

Core Quality Standards for Adult Literacy Programs in Ontario Reading 2

Adult literacy programs in Ontario funded by the provincial Literacy and Basic Skills Section follow these standards.

1. Program Mission:

A quality literacy program has a clearly written statement of mission and objectives which it follows and shares with the people involved in the program and with other stakeholders in the community.

2. Community Focus:

A quality literacy program is rooted in the community it serves. Learners participate in decisions that affect them and their communities. The program reflects its own philosophy and objectives, and strengthens individuals, their communities, and their cultural identity.

3. Program Commitment to Learners:

A quality literacy program values, plans for and provides opportunities for learners to increase literacy and numeracy skills, life skills, critical thinking and problem-solving.

4. Learner Commitment to Program:

A quality literacy program asks for a realistic commitment of time and effort from learners to meet their identified goals.

5. Respect for Learners:

A quality literacy program maintains a good rapport and promotes mutual respect among learners, practitioners, and others in the organization. Programs provide a supportive learning environment, respect for learners' privacy, and constructive feedback on achievements.

6. Learner-Centred Approaches and Methods:

A quality literacy program uses approaches and methods that respect learners as individuals and that are learner-centred. It supports learners to participate individually and collectively in order to take control of their learning.

7. Access and Equity:

A quality literacy program respects differences. It has structures and supports in place to increase access and equitable outcomes and to help learners from all backgrounds reach their goals.

8. Learning Assessment:

A quality literacy program evaluates learners' progress on an ongoing basis. The process involves the learners and contributes to their development.

9. Instruction Time:

A quality literacy program offers instruction often enough and long enough to allow learners to make reasonable progress toward their literacy goals. The frequency and duration of a program may vary according to learner needs and objectives as well as to the resources available to programs.

10. Ratio of Learners to Instructors:

A quality literacy program has a ratio of learners to instructors which is appropriate to learners' needs and levels as well as to the mode of instruction.

11. Learning Materials:

A quality literacy program uses a wide variety of learning materials which are consistent with the program's philosophy, suitable for adults, and relevant to learners' needs. The materials are in accord with the Ontario Human Rights' Code.

12. Practitioner Training:

A quality literacy program has practitioners trained in adult education with a focus on basic education. They have initial and ongoing training.

13. Outreach:

A quality literacy program uses positive and effective strategies to attract learners and other participants.

14. Support Services:

A quality literacy program helps learners get the support services they need, either in the program or in the community. For example, these services are transportation, childcare, counselling, assessment, and information and referral for economic, cultural and social needs.

15. Organizational Links:

A quality literacy program has community and organizational links: to meet program goals; to help learners move successfully from one educational program to another, to greater community involvement, to further training, or to employment; to integrate and strengthen literacy delivery at the local level; and to ensure that literacy education is integrated within the broader educational and training system.

16. Program Accountability:

A quality literacy program does what it says it will do. It is accountable to its learners, sponsoring organizations, partners, community, and funders. All stakeholders, not only program staff, are accountable for the success of the program.

17. Administrative Accountability:

A quality literacy program develops and maintains sound financial and administrative systems in order to provide accurate and timely program statistical and financial information.

18. Program Evaluation:

A quality literacy program evaluates its effectiveness annually. Evaluation of the program is a participatory and continuous process.

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