

Education Quality and  
Accountability Office



# Administering the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

A Guide for Teachers and Principals



April  
**2010**

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## Purpose of This Guide

This guide has been developed to provide direction and information to principals and teachers administering the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) in April 2010. Administering the test according to the guidelines in this document will ensure province-wide consistency before, during and after the administration.

This guide and the *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions* are available on the public section of EQAO’s Web site, [www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com). *A Guide for Principals Preparing for the Administration of EQAO Tests* is available on the secure section of the same site, under “Student Data Collection System—Resources.”


 New

## What’s New for the 2010 Test

- The OSSLT will be completed in two 75-minute sessions on the morning of Thursday, April 8, 2010. Your test materials will arrive between April 1 and April 7.
- **All** electronic versions of the test must be deleted by June 11, 2010.
- Mature students (18 years of age or older, previously out of school for at least one year and registered in a secondary school program) may take the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC) instead of writing the test.
- No test materials may be removed from your school without prior approval from EQAO (see Appendix B—EQAO Policies and Procedures).
- For students writing the OSSLT at a location other than the school holding their OSR, requests for permission must be received and approved by EQAO prior to the administration of the test (see Appendix B—EQAO Policies and Procedures).
- Students are encouraged to complete the whole test using dark blue or black ink. They are, however, permitted to use pencil.
- Students with a visual impairment will be permitted to use the Braille and audio versions together. You must order both versions using the online Student Data Collection (SDC) system.
- It is recommended that copies of all seating plans used for the test be retained for future reference.

## The Test at a Glance

Activity	Allotted Time
<i>Booklet 1</i> (Reading and Writing)	75 minutes
Break	15 minutes
<i>Booklet 2</i> (Reading and Writing)	75 minutes
Questionnaire ( <i>Booklet 2</i> )	10 minutes

## Important Information

- Section 2 of this guide, “Professional Responsibilities for the Administration of the OSSLT,” outlines the responsibilities of principals and teachers administering the test.
- The electronic versions of the test (Kurzweil [3000 and 1000], Premier, PDF, Word, HTML, WYNN and WordPerfect), downloadable by the school for use with assistive technology, will be posted on the secure section of the EQAO Web site on Tuesday, April 6 at 9:00 a.m. Only those schools that indicated in EQAO’s online SDC system that one or more students will be accommodated with the assistive technology **presentation format** will have access. A hard-copy student package will also be sent for students accommodated with an assistive technology **presentation format**.
- The *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions* is a companion document that provides information about and outlines the required documentation for English language learners and students with special education needs, special circumstances, deferrals and exemptions.
- Upon receipt of the tote boxes, test materials should be verified using an up-to-date version of the Student Tracking Sheet (STS) printed from EQAO’s online SDC system. The materials **must not be distributed** until the morning of the administration day.
- No cellphones, audio- or video-recording devices, pagers, digital music players or any e-mail or text-messaging devices will be permitted during the test.
- Student packages **must not be opened** until the students start the test.

## Package ID Numbers

When distributing packages to students, teachers must ensure that the **final 12 digits** of each student’s package ID match those of the ID number assigned to the student on the STS. A 22-digit ID number is printed on all student test materials. The number on each item in each student’s package has the same **final 12 digits**.

**Note:** The alteration of ID numbers may affect the accuracy of the student’s score.

If there is any problem with a package or the distribution of packages, find the description that matches the problem on the next page and follow the directions provided or contact EQAO at 1-888-327-7377 or [e-mail@eqao.com](mailto:e-mail@eqao.com).

## Problems with Package Immediately Before the Test

### ID Numbers on Materials in the Package Do Not Have Same Final 12 Digits

Use the package of an absent student and inform EQAO by using the SDC's "Switch Packages" task.

**OR**

Continue to use the package and place all of the student's test materials in the **Issues Envelope**. Document the problem on the outside of the envelope.

**OR**

Contact EQAO to describe the problem and request replacement materials.

### Package Incomplete (Test Materials Missing)

Use the package of an absent student and inform EQAO by using the SDC's "Switch Packages" task.

**OR**

Contact EQAO to describe the problem and request replacement materials.

## Problems with Package During the Test (Students Have Begun Working on the Test)

### Incorrect Package Given to Student

(Packages Not Distributed According to Number Assigned on STS)

If the error affects two students,

- instruct the students to continue working in the test materials they have and
- inform EQAO by using the SDC's "Switch Packages" task.

If the error affects more than two students,

- instruct the students to continue working in the test materials they have;
- on an STS, print the students' names beside the packages they are actually using and fax the STS to EQAO at 416-325-6622 and
- place all booklets of the students who received the wrong package and a copy of the STS that indicates the changes in the **Issues Envelope** and document the problem on the outside of the envelope.

### ID Numbers on Materials in the Package Do Not Have Same Final 12 Digits

Instruct the student to continue to work with the set of materials. When the test is complete, place all of the student's materials in the **Issues Envelope** and document the problem on the outside of the envelope.

**OR**

Contact EQAO to describe the problem and request replacement materials.

### Package Incomplete (Test Materials Missing)

Open the package of an absent student and use materials from that package. Place all of the materials from both packages in the **Issues Envelope** and document the problem on the outside of the envelope.

**OR**

Contact EQAO to describe the problem and request replacement materials.

### ID on Test Materials Damaged

Clearly write the **final 12 digits** of the ID number on the cover of the affected materials. Place all of the student's materials in the **Issues Envelope** and document the problem on the outside of the envelope.

## Section 2

# Professional Responsibilities for the Administration of the OSSLT

EQAO relies on principals and teachers in the development, administration, scoring and reporting of the OSSLT.

**Principals** are responsible for ensuring that

- they and the teachers administering the test have read the 2009–2010 administration guide and board direction/policy.
- all students eligible for the test are accounted for, including those writing with accommodations and special provisions, and those deferred or exempted.
- **any student receiving an accommodation has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that outlines the accommodations that are necessary for and consistent with regular classroom assessment practices used for the student. The student must normally receive the accommodation for all forms of assessment, including summative assessments.**
- complete and accurate information is provided to EQAO for each student eligible to write the test, including those writing with accommodations or special provisions, and those deferred or exempted.
- complete and appropriate test materials are ordered for each student, using the EQAO SDC system, including, if necessary, additional materials requested after receipt of the initial shipment.
- all materials necessary for the preparation for and administration of the test are provided to all participating teachers and support staff.
- all teachers and other personnel (e.g., scribes, prompters and principals themselves) participating in, preparing for and administering the test have received training this year and follow this year’s administration guide and the *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions*.
- all test materials are kept secure prior to, during and after the administration.

- the locations and conditions for writing the test allow each student to work independently of every other student and conform to EQAO requirements as defined in the administration guide and the *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions*.
- there is no deviation from EQAO guidelines and instructions without explicit written direction from the relevant supervisory officer and EQAO’s Chief Assessment Officer.
- any breach or suspected breach of security is reported to EQAO immediately.

**Principals and teachers** are responsible to ensure the fair and consistent administration of the test as outlined in the administration guide. These procedures must be followed:

### Before the Administration

- Ensure that all materials and types of materials ordered have been received.
- Student test packages **must not** be opened prior to the administration of the first test session.
- Only staff members administering the test may have access to test materials.
- Teachers administering the test may receive the student test materials no earlier than the morning of the day the administration begins.
- Scribes and prompters may have access to the test materials only during the administration sessions.
- Staff preparing test materials for assistive technologies may have access to the materials no earlier than 48 hours prior to the start of the administration.
- Test materials must not be copied in any way for any reason. The only exception is for the preparation of test materials for students using assistive technologies (no earlier than 48 hours prior to the start of the administration).

## During and After the Administration

- Only staff members administering the test may have access to test materials.
- Student test materials must not be removed from the classrooms during the administration.
- All classroom materials containing reading or writing content of an instructional nature must be removed from view or covered.
- Only those individuals directly involved in the administration and testing activities (e.g., scribes and prompters) may enter the testing room.
- Students must be supervised at all times during the administration. This includes students with accommodations or special provisions and students who are permitted additional time to complete the test.
- Once the test materials have been opened, no one may use information from the test to provide instruction on any concept or item being tested prior to, during or after the administration of the test.
- During the test, no one may explain, define or provide examples of reading vocabulary or writing terminology to students, including those with accommodations.
- During the test, nothing may be said or done to influence student responses, including, but not limited to, actions such as drawing a student's attention to an unanswered question.
- At no point during or after the test may anything be said or done to encourage students to alter or revise their responses.
- No one may read, review or correct student work during or after the administration. This includes darkening, rewriting, editing, erasing or altering student work in any way. Each test booklet must be completed in one continuous session. A session may not be interrupted by lunch or by any other school programming. A session may include water-fountain, stretch and washroom breaks.
- At the end of each session, the test booklets must be collected and stored in a secure place without review.
- After a test session has ended, booklets must **not** be returned to students for further review, correction or completion.
- Once both booklets are completed, they must be collected and stored securely, without review, prior to the return of materials to EQAO.
- All test materials, used or unused, must be returned to EQAO.
- Student responses must not be copied in any way for any reason. The only exception is for the recommended photocopying of the Student Answer Sheets prior to returning them to EQAO.
- Any circumstances that may affect the scoring of student work (e.g., package ID number issues) or may have affected the validity of any student performance (e.g., a discussion between two students during the test) must be documented and reported to EQAO on the **Issues Envelope**.

## Section 3

# Detailed Steps for the Principal

*A Guide for Principals Preparing for the Administration of EQAO Tests* describes the steps for ordering test materials and ensuring that complete and accurate information is collected for each student. The document is available on the secure section of EQAO's Web site, [www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com), under "Student Data Collection System—Resources."

Follow the steps below for the administration of the test and the return of all test materials to EQAO.

Step	Action
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STEP 1</b></p> <p><b>Prior to receipt of test materials</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send letters to adult students or parents of students receiving accommodations, special provisions, deferrals or exemptions as documented in the SDC system. (Sample letters are available on the secure section of EQAO's Web site.)</li> <li>• Request permission for students who will write at an alternative location.</li> <li>• Determine the administration schedule. Include a break with a <b>maximum</b> length of 15 minutes between the two sessions. (See the <i>Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions</i> for information about breaks for students being accommodated with additional time.)</li> <li>• Meet with the staff administering the test to review Appendix B—EQAO Policies and Procedures, the "Professional Responsibilities" in Section 2, the administration schedule, the accommodations and special provisions to be provided, the school's policy for students who are late and other details pertaining to the administration of the OSSLT.</li> <li>• Ensure that the rooms for writing the test are appropriate and meet the requirements outlined in the "Professional Responsibilities" (Section 2) of this guide.</li> <li>• Ensure necessary arrangements have been made for students who are               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– receiving accommodations or special provisions and/or</li> <li>– receiving special versions of the test.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Identify a secure location for the test materials.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STEP 2</b></p> <p><b>Information Session (optional)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform students about               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the test presentation (number of booklets, Student Answer Sheet) and</li> <li>– the schedule (date and time of test, break, location, etc.).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Read to students               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the instructions on the inside front cover of the booklets (see Appendix C of this guide).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Step	Action
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STEP 3</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Receipt of test materials</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The shipment will arrive between April 1 and 7, 2010.</li> <li>• As soon as the shipment arrives, use up-to-date STSs from the SDC system and the Packing Lists to ensure that the required materials have been received, including all special versions ordered. <b>Do not open individual student packages.</b></li> <li>• Use the SDC system <b>immediately</b> to order any additional materials and make any changes to student information. If materials are missing from your shipment, refer to page 3 of this guide.</li> <li>• Distribute a copy of this guide and the <i>Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions</i> to each teacher administering the test.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STEP 4</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Security</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Store the test materials in a secure location until their distribution to the teachers administering the test the morning of April 8, 2010.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STEP 5</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Distribution of STS and test packages to teachers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From the SDC system, print an up-to-date STS for each class.</li> <li>• On the morning of April 8, 2010, distribute the test materials and the STSs to the teachers administering the test.</li> <li>• If there is a package ID problem, follow the directions under “Package ID Numbers” on pages 2 and 3 of this guide.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> If the start time will be delayed more than one hour, refer to Appendix B—EQAO Policies and Procedures.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STEP 6</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Receipt of test materials from teachers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the STSs to check that all student test materials have been returned by all teachers.</li> </ul>

Step	Action
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STEP 7</b></p> <p><b>Return of test materials to EQAO</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the data in the SDC system to ensure that the student information is complete and accurate.</li> <li>• To help resolve potential issues in the future, EQAO recommends that you photocopy all completed Student Answer Sheets and keep the copies on file.</li> <li>• Keep the following on file and do not send them to EQAO: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the STS and student information for each grouping, printed from the SDC system</li> <li>– all documentation for students with accommodations, special provisions or deferrals</li> <li>– the signed consent forms for exempted students</li> <li>– the Packing Lists</li> <li>– class seating plans</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Place all original Student Answer Sheets in the <b>Student Answer Sheet Envelope</b>.</li> <li>• In the <b>Issues Envelope</b>, place all materials that require EQAO’s attention (e.g., materials with student package ID problems, booklets with missing pages and any notes addressed to EQAO representatives). Provide a <b>detailed explanation</b> of each issue on the outside of the envelope.</li> <li>• Place all special versions using computer, assistive technology and audio <b>response formats</b> in the <b>Special Versions Envelope</b>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Refer to page 8 of the <i>Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions</i> for further instructions on submitting student responses to special versions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check the Packing Lists to ensure that the quantities returned are the same as the quantities received by the school.</li> <li>• Place all test materials (<b>Student Answer Sheet Envelopes, Special Versions Envelopes, Issues Envelopes</b>, all <i>Booklets 1 and 2</i>, and all unused, sealed packages) in the tote boxes. Fill any free space with the original packing material.</li> <li>• Affix the Return Service labels to the tote boxes, ensuring that the ID number on each label matches the one on the tote box.</li> <li>• Seal the tote boxes as indicated on the UPS Return Shipping Instructions.</li> <li>• A pre-scheduled pickup has been arranged for Friday, April 9, 2010.</li> <li>• Record the date of the pickup and the shipment tracking number.</li> </ul>

## Section 4

# Detailed Steps for Teachers

Follow the steps below for the administration of the test and the return of all test materials to the principal (for return to EQAO).

Step	Action
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STEP 1</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Preparation for the test</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with the principal and staff administering the test to review Appendix B—EQAO Policies and Procedures, the “Professional Responsibilities” in Section 2, the administration schedule, the accommodations and special provisions to be provided, the instructions for the information session and other details pertaining to the administration of the OSSLT.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STEP 2</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Test environment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange the test room to ensure that students work independently.</li> <li>• Ensure that the room for writing the test is appropriate and meets the requirements outlined in “Professional Responsibilities” (Section 2).</li> <li>• Cover or remove from view all materials containing reading or writing content of an instructional nature (i.e., anything that directly aids the student in writing the OSSLT, e.g., a chart that outlines the writing process in detail).</li> <li>• Prepare seating plans (recommended).</li> <li>• Ensure that students have pens with dark blue or black ink to complete the test. They are also permitted to use pencil.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STEP 3</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Receipt and security of STS and test packages</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check that you have received from your principal an up-to-date STS and the correct number of student packages for your room. If materials are incomplete, refer to page 3 of this guide.</li> <li>• For students using assistive technology, ensure the correct electronic version has been downloaded from the SDC system and loaded onto the student’s computer. Only students for whom electronic versions were ordered may use them.</li> <li>• Do not open the individual student packages.</li> <li>• Instructions for answering multiple-choice questions and responding to prompts for written answers are provided in Appendix C of this guide.</li> <li>• Store all test materials securely throughout the administration.</li> </ul>

Step	Action
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STEP 4</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Administration and instructions to students</b></p>	<p><b>Follow the instructions below, without providing extra instructions to the students.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute student packages according to the STS.</li> <li>• Ensure that the <b>final 12 digits</b> of the package ID on the STS and the student package match. If there is a package ID problem or if a package is incomplete, follow the directions in “Package ID Numbers” on pages 2 and 3 of this guide.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Do not attempt to change package IDs. It is very important that they not be altered, as alteration may affect the accuracy of the student’s score.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the beginning of the scheduled test time, ask students to remove their booklets from the plastic wrapping.</li> <li>• Extra packages must not be opened. They must be returned to the principal at the end of the test session and will be returned to EQAO after the test administration.</li> </ul> <p>• <b>Read the following to students:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. You have two and a half hours to complete the OSSLT (not including the time for preliminary test instructions, for the break and for the Student Questionnaire at the end of <i>Booklet 2</i>).</li> <li>2. You have 75 minutes to finish each test booklet. If you finish early, you should review your work and check that you have not missed any questions.</li> <li>3. Attempt all questions. If you leave a question blank, the question will be scored zero.</li> <li>4. No cellphones, audio- or video-recording devices, pagers, digital music players or any e-mail or text-messaging devices are permitted during the test.</li> <li>5. Check that you have <b>Booklet 1</b> and <b>Booklet 2</b> (includes the Student Questionnaire) and a Student Answer Sheet.</li> <li>6. Print and sign your name on the <b>Student Answer Sheet</b>.</li> <li>7. Check the ID numbers of your three documents to see that the <b>final 12 digits</b> all match. If they do not, tell me. [Teacher: If a student has mismatched documents, refer to the directions in “Package ID Numbers” on page 3 of this guide.]</li> <li>8. Check the pages of each test booklet to see that they are in order. If they are not, report the problem to me.</li> <li>9. Read the instructions on the inside front cover of the test booklet while I read them to you.</li> <li>10. Put <i>Booklet 2</i> face down on the corner of your desk while you are doing <i>Booklet 1</i>. Do not start <i>Booklet 2</i> until instructed to do so.</li> <li>11. It is best that you use dark blue or black ink to complete the whole test, but you are permitted to use pencil.</li> <li>12. If you have any questions, ask them now, since you will not be able to talk during the test. [Teacher: If the students do not have any questions, start the test and carefully keep track of the time.]</li> <li>13. <b>You are now ready to start Booklet 1.</b></li> </ol>

Step	Action
<p><b>STEP 4</b> (cont'd)</p> <p><b>Administration and instructions to students</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indicate any changes to the seating arrangement on the seating plans.</li> <li>• Signal to the students when there is 15 minutes left before the end of the test session.</li> <li>• At the end of the first 75-minute test session, collect all <i>Booklet 1s</i>.</li> <li>• Make sure the room is secure during the break. Have students leave the Student Answer Sheet and <i>Booklet 2</i> face down on their desks during their break.</li> <li>• When students return from the break, remind them to review the instructions for completing multiple-choice and written answers. Students have 75 minutes to complete <i>Booklet 2</i>.</li> <li>• Signal to students when there is 15 minutes left before the end of the test session.</li> <li>• Have students complete the Student Questionnaire if they finish the test early, or at the end of the testing period (the Student Questionnaire is not included in the time allotted for <i>Booklet 2</i>). Remind students to record their answers on the questionnaire section of the Student Answer Sheet.</li> <li>• At the end of Session 2, collect all <i>Booklet 2s</i> and all Student Answer Sheets separately.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Printed copies or transcriptions of any responses in computer or audio format must be stapled to the inside front cover of the corresponding booklet. Ensure that the final 12 digits of the student's package ID number appear in the header of each page.</p>
<p><b>STEP 5</b></p> <p><b>Return of test materials and STS to the principal</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the STS to check that each student's test booklets and Student Answer Sheet have been collected. Record student absences on the STS.</li> <li>• Return all materials to the principal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the STS</li> <li>– all completed <i>Booklet 1s</i> and <i>Booklet 2s</i></li> <li>– all completed Student Answer Sheets (ensure that no Student Answer Sheets remain in booklets)</li> <li>– all unused, sealed student packages</li> <li>– all materials that require EQAO's attention (e.g., materials with student package ID problems, booklets with missing pages and any notes addressed to EQAO representatives). Provide a <b>detailed written explanation</b> of each problem to the principal; he or she will include it on the outside of the <b>Issues Envelope</b>.</li> <li>– special versions using computer, assistive technology and audio <b>response formats</b>. Place these in the <b>Special Versions Envelope</b>.</li> <li>– a copy of the seating plans</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**The Role of EQAO**

EQAO conducts province-wide assessments at the primary, junior and secondary levels to measure student achievement against curriculum expectations. The data can be used as an additional tool to direct improvements in education at the individual, school, board and provincial levels. For access to our frameworks, which map how the tests reflect curriculum expectations, and other useful educator resources, visit [www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com).

The role of EQAO is to

- design and implement a comprehensive program of student assessment within government-established guidelines;
- develop and implement a system for measuring the quality of education in Ontario;
- manage Ontario's participation in national and international assessments;
- promote research in best practices in assessment and accountability and
- report to the Minister of Education, the public and the education community on system quality issues, and recommend improvements.

**Development of the Test**

EQAO has developed the OSSLT in collaboration with teams of Ontario teachers, consultants and principals. These educators have contributed their expertise in language, their knowledge of *The Ontario Curriculum*, their experience with equity issues, their knowledge concerning students with special education needs and their technical knowledge pertaining to validity and reliability. The test assesses the cross-curricular reading and writing skills students are expected to have learned by the end of Grade 9, as outlined in *The Ontario Curriculum*.

EQAO's commitment to both accountability and improvement has led to the following criteria for the OSSLT. The test must

- be of high quality to ensure that reliable information about student achievement is obtained;
- reflect the performance of each student when working independently;
- give a broad view of students' knowledge and skills in language and
- contribute to student learning.

### Consistency and Fairness

In order to ensure that the test is administered consistently and fairly, EQAO publishes guides for schools to follow. The guides outline in detail what is expected of educators involved in the administration of the test, including

- professional responsibilities for the administration of the test;
- steps to follow (e.g., preparation of materials for distribution to students, administration procedures and return of materials to EQAO) and
- the accommodations and special provisions made for students with special education needs and English language learners.

During the assessment, students must work independently to answer the multiple-choice and open-response questions in a quiet environment supervised by teachers trained to administer the test.

Quality assurance procedures help to ensure that the test produces valid and reliable data. EQAO follows a number of procedures that ensure parents, educators, students and the public can have confidence in the reliability and validity of the data the agency reports. These include

- Quality-assurance monitoring: EQAO contracts quality-assurance monitors to visit a random sample of schools and observe the administration of the test.
- Database analysis: EQAO conducts two types of statistical analysis of student-response data. The first identifies student-response patterns that suggest collusion between two or more students. The second examines overall patterns in school results and the proportion of students succeeding over time.

Actions that breach EQAO test-administration procedures and test security may affect item and student-response validity. **EQAO will release individual student, school or board achievement results only if it is confident in the quality and integrity of the data.** When EQAO has reason to believe that the integrity of the data has been compromised, the school and/or board administration is required to conduct an investigation. If irregularities in test administration or breaches of test security are confirmed by the investigation at the local level, one or more of the following actions may be taken:

- The reporting of the test results may be delayed until a full investigation has been completed.
- Individual student, school and board results may be withheld.
- The violation may be reported to the school community, school board or the Ontario College of Teachers.

Examples of actions that breach EQAO test-administration procedures and test security include but are not limited to

- opening and reviewing the test packages before the administration of the first session;
- coaching students during the test, including interpreting, explaining or paraphrasing the items; remarking on the quality or quantity of student responses; returning student responses and indicating that the student should rethink or change an answer and
- failure to follow the instructions in this guide and the *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions*.

## Participation in the OSSLT

Successful completion of the OSSLT is a requirement for students who entered Grade 9 in September 2000 or later and are working toward an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). Students can also meet this requirement through the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC), but must have had at least two opportunities to take the test (at the principal's discretion, this may be reduced to one) and have failed the test at least once (refer to PPM 127).

Ensure that all students eligible for the test are accounted for, including those who are English language learners as defined by *English Language Learners: ESL and ELD Programs and Services: Policies and Procedures for Ontario Elementary and Secondary Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12* (2007) and those with special education needs, even if the students are to be deferred or exempted or plan to fulfill the requirement through the OSSLC.

### Participants in the April 2010 OSSLT are

1. students who are first-time eligible. A student is first-time eligible if the student
  - entered Grade 9 in the 2008–2009 school year or
  - came from out of province and entered Grade 10 in the 2009–2010 school year.
2. students who are previously eligible who still must fulfill the graduation requirement. A student is previously eligible if the student
  - was absent, deferred or unsuccessful in one or more previous administrations;
  - was exempted in a previous administration but is now working toward an OSSD;
  - came from out of province and entered Grade 11 or 12 in the 2009–2010 school year or
  - is enrolled in an adult education program and began Grade 9 in or after the 2000–2001 school year.

**Note:** Previously eligible students who plan to fulfill the graduation requirement through the OSSLC during the 2009–2010 school year must be accounted for in the SDC process.

## School Emergency

In case of an emergency, instruct the students to leave all test materials on their desk and exit immediately according to the school's emergency exit plan. When the students return, instruct them to return to work.

## Student Punctuality and Absences

The school's late policy for exams will determine admittance of late students to the test room. EQAO's reports will deem students to be absent if there is no work for one or both sessions of the administration.

## Teacher Absences

In the case of an absence, another teacher, supervised by the principal, may administer the test. The teacher taking over the administration of the test must be provided in advance with a copy of this guide and must follow the detailed steps in it. The teacher must have the opportunity to have the procedures clarified.

### **EQAO Policy on the Duty to Report Child Abuse**

Under provincial law, persons dealing with children, including teachers, teaching assistants and principals, have a duty to report suspicions of child abuse to the Children’s Aid Society. According to the Child and Family Services Act, the duty to report also applies where there are reasonable grounds to suspect patterns of child neglect.

If a teacher, non-teaching staff member, principal or volunteer working as a scribe has reasonable grounds to suspect child abuse or neglect, he or she is obligated to report any suspicion and the information on which it is based directly to the Children’s Aid Society. When reporting to the Children’s Aid Society, send only the student’s writing linked to the suspicion of abuse or neglect. Notify EQAO at 1-888-327-7377 at the same time, indicating which portion of the test is in question. Do not send the Children’s Aid Society any part of the preprinted test, including the writing prompt. If they require more information, they will contact EQAO.

EQAO has procedures in place to facilitate scorers’ reporting of suspicions of child abuse.

### **EQAO Policy on Offensive Language**

Student work that contains offensive (e.g., obscene or racist) language or graphic depictions will be reported to the principal, so that appropriate action can be taken at the school level. Offensive content may invalidate a student’s response.

### **Reporting to Students and Parents**

EQAO will provide an Individual Student Report (ISR) for each student who participated in the OSSLT, following the test administration. A copy will also be provided for the student’s school record. The ISR will indicate whether a student has successfully completed the test. Samples of student work will be available on the EQAO Web site, [www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com), to assist in the interpretation of EQAO reports. Each district school board and school authority will receive school, board and provincial results. EQAO will also report on student achievement at the board and provincial levels in the *Provincial Report*.

### **Embedded Field-Test Materials**

Field-test questions are embedded in the student booklets. **Students will have different versions of these embedded questions.** These questions will not be included in the students’ scores. However, it is important that students give them the same effort they give the other parts of the test.

### **Request for a Student to Write at an Alternative Location**

A principal may request permission for a student to write the OSSLT at an alternative location when the student is in his or her graduating year or when there are extenuating circumstances (e.g., expulsion, illness) resulting in the student’s inability to write at the school at which he or she is registered. The request for approval must be submitted to EQAO **six weeks** prior to the administration of the test. (The required form “Request for Approval to Administer the Test at an Alternative Location” is located on the secure section of the EQAO Web site.)

### **Delayed Start**

The start time of the test may be delayed for up to one hour due to unforeseen circumstances affecting a group of students (e.g., bus delay, weather conditions) at the principal’s discretion. If the start of the administration will be delayed for more than one hour, the principal must contact EQAO at 1-888-327-7377.

**Read carefully before writing the test:**

- Check the identification numbers of your three documents to see that the final 12 digits all match. If they do not, report the problem to the teacher in charge.
- Check the pages of this *Test Booklet* to see that they are in order. If they are not, report the problem to the teacher in charge.
- Read all instructions before responding to the questions.
- Use only HB pencil or blue or black pen in the *Test Booklet* and on the Student Answer Sheet.
- Attempt all questions. If you leave a question blank, the question will be scored zero.

**Multiple-Choice**

- Choose the best or most correct answer for each question.
- You must record your multiple-choice answers on the Student Answer Sheet. Multiple-choice answers recorded in the *Test Booklet* will not be scored.

To indicate your answer, **fill in the circle completely**, as shown below.

Like this: ● Not like this: ⊗ ✓ ◐ ○

- If you fill in more than one circle for a question, the question will be scored incorrect.
- If you wish to change a multiple-choice answer, erase or cross out your answer and fill in the circle for your new answer. Ensure that your final answer is clear.

**Written Answers**

- For all questions that ask for a written answer, **write legibly on the lined space provided** in the *Test Booklet*.
- For the writing sections, pay attention to clarity, organization, spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- The lined space provided for your written work indicates the approximate length of the writing expected.
- There is space in the *Test Booklet* for rough notes. Nothing you write in these spaces will be scored.

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**You are now ready to start *Test Booklet 1: Session 1*.**

**Remember to record all your multiple-choice answers on the Student Answer Sheet.**

**Education Quality and  
Accountability Office**



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