

This document was prepared by the Ontario Association of Deans of Education to be used by member organizations as appropriate within their programs.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS IN PRESERVICE TEACHING, COURSE WORK, AND ON PRACTICUM

This document provides information for students in education programs, instructors and professional experiences coordinators, guidance counsellors, educational institutions, education program admission officers, accessibility service providers, teachers and the public about the essential skills and performance expectations for teacher candidates in initial teacher education programs. The Essential Skills:

- provide information to prospective teacher candidates so they can make an informed choice regarding applying to a program;
- guide teacher candidate efforts toward accomplishing the essential skills and performance expectations;
- provide prospective and current teacher candidates information to help them decide if they should register with Student Accessibility Services;
- help teacher candidates, Student Accessibility Advisors and Faculty develop reasonable accommodation; and,
- help to ensure the safety of learners and their learning

The Ontario Association of Deans of Education (OADE) recognizes four entry-to-practice categories of skills as capturing the components necessary for teaching practice:

1. Communication skills
2. Intra- and inter-personal skills
3. Cognitive and metacognitive skills
4. Supervision skills

These categories represent reasonable and justifiable skill requirements for course work and practice teaching.

Individuals considering a teaching career in Ontario schools should review this document to assess their ability to demonstrate the requirements for successful completion of a Bachelor of Education degree program. The Essential Skills serve as a benchmark, outlining the requirements to meet the minimum standard necessary to ensure children's safety and learning. Failure to demonstrate any of the Essential Skills may result in removal from the Bachelor of Education degree program following appropriate due process.

OADE

Ontario Association of Deans of Education

The Ontario Association of Deans of Education welcomes and supports a diverse student body and is committed to fostering equity and inclusion for all peoples. Individuals with questions about the Essential Skills should contact their Faculty of Education. Educational institutions recognize their duty to consider teacher candidates' requests for accommodation while protecting their privacy, confidentiality, autonomy and dignity.

Accommodations ensure equality of access and opportunity for students with disabilities to fulfill the Essential Skills. Requests for such accommodation are considered on a case-by-case basis by student accessibility centres within individual universities. Students in education programs should be aware that provision of accommodation does not constitute a guarantee of success but, rather, an opportunity to successfully meet essential program requirements.

REQUIREMENT 1: COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Teacher candidate communicates clearly, non-verbally and verbally (in the language of instruction, orally and in writing), in various contexts.

Specifically, the teacher candidate:

- ✓ Speaks with appropriate volume, vocabulary, and expression in the language of instruction at a level that provides for safe and accurate understanding of words and meanings.
- ✓ Communicates effectively to provide instructions and direction that can be understood by others.
- ✓ Clarifies expectations and implied meanings (stated or unspecified details) in course work and on practicum.
- ✓ Receives and responds appropriately to oral and written communication from others.
- ✓ Responds appropriately to nonverbal signals received from others while considering individual differences in both expression and associated meanings.
- ✓ Reads, comprehends, and writes, observing the conventions of writing (paragraphing, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar) at a satisfactory level.
- ✓ Models appropriate speech and writing, and provides accurate feedback in real time.

REQUIREMENT 2: INTRA- AND INTER-PERSONAL SKILLS

Teacher candidate interacts appropriately with others.

Specifically, the teacher candidate:

- ✓ Accepts, interprets and uses multiple forms of feedback (e.g. body language, tone of voice, verbal and written comments) to enact effective change (e.g. demonstrates flexibility and adaptability).
- ✓ Maintains culturally appropriate interpersonal boundaries.
- ✓ Works cooperatively and effectively with others.
- ✓ Models inclusive respectful behaviour.
- ✓ Acts calmly and non-judgmentally in situations that are stressful or involve conflict.

REQUIREMENT 3: COGNITIVE AND METACOGNITIVE SKILLS

Teacher candidate learns, and recalls in a timely manner, the discipline's content and points of understanding (concepts, postulates and methods), and demonstrates effective executive functioning skills (e.g. planning, problem solving, and self-control). Specifically, the teacher candidate:

- ✓ Learns new material on a given topic within a subject to the level (depth and breadth) required for instruction (as outlined in the curriculum documents) within cultural contexts.
- ✓ Plans, organizes and prioritizes academic/job tasks to meet program requirements.
- ✓ Responds to unanticipated problems in a timely manner with an appropriate and justifiable course of action and professional demeanour.
- ✓ Sustains ongoing effort and persists in the face of challenges.

REQUIREMENT 4: SUPERVISION SKILLS

Teacher candidate maintains awareness of others so as to ensure a safe environment. Specifically, the teacher candidate:

- ✓ Attends to the learners and their environment and takes appropriate action in order to maintain a safe environment.
- ✓ Manages multiple job duties simultaneously so as to ensure a safe environment.
- ✓ Works effectively in the presence of distracting stimuli so as to ensure a safe environment.
- ✓ Moves about the classroom, manages materials and supplies, and supervises learners during classroom activities.

Documents Consulted

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