TESL CANADA CERTIFICATION MANUAL

*****Please refer to the website *www.Tesl.ca* for updates during the COVID-19 crisis.*****

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INTRODUCTION

TESL Canada National Certification Standards for Teachers of English as a Second Language or Foreign Language (TESL) in adult programs were developed for instructors trained in Canada. TESL Canada National Professional Certification Standards represent a teacher-driven initiative to create basic, minimum national standards. Some provinces currently have professional certification systems in place. A TESL Canada professional certificate does not replace provincial professional certificates where they exist. Professionals can choose to hold both TESL Canada and provincial organization certificates.

I Purpose

The purpose of TESL is to promote excellence in the teaching and learning of English as a Second Language (ESL) across Canada by promoting professional certification standards that are recognized in all provinces.

Developed through participation and feedback across the ESL field, these standards address the professional context of Canadian ESL educators. TESL Canada recognizes that Canadian ESL delivery varies widely in structure and specifics and looks forward to the continuing development of these standards through feedback and the appeal process.

TESL Canada national standards provide a national focus on standards for all ESL educators and encourage high levels of participation in an accreditation system that recognizes and values the diversity of approach to ESL instruction in its many settings. Since their implementation in May 2002, the TESL Canada National Professional Certification Standards are continuing to be the authoritative base for evaluation and comparison of ESL teacher training in Canada.

II Benefits

The TESL Canada National Professional Certification Standards benefit educators by helping ensure that:

- TESL training and ESL teaching experience are recognized as main professional benchmarks of Canadian ESL educators
- Teaching credentials are recognized not only from province to province but by virtue of their national status from country to country.
- Credentials are recognized by international students when they compare faculty at post-secondary schools and language institutes across Canada before their arrival in Canada. As a result, programs which hire qualified professionals will attract more students.
- Qualifications are valued appropriately by government and non-government funders when educators request financial support for awards, scholarships, and projects.

III Pre-2006 Certification Exceptions

TESL Canada certificants who have received TESL Canada Professional Certification prior to 2006 will have been awarded Levels One, Two, Three or Four. They are not required to re-apply for accreditation under the revised standards; they may opt, if they prefer, to retain their certification status under the pre-2006 guidelines. To review the pre 2006 certification levels please see **Appendix A.**

CERTIFICATION OVERVIEW

I Overview of Standards

Table 1: Standard with eligibility requirements

Name of Standard	Details of Eligibility
Professional Standard One *The Professional Certificate: Standard One is intended to recognize ESL/EFL educators who have completed an undergraduate degree and a Standard One TESL Canada recognized TESL training program.*	The Professional Certificate: Standard One may be granted upon presentation of certified evidence of: 1) Completion of a three- or four-year bachelor's degree at an accredited post-secondary institution, **and** 2) Completion of a Standard One TESL Canada Recognized TESL Training Program which includes: a) A minimum of 100 hours of theory and methodology, **and** b) A supervised practicum of a minimum of **20 hours** (**10 hours of observation and 10 hours of teaching** under the supervision of an instructor certified at a minimum of TESL Canada Professional Certificate: Standard One, Two, or Three with at least 2,000 hours of adult ESL/EFL classroom experience or equivalent.) Note: Item (2) may be part of an undergraduate or graduate degree.
Professional Standard Two *The Professional Certificate: Standard Two is intended to recognize ESL/EFL educators who have completed an undergraduate degree and a Standard Two TESL Canada recognized TESL training program.*	The Professional Certificate: Standard Two may be granted upon presentation of certified evidence of: **1)** Completion of a three- or four-year bachelor's degree at an accredited post-secondary institution, **and** **2)** Completion of a Standard Two TESL Canada Recognized TESL Training Program which includes: a) A minimum of 250 hours of theory and methodology, **and** b) A supervised practicum of a minimum **of 50 hours (30 hours of observation and 20 hours of teaching** under the supervision of an instructor certified at a minimum of TESL Canada Professional Certificate: Standard One, Two, or Three with at least 2,000 hours of adult ESL/EFL classroom experience or equivalent). Note: Item (2) may be part of an undergraduate or graduate degree.
Professional Standard Three *The Professional Certificate: Standard Three is intended to*	The Professional Certificate: Standard Three may be granted upon presentation of certified evidence of: 1) Completion of a Master's/Doctoral degree in TESL or equivalent from a Canadian institution which is a member in good standing of Universities Canada,

recognize ESL/EFL educators who have completed a Master's/Doctoral degree in TESL or equivalent with a demonstrated background in adult education from a Canadian institution which is a member in good standing of Universities Canada, and a minimum of 50 hours in a supervised adult ESL/EFL classroom practicum.	2) Demonstrated background in adult education, and Completion of a minimum **of 50 hours in a supervised adult ESL/EFL classroom practicum (30 hours of classroom observation and 20 hours of teaching** under the supervision of an instructor certified at a minimum of TESL Canada Professional Certificate: Standard One, Two, or Three with at least 2,000 hours of adult ESL/EFL classroom experience or equivalent.) **OR** 1) The requirements of Professional Standard One or Two, 2) Completion of a Master's degree or PhD in a related field at an accredited post-secondary institution.

Please note that students who graduate from an interim recognized program will be able to apply for TESL Canada certification once the program has received full accreditation. Graduates of recognized programs with interim status may also apply for certification through Prior Learning and Assessment Recognition (PLAR) before the program obtains full accreditation.

Practicum

The requirements for the practicum portion of the program can be met when conducted entirely in English by:

a. 100% face-to-face (ESL/EFL), or
b. 100% online synchronous (ESL/EFL), or
c. through a mix of either face-to-face or online synchronous (ESL/EFL).

Online synchronous environment requirements

Teaching in an **online synchronous** environment must include some of the following teaching modalities:

-Teacher-centred lectures/explanations
-Student-centred activities such as pair and group discussions and tasks delivered through a breakout room function
-Screen sharing of various media
-Using audiovisual technology (e.g., for listening and watching comprehension activities)
-Using the digital whiteboard and annotation tools
-Providing feedback in real time
-Classroom management (e.g., giving floor, managing class interaction, elicitation)
-Using external polling and assessment tools (e.g., Kahoot!)

* Online synchronous teaching environment are web-conferencing platforms (such as Zoom, Adobe Connect, Google Meet, Blackboard Collaborate, YouSeeU, Big Blue Button, Teams) or 3D Virtual Worlds (such as Second Life or VirBELA), where instruction requires participation of learners in real time.

TESL Canada Instructor Certification Manual
Table 2: Required Documents

Documents Required			
	Standard One	Standard Two	Standard Three
Proof of TESL Canada Membership	✓	✓	✓
Transcript of Bachelor Degree (Canadian University)	✓	✓	✓
TESL Program (Official Transcripts or certified copies of certificates required)	✓	✓	✓
Transcript of Master in TESL/Applied Linguistics (Canadian University)			✓
Canadian Equivalency Report	Applicants who have completed a Bachelor degree outside Canada must provide Canadian equivalency from a credential evaluation service. Please see the FAQs for more details.		
Proof of Practicum Completion	Applicants who have completed a Bachelor or Master degree in TESL or Applied Linguistics will have to provide a letter of practicum completion from their practicum supervisor or program coordinator.		
English Language Proficiency Score (ELP)	Applicants who have completed an undergraduate degree from a university where the language of instruction and administration was not English will have to submit an ELP Score. Please see the ELP section and FAQs on the website		

List of TESL Canada Recognized Programs: https://www.tesl.ca/training/tesl-canada-recognized-teacher-training-programs/recognized-teacher-training-directory/

CELTA

Graduates of The University of Cambridge Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA) from an institution not recognized by TESL Canada are eligible to apply for certification through the regular application process. An additional administrative fee of $100.00, plus applicable tax, will be charged in these cases in order for a TESL Canada adjudicator to review information regarding the program that would have otherwise been submitted if the program had been through the TESL Canada Teacher Training Program Recognition process. Provided the CELTA Program is assessed at TESL Canada Standards, the applicant will be granted TESL Canada Certification without being referred to PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment Recognition).

Master's/Doctoral Degree

All master's/doctoral graduates in TESL or equivalent with a demonstrated background in adult education, with appropriate practicum, from a Canadian institution which is a member in good standing of Universities Canada, are eligible for TESL Canada Standard Three upon application. These programs are listed on our list of recognized programs. Please complete the application form for Professional Certification Standard Three.

List of Standard Three Programs: http://www.tesl.ca/training/tesl-canada-recognized-teacher-training-programs/standard-three-programs/

Cases with no Practicum

1. Candidates who did an approved program but chose not to do a practicum because of extensive employment as a TESL instructor:

a. Need to go through PLAR;
b. Provide documentation of paid employment as a TESL instructor. The requirement for Standard One is 1000 hours while the requirement for Standards Two and Three is 2000 hours
c. Provide two performance reviews, each written by a separate TESL Canada qualified person and one of which must be an observation

2. Candidates who did a relevant Masters in Canada that has no practicum

a. Need to go through PLAR and
b. Provide documentation of 2000 hours employment as a TESL instructor
c. Provide two performance reviews, each written by a separate TESL Canada qualified person and one of which must be an observation OR
d. Set up a practicum through one of TESL Canada's approved programs and provide one report (observation or performance) by a TESL qualified person

3. Candidates who did TESL training overseas which did not include a practicum

a. Fill requirements as per situation #1 or #2

Training Completed Prior to Program's Recognition

Applicants who completed their training prior to their programs' TESL Canada recognition will be referred back to the program to determine equivalency. The TESL training program adjudicator must confirm that the program the applicant completed is equivalent to the program now recognized. If it is not equivalent, the gaps will be identified by TESL Canada and completed by the applicant before certification can be granted.

II Official Documents

Undergraduate or Graduate Degree Transcripts:
Official transcripts must be received in a sealed envelope either with the application or by the degree-granting institution. Transcripts that are received unsealed will not be accepted. Official transcripts may also be sent electronically by the institution to admin@tesl.ca.

Note: Standard 1 and Standard 2 applicants with degree(s) from outside of Canada must provide **Canadian equivalency** from a credential evaluation service. The report must be mailed in a sealed envelope by the agency. Please see FAQ for more details on Standard 3 applications.

TESL Training:

Official transcripts or certified copies of the certificate are required. Official transcripts must be received either with the application in an officially sealed and signed envelope from the institution or from the institution itself.

III English Language Proficiency Scores (ELP)

TESL Canada only accepts valid official scores. Any ELP test result provided must be current (scores completed more than two calendar years prior will not be accepted). Notarized copies of the TESL certificate and ELP result are accepted.

From November 24, 2025 onwards, applicants will be deemed to have met the English language proficiency requirement if they have completed an in-person Master's or Doctorate in a relevant field from a university where the language of instruction for that specific degree is in English and completed in one of the countries listed below.

English Language Proficiency Tests*	**Score – Program Trainees**
TOEFL iBT / TOEFL iBT Home Edition	**For exams taken before January 21, 2026:** Overall 101 with a minimum of 23 in Listening, 24 in Reading, 27 in Speaking and 27 in Writing **For exams taken on or after January 21, 2026:** Overall 5.25 with a minimum of 5 in Listening, 5 in Reading, 5.5 in Speaking and 5.5 in Writing
Or IELTS Academic / IELTS Academic Online	Overall 7 with a minimum of 7 in each skill area
Or completion of an undergraduate degree from an English-speaking university in one of the following countries: Canada, Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bermuda, Botswana, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Cameroon, Dominica, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Nigeria, New Zealand, Republic of Ireland, Saint Kitts-Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, South Africa, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, United Kingdom, United States, Uganda, US Virgin Islands, Zambia, Zimbabwe.	

* Note that candidates can submit two or more IELTS or TOEFL reports done in the past two years, and the highest of the scores for individual skills will be considered.

IV PLAR – Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition

Applicants whose training was completed at an institution not on our list of recognized teacher training programs can apply to TESL Canada for certification. They will not be eligible to apply under the TESL Canada regular application process because their training is not from a recognized program, but will be recommended to PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment Recognition). A TESL Canada PLAR adjudicator will review an applicant's experience and training to determine equivalency. If the adjudicator finds a component(s) lacking from an applicant's portfolio he/she will recommend the course(s) of action needed to meet TESL Canada standards. Once applicants have been approved through PLAR, they will be granted certification if a) their application is deemed equivalent to TESL Canada standards, or b) the missing requirements are provided in the prescribed length of time. The cost of the PLAR assessment is $290.00 plus applicable taxes.

V TESL Ontario and TESL Saskatchewan Certificants Streamlined Application Process - Standards One and Two

TESL Ontario and TESL Saskatchewan certificants are eligible to apply for TESL Canada Certification through a streamlined process. Holders of a TESL Ontario or TESL Saskatchewan Instructor Certificate applying for Professional Standards One or Two may select the streamlined application process when applying for certification. This type of application is subject to a reduced application fee of $45 + HST that will cover the direct costs of the streamlined administrative process. Membership

to TESL Canada is required.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

I Membership

Applicants must be members of a TESL Canada through an associated Provincial or Territorial Organization, a direct membership, or an international membership.

Members of an associated TESL Canada organization are automatically members of TESL Canada and need to submit proof of provincial or territorial organization.

Applicants from provinces or territories who are not associated members of TESL Canada need to become a member of TESL Canada through direct membership. Please sign up on the website under membership. Proof of membership is required.

International applicants apply for TESL Canada International membership. TESL Canada membership fee is $112.00 for residents outside of Canada and the United States and $108.00 for international applicants residing in the United States.

II Review of Applications

Applications are reviewed by a TESL Canada Professional Standards Adjudicator.

III Review Periods

Applications are reviewed weekly. It is anticipated that complete applications will be processed within four to six weeks of receipt. Incomplete applications or those with missing documents will be delayed due to follow up with the applicant.

IV Application Fee

The non-refundable application fee for TESL Canada certification is $90.00 plus applicable provincial sales tax.

Payment of $94.50 ($90.00 plus $4.50 GST) if you live in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Quebec, NWT, Nunavut, and Yukon
or
Payment of $101.70 in Ontario
or
Payment of $102.60 in Nova Scotia
or
Payment of $103.50 in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland, and Labrador
or

Payment of $90.00 U.S. if applying from outside Canada

Payment can be made by cheque or credit card (VISA or MasterCard with number and expiry date). Please make cheques payable to TESL Canada Federation.

Note: This fee is non-refundable and will be processed upon receipt of application.

Non TESL Canada recognized CELTA applicants please include an additional payment of $100.00 plus applicable tax (outlined on the application form). Payment must be included with the application.

V Confidentiality

All documentation will be kept confidential. It is recommended that applicants retain a personal copy of the completed application and all documentation.

VI Awarding of Certificates

Successful applicants will receive a certificate at the appropriate standard.

VII Appeals

Applicants who do not meet the requirements will receive an e-mail of explanation. An applicant who is denied a certificate, or who is denied a certificate at the standard requested, may appeal to the TESL Canada Professional Standards Appeal Committee by submitting a letter along with documentation to TESL Canada. Appeals must be submitted within 6 months of notification of being denied.
The fee for appeals is $50.00 plus applicable taxes for the applicant's province or US $50.00 if applying from outside Canada.

The undergraduate degree requirement may not be challenged by appeal.

VIII PLAR – Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition

Applicants whose education and training was not completed at an institution on TESL Canada's list of recognized teacher training programs apply to TESL Canada for certification through the PLAR application process. The TESL Canada PLAR adjudicator will review applicants' prior education, training and experience to determine equivalency. TESL Canada will follow the PLAR Adjudicator's recommendation. The PLAR process will be outlined in a letter of explanation (Form A) which applicants may receive after applying to TESL Canada. For any questions, please contact the office by e-mail at admin@tesl.ca.

IX Upgrading to a Higher Standard

Applicants may upgrade to a higher standard by submitting required documentation. The non-refundable fee for upgrading is $90.00 plus appropriate tax:

Payment of $94.50 ($90.00 plus $4.50 GST) if you live in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Quebec, NWT, Nunavut, and Yukon

TESL Canada Instructor Certification Manual
or
Payment of $101.70 in Ontario
or
Payment of $102.60 in Nova Scotia
or
Payment of $103.50 in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland, and Labrador
or
Payment of $90.00 U.S. if applying from outside Canada
Payment can be made by cheque or credit card (VISA or MasterCard with number and expiry date). Please make cheques payable to TESL Canada Federation.

Note: This fee is non-refundable and will be processed upon receipt of application.

Non TESL Canada recognized CELTA applicants please include an additional payment of $100.00 plus applicable tax (outlined on the application form). Payment must be included with the application.

PLAR

I WHAT IS PLAR?

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is a process used by TESL Canada to assess and evaluate the skills and knowledge of an ESL teacher applying for TESL Canada accreditation who has not completed

training through a TESL Canada accredited program. Applicants going through the PLAR process submit a professional portfolio demonstrating equivalent competencies to those who have graduated from a TESL Canada accredited program.

II WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR PLAR?

TESL Canada certification will be awarded to applicants who demonstrate an equivalent competency to those who graduate from a TESL Canada accredited program. The following guidelines help determine whether to apply for TESL Canada certification through PLAR:

- **Formal Training:**
    i. Have you completed a minimum equivalent of 100 hours of Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) courses with a focus on theory and methodology?
        - Verifiable documentation (sealed transcripts) is required.
    ii. Do you have performance evaluations of your adult ESL teaching that document successful implementation of ESL theory and methodology?

- **Informal Training:**
    i. If you don't have the minimum equivalent of 100 hours of formal training, have you completed an equivalent of at least 25 hours of on-the-job teacher training, workshops, or non-credit courses with a focus on ESL theory and methodology?

- Verifiable documentation (workshop certificates, workplace letter outlining on-the-job training received, transcripts showing participation in non-credit courses, etc.) is required.

ii. Do you have performance evaluations of your adult ESL teaching that document successful implementation of ESL theory and methodology?

- **Informal Learning:** Life experiences are an asset for an ESL teacher to possess, but informal learning alone will not qualify for TESL Canada Certification.

III WHAT IS A PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO AND WHAT ARE ITS CONTENTS?

A professional portfolio is a well-organized and documented record of one's learning, experience, and growth in a particular field of work. Both digital and hardcopy portfolios must have clearly defined sections that allow the reader to evaluate the qualifications of the applicant.

1. **Introduction:**
   - In 250 words or less, provide a statement outlining your underlying beliefs about teaching strategies and practices. This statement should summarize the documents in the portfolio and how they exemplify your abilities, skills, and knowledge.
2. **Education:**
   - Name of University, Degree(s) completed with year(s) of completion.
     - Sealed transcripts must be sent to TESL Canada by the applicant or the institution(s).

Please note: If a degree is from another country, applicants must provide a Canadian equivalency report from one of the following agencies. Candidates should present a detailed document-by-document report that includes a transcript, or a short report.

- World Education Services (WES) https://www.wes.org/ca/
- International Credential Evaluation Service (ICES) http://www.bcit.ca/ices/
- International Credential Assessment Service (ICAS) http://www.icascanada.ca
- Comparative Education Service https://learn.utoronto.ca/comparative-education-service
- IQAS Alberta https://www.alberta.ca/iqas-employment-education-licensure.aspx

3. **TESL/TEFL training:**
   - Include the following information – institution name and location, dates attended, program completed, and the name and precise address of a contact person, including an email address.

4. **Practicum information:**
   - Please provide the name of your sponsor teacher, his/her TESL qualifications, his/her contact information including an email address, your practicum supervisor and his/her qualifications and contact information.
   - Also specify how many hours were spent observing and how many hours were spent teaching under supervision.
     - Sealed transcripts must be sent to TESL Canada by the applicant or the institution(s).

5. **Names and detailed descriptions of TESL and relevant Linguistics courses:**

    - Ideally include at least 2 pages of information for each 40 academic contact hours.
        - At least 100 academic contact hours of this type of documentation is mandatory for a PLAR adjudication.

6. **Learning Resources:**
    - List of textbooks and other core resources used in your TESL/Applied Linguistics education and training. Include title, author and date of publication.

7. **Assessment of Learning:**
    - Description of assessment requirements in your TESL/Applied Linguistics education and training.

8. **Teaching experience:**
    - List the institutions and locations where you have taught adults and the courses you have taught at the institutions.
        - Sealed documents verifying the number of adult ESL teaching hours must be sent to TESL Canada. Pay stubs or documentation need to indicate teaching to adults over the age of 18, class room hours, and class sizes greater than 5.

9. **Performance Reviews:**
    - Two performance reviews for Professional Standard One, Two, or Three Permanent each written by a separate TESL qualified person.
    - One of these must be a classroom observation report.
        - The reviews must be originals sealed in an envelope with the referee's signature across the seal or received directly from the writer electronically to admin@tesl.ca.
        - The names of the referees along with their contact information and institution must be included.

10. **Other Documentation:**
    - Other documentation that fills any gaps between the contents of your formal academic education in TESL and TESL Canada's standard descriptors.
    - Documents may include in-service certificates stating topics and hours; letters from supervisors attesting to workplace training activities; essays from non-TESL courses that demonstrate required knowledge; or items you have created for classroom use such as sample lesson plans, unit plans, curriculum guides, assessment rubrics, handout materials, computer assisted language learning tools, audiotapes, etc.

11. **Proof of membership in a TESL Canada Provincial/Territorial organization:**
    - This is mandatory.
    - Please send your original membership receipt or email from provincial organization indicating that

you are a member in good standing.

- If residing outside of Canada, a completed International Membership form along with membership fee must be included.

IV WHAT ARE THE STEPS IN THE PLAR PROCESS?

Step #	Role	Action
1	Applicant	Initial review of PLAR requirements
2	Applicant to TESL Administration (admin@tesl.ca)	Applicant emails TESL Canada if they have questions
3	Applicant	Applicant submits application, PLAR fee, and portfolio submission
4	TESL Canada Administration	Preliminary PLAR portfolio review and communication
5	Adjudicator	Portfolio adjudication
6	Adjudicator	Adjudicator approves or requests further documentation
7	Administration	Once approved, issuance of certificate

1. **Initial review of PLAR requirements**

An applicant familiarizes him/herself with the PLAR guidelines published on the TESL Canada website and decides if he/she is eligible for PLAR and whether he/she requires counselling.

2. **Applicant emails TESL Canada if they have questions**

If desired, an applicant may contact TESL Canada Administration at admin@tesl.ca for clarification or guidance. The applicant is provided with additional explanation about what the PLAR adjudicator will need to carry out an efficient assessment of an applicant's credentials and experience. At this stage, a TESL Canada administrator may be able to determine that a candidate is not eligible for PLAR (in consultation with the adjudicator).

3. **Applicant submits application, PLAR fee, and portfolio**

Based on the counselling on the review of PLAR requirements, the applicant fills out the application form available on the TESL Canada website, pays the fees, and submits the portfolio with all necessary documentation as part of the application. Portfolio must be submitted in an orderly fashion with each section clearly identified. If not organized, it may be returned to applicant to do so.

4. **Preliminary PLAR portfolio review and communication**

Upon receipt of the portfolio at the TESL Canada office, an administrator will review the portfolio for completeness. If there are obvious omissions, an administrator will contact the applicant. Otherwise, the portfolio will be sent for adjudication.

5. **Portfolio review**

The adjudicator reviews the portfolio.

6. **Adjudicator approves or requests further documentation**

The adjudicator will either approve the application or request further documentation.

7. **Once approved, issuance of certificate**

Following a successful PLAR adjudication, the TESL Canada administrator issues the appropriate certificate to the applicant.

TESL Canada PLAR process vs. TESL certification

It should be noted that TESL Canada professional accreditation merely recognizes that a candidate has the minimum required education, training and/or teaching experience at the applicable standard to be employable as an adult ESL instructor in Canada. TESL Canada professional accreditation does not replace or supersede teacher training/education degrees or certificates issued by educational institutions. Applicants are encouraged to review various training programs recognized by TESL Canada and to seek advice on whether further education may be required to enhance their employability in specific teaching contexts in Canada and/or internationally.

V ASSESSMENT OF PORTFOLIOS AGAINST TESL CANADA STANDARDS ONE, TWO, AND THREE

(As per standard descriptors on TESL Canada website, www.tesl.ca under the tab certification)

Adjudication Rubric

- The TESL Canada Professional Certification Standards are based on level of education, TESL training, teaching experience and positive performance reviews. The following chart indicates the requirements for each Standard.

- If an applicant has successfully completed a program not recognized by TESL Canada, the adjudicator uses this chart to determine which standard to award based on the PLAR applicant's documented TESL education and training hours.

Name of Standard	Requirements
Professional Standard One	• University degree + 100 hours (methodology and theory) and • A minimum of 20 hours of supervised adult ESL/EFL classroom practicum, consisting of 10 hours of classroom observation and 10 hours of practice teaching. The practice teaching needs to be individual teaching by the applicant, not team teaching, and supervised by a qualified teacher of adult ESL learners in a regular classroom setting of a minimum of five ESL learners.
Professional Standard Two	• University degree + 250 hours (methodology and theory) and • A minimum of 50 hours of supervised adult ESL/EFL classroom practicum, consisting of 30 hours of classroom observation and 20 hours of practice teaching. Classroom observations must be completed in two different settings. Practice teaching needs to be individual teaching by the applicant, not team teaching, and supervised by a qualified teacher of adult ESL learners in a regular classroom setting of a minimum of five ESL learners.
Professional Standard Three	• Master's in Applied Linguistics or TESOL and • A minimum of 50 hours of supervised adult ESL/EFL classroom practicum

VI ASSESSMENT OF PORTFOLIO INTRODUCTION

The introduction should be in 12-point ARIAL font, 250 words or less, and should include a statement outlining candidate's underlying beliefs about teaching strategies and practices. This statement should summarize the documents in the portfolio and reflect how they exemplify candidate's abilities, skills, and knowledge.

Quality of language (demonstrated through features including use of standard academic English, varied sentence structure, clear organization), specific examples, and a succinct summary of applicant's teaching philosophy.

Here is a suggested link to help a candidate with the creation of a portfolio introduction: https://teachingcenter.wustl.edu/programs/graduate-students-postdocs/applying-for-academic-positions/creating-a-teaching-portfolio/

VII ASSESSMENT OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

1. **Attestation of hours of professional English language classroom teaching**

Include a list of present and prior TESL/TEFL workplaces and their locations; letters signed by program supervisors specifying the number of hours you were teaching an ESL/EFL classroom; levels and nature of classes taught; and current contact information. Applicants are required to document their hours of professional English language classroom teaching using the following guidelines:

- Documented teaching experience must take place in English language classes of 5 or more students consisting of at least 80% adult English language learners of 18 years or older. The applicant must be teaching in a paid not

volunteer capacity.

- Contact information must include the current name of the educational institution(s), the current postal and email address of the institution as well as the name of the program coordinator who supervised/coordinated the documented teaching hours.
    - The forms or letters documenting the applicant's teaching hours and signed by the supervising program coordinator or administrator must provide the dates, the number of teaching hours, the English language level, and nature of the class that was taught by the applicant.

2. Performance reviews

The performance review and the practicum reports must come from two different professionals. All performance reviews must be less than five years old and must be submitted by the program coordinator who supervised the applicant's ESL/EFL workplace and include the following:

- an assessment of the applicant's TEFL/TESL skills with reference to the dates
- the number of teaching hours
- class English language level
- The nature of the class taught by the applicant as well as current contact information for the program coordinator and program.

If unable to provide performance reviews, indicate the reason.

3. Practicum reports

The following information must be provided as part of a practicum report:

- The sponsor teacher's and practicum supervisor's TESL/TEFL qualifications, including information regarding university degrees, years of ESL/EFL teaching, professional accreditation standard and current contact information.
- The number of hours spent observing and the number of hours spent teaching under supervision of a qualified teacher of adult ESL.
- The dates, the number of teaching hours, the English language level, and the nature of the classes observed or taught during the practicum
- The practicum reports must be based on the sample observation report found in the appendix.

VIII OTHER POTENTIAL PORTFOLIO INCLUSIONS

In addition to the required documents, a portfolio may also include:

- In-service certificates stating topics and hours;
- Letters of recommendation from employers;
- Letters from supervisors attesting to workplace training activities;
- Essays from non-TESL courses that demonstrate required knowledge;
- Items the applicant created for classroom use such as sample lesson plans, unit plans, curriculum guides,

assessment rubrics, handout materials, computer assisted language learning tools, audio files, etc.

IX PLAR SKILLS RUBRIC

TESL Canada Requirements	Minimum Hours	Candidate's Prior Training	Candidate's Practical Skills	Candidate's Hours
1. Theory		**Program/Course/ Module**	**Demonstration Method**	
Historical perspective on second language teaching				
Models of second language acquisition				
Pedagogy:				
Learning strategies and styles				
Factors affecting language learning				
Adult teaching and learning principles (andragogy)				
Linguistics:				
Syntax				
Phonology				
Morphology				
Sociolinguistics				
Discourse analysis				
Pedagogical grammar				
a. Methodological Issues				

Lesson/Unit Planning				
Material Analysis and Development				
Curriculum for Specific Contexts				
Methodology/Techniques for:				
Listening				
Speaking				
Reading				
Writing				
Grammar				
Vocabulary				
Pronunciation (including segmentals and suprasegmentals)				
Intercultural awareness and communication				
Assessment/Feedback				
Error correction				

Standardized exams				
Classroom tests				
Other				
b. Professional Issues				
Resources				
Professional Conduct and Practice				
Classroom Management				

Ongoing Professional Development				
TOTAL HOURS – Methodology/Theory				
2. Practicum (Adult classroom setting)				
Classroom observation	10 (Std 1)			
Supervised practice teaching	10 (Std 1)			
TOTAL HOURS – Practicum	20			
TESL Canada Required Total				
Methodology/Theory - Standard I	100 hours			
- Standard II	250 hours			
Practicum Teaching and Observation Std 1: 20 hours Std 2& 3: 50 hours (20 hours prior to Sep 1, 2017)				
TOTAL TRAINING				

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **My TESL/EFL training is not from a TESL Canada Recognized Program. Do I have to start over?** Applicants whose training was not completed at an institution on the TESL Canada list of recognized teacher training programs apply for TESL Canada certification through PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment Recognition). A PLAR adjudicator in TESL Canada reviews the applicants' experience and training to determine equivalency. If the adjudicator finds a component(s) lacking from an applicant's portfolio, he/she will recommend the course(s) that will be needed to meet TESL Canada standards. Once applications have been assessed through PLAR, they will be granted certification if a) they deem the application equivalent to TESL Canada standards, or b) applicants satisfy the missing components within the prescribed length of time. The cost of the PLAR assessment is $290.00 plus applicable tax.

2. **I have a Bachelor of Education degree and did my teaching practicum with children. Am I eligible for TESL Canada Professional Certification?**
   No. TESL Canada Professional certification is intended for ESL/EFL instructors teaching in adult learning environments. Please note that an adult classroom is defined as a classroom with five or more students where 80% of the students are aged 18 or older. Provincial Teachers' Colleges and provincial regulatory bodies govern the certification of K-12 teachers.

3. **I have been teaching EFL overseas and would now like to be certified to teach in Canada. How should I apply?**
   If you completed a non-TESL Canada recognized program, please see FAQ #1. Essentially the same standards for professional certification apply. Otherwise, if you graduated from a TESL Canada recognized program, please complete a regular application form. Applicants applying from overseas will need to become an international member of TESL Canada.

4. **I completed a degree in another country. Will TESL Canada accept my foreign education credentials?**
   Applicants with university degrees completed outside Canada must provide a Canadian equivalency assessment of their university degree(s) as part of their application. Assessments must be completed and submitted by a credential assessment service recognized in Canada. Examples of recognized assessment services are ICES http://www.bcit.ca/ices, CES https://learn.utoronto.ca/comparative-education-service, WES www.wes.org/ca, and ICAS http://www.icascanada.ca.
   Important: applicants do not need to provide TESL Canada with a copy of their degrees (translated or not). The documented Canadian university equivalency is the required document. TESL Canada uses the standard, document-by-document assessment, and not the comprehensive assessment. If an applicant's degree(s) is/are in TESL/Applied Linguistics then a course-by-course assessment is required and the application process is through PLAR.

5. **How can I document my classroom teaching experience?**

   Applicants need to provide documentation of adult ESL/EFL classroom teaching experience if applying through

PLAR or to request waiving the practicum. Documentation may consist of teaching contracts, employment records, letters from supervisors or pay stubs. Documentation must indicate the actual classroom hours taught to adults.

6. **How long does the application process take?**

   Applications are typically processed within four to six weeks of receipt. Applications, which are missing required documentation, take longer. This is because contact has to be made with the applicant, the missing documentation or information requested, and subsequent submissions added to the file. TESL Canada will keep applications on file, open for a period of six months for missing information or documentation, at which point certification may be denied and the file closed. Materials such as transcripts that arrive without an application will be kept on file for a maximum of six months.

7. **What does "proof of membership in a TESL Canada Provincial/Territorial organization" mean?**

   TESL Canada membership is required for certification, which is a service offered to its members. TESL Canada membership is a) through membership with a provincial/territorial TESL organization that has an association agreement with TESL Canada, b) a direct membership or c) an international membership. Proof of membership must be included with the application form.

8. **Can I count my ESL teaching hours in a K-12 classroom if my students were over the age of 16?**

   No. The curriculum in the K-12 system is designed for youth, their needs and developmental stages. Adult curriculum addresses different needs and concerns.

9. **I took a CELTA Certificate from a non-recognized institution; can I still be certified by TESL Canada?**

   Yes. Applicants who have completed a CELTA Certificate Program at an institution not recognized by TESL Canada may apply for certification through the regular application process. An additional administrative fee of $100.00 plus applicable tax is charged in these cases in order for TESL Canada administration to review the program. Provided the CELTA Program is assessed at TESL Canada Standards, the applicant will be granted TESL Canada Certification without being referred to PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition). Information required to assess a CELTA certificate include course topics and outlines, course resources such as textbooks and handouts, assessments, and information on your practicum. The adjudicator will also need the names, credentials, and training of your practicum supervisor.

10. **What are the differences between the different Standards?**

    Professional Standard One is for those who have taken a program with a minimum of 100 hours of methodology and coursework and at least a 20-hour practicum. Professional Standard Two is for those who have taken a program with a minimum of 250 hours of coursework and methodology and at least a 50-hour practicum. Professional Standard Three is for those with a Master's Degree in Applied Linguistics or TESOL. A 50-hour practicum is also required for Professional Standard Three.

11. **I have a Master's degree in TESL from a Canadian university. Can I get TESL Canada certification?**

    All masters/doctoral graduates in TESL or equivalent with a demonstrated background in adult ESL education, with appropriate practicum, from a Canadian institution which is a member in good standing of Universities Canada (formerly AUCC) are eligible for TESL Canada Standard Three upon application. These programs are on the TESL Canada list of recognized programs. Proof of a 50-hour practicum is required.

12. **I am TESL Ontario or TESL Saskatchewan Standard One or Two certified. Can I use this certification towards TESL Canada certification?**
    TESL Ontario and TESL Saskatchewan Standard One or Two certificants are eligible to apply for TESL Canada certification through a streamlined process. Individuals with TESL Ontario Certificate of Accreditation or TESL Saskatchewan Competency in TESL (Standards One or Two) Accreditation applying for Professional Standard One or Two should complete the appropriate streamlined form on TESL Canada's website. This application category is subject to a reduced application fee of $45.00 + applicable tax that covers the direct costs of the streamlined administrative process. TESL Ontario and TESL Saskatchewan certificants who have relevant Master's degrees for Standard Three certification will follow the usual path for Standard Three certification and pay the full $90.00 fee. However, their TESL Ontario or TESL Saskatchewan certificate will be taken as the necessary proof that all essential academic and practicum requirements have been met, thus making the process less complex than the regular stream.

13. **Is membership the same as certification?**
    No, these are not the same. Membership is signing up and paying a fee to belong to the association while certification is an additional process which recognizes professional adult ESL teaching qualifications and leads to a certificate.
    Membership in a provincial TESL organization or with TESL Canada provides benefits such as professional learning opportunities, member discounts on conferences and/or professional training activities, newsletters, peer support, and eligibility for grants and bursaries. Certification recognizes professional adult ESL teaching qualifications. It involves a longer application and requires providing supporting documents.

14. **I have lost my TESL Canada certificate. Can I be issued a new one?**
    Yes, to request a lost or misplaced certificate please complete the Certificate Re-issue Form located under certification forms on the website, www.tesl.ca. Fee: $20.00 Plus applicable tax.

15. **Can I decide not to do the practicum portion of my TESL training?**
    This is not recommended as it will compromise your training and will complicate the process of becoming certified by TESL Canada. Please read the section "Cases with no Practicum" located in the Instructor's Manual under Certification Overview.

16. **I do not have a university degree. Am I eligible to apply for TESL Canada certification?**
    No. Completion of a three- or four- year bachelor's degree from an accredited post-secondary institution is a requirement for TESL Canada certification.

17. **My undergraduate degree was not completed in a country where English is the first language. Am I eligible to apply for TESL Canada certification?**
    English language proficiency scores are required if an applicant's undergraduate degree was not completed in an English-speaking university in one of the following countries: Canada, Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bermuda, Botswana, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Cameroon, Dominica, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Nigeria, New Zealand, Republic of Ireland, Saint Kitts-Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, United Kingdom, United States, Uganda, US Virgin Islands, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

TESL Canada will accept only IELTS Academic and TOEFL iBT. TESL Canada only accepts valid official scores. Any ELP test result provided must be current (scores completed more than two calendar years prior will not be accepted). Click here to read the minimum score requirements.

Applicants will be deemed to have met the ELP requirement if they have completed an in-person Master's or Doctorate in a relevant field from a university where the language of instruction for that specific degree is in English as found in the list above.

18. **If a TESL Canada Recognized Teacher Training Program has interim status, can I still apply for professional certification?**
Students who graduate from an interim recognized program will be able to apply for TESL Canada certification once the program has received full accreditation. Graduates of recognized programs with interim status may also apply for certification through Prior Learning and Assessment Recognition (PLAR) before the program obtains full accreditation.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Pre-2006 Certification Exceptions
Appendix B: TESL Canada Federation Certification Sample Classroom Observation Report
Appendix C: Link to TESL Canada Federation Certification Forms

Appendix A: Pre-2006 Certification Exceptions

LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Professional Certificate: Level One

The Professional Certificate: Level One is intended to recognize ESL/EFL educators who have completed an undergraduate degree and a TESL Canada recognized TESL training program or equivalent. For a complete description of the criteria for TESL Canada Recognized Teacher Training Programs, please check our website at www.tesl.ca

Eligibility

The Professional Certificate: Level One may be granted upon presentation of certified evidence of:

a) completion of an undergraduate degree at an accredited postsecondary institution or completion of the program at a Provincial Normal School and
b) completion of a TESL Canada Recognized TESL Training Program which includes:
    I. at least 100 hours of theory and methodology and
    II. a supervised practicum of at least 20 hours (10 hours of observation and 10 hours of teaching under the supervision of an instructor certified at a minimum of TESL Canada Professional Certificate: Level Two (Level Three or higher preferred) or equivalent.

Note: Item (b) may be part of an undergraduate or graduate degree.

Professional Certificate: Level Two

The Professional Certificate: Level Two is intended to recognize ESL/EFL educators who have completed an undergraduate degree and a TESL Canada Recognized TESL Training Program, and have 2 years' experience in the field, as defined below.

Eligibility

The Professional Certificate: Level Two may be granted on the presentation of certified evidence of:

a) The qualifications for the Professional Certificate: Level One, and
b) Completion of 1600 hours as an ESL/EFL instructor in an adult program over a minimum period of 2 years, and
c) Two (2) positive performance reviews each written by a separate supervisor or administrator certified at TESL Canada Professional Certification at Level Three or higher preferred (or equivalent)

Professional Certificate: Level Three

The Professional Certificate: Level Three is intended to recognize ESL/EFL educators who have completed an undergraduate degree and a TESL Canada recognized TESL training program, and have 5 years' experience in the field, as defined below.

Eligibility

The Professional Certificate: Level Three may be granted on the presentation of certified evidence of a), b) and c) below:

a) The qualifications for the Professional Certificate: Level One, and
b) Completion of 4,000 hours as an ESL/EFL instructor in an adult program over a minimum period of 5 years or completion of at least 1,600 hours as an ESL/EFL instructor in an adult program over a minimum period of 2 years, and the balance in administration hours as defined above. The minimum number of years in the field to achieve this level will be five and,
c) Two (2) positive performance reviews by a supervisor or administrator: TESL Canada Professional Certification: Level Three or higher preferred (or equivalent). One review must have been completed within the past 2 years.

Professional Certificate: Level Four

The Professional Certificate: Level Four is intended to recognize ESL/EFL educators who are qualified at the graduate degree level and have 8 years of experience in the field, as defined below.

Eligibility

Level Four certification may be granted on the presentation of certified evidence of a), b), c) and d) below:

a) the qualifications for the Professional Certificate: Level One, and

b) completion of a graduate degree in the field of ESL/EFL or related field,

and

c) completion of 6,400 hours as an ESL/EFL instructor in an adult program over a minimum period of 8 years

or

completion of at least 1,600 hours as an ESL/EFL instructor in an adult program over a minimum period of 2 years, and the balance in administration hours as defined above. The minimum number of years in the field to achieve this level will be eight

and

d) two (2) positive performance reviews written by separate TESL qualified supervisors. One review must have been completed within the past 2 years.

Appendix B: TESL Canada Federation Certification Sample Classroom Observation Report

https://www.tesl.ca/images/Certification/sample_classroom_observation_form.pdf

Appendix C: Link to TESL Canada Federation Certification Forms

https://www.tesl.ca/certification/tesl-canada-professional-certification/application-forms.html