



**OKLEARN.CA**

**A Quick Reference Guide  
to Adult Learning Pathways**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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MTML's project team wishes to thank the following people and organizations for their valuable contributions and guidance. Their willingness to engage in rich collaborative efforts and work across the programs and across government ministries is wholeheartedly appreciated and applauded.

## **Project Advisory Committee:**

- Chris Beesley, Metro Toronto Movement for Literacy
- Hanna Cabaj, Toronto Catholic District School Board
- Joseph Colonna, Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
- Pauline McNaughton, Ministry of Education
- Dunja Metikos, YMCA of Greater Toronto, Language Assessment and Referral Centre
- Cheryl Richman, Toronto District School Board
- Elise Sheridan, Seneca College
- Evadne Wilkinson, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

## **Project Work Group:**

The project's cross-program work group included individuals from school boards, colleges, and community based agencies. These dedicated members of the group hailed from Adult Credit, Literacy and Basic Skills and ESL non-credit programs. The work group members were:

- Varla Abrams, Toronto District School Board
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- Elizabeth Charters, Seneca College
- Tania Connell, York Catholic District School Board
- Jinjiang Du, Toronto District School Board
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- Anne Marie Williams, PTP Adult Learning & Employment Programs
- Matan Zelter, Toronto Catholic District School Board

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## **The Project Team –**

**Olga Herrmann, Project Manager/Researcher**  
**Judith Amesbury, Researcher**



## FIND YOUR WAY

- ↳ Watch the Video
- ↳ Start the Conversation
- ↳ Explore Pathways and Transitions
- ↳ Offer Relevant Next Steps

## WATCH THE VIDEO

When you first visit **OKLearn.ca**, view the video on the homepage. The video offers common scenarios with which we can all identify, whether we are looking to find a program for our learners/clients, ourselves, or peers. Navigating adult education options is confusing, and the video offers an alternative perspective on how we can find our way through the maze. This alternative is **OKLearn.ca**, and the video is the guide.

Watch the video, and find your way...

# START THE CONVERSATION!

## Get to know your learners/clients...

Learners are complex, which leads to challenges when seeking, locating, and referring to relevant adult education programs.

The concept of Learner Silhouettes can provide clarity during the process of referring learners to programming that is a good fit, ultimately assisting learners/clients to begin to **visualize their learning journey through a rich and an informed conversation.**

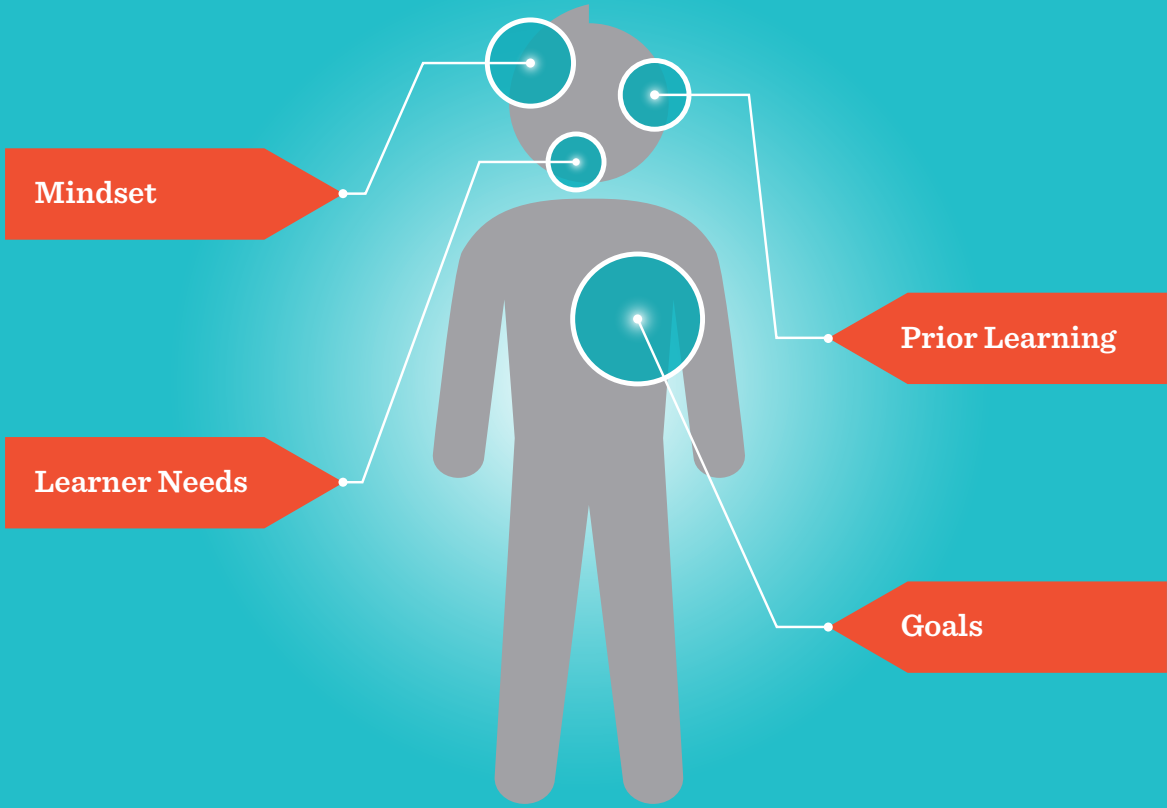
Staff in referring agencies and practitioners cannot possibly know the life situation and/or story of a learner prior to an initial conversation. To help adults find their way along their learning journey, have that conversation!



## LEARNER SILHOUETTES

Learner Silhouettes are basic understandings from which assessors and teachers across adult education programs, and service providers from other referring agencies can become aware of and appreciate their learners'/clients' situations while determining adult education options relevant to learners' needs. Learner Silhouettes are not categories of learners; they involve learner context, academic needs (with respect to programming needed based on goal), and results of dialogue with the learner.

Visit **OKLearn.ca** for more detailed information on Learner Silhouettes.



**Mindset**

**Learner Needs**

**Prior Learning**

**Goals**



## CORE QUESTIONS

The Core Questions can serve as initial prompts to help you understand your client's / learner's prior learning, academic needs and goals, helping you both discover which learning options may be most relevant along the learning journey.

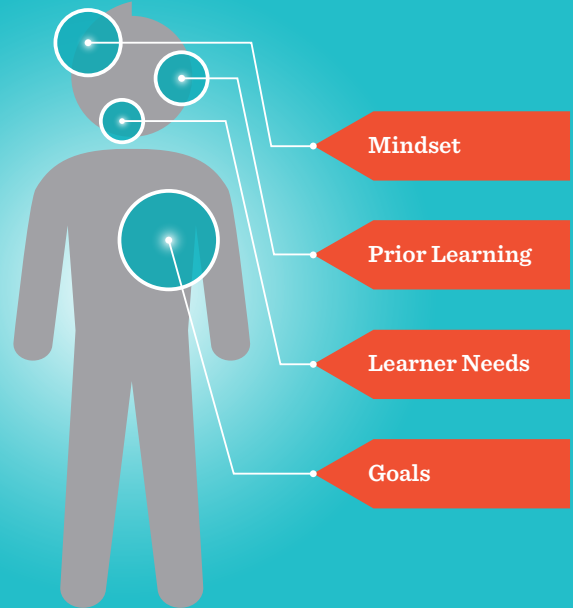
Visit **OKLearn.ca** to access the full set of Core Questions.

## LEARNER PROFILES

- ➔ The Newcomer Adult Learner
- ➔ The Settled Immigrant Adult Learner
- ➔ The Generation 1.5 Adult Learner
- ➔ The Adult Learner Requiring Upgrading (no ESL needs)

## MINDSETS

- ➔ A History of Interrupted Education
- ➔ A 'Second Chance' Mindset
- ➔ A 'Testing the Waters' Mindset
- ➔ A Displaced Worker Mindset
- ➔ A Focused, Goal-oriented Mindset



For full descriptions of Learner Profiles and Mindsets, visit [OKLearn.ca](http://OKLearn.ca)



# “I want to learn English.”

## **Start With A Language Assessment:**

- Language levels need to be assessed at a language assessment centre or by the program itself.
- Visit a Language Assessment Centre/ CLARS Centre.
- For adult credit, visit school board adult learning centres/locations offering adult credit programming.
- For EAP programs, contact the college or university program.

For more details, visit [www.OKLearn.ca](http://www.OKLearn.ca)

NOTE: This chart offers some of the common pathways toward the goal, but it is not exhaustive. Other pathways may be possible.

## ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

### ESL (Non-credit)

LINC  
Language Instruction for  
Newcomers to Canada

*NOTE: ESL and LINC programs offer ESL instruction from ESL Literacy to Advanced levels*

#### Goals

- Improve English language skills (speaking, listening, reading, writing)
- Enhance one's daily life
- Citizenship preparation
- Prepare for standardized tests (TOEFL, IELTS) and postsecondary education
- Improve chances of getting a job

## ESL FOR HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT

### ESL Adult Credit

#### Goals

- Improve English language skills (speaking, listening, reading, writing)
- Earn credits toward an Ontario Secondary School Diploma
- Postsecondary
- Get a job

## WORK-FOCUSED LANGUAGE TRAINING

### Specialized Language Training (SLT)

### Ontario Bridge Training

### Enhanced Language Training (ELT)

### Occupation-Specific Language Training (OSLT)

#### Goals

- Improve English language skills while focusing on content with a workplace focus with an opportunity to be mentored
- Improve chances of entering the local labour market one's field/profession

## ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PREP

### English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

*NOTE: Offered through colleges, universities and private language programs.*

#### Goals

- Improve English language skills for the purpose of taking college or university courses.

*IMPORTANT NOTE: Eligibility criteria and entry language levels required often vary between programs. Check the details of each program by visiting OKLearn.ca.*



# “I want an Ontario high school diploma (or equivalent).”

## Possible Learner Pathways:

- Literacy & Basic Skills
- Credit programming (including ESL credit, distance, and co-op options)
- General Education Development Test (GED)
- Academic and Career Entrance (ACE)
- Credential Assessment (for out-of-province and out-of-country diplomas)

For more details, visit [www.OKLearn.ca](http://www.OKLearn.ca)

NOTE: This chart offers some of the common pathways toward the goal, but it is not exhaustive. Other pathways may be possible.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE

**LINC or ESL Programs**  
If English language skills need to be developed (i.e. speaking; listening, reading and writing), these free English Language Training programs provide the foundation.

See the English pathway on OKLearn.ca for more information.

## UPGRADING

**LBS Program (Literacy and Basic Skills)**  
To enter an LBS program English speaking/listening skills should be strong. (CLB Level 6 is recommended).

## CREDENTIAL NEEDS

**GED (General Education Development Test)**  
GED is not an Ontario high school diploma. Successful completion of the GED Test may prepare learners for formal secondary MPLAR assessments.

**ACE (Academic & Career Entrance)**

**Ontario Secondary School Diploma Programming**

**MPLAR**

**Credential Assessment (CA)**

## GOAL

**HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR EQUIVALENT**

*Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition for Mature Students (MPLAR) is a formal assessment and evaluation process that may allow achievement of grade 9-12 equivalent secondary school credits.*



“I have a diploma or degree from outside Canada. I want to go to college.”

**Possible Learner Pathways:**

- Ensuring Credentials & English Language Proficiency meet entry requirements
- English for Academic Purposes
- ACE Certificate

For more details, visit [www.OKLearn.ca](http://www.OKLearn.ca)

NOTE: This chart offers some of the common pathways toward the goal, but it is not exhaustive. Other pathways may be possible.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE

### LINC or ESL Programs

If English language skills need to be developed (speaking, listening, reading and writing), these English Language Training programs provide the foundation.

TOEFL/IELTS test preparation courses are also available in school board ESL programs.

*Note: CLB Level 7/8 is required to cope with college demands.*

See the English pathway on [OKLearn.ca](http://OKLearn.ca) for more information.

### English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

For-fee (\$\$) advanced English delivered through the universities. These courses prepare learners for the advanced level of English required (i.e. Level 8). Some may also award credits.

### English Language Proficiency:

Strong English skills are required to cope with college. The following standardized tests and minimum required test scores (varies between colleges and programs) will help applicants from other countries.

- TOEFL
- IELTS
- CAEL

A college may conduct its own language testing, as well.

## CREDENTIAL / ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Minimum Entry Requirements Are In Place

**Credential Assessment (CA)**  
Credential earned outside of Canada may be assessed by 3 assessment services in Ontario (WES and ICAS).  
For more information visit [www.canalliance.org](http://www.canalliance.org)

Minimum Entry Requirements Not In Place

**ACE Certificate (Academic and Career Entrance)**

Minimum Entry Requirements Are In Place

*NOTE: Educational qualifications from another country will be considered by universities. Required credentials PLUS the required level of language proficiency must be in place*

## GOAL

# COLLEGE



“I don’t have my high school, and I want to go to **College.**”

**Possible Learner Pathways:**

- High School Equivalency – ACE
- High School Diploma (OSSD)
- High School Equivalency – GED
- Mature Student Admission / Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

For more details, visit [www.OKLearn.ca](http://www.OKLearn.ca)

NOTE: This chart offers some of the common pathways toward the goal, but it is not exhaustive. Other pathways may be possible.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE

### LINC or ESL Programs

If English language skills need to be developed (speaking, listening, reading and writing) these English Language Training programs provide the foundation.

TOEFL/IELTS test preparation courses are also available in school board ESL programs.

*Note: CLB Level 7/8 is required to cope with college demands.*

See the English pathway on [OKLearn.ca](http://OKLearn.ca) for more information.

## UPGRADING

### LBS Program (Literacy and Basic Skills)

To enter an LBS program English speaking/listening skills should be strong.

## CREDENTIAL/ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

### ACE Certificate (Academic and Career Entrance)

Minimum English proficiency to enter ACE program: completed LINC 5/6 or CLB level 6 courses.

### Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD)

### GED (General Education Development Test)

Some college programs require a higher level of math and science than the GED offers. A GED does not guarantee entry to every college program. Check with the college and programs.

### Mature Student Admission

The Mature Students admission process is for adults 19 years of age or older who do not have their GED or OSSD.

*Note: Mature students are still required to complete course prerequisites and should contact the college regarding the mature student admission process.*

### Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

For people with significant work and/or life experience. Check with the college.

## GOAL

# COLLEGE



“I want to train  
to be an **apprentice.**”

### **Possible Learner Pathways:**

- Find an employer willing to train you in a skilled trade, and register with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities as an apprentice (with a high school diploma/equivalent or higher).
- Pre-apprenticeship Program
- Co-op Diploma Apprenticeship Program
- Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program

For more details, visit [www.OKLearn.ca](http://www.OKLearn.ca)

NOTE: This chart offers some of the common pathways toward the goal, but it is not exhaustive. Other pathways may be possible.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE

### LINC or ESL Programs

If English language skills need to be developed (i.e. speaking, listening, reading and writing), these free English Language Training programs provide the foundation.

See the English pathway on [OKLearn.ca](http://OKLearn.ca) for more information.



**LBS Program**  
(Literacy and Basic Skills)

## HIGH SCHOOL/EQUIVALENCY

**GED** (General Education Development Test)

**OSSD**  
Most trades require Gr. 12 (some Gr.10)

**ACE** (Academic and Career Entrance)

**PLAR and/or**  
Credential Assessment

## APPRENTICESHIP-FOCUSED PROGRAMS

**Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)**  
Grade 11/12 Co-Op –start a trade while completing OSSD (age 16+).

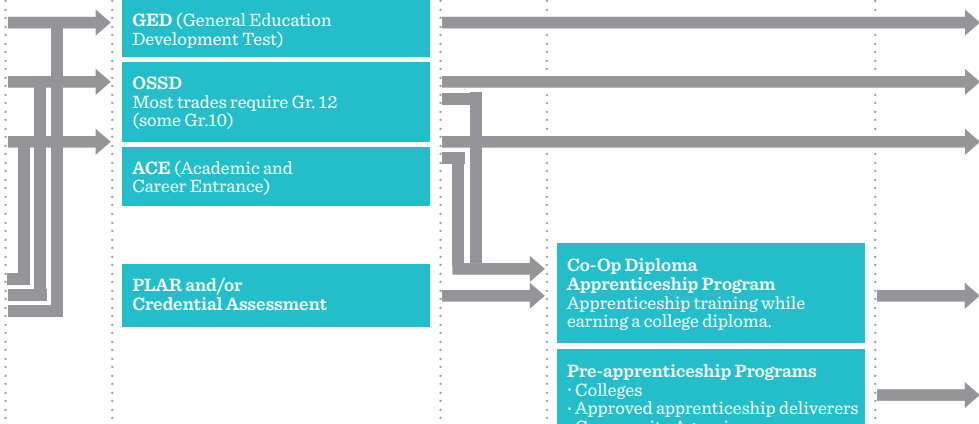
**Co-Op Diploma Apprenticeship Program**  
Apprenticeship training while earning a college diploma.

**Pre-apprenticeship Programs**  
· Colleges  
· Approved apprenticeship deliverers  
· Community Agencies

## GOAL

# APPRENTICESHIP

After the apprenticeship period, successful completion of the Certification of Qualification Exam makes one a journey person.





“I don’t have my high school, and I want to go to **university.**”

**Possible Learner Pathways:**

- Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) or equivalency
- Transition Year Program (for individuals facing a number of barriers)
- Academic Bridging Program

For more details, visit [www.OKLearn.ca](http://www.OKLearn.ca)

NOTE: This chart offers some of the common pathways toward the goal, but it is not exhaustive. Other pathways may be possible.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE

**LINC or ESL Programs**  
If English language skills need to be developed (speaking; listening, reading and writing) these English Language Training programs provide the foundation.

TOEFL/IELTS test preparation courses are also available in school board ESL programs.

See the English pathway on OKLearn.ca for more information.

*Note: CLB Level 7/8 is required to cope with college demands.*

### English Language Proficiency

Check with each university and faculty for the required indicators of English proficiency. Most accept the following standardized tests and set their minimum required scores (TOEFL, IELTS, MELAB). Other indicators of English proficiency may be accepted by the university. Check with the admissions office.

## UPGRADING

**LBS Program (Literacy and Basic Skills)**  
To enter an LBS program English speaking/listening skills should be strong.

## CREDENTIAL/ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

**Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD)**  
Required high school courses that meet entry requirements.

**GED**  
Universities may require a higher level of math and science than the GED offers. A GED does not guarantee minimum entry requirements for all programs.

**ACE Certificate**

## PRE-UNIVERSITY/ ACCESS PROGRAMS

**Transition Year Programs**  
Intensive programs for individuals facing financial or other barriers who are highly motivated.

**Academic Bridging Programs**  
Programs that make it possible for adults who have been away from formal education for a while and who do not have the admission requirements to gain skills and confidence.

## GOAL

UNIVERSITY



“I have a diploma or degree from outside Canada. I want to go to **university.**”

**Possible Learner Pathways:**

- Ensuring Credentials & English Language Proficiency meet entry requirements
- English for Academic Purposes + Credentials
- Transfer Credit + Language Requirements
- Upgrading to meet admission requirements + Language Requirements

For more details, visit [www.OKLearn.ca](http://www.OKLearn.ca)

NOTE: This chart offers some of the common pathways toward the goal, but it is not exhaustive. Other pathways may be possible.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE

### Minimum English Language Requirements Must Be Met

**English Language Proficiency:** Check with each university and faculty for the required indicators of English proficiency. Most accept the following standardized tests and set their minimum required scores (TOEFL, IELTS, MELAB). Other indicators of English proficiency may be accepted by the university. Check with the admissions office.

*NOTE: LINC and ESL programs are not acceptable, but are stepping stones to demonstrated proficiency.*

See the English pathway on OKLearn.ca for more information.

### English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

For-fee (\$\$) advanced English delivered through the universities. These courses prepare learners for the advanced level of English required (i.e. Level 8). Some may also award credits.

## CREDENTIAL / ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

**Transfer Credit(s)**  
From Previous Postsecondary  
Determined course by course by the university.

**Credential Assessment (CA)**  
Credential earned outside of Canada may be assessed by 3 assessment services in Ontario (WES; ICAS; and CES). For more information visit [www.canalliance.org](http://www.canalliance.org)

Admission Requirements Met

Minimum Requirements Not Met  
**Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) /**  
Required high school courses

Minimum Requirements Not Met  
**GED**  
Universities may require a higher level of math and science than the GED offers. A GED does not guarantee minimum entry requirements for all programs.

Admission Requirements Met

*NOTE: Educational qualifications from another country will be considered by universities. Required credentials PLUS the required level of language proficiency must be in place.*

## GOAL

UNIVERSITY



“I need to assess my experience, credentials and skills in order to get a **job.**”

**Things to consider:**

- What experience, credentials, and skills do I bring with me that will help in getting a job?
- What do I still need to achieve?
- What are my next steps...

For more details, visit [www.OKLearn.ca](http://www.OKLearn.ca)

NOTE: This chart offers some of the common pathways toward the goal, but it is not exhaustive. Other pathways may be possible.

**ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE**

Is my English language developed?  
Do I have strong speaking, listening, reading and writing skills?

**UPGRADING**

Do I need further support with reading, writing, and numeracy?

**ASSESSMENT**

Do I have credentials that need to be formally assessed?

**CREDENTIAL  
NEED**

Which credentials (and programming) may help me achieve my employment goal?




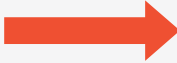


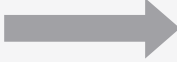
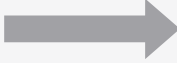
**GOAL**

**EMPLOYMENT**



# TRANSITIONS – CREDENTIALS & LEVELS ATTAINED

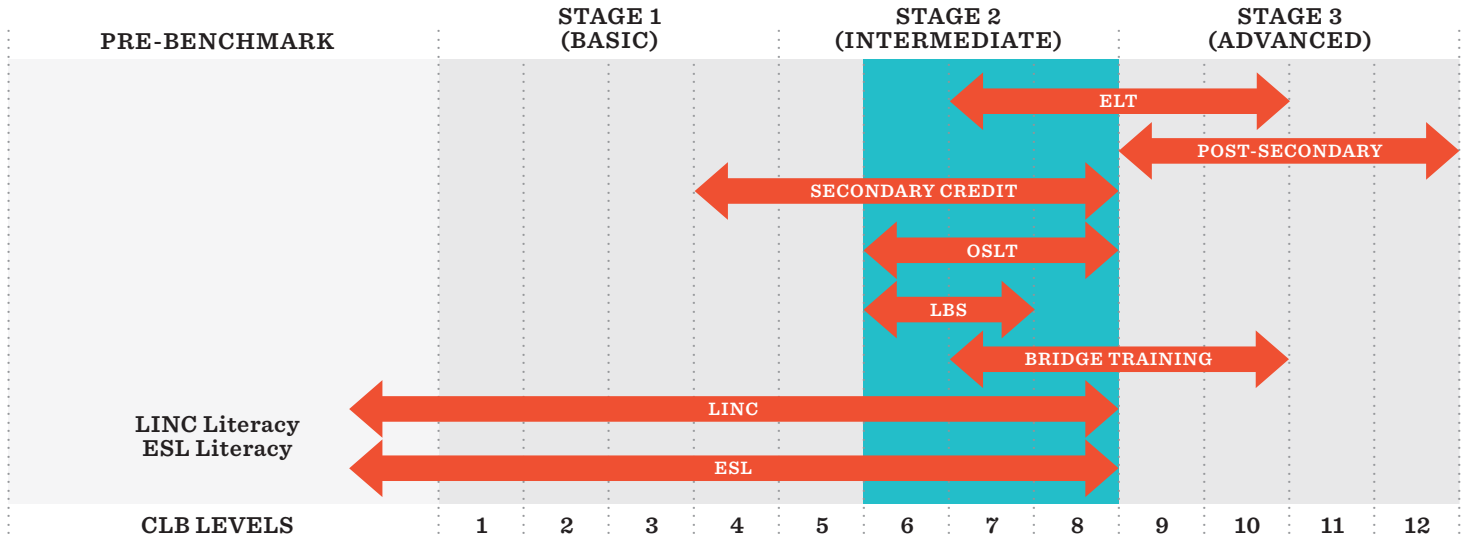
Where completion of credentials/levels could lead...

OSSD		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College</li> <li>• University</li> <li>• Apprenticeship</li> <li>• Employment</li> </ul>
ACE		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College</li> <li>• Apprenticeship</li> <li>• University Transition Year Program</li> <li>• Employment</li> </ul>
GED		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College &amp; University</li> <li>Note: For post-secondary programs, specific math and science upgrading /additional adult credits are often required</li> <li>• Apprenticeship</li> <li>• Employment</li> </ul>
Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) Level 6 and higher		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occupation Specific Language Training (CLB 6-8)</li> <li>• Enhanced Language Training (CLB 7-10)</li> <li>• Specialized Language Training (program sets min. level)</li> <li>• Employment (Occupational Language Analyses) - <a href="http://www.itsessential.ca">www.itsessential.ca</a></li> <li>• Ontario Bridge Training</li> </ul>
Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) Level 3/4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School Adult Credit Classes (for programs offering the lower ESL for credit courses)</li> </ul>
Essential Skills Level 3 and higher		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment (Consult NOC Codes- HRSDC)</li> <li>• Further education and training</li> <li>• Independence - to be able to meet the literacy demands in today's world</li> </ul>
Prior Learning - considering life/work experience		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School</li> <li>• College</li> <li>• University</li> </ul>
Foreign Credentials		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition</li> <li>• Ontario Bridge Training</li> <li>• Employment</li> <li>• Post-secondary</li> </ul>

Note: These are some common transition trajectories. There may be other transitions not shown here.

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY & ACCESS TO PROGRAMS

## Key Transition Points



**Enhanced Language Training (ELT)** – Minimum language level of CLB 7-10

**Occupation Specific Language Training (OSLT)** – Must have CLB 6-8

**ESL** – Offering ESL Literacy to CLB 8 classes (a non-credit program)

**LINC** – Offering LINC Literacy to LINC 7 classes

**Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS)** – Speaking/Listening at a minimum of CLB 6 (reading/writing lower)

**Ontario Bridge Training** – providing the learner with an assessment of education and skills, workplace experience, targeted -language and skills training, and preparation for a license or certification exam – Usually a CLB Level 7 or higher is required.

**Secondary School Credit** – Offers courses outlined in the Ontario Secondary School Curriculum documents, including ESL credit Levels A – E. Transition into ESL A & B requires a minimum CLB 3-4. Transition into ESL Level C requires a CLB 6. These courses lead to an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). Must complete ESL Level C prior to transitioning into mainstream English credits of which Grades 9-12 are required for graduation.

**Post-secondary** – Must have minimum CLB 8

### Chart Key

- The blue shading on the chart denotes a key transition zone for access to many programs.
- The double-point arrow indicates the range of minimum Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) levels one needs to enter that program

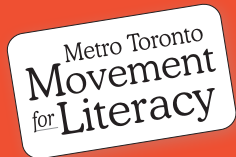
## RELEVANT NEXT STEPS...

Come to an informed decision with your client / learner to determine next steps.

Visit **OKLearn.ca** to print a helpful worksheet take-away for the learner / client.



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