

Types of Courses

The Organization Of Secondary School Courses

The types of courses offered and their organization provide a range of learning opportunities in grades 9 to 12. This keeps options open for all students in earlier grades and prepares students in senior grades for future destinations.

Grades 9 and 10

In grades 9 and 10, four types of courses are offered: academic, applied, locally developed compulsory and open courses. These courses set high expectations for all students with courses differing in the balance between essential concepts and additional material, and in the balance between theory and application.

Academic courses:

- focus on the essential concepts of the discipline and explore related concepts.
- develop students' knowledge and skills by emphasizing theoretical, abstract applications of the essential concepts and incorporating practical applications.

Applied courses:

- focus on the essential concepts of the discipline.
- develop students' knowledge and skills by emphasizing practical, concrete applications of the concepts and incorporating theoretical applications.
- focus on practical applications and concrete examples.

Locally Developed Compulsory Credit Courses:

- focus on essential skills.
- use relevant and practical activities that provide opportunities for students to develop their literacy, numeracy, problem-solving, decision-making and communication skills.
- prepare students for future studies in grade 11 and 12 workplace preparation courses.

Open courses:

- are offered in all subjects other than those offered as academic, applied or locally developed compulsory.
- comprise a set of expectations that is suitable for all students at a grade level.
- prepare students for further study in certain subjects.
- enrich students' education generally.

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Grades 11 and 12

In grades 11 and 12, courses offered to prepare students for post-secondary destinations include:

University preparation courses:

- were developed in close collaboration with universities.
- are designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to meet entrance requirements for university programs.
- emphasize theoretical aspects of the course content, but also include concrete applications.

University/college preparation courses:

- were developed in close collaboration with both universities and colleges.
- include content that is relevant for both university and college programs.
- are designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to meet the entrance requirements for specific university and college programs.
- emphasize both theoretical aspects and related concrete applications of the course content.

College preparation courses:

- were developed in close collaboration with colleges.
- are designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to meet entrance requirements for college programs and some apprenticeship programs.
- emphasize concrete applications of the theoretical material covered in the course and also emphasize the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Workplace preparation courses:

- were developed in close collaboration with representatives from a variety of workplaces.
- are designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed for direct entry into the workplace or for admission to apprenticeship programs and other training programs offered in the community.
- allow students to prepare for a variety of jobs, training programs and careers.
- include Co-operative Education and work experience placements within the community.
- emphasize the development of generic employment skills, as well as independent research and learning skills.
- promote and stress the importance of lifelong learning.

Open courses in grades 11 and 12:

- are appropriate for all students, regardless of their post-secondary destination.
- are designed to provide students with a broad educational base.
- prepare students for active and rewarding participation in society.

Locally Developed Courses – Compulsory and Optional

Locally developed courses are courses that meet educational needs not met by provincial curriculum documents. Each school board may offer seven locally developed compulsory courses, only six of which may count as compulsory credits. In the Peel board these are grade 9 and 10 English, grade 9 and 10 Mathematics, grade 9 and 10 Science and grade 10 History. These courses are available in some schools.

Boards may offer an unlimited number of locally developed optional courses in order to meet the needs of students. At this point, the locally developed optional courses that have been approved are grade 10, 11 and 12 Heating, Ventilation, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning, available at Bramalea Secondary School. Check the course description section for availability and detailed descriptions.

New locally developed optional courses in grade 11 History are Genocide: Historical and Contemporary Implications, and History of Africa and Introduction to Peoples of African Descent. Check the course description section for detailed descriptions. These courses are available in some schools.

The Course Coding System

The course code consists of a course title and a six-character code. The first five characters are designated by the Ministry of Education. The sixth character is determined by the Peel board. Normally, the sixth character is “0.” It acts as a placeholder. Sometimes the sixth character is a specific symbol, used for scheduling purposes. The sixth character does not appear on the Ontario Student Transcript.

Course Descriptions

Information regarding course expectations and achievement chart categories for each subject area is available through the Ministry of Education website at www.edu.gov.on.ca. Courses of study are available in the main office of each school.

Sustaining Quality Curriculum

A review and revision of curriculum policy documents began in 2003 as part of the ministry’s Sustaining Quality Curriculum initiative, designed to ensure that the Ontario curriculum remains current and relevant over time.

The revision process has ensured that there is a clear distinction between applied and academic courses in Grades 9 and 10 and among the various destination courses in Grades 11 and 12. Consequently, secondary school students may now earn credit for the successful completion of more than one course in the same subject and at the same grade level. There is no restriction on the number of credits a student may earn in any given subject.

Code Characters	Explanation	Example – PPL 1OF
First, second, third	Subject discipline of the course in letters	“PPL” – represents Healthy Active Living Education
Fourth	Grade level as a number*	“1” – Grade 9
Fifth	Type of course as a letter: “C” College “D” Academic “E” Workplace “L” Locally Developed “M” University/College “O” Open “P” Applied “U” University	“O” – Open course
Sixth	Board designated character that assists with organization of classes	“F” – a class for females only

*In the case of ESL/ELD and Classical/International Language courses, the fourth character (A, B, C, D, E) refers to a level of proficiency.