

Education Quality and
Accountability Office



#DataInAction

Research Framework at EQAO

Fall 2018



Introduction

Educational research has a long, yet short history.

For many decades, research has focused on student achievement, learning environments, pedagogical approaches and classroom relationships—all of which have enriched our understanding of student learning.

More recently, there have been advances in educational tools and technology, knowledge of brain development and social-contextual factors associated with learning.

As a result, EQAO recognizes the need for a continued focus on research to examine effective, high-quality educational experiences that support student achievement at the individual, classroom, school and system levels.

This document outlines the framework EQAO will use to conduct research, including the priorities to be identified, collaborations to be fostered and approaches to be implemented.

Priorities

EQAO prioritizes research that is consistent with its mandate, values, strategic plan and objects under the *Education Quality and Accountability Office Act*, 1996.^{1,2}

EQAO's research program is designed to achieve two main objectives:

1. To position EQAO at the forefront of large-scale assessment
2. To ensure EQAO data are used for their primary purpose, which is to improve student learning

In Ontario, achieving these objectives requires consideration of diversity, inclusion and equity—understanding student learning from multiple perspectives, including unique consideration of Ontario's Indigenous communities, students with special education needs and English- and French-language learners.

Achieving these objectives also requires consideration of the contexts in which learning occurs, including socio-economic influences, student factors (e.g., health, growth mindset) and support systems (e.g., education, health, interventions).

EQAO recognizes that educational experiences that support student achievement are always evolving. Research can have a critical and transformative role, as promising practices and approaches are examined, understood and implemented.

In practice, research priorities need to keep pace with advances in curricula, pedagogy and large-scale assessments due to changes in technology, testing environments, psychometrics and student experiences.

¹ EQAO's mandate, values and strategic plan can be found on the agency's Web site, under "About the Agency": www.eqao.com/en/about-eqao/about-the-agency

² *The Education Quality and Accountability Office Act*, 1996, is available on the Government of Ontario Web site: www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/96e11

Approaches to Research

EQAO is committed to the following five approaches in the achievement of its research objectives:

1. Conducting in-house research that uses the full potential of EQAO data
2. Partnering with academic researchers and their institutions
3. Leveraging research that is underway at Ontario's publicly funded school boards and educational institutions
4. Collaborating with ministry colleagues in research activities, particularly those related to well-being, global competencies and curriculum assessment
5. Encouraging external researchers to access EQAO data and supporting open data initiatives as appropriate

Ethics

Research activities conducted by or associated with EQAO are expected to align with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (2014).³

Research involving Indigenous communities must align with the OCAP principles of ownership, control, access and possession.⁴

External researchers interested in working with EQAO are required to submit documentation of ethics review and approval.

Contact

To learn more about EQAO research, contact the EQAO Information Centre.

Telephone: 1-888-327-7377

E-mail: info@eqao.com

³ The *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* is available on the Panel on Research Ethics Web site: www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/tcps2-eptc2/Default

⁴ Information on the OCAP principles of ownership, control, access and possession is available on the First Nations Information Governance Centre Web site: <https://fnigc.ca/ocap.html>