by statements of competence.

#### **CELTA**

Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. An initial teacher training qualification for teaching English as a second or foreign language. It is provided by Cambridge English Language Assessment through authorized Cambridge English Teaching Qualification centres. CELTA was developed for both teaching English as a foreign language and teaching English to the speakers of other languages.

#### **CLB**

Canadian Language Benchmarks. The Canadian Language Benchmarks consists of a 12-point scale of task-based language proficiency descriptors used to guide the teaching and assessment of English as a second language learners in Canada.

#### **Cognitive Domain**

The area of learning that deals with the processes and measurable results of study, as well as the practical ability to apply intelligence.

#### **Communicative Competence**

Includes grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociocultural competence and strategic competence.

#### **Competency**

A demonstrable skill and knowledge that a teacher is expected to apply when practicing his/her profession.

#### **Competency Framework**

A competency framework is a document that identifies the skills needed to effectively perform a job or profession. The main goal of a competency framework is to clearly identify and communicate the skills employees need to effectively conduct their work.

**Competency-based PLAR**

A process of recognition of teacher qualifications based on their demonstrated competency in categories of knowledge and skills required of a qualified adult English as a second language teacher.

**Competency Statements**

Represent what teachers need to know and be able to do in order to teach effectively.

**Comprehend**

To grasp the nature, significance or meaning of something.

**D****Digital Literacy**

Digital literacy refers to an individual's ability to find, understand, evaluate and compose clear information on various digital platforms.

**Domain**

Domains focus on general categories of competence. Domains frame standards for TESL Ontario Accredited Training Programs and Certification.

**E****EAP**

English for Academic Purposes. These prepare students for formal education.

**Educational Technology**

The study and ethical practice of facilitating learning and improving performance by creating, using and managing appropriate technological processes and resources. Educational technology is an inclusive term for both the material tools and the theoretical foundations for supporting learning and teaching.

**ELP**

English Language Proficiency.

**Ethics**

Rules or standards governing the right conduct of a person or members of a profession.

**Exit Demonstrations**

CLB 5-10 Exit Assessment Tasks is a national validated language assessment (workplace, academic and community contexts).

**F****Formative Assessment**

A formative assessment takes place during learning and is intended to provide guidance that contributes to further learning.

**Framework**

A structure in which categories and statements of competency are located.

**I****Identities of Learners**

Identities of learners may include parents, workers, citizens etc. as well as the broader demographics of gender, age and life experiences.

**Intercultural Communication**

Ability to understand, communicate and effectively interact with people across cultures in a variety of roles or contexts.

**ITI**

Internationally Trained Individuals (sometimes called IEPs, or Internationally Educated Professionals).

**K****Kinesthetic Learning**

Or tactile learning, is a learning style in which learning takes place by students carrying out physical activities rather than listening to a lecture or watching demonstrations.

**L****Language Structure**

Includes reading, writing, listening, speaking, pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary.

**Learner-centred Approach**

Actively engages students in the learning process. Learner-centred teaching includes determination of learner needs, learner-based skill instruction and communicative interaction among learners.

**LINC**

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) is federally funded language programs for teaching English.

**Linguistics**

The scientific study of language and its structure, including the study of morphology, syntax, phonetics and semantics. Specific branches of linguistics include sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and applied linguistics.

**M****Modalities**

Modes of teaching and learning delivery – face to face (classroom), mixed modality (combined face to face and online delivery) and online delivery.

**Multilevel**

Multilevel classrooms include students who communicate in English at a variety of different levels.

**N****Needs Assessment**

A systematic process for determining and addressing needs or "gaps" between current English language proficiency of learners and desired learning outcomes for a particular program level.

**O****OCELT**

Ontario Certificate English Language Teacher. The accreditation and professional designation recognizes that a certificate holder has the knowledge and skills required for teaching English to adult learners in all publicly funded and private programs in Ontario, other Canadian provinces and territories, and abroad.

**Outcome**

A specific, measurable description of what teachers should know and be able to do.

**Outcome-based Assessment**

Assessment designed to evaluate achievement of intended outcomes; determining if students have the skills and knowledge they were expected to gain.

**P****Para-verbal**

Refers to how we say something; tone, pitch, volume etc.



**PBLA**

Portfolio-based Language Assessment. PBLA is the Canadian standard for publicly funded LINC and ESL program delivery and required content in all TESL Ontario Accredited TESL Training Programs and Certification.

**PD**

Professional development (PD) refers to continued training and education regarding teaching English as a second language. The goal of PD is to keep the teacher up-to-date on current trends as well as to develop new skills for the purpose of advancement in the field.

**Performance-based Standards**

Standards that focus on demonstrable skills, knowledge and attitudes that teachers are required to exhibit.

**PLAR**

Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR) is based on a tested process and set of mechanisms for the recognition of learning that has been acquired from life experience, job training, workshops, seminars or other experience. The term Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is also sometimes used.

**Portfolio**

A collection of documents and other evidence compiled by the PLAR candidate that demonstrates tangible proof of learning and reflection on the learning.

**Practicum**

Classroom-based instruction, tutorials and classroom observation.

**Pragmatics**

The study of how language is affected by the situation in which it is used, of how language is used to achieve things or perform actions, and of how words can express things that are different from what they appear to mean (Cambridge Dictionary).

**Professional Identity**

A number of specialty areas available for qualified teachers: workplace specific, employment, occupation specific, literacy, Test Preparation, ESL/EFL for International students, LINC, EAP, workplace training.

**Professional Development**

See PD above.

**Professionalism**

The knowledge, attitude and skills required to successfully meet occupational responsibilities. These behaviours define a teacher's professionalism and reputation in the field.

**Psychomotor**

The relationship between cognitive functions and physical movement. Recognize To realize the nature of something.

**R****Reflective Practice**

Ongoing professional learning and reflection, through collegial discussion, action research, and dynamic interaction with learners in order to evaluate and challenge teacher's own developing practice and better meet the needs of learners.

**Rubrics**

A set of rules, descriptions, guidelines or benchmarks that describes different levels of performance and is used to determine an individual's outcome or grade.

**S****SAM**

Summative Assessment Manual (SAM). This is a national, validated assessment process for CLB benchmarks levels 1 to 4.

**Sociocultural Competence**

Understanding the social rules of language use and the ways that cultural context affects the meaning of what is said or written.

**Strategic Competence**

Refers to the ability to get one's meaning across successfully especially when problems arise in the communication process.

**Summative Assessment**

Takes place at the end of a stage of learning to assess what has been learned.

**T****Task-based Approach**

Focuses on the use of authentic language and on completion of meaningful tasks. Assessment is primarily based on task outcomes (the appropriate completion of real-world tasks).

**TESL**

Teachers of English as a Second Language. TESL refers to Teaching English as a Second Language programs in English-speaking countries for students whose first language is other than English.

**TESL Ontario Accredited OCELT Training Program**

TESL Ontario accredited OCELT training programs include at least 250 instructional hours, 30 hours of observation and 20 hours of supervised practise teaching. The training can be completed on a full-time or part-time basis. The delivery modes are in-person, online, blended and distance education.

**TESL Ontario Accreditation Standards Committee**

This committee supports TESL Ontario in establishing and advancing accreditation standards and providing consultation on accreditation-related initiatives and issues. The volunteer members are recruited from TESL Ontario membership.

**TESL Ontario Code of Ethics**

TESL Ontario requirements for workplace activity and behaviour [www.teslontario.org/uploads/aboutus/CodeofEthics.pdf](http://www.teslontario.org/uploads/aboutus/CodeofEthics.pdf)

**TESOL International Association**

An internationally established professional organization for teachers of English as a second or foreign Language.

**Theories of Adult Language Acquisition**

Adult learning principles and theory of adult English as a second language acquisition.

**U****Understand**

To have thorough knowledge or technical familiarity with or expertise in the practice of something.

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## **About TESL Ontario**

TESL Ontario is a non-profit organization serving the needs of English language training professionals in Ontario.

TESL Ontario is also an accrediting agency providing accreditation to practitioners and programs in the field of language training.

## **Vision & Mission Statements**

### **Vision Statement**

To inspire professionals and learners through our role as a leading authority on English language education.

### **Mission Statement**

To provide support and direction to professionals, government bodies, and industry stakeholders involved in English language education.

