



# A Guide to OCELT: The Professional Designation of TESL Ontario Accredited Members



# OCELT

Ontario Certified English Language Teacher

# OCELT: Your Professional Designation

Recognizing the professionalism and integrity of TESL Ontario certified teachers



TESL Ontario started the Standards and Certification Project in 1994 and completed it on March 31, 2001. The mandate of this project was to ensure that the TESL profession in Ontario maintained a high quality of instruction and adult ESL teachers were provided with ample professional development opportunities on a regular basis.

The TESL Ontario Certificate of Accreditation has now become the industry norm in Ontario, and TESL Ontario certified teachers are being hired by both government-funded programs and private schools in Canada, and by international employers.

To enhance the recognition of TESL Ontario accreditation, in 2016, TESL Ontario began the process of applying for the professional designation OCELT (Ontario Certified English Language Teacher), which was granted in early 2017.

## The Professional Designation and its Purpose

OCELT is a registered professional designation for TESL Ontario accredited members in good standing.

OCELT recognizes the professionalism and integrity of TESL Ontario certified teachers, and their commitment to the TESL Ontario Code of Ethics and high quality instruction. OCELT helps enhance respect for the TESL profession and signifies that TESL Ontario accredited members

- have met TESL Ontario certification standards;
- have distinct knowledge and skills specific to teaching adult ESL;
- are qualified to teach in both government-funded and private programs in Canada, and in international settings;
- strive for excellence through academic inquiry, self-reflection, openness to new ideas and ongoing professional development; and
- belong to a community of highly educated, responsible and dedicated professionals who seek to further the best interests of the learners.



A symbol of  
professionalism in  
adult language  
education.



# Using your Professional Designation You are an OCELT

Now that the TESL Ontario Certificate of Accreditation has become the industry norm in Ontario, it is time for OCELT to be introduced as a symbol of professionalism in adult ESL teaching both in Canada and in international settings.

OCELT appears on the TESL Ontario Certificate of Accreditation and accredited members' membership cards. TESL Ontario also uses OCELT in all references to its accredited members on its website; in its paper and electronic correspondence with members, TESL training programs, ministries, and the public; and in its publications, conference name tags, and promotional material.

If you are an accredited member of TESL Ontario in good standing, you are an OCELT. You are encouraged to use OCELT, your officially registered professional designation, consistently:

- on your business card;
- in your handwritten, typed, and email signatures;
- on PowerPoint presentations;
- on any books or research papers you author (e.g. Kevin O'Brien, OCELT or Kevin O'Brien, OCELT, MA TESL, BEd);
- on application forms;
- at conferences, workshops, webinars, and social media; and
- when you introduce yourself to your students, colleagues and employers.

Use your professional designation as often as you can and let it become a common term in the TESL profession both in Canada and in international settings.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Is OCELT a permanent designation?

No, OCELT is not a permanent designation. You can use OCELT as your professional designation as long as your TESL Ontario accredited membership is in good standing. If your accredited membership lapses, you will not be eligible to use the designation. To regain your accredited status, you can apply for accredited membership reinstatement at any time.

## Can OCELT be used by ESL teachers who work for private schools, ESL/TESL program administrators, or those who teach in foreign countries?

Yes. All individuals who maintain their TESL Ontario accredited membership are eligible and are encouraged to use OCELT consistently.

## Is OCELT officially approved?

Yes, OCELT is officially approved as a certification trademark by the Canadian Intellectual Property Office. This professional designation can be used only by TESL Ontario accredited members in good standing.

## Why do I need a professional designation?

OCELT distinguishes TESL Ontario certified teachers as highly educated and qualified practitioners who strive for excellence through academic inquiry, self-reflection, openness to new ideas and ongoing professional development. OCELT also enhances the recognition of, and the respect for, the adult ESL teaching profession and the crucial role it plays in the success of hundreds of thousands of immigrants, refugees, and international students in Canada, as well as millions of students and professionals around the world.

## Should my academic degree precede or follow OCELT on my business card?

Academic degrees should follow your professional designation. Here's an example:

Kevin O'Brien, OCELT, MA TESL, BEd

## Where do I use OCELT?

You are encouraged to put the OCELT designation immediately after your name. Use it consistently on your business card; in your handwritten, typed, and email signatures; and on PowerPoint presentations, application forms, and any books or research papers you author. Introduce yourself as an OCELT to your students, colleagues and employers. Use OCELT at conferences, workshops, webinars, and social media. Use your professional designation as often as you can, and let it become a common term in the TESL profession both in Canada and in international settings.

## Can I still use the professional designation if I have retired?

Yes you can, provided that you maintain your TESL Ontario accredited membership.

If you have any questions, please TESL Ontario at [accreditation@teslontario.org](mailto:accreditation@teslontario.org) or at 416-593-4243, ext. 205.

