

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When is the test? APRIL 2, 2009

What is the OSSLT based on?

The OSSLT is based on the expectations for literacy (reading and writing) across all subjects in *The Ontario Curriculum* up to the end of Grade 9. These skills are the basis for learning in all subject areas in both middle and secondary school. For more information, please refer to the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test [Framework](#) and [Curriculum Connections](#), posted on the EQAO Web site, www.eqao.com.

Who is required to write the OSSLT?

Students who began Grade 9 during the 2000–2001 school year and those who began it thereafter are required to write the OSSLT, according to *Ontario Secondary Schools, Grades 9 to 12: Program and Diploma Requirements* (1999). These students (and any others who are placed in one of these cohorts) are required to complete the test or the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC) successfully in order to earn their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). Students normally participate in the test when they are in Grade 10. Students who do not participate in the OSSLT in the year following the year in which they entered Grade 9 require either a deferral or an exemption.

Which students can be deferred and exempted?

If a student is working toward an OSSD but either has not yet acquired a level of proficiency in English advanced enough to complete the OSSLT successfully or is unable to write the test because of illness, injury or other extenuating circumstances, the principal may grant a deferral in accordance with the EQAO deferral policy. The student will need to complete the OSSLT or the OSSLC successfully in order to earn an OSSD.

Students who have an Individual Education Plan that indicates that they are not working toward an OSSD may be exempted from writing the OSSLT. Exemptions must be documented according to EQAO's *Administration Guide*.

Can students who do not successfully complete the OSSLT take it again?

Yes. Students who are not successful may write the OSSLT a number of times.

For the 2003–2004 school year, students who had had two opportunities to take the OSSLT and had failed it at least once were eligible to enrol in the OSSLC. However, in June 2004, policy was changed to grant principals the discretion to allow a student to enrol in the OSSLC before he or she has had a second opportunity to take the OSSLT, if the principal determines that it is in the best educational interests of the student (Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum 127).

Is it possible for a school to modify the dates for administering the OSSLT?

No. To protect the security of test materials and to ensure the validity and reliability of the results, all students across the province must write the OSSLT at the same time. This policy applies to schools in the publicly funded system and to independent schools, including First Nations schools. Teachers and principals who are responsible for administering the OSSLT must follow this policy.