

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### **I. Language Instructor Accreditation Requirements**

1. I do not have a university degree. Do I still qualify for the TESL Ontario Language Instructor Accreditation?

No. TESL Ontario considers a (minimum three-year) bachelor's degree as an indispensable component of the overall training, general and specialized, that a teacher (of any subject matter or at any level) needs to have gone through. Therefore, TESL Ontario emphasizes that this is the minimum level of university education that an applicant is required to have completed to qualify for the TESL Ontario Language Instructor Accreditation application and to teach as an accredited language instructor.
2. I have obtained my degree from a university located in the USA/ the U. K. /Australia. Do I still need to submit a Canadian equivalency report?

Yes. If your degree is from a university located outside Canada, you are required to have it evaluated by one of the equivalency offices listed on TESL Ontario's website.
3. Can I submit a graduation confirmation letter from my university in lieu of my degree or degree transcript with my Language Instructor Accreditation application?

No. Graduation confirmation letters and the like cannot be accepted in lieu of a degree, a degree transcript, or a degree equivalency report.
4. What if I completed my TESL training program in an institution before it was recognized by TESL Ontario?

You should contact the director of that TESL training program and request a TESL training verification letter attesting that the TESL program you completed was in every respect the same as the TESL program that institution is currently offering. If the two programs are not the same in every respect, you may either complete the outstanding courses/practicum hours in a TESL Ontario accredited institution OR apply for the TESL Ontario PLAR assessment, provided that you can meet the degree and ELP requirements of Language Instructor Accreditation.
5. I don't want to mail the required documents to the TESL Ontario Office. Can I submit them in person?

Yes. TESL Ontario's address is 27 Carlton Street, Suite 405, Toronto, Ontario, M5B 1L2. The office hours are 9:00am to 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday. When you are at the TESL Ontario Office, a staff person will make copies of your documents. You will then be able to take your original documents with you immediately. Please be aware that applications submitted in person cannot be reviewed or processed at the time of submission.
6. I am going to mail my original documents to TESL Ontario. How can I get them back?

You should send TESL Ontario a self-addressed self-stamped registered envelope with your application package. You can also pick up your originals from our office in person at any time.

7. How long does it take for my Language Instructor Accreditation application to be processed?  
It normally takes six weeks from the date the application form, all required supporting documents, and fees are submitted to TESL Ontario. If some pieces of the required documents are submitted at a later date/at later dates, or if additional documentation is required, the six week processing period starts once the last required piece has arrived.

## II. Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

8. How long does it take for my PLAR assessment application to be processed?  
For PLAR applications, the processing time is a maximum of three months from the date the application form, the portfolio and its mirror copy, and fees are submitted to the TESL Ontario Office. However, in most cases, the assessment is completed and the applicant is notified of the result in about one month.
9. I meet the degree and ELP requirements. I have also gone through some TESL/TEFL training in the past. Do I qualify for PLAR assessment?  
Yes, you do.
10. I have a degree in English and meet the ELP requirement. Do I qualify for PLAR assessment?  
If your degree in English includes TESL theory and/or methodology courses (as distinct from English language and literature), you will qualify for PLAR assessment.
11. I have not gone through a TESL training program and practicum recognized by TESL Ontario but have significant TESL training from other TESL institutions. How should I go about applying to TESL Ontario for Language Instructor Accreditation?  
You have the option to apply for Language Instructor Accreditation through prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) provided that you can meet the degree and ELP requirements.
12. What is a Professional Portfolio?  
A professional portfolio is a collection of material assembled by you that demonstrates and showcases a wide range of your skills as a TESL professional. Some of your portfolio's contents are obvious: a curriculum vitae or resumé that stresses your TESL training and adult ESL teaching experience, official transcripts from your university and TESL/TEFL training program, detailed TESL-related course descriptions, the number of hours for each course, and letters of reference from past and present employers.

Additional material may include a statement of your philosophy of ESL teaching, detailed outlines of each TESL/TEFL-related course that you have taken, including lists of textbooks and other core resources, types of assignments and other methods of assessment used, exact information about all teaching practicum/internship experience, if any, including both adult and non-adult settings, detailed supervision reports from past and present employers, particularly if practicum/internship experience does not match TESL Canada or TESL Ontario parameters so that you can demonstrate that you have had successful experience in relevant teaching situations.

You can and should add anything else that shows specific knowledge and practical abilities that may not be carefully detailed in the above-listed items: participation documents regarding any relevant in-service training you have taken, transcripts and course descriptions for other types of courses that enabled you to acquire relevant skills (for instance, adult education programs may include material on adult learning and development or classroom uses of appropriate technologies, relevant to TESL,

sample lesson plans and/or unit plans that you have created, teacher-developed assessment tools, documentation of relevant workplace or volunteer experience; for instance, a person who has volunteered extensively in a LINC or ESL literacy program may provide documentation of that experience to prove appropriate knowledge of LINC or ESL literacy issues for TESL Ontario purposes, or a person who has done language assessment testing for Canada Immigration and Citizenship can include a letter from a workplace supervisor detailing that experience as evidence of assessment skills, copies of articles you may have published, outlines or typescripts of presentations you may have given, samples of materials you have created for use with your students, reviews of key ESL textbooks or other classroom resources that you have used, anything else that your imagination and professional history make possible.

Please note that sometimes the adjudicator must request more material because the candidate has not provided enough solid information about exactly what skills he or she has acquired, in which case our adjudicator will need more time, especially if sources of the additional documentation must come from overseas locations.

### III. Accreditation Reinstatement

13. What are the requirements and fees involved to reinstate my lapsed Certificate of Language Instructor Accreditation?

**Please Note!** In an effort to further streamline the Language Instructor Accreditation Reinstatement process and to enhance the fairness and transparency of its requirements, TESL Ontario has reviewed and updated this service. The updated requirements and application process steps will be in effect as of January 1, 2013. For details, please go to <http://www.teslontario.net/accreditation/language-instructor> and click on "Accreditation Reinstatement".

Here are the current accreditation reinstatement requirements:

To reinstate your lapsed Certificate of Language Instructor Accreditation, you are required to

- fill out and mail, email, fax, or deliver the "Language Instructor Accreditation Reinstatement Application Form" to TESL Ontario. This form is available at <http://www.teslontario.net/accreditation/language-instructor>, under the heading "Accreditation Reinstatement";
- pay the administration fee of \$50.00;
- have maintained your standard membership to the current year while your accreditation was inactive. If your standard membership has expired as well, you will be required to pay the outstanding standard membership fees for the lapsed years. This will include the period from the year when your standard membership expired to the current year. For example, if your accreditation and membership had expired in December 2010 and you applied for Language Instructor Accreditation reinstatement in August 2012, you would be required to pay the outstanding standard membership fees for the periods (two years) listed below:

Dec. 2010-Dec. 2011: \$86.00

Dec. 2011-Dec. 2012: \$86.00

- pay the prorated accreditation fee, which will not exceed \$80.00, for the period starting from your current reinstatement approval date to your next renewal date. In the example mentioned above (assuming that your reinstatement application is processed by late August), you would be required to pay a prorated accreditation fee of \$26.00 for the period of September 2012 to December 2012 (four months);
- and
- provide proof of completion of 5 hours of professional development (PD) per year for the period starting from the date of last accreditation renewal or initial accreditation (as applicable) to the most recent renewal due date. In the example above, assuming that you last renewed your accreditation in December 2010, you would be required to submit proof of 5 PD hours for the period of Dec. 2010-Dec. 2011. Any missing PD can be completed online through the TESL Ontario website (free of charge) after the outstanding fees are paid off, and the applicant's membership number is reactivated.

#### **IV. Required Theory, Methodology, and Practicum Courses**

14. What are the required theory and methodology courses in a TESL training program recognized by TESL Ontario?

##### **I. Theory (a minimum of 65 hours)**

###### ***A) Foundations (a minimum of 25hours)***

History and Nature of Language  
 Competence and Performance  
 Major Models of Linguistic Description  
 Formal Language Instruction and  
 Unconscious Language Learning  
 First and Second Language Acquisition  
 Models of Second Language Acquisition  
 Learning Strategies and Styles  
 Factors Affecting Language Learning  
 The Adult Learner  
 Sociolinguistic Dimension of 2nd Language  
 Acquisition

###### ***B) Linguistic Systems (a minimum of 25 hours)***

The Sound System  
 Segmentals and Suprasegmentals  
 Phonetic Transcription  
 Influence of L1 on English Acquisition  
 Pedagogical Grammar

###### ***C) Sociocultural and Sociopolitical Issues (a minimum of 15 hours)***

Cultural Pluralism in Canadian Society  
 Institutional and Individual Barriers to  
 Participation in Canada's Society  
 Culturally-determined Lifestyles and Learning Styles and Effects on Learning  
 Acculturation  
 Anti-Racism

## **II. Methodology (a minimum of 120 hours)**

### ***A) Foundations (a minimum of 30 hours)***

Survey of 2nd Language Teaching Methods  
New Technologies in TESL  
Lesson Planning  
ESL Literacy  
Classroom Management  
Materials Development; Textbook Evaluation  
Adult ESL in Canada:  
\* LINC guidelines  
\* English for Academic Purposes  
\* TEFL/English for International Students  
\* Canadian Language Benchmarks  
Professional Resources and Organizations.

### ***B) Teaching the Skills (a minimum of 60 hours)***

Listening  
Speaking  
Reading  
Writing  
Pronunciation  
Grammar

### ***C) Assessment (a minimum of 20 hours)***

Principles of 2nd Language Testing  
Assessment of Progress and Proficiency  
Classroom Test Development

## **III. Practicum (50 hours)**

Classroom Observation (30 hours)  
Supervised Teaching (20 hours)

Total hours of Methodology and Theory training required by TESL Ontario: 250 hours

Total hours of TESL Training Required by TESL Ontario: 300 hours

15. What is Practicum? In what language instruction settings should practicum hours be completed? What are the other practicum requirements?

Practicum is an academic TESL subject that is supervised by a TESL Ontario qualified practicum supervisor and must be completed through a TESL training program accredited by TESL Ontario. Practicum consists of a minimum of thirty hours of observation and a minimum of twenty hours of supervised practice teaching. TESL students must first observe classes that they will teach.

Practicum hours should be completed in the following settings in Ontario: LINC/Adult ESL for newcomers to Canada; ESL for international students at colleges, universities, and private institutions; English Language Proficiency Test Preparation Courses; EAP (English for Academic purposes); ELT (Enhanced Language Training); ESP (English for Specific Purposes); SLT (Specialized Language Training) and/or OSLT (Occupation Specific Language Training).

The twenty hours of supervised practice teaching may be done in one or more settings; however, the observation hours (thirty hours) must be done in at least two settings. Classes that are observed or taught by TESL students must have a minimum of 5 students. Students must be 18 years old and older. TESL students must be in charge of the class during the supervised practice teaching hours. Mentoring instructors, selected by TESL Program academic directors and/or practicum supervisors, must either be TESL Ontario accredited or have training, as well as experience, that equates to or is superior to that required by TESL Ontario.

## V. Professional Development (PD)

16. Is completion of Post TESL Certificate training (PTCT) recognized as PD?  
Yes, completion of a PTCT course meets TESL Ontario's annual PD requirement (5 hours). However, please note that additional training/PD hours completed in any given year cannot be carried over as PD to the following year/s.
17. Is completion of virtual seminars, such as the ones offered by TESOL International Association ([www.tesol.org/attend-and-learn](http://www.tesol.org/attend-and-learn)) recognized as PD?  
Yes, completion of virtual seminars, such as the ones offered by TESOL International Association ([www.tesol.org/attend-and-learn](http://www.tesol.org/attend-and-learn)) is recognized as PD. Please make sure to keep your training certificate, registration slip, or a similar document as proof. Also, please note that additional training/PD hours in any given year cannot be carried over as PD to the following year/s.

## VI. General Questions

18. What type of certification do I need: TESL Ontario Language Instructor Accreditation, TESL Canada Certification, or Ontario College of Teachers' (OCT) Certification? If you are planning to apply for jobs at LINC and/or ELT programs in Ontario, you must be accredited by TESL Ontario. For jobs at all other ESL/EFL programs in Ontario, in other provinces, or in other countries, the employers might ask for TESL Canada Language Instructor Accreditation, TESL Ontario Language Instructor Accreditation, CELTA, DELTA, etc. You must be accredited by Ontario College of Teachers if you are planning to teach ESL at public grade schools (JK- Grade 12) in Ontario.