

# Diploma Requirements

The diploma requirements for students entering grade 9 in September 2011, are described below. Any changes to the diploma requirements will be communicated to schools as soon as they are made available by the Ministry.

## The Credit System

A credit is granted in recognition of the successful completion of a course that has been scheduled for a minimum of 110 hours. For the purpose of granting a credit, “scheduled time” is defined as the time during which students participate in planned learning activities (other than homework) designed to lead to the achievement of the curriculum expectations of a course. A credit is granted to a student by the principal of a secondary school on behalf of the Minister of Education.

## Requirements for Ontario Secondary School Diploma

In order to earn an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD), a student who entered grade 9 in the 1999-2000 school year, or enters in subsequent years, must earn a minimum of 30 credits, including 18 compulsory credits and 12 optional credits. Students must also complete 40 hours of community involvement activities and must successfully complete the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT).

Effective September 2005, two co-operative education credits can be counted toward the 18 compulsory credits.

**Note:** Successful completion of the OSSLT is not required as a diploma requirement for those students who entered grade 9 in September 1999. Refer to page 3 for conditions under which a student may take the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC) in lieu of the test. Under special circumstances an adjudication process would be put in place. Eligibility is determined in consultation with schools.

### Credits required – 18 compulsory credits

4 credits	English (1 credit per grade)*
3 credits	Mathematics (1 credit in Grade 11 or 12)
2 credits	Science
1 credit	The Arts
1 credit	Canadian Geography
1 credit	Canadian History
1 credit	French as a Second Language
1 credit	Health & Physical Education
½ credit	Civics
½ credit	Career Studies

### An additional credit in one of:

(Group 1)  
English  
French as a Second Language\*\*  
Native Language  
Classical or International Language  
Social Sciences and the Humanities  
Canadian & World Studies  
Guidance and Career Education  
Co-operative Education\*\*\*

### An additional credit in one of:

(Group 2)  
Health & Physical Education  
The Arts  
Business Studies  
French as a Second Language\*\*  
Co-operative Education\*\*\*

### An additional credit in one of:

(Group 3)  
Science (Grade 11 or 12)  
Technological Education  
French as a Second Language\*\*  
Computer Studies  
Co-operative Education\*\*\*

\*A maximum of 3 credits in English as a Second Language (ESL) or English Literacy Development (ELD) may be counted towards the 4 compulsory credits in English, but the fourth must be a credit earned for a Grade 12 compulsory English course.

\*\*In Groups 1, 2, and 3, a maximum of 2 credits in French as a Second Language can count as compulsory credits, one from group 1 and one from *either* group 2 or group 3.

\*\*\*A maximum of 2 credits in Co-operative Education can count as compulsory credits.

### 12 optional credits

In addition to the 18 compulsory credits, students must earn 12 optional credits selected from the courses listed as available in the course calendar†.

†The 12 optional credits may include up to 4 credits earned through approved dual credit courses.

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## Additional Diploma Requirements

### *40-Hour Community Involvement*

- The student is responsible for finding and completing 40 hours of volunteer work. The school will not be directly involved in finding volunteer placements for students or monitoring students while they are completing their volunteer work.
- Students are responsible for completing their 40 hours and submitting their completed form prior to the end of classes of their graduating year to ensure that their transcript is updated prior to the end of the school year.
- The parent is responsible for checking potential placements before the student begins volunteering.
- The school is responsible for advising students of the requirements and procedures for completing the 40-hour community involvement requirement. Students will receive information and appropriate forms from their guidance office.
- Students entering a Peel secondary school from outside of the province or country must complete the full 40 hours regardless of their grade of entry.
- For more information, including guidelines for eligible activities, visit the Peel board website at [www.peelschools.org](http://www.peelschools.org), go to the “Student Stuff” section and look for the “40 hours” icon.

### *Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)*

- For students who entered secondary school in the 2000-2001 school year or later, successful completion of the test is a diploma requirement.\*
- The test measures whether students can successfully demonstrate reading and writing skills that apply in all subject areas in the provincial curriculum, up to the end of grade 9.
- The test is designed and marked by the Education Quality & Accountability Office (EQAO).
- The test is conducted once each year.

- Students receive results – either “complete” or “incomplete.” Students who receive an incomplete will be sent detailed feedback. Students may re-take the test. No limits have been established regarding the number of re-takes allowed.
  - Sample test materials are available at [www.peelschools.org](http://www.peelschools.org) or [www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com).
  - Accommodations, deferral and exemption information are outlined in the Ministry of Education’s Programs/Policy memorandum 127; Accommodations, Deferrals and Exemptions for the grade 10 Literacy Test.
  - Any accommodations recommended by the school will be acceptable to EQAO, in accordance with Programs/Policy memorandum 127, and must be outlined in the individual student’s Individual Education Plan. Accommodation recommendations will be communicated by letter to parents/guardians in advance of the test.
  - Deferrals will be considered in individual circumstances. The consideration for a deferral may be initiated by a parent or by the principal. The principal will make a decision in consultation with the student’s parents/guardians and appropriate school staff. A letter outlining the reason for the deferral will be sent home with the student for parent/guardian signature in advance of the test. A student who is deferred must still successfully complete the test in order to earn an OSSD.
  - A student will only be exempted from the test if she is not working towards an OSSD.
- \* A student who has been eligible twice to write the OSSLT, and who has failed at least once, is eligible to take the grade 12 literacy course (OSSLC). If passed, this will count in lieu of the literacy test (OSSLT). A principal may decide, based on individual needs, to allow a student to take the OSSLC before he has had his second opportunity to write the OSSLT.

# Diploma Requirements

## The Ontario Secondary School Certificate

The Ontario Secondary School Certificate will be granted on request to students who leave school before earning an Ontario Secondary School Diploma provided they have earned a minimum of 14 credits distributed as follows:

### *7 compulsory credits*

2 credits in English  
1 credit in Canadian Geography *or* Canadian History  
1 credit in Mathematics  
1 credit in Science  
1 credit in Health & Physical Education  
1 credit in The Arts *or* Technological Education *or* Computer Studies

### *7 optional credits*

7 credits selected by the student from available courses

## Certificate of Accomplishment

Students who leave school before fulfilling the requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma or the Ontario Secondary School Certificate may be granted a Certificate of Accomplishment. The Certificate of Accomplishment may be used to recognize achievement for students who plan to take certain vocational programs or other types of further training, or who plan to find employment after leaving school.

## Tracking of Credit Accumulation

### *Ontario Student Record (OSR)*

This is the official record for a student. The OSR contains achievement results, credits earned, diploma requirements completed and other information important to the education of the student.

### *Ontario Student Transcript (OST)*

The OST is an official and consistent summary of a student's achievement in Ontario secondary school credit courses. A current, accurate and complete copy of the OST will be included in the Ontario Student Record.

## Substitutions for Compulsory Courses

To meet individual student needs, the principal may replace up to three compulsory courses. The decision to make a substitution will be made only if the student's educational interests are best served by such a substitution. Each substitution will be noted on the student's Ontario Student Transcript.