

Glossary

Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

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Document History

Version	Date	Notes and changes
1.0	April 2011	Initial version
1.1	October 2011	Some terms revised and added

A

ACE: Acronym for the Academic and Career Entrance Program. The ACE Program certificate is accepted as equivalent to an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD), or Grade 12, by Ontario's community colleges and the Apprenticeship Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to enter a community college or be registered as an apprentice in Ontario. The ACE Program certificate is also recognized as equivalent to a grade 12 for the purposes of job application by a growing number of employers. ACE programming is available at all 24 community colleges and online.

Adult Credit: The Ministry of Education funds adult credit courses that count towards achieving an Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

ALLS: Acronym for Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey. In 2003, the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey tested more than 23,000 Canadians on their skills proficiency in four scales: prose, document, numeracy, and problem solving. Skills were rated on the basis of IALS Levels 1 to 5, that is, lowest to highest. The report presents an initial set of findings covering Canada, Bermuda, Italy, Norway, Switzerland, the United States, and the Mexican State of Nuevo Leon.

AlphaPlus: AlphaPlus supplies web-based tools, training, and consulting to Literacy and Basic Skills service providers so they can teach more effectively and train their learners to use technology. AlphaPlus researches innovative learning technologies and practices and is the technology lead for the Literacy and Basic Skills Program.

Andragogy: The teaching of adults, using an adult-centred teaching approach.

Anglophone: An English-speaking person, usually in a country where two or more languages are spoken.

Apprenticeship goal path: Outlines on-the-job workplace-based training programs for a career in the skilled trades. The apprenticeship goal path description also includes information on skills training programs (hands-on, job-specific training).

ASL: American Sign Language (ASL) is a complete, complex language that employs signs made with the hands and other movements, including facial expressions and postures of the body. ASL is a language completely separate from English. It contains all the fundamental features a language needs to function on its own. It has its own rules for grammar, punctuation, and sentence order.

Assessment: Any process or procedure that gathers information to decide about a learner's knowledge, skills, and behaviours. Assessment forms a critical part of everyday activities in literacy programs, as decisions are made throughout the learning process to determine how best to meet learners' needs. Assessment includes a wide range of approaches from informal procedures to formal standardized assessments or tests. Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) service providers conduct three kinds of assessments: intake assessment (upon registration and placement), ongoing assessment (as part of program delivery), and exit assessment (when learners complete the LBS Program).

AU: Acronym for Academic Upgrading. Academic Upgrading was first introduced in 2004. It was part of the government's Learning to 18 and Reaching Higher initiative through which additional services were provided by colleges, school boards and community-based agencies to adults who needed to achieve a high school diploma or equivalency to enter postsecondary or apprenticeship programs.

Authentic: A term that describes tasks, learning materials, activities, and assessments that have a specific purpose and are practical in nature. They match, as closely as possible, tasks associated with life, learning, and work.

C

CaMS (also CAMS): Acronym for Case Management System. A web-based, real-time software solution that supports the administration and management of clients participating in Employment Ontario programs and services. See also **EOIS** in this glossary.

Case Management: Occurs when a practitioner oversees the identification of a learner's needs, coordinates referrals to the appropriate services and supports and monitors the provision of the supports and their effectiveness in meeting the learner's needs.

CESBA: Acronym for the Ontario Association of Adult and Continuing Education School Board Administrators. CESBA represents and supports the broad spectrum of adult and continuing education offered by public, Catholic, and francophone school boards in Ontario.

CLO: Acronym for Community Literacy of Ontario. CLO is a provincial literacy support organization with 100 member agencies. It exists to support, promote, and provide a united voice for anglophone community-based literacy programs in Ontario.

COFA: Acronym for Coalition ontarienne de formation des adultes, one of four provincial stream organizations funded by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. COFA promotes adult literacy for francophones in Ontario and provides coordination to its member agencies that include community-based, school board, and college-based adult literacy programs in Ontario.

Community-wide planning: Occurs when community service providers cooperate to ensure that their services are accessible to learners and effective in meeting their range of needs.

Competencies: Broad, generic categories of learners' abilities that capture and organize the learning in a program.

Competency-based Approach: An approach encompassing the interaction of skills, knowledge, and behaviours that contributes to learners being able to perform authentic and purposeful tasks. Key to a competency-based approach is the learners' abilities to demonstrate success against the standards set by a curriculum framework.

Contact North: Contact North provides educational institutions access to audioconference and videoconference facilities to deliver distance education courses and programs. It collaborates with Aboriginal peoples, francophones and communities in Northern Ontario to help educational providers to meet identified needs. Contact North supports innovation in education and learning through testing and applied research of new modes of "delivery" using technology. Contact North offers its E-learning services free of charge in partnership with Employment Ontario.

Contextualize: Using the learner's environment, prior experiences, culture, language, goals, and interests to link to literacy programming.

CSC: Acronym for the College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading. The CSC leads and supports the Ontario community college system to create provincial resources, procedures, and standards related to the development and delivery of programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners.

Culminating Tasks: More complex than milestone tasks, but are similarly aligned to the Curriculum Framework. Culminating tasks draw together multiple competencies which may be at different levels of complexity. Successful completion of a culminating task is an important demonstration of the learner's ability to manage the kinds of tasks that will be encountered once the learner transitions beyond the LBS Program.

Cultural Considerations: A section in the OALCF *Supplemental Tasks for Practitioners* document that guides practitioners when developing tasks for learners from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Cultural Context: Includes the four cultural groups in the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Program: anglophone, Deaf, francophone, and Native. Cultural context involves respecting and building on the shared knowledge, experiences, values, and norms of a specific group or society.

Culture: The norms, values, behaviours, and practices of a specific group or society. Culture is strongly tied to a sense of belonging that contributes to improved social and personal self-esteem, and participation in the community.

Curriculum: The planned content and experiences to which learners should be exposed to achieve learning goals.

Curriculum Framework: Sets out the content of learning within a system, using an established set of organizing principles. Within the OALCF, the Curriculum Framework refers specifically to the six competencies that organize learning content and describe learner proficiency, using three levels of performance.

D

Deaf: A person who is either born Deaf or deafened late in early childhood or late in life. The person uses American Sign Language as his or her first language and is immersed within the Deaf community, culture, and history within his or her daily life experiences. Members of the Deaf community share beliefs, values, language, and a culture.

Deaf-Blind: A term referring to an individual with varying degrees of both hearing and vision loss, making it unique to each individual. Members of the Deaf-Blind community share beliefs, values, language, and a culture.

Demonstrations: A term used before the introduction of the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF) to describe an integrated task or activity that allowed learners to demonstrate the complex performance of a task reflecting an authentic context and purpose. In the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Program, demonstrations linked performance to indicators in the LBS domains.

Descriptors: Detail the qualities of tasks and learner performance at a given level. Descriptors are intended to work in combination with each other to foster an understanding of task complexity at a given level within a given task group.

DLI: Acronym for Deaf Literacy Initiative, one of four provincial stream organizations funded by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. DLI provides accessible and culturally relevant training, research, networking, and resources to the Deaf and Deaf-Blind literacy community in Ontario.

E

E-Channel: Speaks specifically to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and University's distance learning approach for the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Program. E-Channel currently uses five lead delivery organizations to provide literacy training to anglophone, Deaf, francophone, and academic upgrading learners in Ontario. Contact North and AlphaPlus support the infrastructure of the E-Channel.

Employment Ontario (EO): Ontario's integrated employment and training network in the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities that provides programs, such as Apprenticeship, Literacy and Basic Skills, Second Career, Wage Subsidy, and Summer Jobs in communities across the province.

Employment goal path: Primarily describes employment as an activity for which an individual seeks to earn a wage or salary. Activities that lead to employment and are similar to work, such as volunteering, internships and community placement are also part of the employment goal path description. Individuals with an employment goal spend time in job search, developing employability and job retention skills or learning how to advance at the workplace.

EOIS: Acronym for Employment Ontario Information System. EOIS is not a single, stand-alone system, but an umbrella term used to describe a combination of various computer systems that will be responsible for supporting the administration of Employment Ontario programs and services.

ESL: Acronym for English as a Second Language. The Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration provides English and French language training to adult immigrants whose first language is neither English nor French. For more information about the range of available courses, visit www.ontarioimmigration.ca/adultlanguage/training.

Essential Skills: Essential Skills, as researched and defined by Human Resources Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) in 1994, are the skills needed for work, learning, and life. They provide the foundation for learning all other skills and enable people to evolve with their jobs and adapt to workplace change. The research included identification and definitions of nine Essential Skills and the development of rating scales to measure the complexity levels of these skills when applied to tasks. The Essential Skills Research Project also developed a methodology to document the application of Essential Skills in Canadian occupations. This documentation uses a template known as an "Essential Skills Profile."

Example Tasks: Tasks that illustrate what learners can do at the end of a level within the *Curriculum Framework* of the Ontario Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF). Each example task indicates the goal paths in which learners are likely to be expected to perform similar tasks once they have transitioned to their goal.

F

Fair Assessment Practices: Ensure that all learners are assessed in a fair and equitable manner. Fair assessment practice principles take into account the nature of the decision to be made, who will be affected by the decision, and what procedures will be used to gather information for the decision.

Francophone: In Canada, the word francophone generally means a French-speaking person. Statistics Canada uses the term francophone to mean someone whose mother tongue is French and who still speaks French. The LBS Program offers French literacy instruction to francophones living in Ontario. In 2009, Ontario introduced a new, more inclusive definition of the province's francophone population that includes those persons whose mother tongue is French, plus those whose mother tongue is neither

French nor English but have a particular knowledge of French as an Official Language and use French at home. (Source: Office of Francophone Affaires : <http://www.ofa.gov.on.ca>)

FSL: Acronym for French as a Second Language. The Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration provides English and French language training to adult immigrants whose first language is neither English nor French. For more information about the range of available courses, visit www.ontarioimmigration.ca/adultlanguage/training

G

Goal: What the learner wants to achieve once leaving the LBS Program. It is the next step to which the learner transitions after completing the LBS Program.

Goal-Directed Learning: Uses a learner's goal for attending the LBS Program to plan and deliver programming that supports that goal. Goal-directed learning looks beyond the LBS Program and orients content to the expectations or requirements of the learner's goal.

Goal Path: Refers to the preparation required to exit LBS and transition to the goal and is delivered by an LBS service provider. The LBS Program has five goal paths: employment, apprenticeship, secondary school credit, postsecondary and independence.

Goal Path Completion: Means that learners have achieved everything identified on their LBS learner plan as required to transition to their identified goal. Indicators of goal path completion include milestone tasks, successful demonstration of the goal path related culminating task and the learning activities identified on the learner plan.

Goal Path Description: Provides a snapshot of the goal for which the LBS Program prepares learners (employment, apprenticeship, secondary school credit, postsecondary and independence). Other information is also provided to help learners and practitioners decide if the goal is appropriate to the learner's needs and abilities, is feasible within the learner's means and is achievable in the learner's community. There is a goal path description for each of the five goal paths.

I

IALS: Acronym for International Adult Literacy Survey. A seven-country initiative first conducted in the fall of 1994. Its goal was to create comparable literacy profiles across national, linguistic, and cultural boundaries. The survey offers the world's only source of comparative data on participation in adult education and training. The results, published in the report *Literacy, economy and society: Results of the first International Adult Literacy Survey* (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Statistics Canada, 1995), demonstrated a strong plausible link between literacy and a country's economic potential.

Independence goal path: Based on four broad areas that contribute to personal independence (managing basic needs, health, personal issues and relationships and participating in the community). The independence goal does not have standard requirements or eligibility criteria due to the many purposes for which independence is required

Indicators: Describe achievement at the end of each OALCF Level and present a snapshot of the programming focus at the level.

Interagency cooperation: Occurs when agencies are able to cooperate to ensure that learner supports are in place. Cooperation might be either formal or informal, and involve different agencies (or distinct departments within a complex organization such as a college or multi-service agency) sharing responsibility for learners' programs by offering different elements which, taken together, provide a broader range of supports.

Integrated programming: Occurs when employment and training services are provided concurrently, ideally through a single service provider.

Integrated Tasks: Complex tasks that incorporate two or more competencies or two or more task groups, usually from different competencies, and may reflect different levels of complexity. Integrated tasks allow learners to develop and apply their skills and knowledge across competencies in a way that reflects real-life situations.

Integrated Training: Intended to support the acquisition of competencies (knowledge, skills, and behaviours). Integrated training provides learners with meaningful and authentic learning experiences and builds a common understanding about the specific skills, knowledge, and behaviours that learners should master as a result of their goal-related learning experiences.

L

LBS: Acronym for Literacy and Basic Skills. The Ontario LBS Program is funded by the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities and provides literacy, numeracy, and basic skills (e.g. digital technology, interpersonal skills, problem solving, critical thinking) services to help people achieve their education, training, and employment goals, as well as enjoy increased independence.

Learning (or Learners') Environments: Various settings where learning takes place, such as meeting rooms, classrooms, computer labs, lecture halls, and libraries.

Learner-Centred: Emphasizes a learning setting that provides learners with choices about what and how they learn, encourages active learning, encourages learner responsibility and accountability towards the achievement of learning goals, fosters a respectful working relationship between learner and instructor, and emphasizes the importance of context in the design of learning activities. In a learner-centred program, learners and instructors work together to set a realistic learning goal (e.g., to gain the literacy related skills and abilities to apply for a job).

Learner Gains Assessment: Satisfies accountability requirements by providing evidence that educational programs are supporting the progress of learners. Learner gains are usually assessed by standardized tools that measure ideas or abilities in a general way.

Learning Activities: Instructional activities directly related to tasks; those activities which build skills to help learners be "transition ready," but are not directly related to the tasks; and those activities which focus on academic content necessary for learners to progress.

Learning Materials: Resources that practitioners and learners use for literacy instruction and learning. They include materials in a variety of print and non-print formats, such as workbooks, online courses, audio and visual learning supports, web-based materials, CDs, and real-life (also known as *authentic*) documents.

Learner Plan: Describes the learning or program elements that prepare learners for their next steps beyond the LBS Program. It includes the learner's goal, background information, assessment results for

milestone tasks,culminating tasks and learning activities to indicate goal completion, program duration, additional learner supports required, service coordination, and referral results.

Learner Progress: Can be tracked and measured in a variety of informal or formal ways to determine if there has been a change in skills development, literacy application, behaviours, or literacy practices. A range of scales and methods are used to determine how much progress a learner demonstrates as a result of her or his participation in a literacy program.

Learning Styles: Ways that individuals interact with, take in, and process information in the learning process. Learning styles include visual (learning by seeing), aural (learning by hearing) and kinaesthetic or practical (learning by doing). Assessments can determine which style learners prefer and how that style can help them learn most effectively.

Learner Supports: Non-Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Program supports that contribute to a learner's persistence in LBS programming and successful learning outcomes. Learner supports can be organized according to five types: financial and material supports, health supports, academic supports, employment-related supports, and other social services.

Levels: The *Curriculum Framework* uses three levels to describe a learner's developing proficiency to perform tasks. These levels are informed by the same factors that drive complexity at Essential Skills (ES) Levels 1, 2, and 3.

M

MCI: Acronym for the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. Funder of newcomer and settlement services, adult non-credit ESL / FSL training for immigrants, and bridge training for internationally trained immigrants.

MED (or EDU): Acronym for the Ontario Ministry of Education. Funder of secondary school credit programming that can result in an Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

Milestone Tasks: Standardized indicators of learner progress towards goal completion. Organized by goal path, they are linked to the indicators in the competencies and task groups at three levels of performance found in the Curriculum Framework. Milestone tasks will be fully developed for use in 2012.

MTCU (or TCU): Acronym for the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. Funder of the Literacy and Basic Skills Program.

N

Native: Name used in the LBS Program to refer to learners of Aboriginal origin.

O

OALCF: Acronym for the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework. It refers to all the features of delivering a competency-based program, including competencies, assessment, learner transitions to work, further education and training, or independence, and learning materials.

OALCF Competencies: A. Find and Use Information, B. Communicate Ideas and Information, C. Understand and Use Numbers, D. Use Digital Technology, E. Manage Learning, and F. Engage with Others.

ODSP: Acronym for the Ontario Disability Support Program. Funder of support interventions to eligible clients.

OLC: Acronym for the Ontario Literacy Coalition. One of four provincial stream organizations, the OLC is funded by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to support anglophone literacy service providers in Ontario. Specifically, it supports the implementation of government initiatives, disseminates information, and establishes community partnerships, for example, with the business and labour communities.

ONLC: Acronym for the Ontario Native Literacy Coalition. One of four provincial stream organizations, the ONLC is funded by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to support Native literacy service providers. The ONLC provides information, support, and training to Native literacy practitioners in Ontario, and enhances the awareness of literacy issues.

Online Learning: Very open-ended term meant to encapsulate all forms of learning that use the Internet. Online learning may be instructor- or learner-directed, informal, or structured. Examples range from using learning activities on the Internet, such as games and interactive tutorials to taking distance learning courses delivered via an e-learning platform, such as Moodle.

OSAP: Acronym for the Ontario Student Assistance Program. An assistance program that supports eligible adults financially to pursue training and education.

P

Performance Descriptors: Observable characteristics of learner performance.

PIAAC: Acronym for the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies. An assessment strategy to identify and measure differences between individuals and countries in competencies believed to underlie both personal and societal success; assess the impact of these competencies on social and economic outcomes at individual and aggregate levels; gauge the performance of education and training systems in generating required competencies; and help to clarify the policy levers that could contribute to enhancing competencies.

Postsecondary goal path: Outlines the formal education opportunities (college and university) for which high school completion or its equivalency is the normal entrance requirement.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR): Recognizes the knowledge and skills that students have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside secondary school. Formal evaluation and a credit-granting process may be used for an adult to obtain credits for prior learning.

Practitioner: The person involved with development or instruction of literacy programming, or the assessment of learners.

Presentation Software: Software programs, such as Microsoft PowerPoint, used to display information as a slide show.

Proficiency: The advancement or progress in skills and knowledge.

R

Red Seal Trades: Apprenticeship trades for which interprovincial certification is available. Currently, Canada has 53 Red Seal trades, including carpenter, machinist and automotive service technician.

Rubric: A set of criteria used for assessing a particular type of work or performance. A rubric usually includes levels of potential achievement for each criterion. Levels of achievement are often given numerical scores, and a summary score for the work being assessed may be produced by adding the scores for each criterion. (Source: www.tltgroup.org)

RWC: Acronym for Rear Window Captioned, a method for presenting, through captions, a transcript of the audio portion of a film in theatres for Deaf, hard of hearing, or hearing impaired people.

S

Secondary school credit goal path: Presents LBS service providers with the various options available to learners for completing individual credit courses or obtaining their full Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).

Service Coordination: LBS service providers coordinate their literacy services with other service providers in a community, such as income support or health services, to meet the range of non-LBS Program-related needs and challenges brought to the LBS Program by a learner.

Skills-Based Approach: Instruction and assessment that focus on discrete literacy and numeracy skills. Program planning begins with where the learner is on a continuum of skills development and focuses on the increase in skills development.

Skills Training: Provides participants with job-specific skills through programs that vary in length, ranging from a few hours to several weeks or months. Generally, however, these programs do not exceed a 52-week period or an academic year (a period of 8 months). Many skills training programs grant certificates recognized by a specific professional body (e.g. Personal Support Worker, Truck Diver, Security Guard, etc.)

Smartpen: A device that is capable of digitalizing writing, transforming notes written by hand on special digitalized paper to interactive text on a computer.

Smartphones: Cellular telephones with built-in applications and Internet access. They provide digital voice service as well as any combination of e-mail, text messaging, pager, web browsing, voice recognition, a still or video camera, and an MP3, TV, or video player.

Spreadsheet: A document used to organize data in rows and columns of cells. An example of a spreadsheet program is Microsoft Excel.

Stream: The cultural and linguistic features of a service provider delivering the Literacy and Basic Skills Program, such as anglophone, Deaf, francophone, or Native.

Supplemental Tasks: Lists of tasks organized within task groups by culture and language for anglophone, Deaf, francophone, or Native learners and by level of task complexity. Supplemental tasks provide examples of tasks within a level, while example tasks in the *Curriculum Framework* provide end-of-level examples.

T

Tally Chart: A chart that uses tally marks to count data and record frequencies.

Task: A purposeful activity that bundles skills, knowledge, and behaviours in unique and authentic ways. Tasks require learners to perform an action or activity, resulting in something concrete or tangible, such as a completed application form, a shopping list, or a research report.

Task-Based Learning or Task-Based Approach: An instructional approach that helps adults draw connections between what they learn in an educational setting and how they can apply their skills and knowledge in everyday activities. In the LBS Program, a task-based approach helps outside stakeholders understand the learning that takes place in the LBS Program.

Task Complexity: The two features that drive complexity within the *Curriculum Framework* are task descriptors, the features of the task itself, and performance descriptors, the qualities of learner performance expected at the end of a given level.

Task Descriptors: Describe the qualities of tasks.

Task Groups: Organize the content within each competency. They link the broad competencies to program development and make it easier to determine what a learner can or cannot do. When taken together, task groups describe the full range of content within each competency.

Transition-Oriented Programming: A term that brings together three key program elements: goal-directed learning, contextualized learning, and coordinated learner supports and services. These three elements maximize a learner's successful transition to their goals of work, further education and training, or independence.

TTY/TDD: Text telephone or Telecommunication Device for the Deaf. These special devices make it easier for Deaf, hard of hearing, and speech-impaired people to use the telephone to communicate.

V

Video-Editing Software: A software program that allows users to upload, edit, and save still images and videos. Examples include Windows Movie Maker and Macintosh iMovie.

Videophone: A telephone with a video screen that has the capacity to send and receive video and audio transmissions for communication.

Vlog: A blog comprised mainly or solely of videos.