



Ontario
College of
Teachers

Ordre des enseignantes
et des enseignants
de l'Ontario

Additional Qualification Course Guideline Kindergarten, Specialist

Schedule D – Teachers' Qualifications Regulation

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Preface

Placing each student's interests and well-being first is at the core of teaching in Ontario.

The Ontario College of Teachers (the College) is the self-regulating body for the teaching profession in Ontario and is responsible for:

- establishing and enforcing professional standards and ethical standards applicable to members of the College
- providing for the ongoing education of members of the College
- accrediting Additional Qualification (AQ) courses.

The College supports teaching excellence by preparing educators to work in varied and diverse educational contexts and geographical settings:

- English language public school
- French language public school
- English language Catholic school
- French language Catholic school
- First Nations school
- Provincial and Demonstration school
- Private school
- Independent school
- Urban setting
- Rural setting
- Remote setting

Additional Qualification (AQ) course guidelines are designed following extensive consultation and feedback from course providers, course writers and members of the teaching profession.

AQ course guidelines serve as the framework for providers and instructors to develop courses.

In this document, all references to candidates are to educators enrolled in the AQ course. References to learners indicate those enrolled in school programs.

Introduction

Additional Qualifications (AQs) for educators are identified in O. Reg. 176/10: *Teachers' Qualifications Regulation*. This regulation includes courses that lead to AQs, the Principal's Development Qualification, the Principal's Qualifications, the Primary Division, the Junior Division, the Intermediate Division, the Senior Division, the Supervisory Officer's Development Qualification and the Supervisory Officer's Qualifications. A session of a course leading to an AQ shall consist of a minimum of 125 hours as approved by the Registrar. Successful completion of the course is recorded on the candidate's Certificate of Qualification and Registration.

This AQ course guideline provides a framework upon which to develop courses that meet accreditation requirements established in O. Reg. 347/02: *Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs*.

Accreditation – Program of Additional Qualification

Accreditation requirements for AQ courses are articulated in O. Reg. 347/02: *Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs*, s. 24.

A program of additional qualification may be granted accreditation under this Regulation if the following requirements are satisfied:

1. The program content and expected achievement of persons enrolled in the program match the skills and knowledge reflected in the College's "Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession" and the "Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession" and in the program guidelines issued by the College.
2. The program satisfies the requirements of the teachers' qualifications regulation for entry of an additional qualification on the general certificate of qualification and registration of a person who successfully completes the program.
3. The program curriculum is current, references the Ontario curriculum, relevant legislation and government policies and represents a wide knowledge base in the program's area of study.
4. The course content of the program makes appropriate provision for the application of theory in practice.
5. The program's format and structure are appropriate for the course content of the program.
- 5.1 The program consists of a minimum of 125 hours of work acceptable to the Registrar.
6. There is clear identification of the goals of the program, with a formal testing or assessment mechanism to determine the level of successful completion of the program.
7. The majority of the educators teaching the program have Ontario teaching experience relevant to the program.
8. The provider maintains adequate internal controls to preserve the integrity of student records relating to the program.
9. The provider is committed to continuous improvement and quality assurance of the program and, if the program is an existing program, has implemented measures demonstrating that commitment.

O. Reg. 347/02, s. 24; 2009, c. 33, Sched. 13, s. 3 (2); O. Reg. 182/10, s. 8.

Overview: Additional Qualification Course Guideline Design

The following section of AQ course guidelines are organized using the structure and content described below (Figure 1):

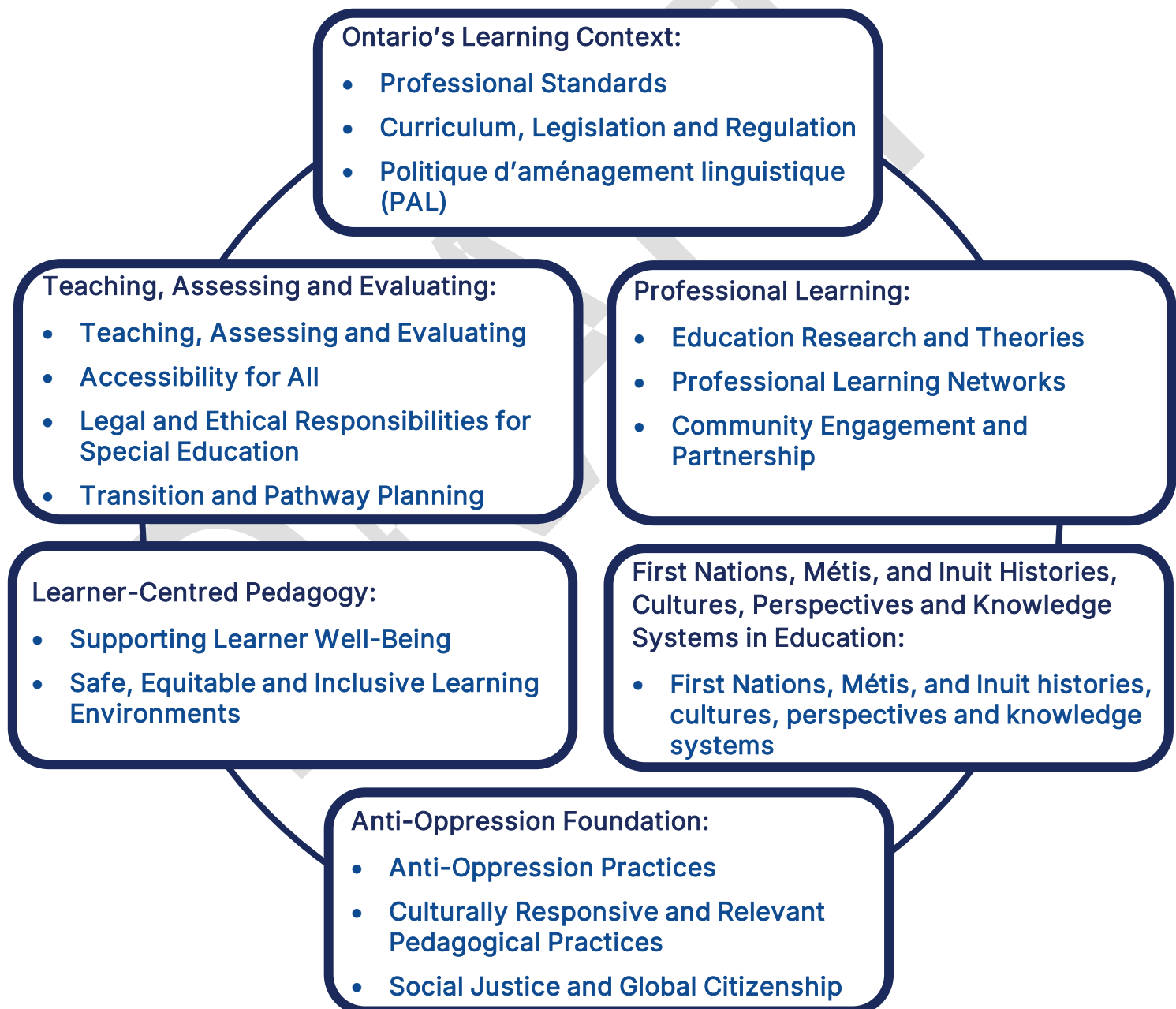
1. **Foundational elements** – six overarching distinct but interconnected elements grounding AQ course guidelines
2. **Fundamental principles** – accreditation requirements that are infused throughout the content of the AQ course and serve to inform providers and instructors of the conceptual framework from which to design AQ courses
3. **Core concepts** – candidates' professional experience and learning needs in relation to the required elements of the AQ course
4. **Required elements** – subject and/or division specific knowledge, skills, practices and values that AQ course providers must infuse throughout the content of the AQ course
5. **Required element statements** – description of the professional knowledge, skills, practices and values related to the required element.

1. Foundational Elements 2. Fundamental Principles Description 3. Core Concepts <Guideline Name>... 4. Required Element: 5. - Required element statement - Required element statement

Additional Qualification Course Guideline Foundations

AQ course guidelines are grounded in **six foundational elements**, which are distinct but interconnected.

There are 15 required elements in English-language AQ course guidelines and 16 required elements in French-language AQ course guidelines:



Kindergarten, Specialist

Additional Qualification – Schedule D, Part I/Part II/Specialist (Three Session)

Schedule D (see Appendix 1), three-session specialist Additional Qualification courses, allow educators to:

- enhance subject-specific professional practice, knowledge and skills as outlined in the *Kindergarten, Part I* course
- extend subject-specific professional practice, knowledge and skills in the design and implementation of learning opportunities as outlined in the *Kindergarten, Part II* course
- apply the subject-specific professional practice, knowledge and skills in a leadership role as outlined in the *Kindergarten, Specialist* course.

Additional Qualification Course Requirements

The AQ course *Kindergarten, Specialist* enables candidates to advance their professional practice through focussed learning in the following areas:

- Curriculum Knowledge
- Pedagogical Strategies
- The Learning Environment.

This AQ course is designed and delivered using adult learning instructional practices.

The AQ Course *Kindergarten, Specialist* reflects **adult learning theories and processes** that foster critical reflection, dialogue and inquiry. Instructors provide candidates with professional learning experiences related to teaching, learning and assessment of learners.

The purpose of this AQ course is to enhance educators' knowledge, skills, and professional practices for teaching Kindergarten from a foundation of equity and inclusion. This course will support candidates, in partnership with early childhood educators, in developing responsive strategies across the learning continuum from Kindergarten through the primary division. Educators will learn to foster foundational knowledge and skills through evidence-informed explicit instruction within play- and inquiry-based learning environments, particularly in literacy, mathematics, science, and technology.

Ontario's Learning Context

Fundamental Principles

Education in Ontario is complex and dynamic with learning communities that reflect the province's diversity. As the teaching profession continually evolves to meet the ever-changing needs of learners, educators are called upon to follow foundational principles that inform instructional practice.

Professional standards, the Ontario curriculum, and related legislation and regulation, including the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, the *Education Act* and *Aménagement Linguistique Policy* (for French-Language schools) serve as the foundation for equitable, inclusive and accessible education.

Through ongoing professional learning, educators deepen their understanding of these principles, thereby advancing their professional practice to support each student's learning and well-being.

Core Concepts

Kindergarten, Specialist applies the subject-specific professional practice, knowledge and skills in a leadership role through explicit instruction, reflections, guiding questions or resources in the following required elements:

Professional Standards:

- significance of the Ethical Standards, Standards of Practice and Professional Advisories as theoretical foundations within the *Kindergarten* AQ Course
- ethical professional identity, knowledge, leadership, advocacy and collective practices to inform program planning
- knowledge and understanding of the College of Early Childhood Educators *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* in alignment with the Ontario College of Teachers' *Professional Standards*.

Ontario curriculum and related Legislation and Regulation:

- current Ontario curriculum, policies, frameworks, strategies and resources related to Kindergarten, including the play-based learning continuum
- relevant legislation and policies at the municipal, provincial, federal and international levels that support human rights and privacy for all (for example, *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, *Canadian Human Rights Act*, *Ontario Human Rights Code*, *Anti-Racism Act*, 2017, S.O. 2017, c. 15 and *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*)
- candidates' legal obligations and ethical responsibilities according to current provincial legislation, policies and practices.

Professional Learning

Fundamental Principles

Professional learning is an integral part of the teaching profession and is essential for fostering continuous growth and improving outcomes for Ontario learners.

Throughout their career, educators continue to engage in ongoing professional learning informed by educational research and theories, including sessions offered by school boards or community partners, professional reading and AQ courses.

AQ courses serve as a key tool for enhancing professional practice by preparing educators for specific roles within the educational community. As part of their professional learning, educators are called upon to participate and lead in Professional Learning Networks and Community Engagement and Partnership opportunities that foster knowledge sharing, collaboration, and innovation to respond to diverse learner needs and create inclusive learning environments.

Core Concepts

Kindergarten, Specialist applies the subject-specific professional practice, knowledge and skills in a leadership role through explicit instruction, reflections, guiding questions or resources in the following required elements:

Educational Research and Theories:

- current research and contributions representative of diverse voices and cultures associated with professional practices, policies and pedagogies related to Kindergarten
- research and theories that reflects society's diverse changing nature and influence on learning and well-being (for example, trauma-informed pedagogical practices and mental health resources)
- theoretical foundation for the design, assessment and implementation of programs and practices including play-based learning and explicit instruction
- application of theories of child development and identity formation that support learner well-being, efficacy, self-regulation and agency, including the literacy, numeracy and play-based learning continuum.

Professional Learning Networks:

- professional learning communities that promote critical pedagogy and collective efficacy between Kindergarten educators and early childhood educators

- research and leadership to advance professional practice through ongoing collaborative inquiry, dialogue and innovation
- internal and external collaboration and supports to enhance professional practices in Kindergarten, including early childhood educators, cross-curricular teams, Board leads, mentors, formal and informal professional networks.

Community Engagement and Partnerships:

- culturally responsive strategies to engage with learners, families, caregivers, guardians, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Knowledge Guardians, agencies and the school community including:
 - processes and practices to foster communication and collaboration to support learning
 - partnerships that value shared decision-making, confidentiality, advocacy and leadership
 - empowerment to navigate the education system and support learning and well-being
- strategies to build community partnerships that promote reciprocal learning experiences
- strategies to build collaborative partnerships between educators and early childhood educators to support teaching and learning
- strategies to build community partnerships that promote reciprocal learning experiences within and beyond the school environment (for example, speech language pathologists, education assistants, settlement workers and local libraries).

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Histories, Cultures, Perspectives and Knowledge Systems in Education

Fundamental Principles

Ontario's educators are responsible to uphold the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action* and align their professional practice with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP). They engage in authentic reconciliatory action by learning from and valuing First Nations, Métis, and Inuit histories, cultures, perspectives and knowledge systems, in teaching and learning. Educators, as treaty partners, acknowledge that learning about, and upholding treaty responsibilities will guide them on the reconciliation journey.

Core Concepts

Kindergarten, Specialist applies the subject-specific professional practice, knowledge and skills in a leadership role through explicit instruction, reflections, guiding questions or resources in the following required elements:

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Histories, Cultures, Perspectives and Knowledge Systems:

- meaningful inclusion of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit histories, cultures, perspectives and knowledge systems in teaching and learning processes
- knowledge of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action (TRC)
- awareness of United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)
- learning experiences that foster participation and engagement to support each learner's cultural and personal growth (for example, land-based learning).

Anti-Oppression Foundation

Fundamental Principles

An anti-oppression foundation acknowledges that systemic manifestations of power and privilege have led to multiple forms of oppression, injustices, inequities and inequalities. It is an approach that ensures equity and human rights are foundational to all AQ courses and programs.

Educators have a shared ethical and professional responsibility to identify and challenge individual and systemic barriers, including the impact of biases and assumptions related to power and privilege. Ongoing teacher education must recognize and address historical contexts that have contributed to various forms of oppression.

Through culturally responsive and relevant pedagogical practices, educators provide learning opportunities that respect diversity, foster learner well-being, and promote social justice and global citizenship.

Core Concepts

Kindergarten, Specialist applies the subject-specific professional practice, knowledge and skills in a leadership role through explicit instruction, reflections, guiding questions or resources in the following required elements:

Anti-Oppression Practices:

- theories and pedagogies about multiple forms of oppression applied to the design, assessment and implementation of programs and practices
- addressing individual and systemic biases, discrimination and barriers as well as manifestations of power and privilege, including gender and cultural norms in Kindergarten
- addressing disproportionate representation of learners from equity seeking groups within specialized programs
- creation of anti-oppressive learning environments where all children are valued and included through materials, resources and spaces that authentically reflect diverse identities, cultures and lived experiences.

Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogical Practices:

- culturally responsive and relevant practices that reflect understanding of learners' identities, languages and intersectionalities
- strategies for exploring the difference between cultural appropriation and cultural appreciation
- culturally inclusive processes, practices and resources to provide learning opportunities that respect the learning styles, voices and perspectives of each learner
- development of intercultural understanding and cultural competencies when engaging in play-based learning.

Social Justice and Global Citizenship:

- processes and practices that foster learners' voice and choice, respect diversity and promote social and ecological justice as change makers, including Kindergarten learners' natural sense for fairness
- strategies for consensus-building, participatory democracy and empowerment within schools and the community
- processes that engage learners as active global citizens in supporting environmental and economic sustainability.

Learner-Centred Pedagogy

Fundamental Principles

Learner-centred pedagogy prioritizes learner engagement, well-being and success. Educators support student learning and well-being by encouraging learner voice, choice, and collaboration with families, caregivers, guardians, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Knowledge Guardians and community partners.

Educators create safe, equitable, and inclusive learning environments that value diverse identities, experiences, and learning needs to ensure that all learners are empowered to reach their learning goals.

Core Concepts:

Kindergarten, Specialist applies the subject-specific professional practice, knowledge and skills in a leadership role through explicit instruction, reflections, guiding questions or resources in the following required elements:

Supporting Learner Well-Being

- policies, processes and practices to support learners' cognitive, social, emotional, spiritual and physical development
- strategies that respond to the strengths, identities, needs and interests of each learner
- programs that respond to learners' lived experiences, linguistic abilities, mental health and well-being
- practices to understand learner's curiosities and experiences to empower them to reach their learning goals.

Safe, Equitable and Inclusive Learning Environments:

- policies and processes to create and maintain inclusive learning environments that:
 - respect diversity
 - encourage critical thinking
 - foster learner agency and perspectives
- strategies to foster inclusive learning environments (for example, gender neutral language, resources in various formats, sensory-responsive learning areas, varied seating and small group spaces)
- practices that support safe and healthy learning environments for learners as well as families, caregivers, guardians, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Knowledge Guardians

- educators' ethical use of technology in support of learners' safety, privacy and well-being (for example appropriate use of AI and responsible use of social media)
- strategies to promote first language or other language use within the learning environment, respecting learner identities and supporting language acquisition.

Teaching, Assessing and Evaluating

Fundamental Principles

Educators believe that each student can learn. Through evidence-based teaching and learning practices that are learner-centred, educators provide programs and services that offer equitable, inclusive and accessible opportunities for all. Educators use instructional strategies and assessment practices that respect the identities of each learner and support their cognitive, social, emotional, spiritual and physical development.

Accessibility, inclusion and equity are fundamental to everyday practice for teaching and learning. Informed by the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, *Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, and the *Education Act*, educators advocate for each learner to access and benefit from services and resources within the education system, understanding the unique needs presented by geographical and socioeconomic contexts.

As educators are responsible for instruction, assessment and evaluation of all learners, they provide accommodations, modifications, or alternative programming outlined in the Individual Education Plan (IEP), which must be developed by an interdisciplinary team to reflect the learner's strengths, needs, and abilities, according to Reg. 181/98.

Each learner has their own unique profile and goals. As such, educators design opportunities that support their transition, education, and life and career planning.

Core Concepts

Kindergarten, Specialist applies the subject-specific professional practice, knowledge and skills in a leadership role through explicit instruction, reflections, guiding questions or resources in the following required elements:

Teaching, Assessing and Evaluating:

- program design and implementation aligned with the Ontario curriculum that foster transferable skills to support lifelong learning (for example, critical thinking, collaboration and innovation)

- instructional strategies and approaches (for example, differentiated instruction, universal learning design, experiential learning, outdoor learning, play- and inquiry-based learning)
- assessment and evaluation processes and practices to:
 - provide feedback to learners and adjust instruction (assessment *for* learning)
 - develop learners' capacity to be independent, autonomous learners (assessment *as* learning)
 - make informed professional judgments about the quality of learning (assessment *of* learning)
- integration of information and communication technology to enhance teaching and learning
- strategies that connect oral language instruction to language acquisition to support development of formal and informal language skills
- strategies that support the development of early reading and writing skills (for example, phonological awareness and stages of emergent writing)
- intentional selection and design of mathematics learning experiences that allow learners to have multiple entry points along the continuum of learning (for example, understanding numbers, exploring money concepts, counting and recognizing patterns)
- practices that integrate a variety of instructional approaches (for example, evidence-based explicit instruction, play-based learning and inquiry-based pedagogy)
- the learning environment as the third teacher to promote curiosity, creativity, voice, innovation, perspectives and learner-led inquiry.

Accessibility for All:

- ethical responsibilities related to the Ontario Human Rights Code and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act S.O., 2005
- adaptive strategies, such as assistive technologies, accessible content and inclusive design to facilitate learning and foster inclusion
- strategies to address ableism that exists in processes and practices
- practices to develop accessible outdoor learning spaces as an extension of the classroom
- accommodations and modifications that facilitate learning in the Kindergarten classroom (for example, sensory, environmental and physical).

Legal and Ethical Responsibilities related to Special Education:

- legal and ethical responsibilities related to learner's Individual Education Plan (IEP), safety plan, and transition plan
- programs, strategies and services that support the learner in achieving individual goals outlined in their respective plans
- interdisciplinary teams to support learning, advocacy and transitions.

Transition and Pathway Planning:

Transition Planning:

- processes and practices to support entry to school and early years continuum, including Kindergarten to Grade 2
- policies, programs and learning opportunities that value each pathway equally and equitably
- strategies for educators to support learners in their daily transitions (for example, the flow of the day, literacy and numeracy blocks and indoor to outdoor learning).

Education, Life and Career Planning:

- play and inquiry-based learning to explore career pathways (for example, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics [STEAM], coding, construction, dramatic play areas and mud kitchens).

Resources

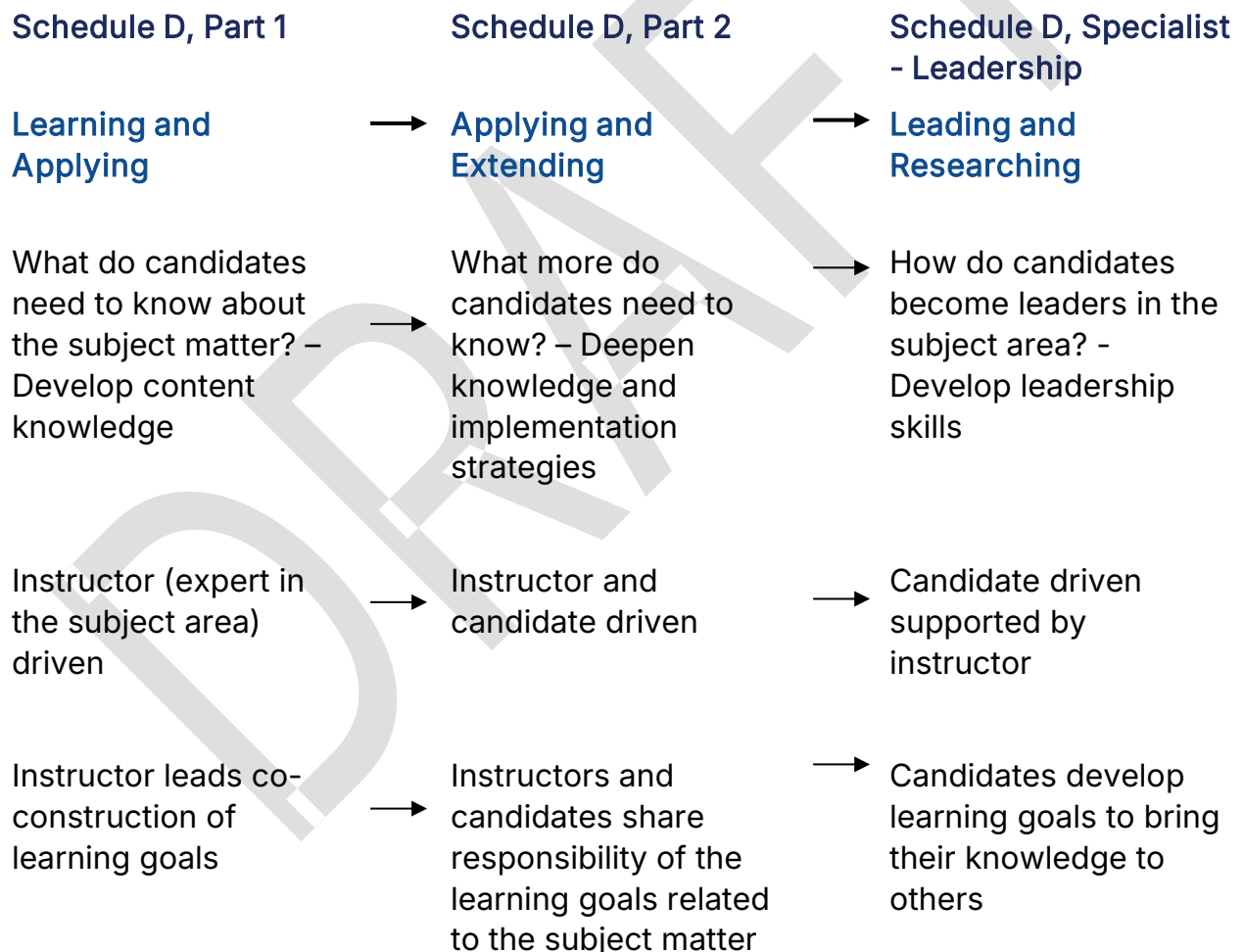
Resources to support the development of the AQ Course *Kindergarten, Specialist* can be found on the [College](#) website and the [Ontario Ministry of Education](#) website.

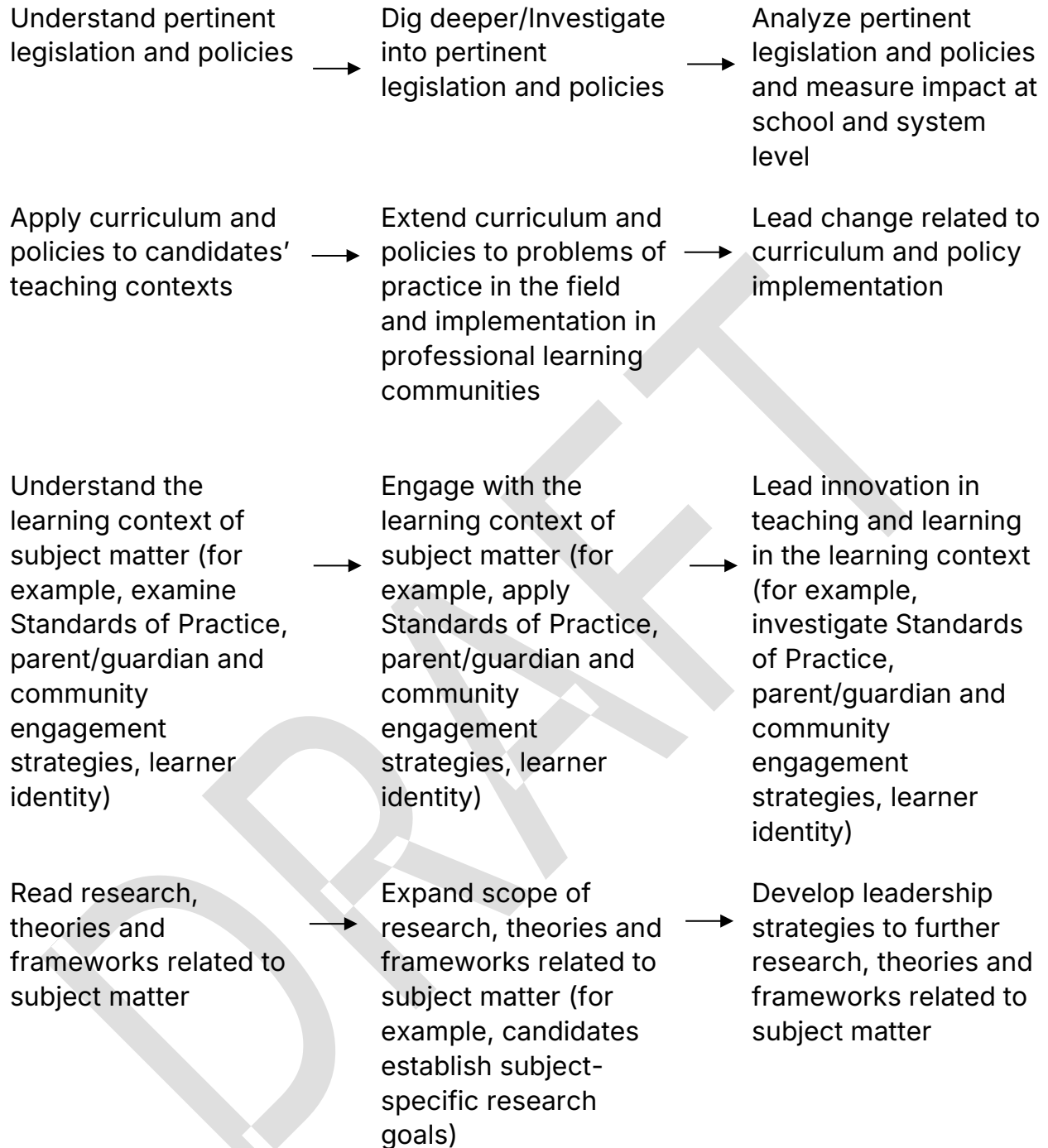
Appendix 1

Continuum Of Learning in Schedule D Additional Qualification (AQ) Courses

Considerations:

- Consistency across the three Schedule D sessions to:
 - support the development and progression of knowledge, implementation and leadership
 - support candidates who take the sessions from different providers
- Candidates' professional experience and learning needs in relation to the required elements of the AQ course.





Apply subject content research to the candidates' teaching context



Extend the application of subject content research to the teaching context of the candidate and beyond (for example, school, Board, community)



Apply leadership strategies and subject content research to lead instructional practice

Continuum of Learning in Schedule D Additional Qualification (AQ) Courses

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Compliant Text:

Schedule D, Part 1

This is the first level on a three-level continuum as outlined in the columns above.

Learning and Applying:

- What do candidates need to know about the subject matter? – Develop content knowledge
- Instructor (expert in the subject area) driven
- Instructor leads co-construction of learning goals
- Understand pertinent legislation and policies
- Apply curriculum and policies to candidates' teaching contexts
- Understand the learning context of subject matter (for example, examine Standards of Practice, parent/guardian and community engagement strategies, learner identity)
- Read research, theories and frameworks related to subject matter
- Apply subject content research to the candidates' teaching context.

Schedule D, Part 2

This is the second level on a three-level continuum as outlined in the columns above.

Applying and Extending:

- What more do candidates need to know? – Deepen knowledge and implementation strategies
- Instructor and candidate driven
- Instructors and candidates share responsibility of the learning goals related to the subject matter
- Dig deeper/Investigate into pertinent legislation and policies
- Extend curriculum and policies to problems of practice in the field and implementation in professional learning communities
- Engage with the learning context of subject matter (for example, apply Standards of Practice, parent/guardian and community engagement strategies, learner identity)
- Expand scope of research, theories and frameworks related to subject matter (for example, candidates establish subject-specific research goals)

- Extend the application of subject content research
- to the teaching context of the candidate and beyond (for example, school, Board, community).

Schedule D, Specialist – Leadership

This is the third level on a three-level continuum as outlined in the columns above.

Leading and Researching:

- How do candidates become leaders in the subject area? - Develop leadership skills
- Candidate driven supported by instructor,
- Candidates develop learning goals to bring their knowledge to others
- Analyze pertinent legislation and policies and measure impact at school and system level
- Lead change related to curriculum and policy implementation
- Lead innovation in teaching and learning in the learning context (for example, investigate Standards of Practice, parent/guardian and community engagement strategies, learner identity)
- Develop leadership strategies to further research, theories and frameworks related to subject matter
- Apply leadership strategies and subject content research to lead instructional practice.



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