



SECONDARY SCHOOL QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

At the OCDSB there are many pathways to a student's future. We encourage students to achieve their full potential. Students and families can use this Quick Reference Guide to know about diploma requirements, course selection, program pathways and more. Staff is on hand to help students choose. We are here to help support students in personalizing their learning experiences.

ONTARIO SECONDARY SCHOOL DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be successfully completed in order to obtain an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD):

- 30 credits including 18 compulsory credits and 12 optional credits*
- 40 hours of community involvement
- Successful completion of the EQAO Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) or the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OLC)

Compulsory credits

Students must earn the following 18 compulsory credits to obtain the Ontario Secondary School Diploma:

- 4 credits in English (1 credit per grade)*
- 3 credits in Mathematics (1 credit in Grade 11 or 12)
- 2 credits in Science
- 1 credit in Canadian History
- 1 credit in Canadian Geography
- 1 credit in the Arts
- 1 credit in Health and Physical Education
- 1 credit in French as a Second Language
- 0.5 credit in Career Studies
- 0.5 credit in Civics

Plus one credit from each of the following groups:

- **Group 1:** 1 additional credit in English, or French as a Second Language,** or a Native language, or a Classical or an International language, or Social Sciences and the Humanities, or Canadian and World Studies, or Guidance and Career Education, or Cooperative Education***
- **Group 2:** 1 additional credit in Health and Physical Education, or the Arts, or Business Studies, or French as a Second Language,** or Cooperative Education***
- **Group 3:** 1 additional credit in Science (Grade 11 or 12), or Technological Education, or French as a Second Language,** or Computer Studies, or Cooperative Education***

* A maximum of 3 credits in English as a second language (ESL) or English Literacy Development (ELD) may be counted towards the 4 compulsory credits in English, but the fourth must be a credit earned for a Grade 12 compulsory English course.

** In groups 1, 2 and 3, a maximum of 2 credits in French as a Second Language can count as compulsory credits, one from group 1 and one from either group 2 or group 3.

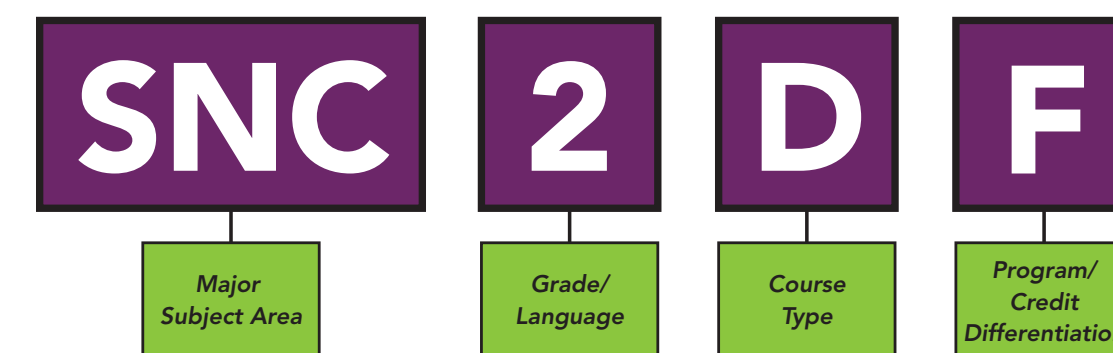
*** A maximum of 2 credits in Cooperative Education can count as compulsory credits.

The 12 optional credits may include up to 4 credits earned through approved dual credit courses.

(For more information visit the [OCDSB's High School Diploma Requirements webpage](#))

COURSE CODE EXPLANATION

OCDSB uses a six-digit alphanumeric code for courses. Here's a sample course code and its explanation:



Major Subject Area = **SNC**

The first three digits indicate the Ministry approved course title. **In this case SNC = Science**

These are the Major Subject Areas:

- **A** = The Arts
- **B** = Business Studies
- **C** = Canadian and World Studies
- **E** = English, English Literacy Development, English As a Second Language
- **F** = French
- **G** = Guidance and Career Education
- **H** = Social Sciences and the Humanities
- **K** = Alternative (Non-credit)
- **L** = Classical, International and Native Languages
- **M** = Mathematics
- **N** = Native Studies
- **P** = Health and Physical Education
- **I** = Computer Studies or Interdisciplinary Studies
- **S** = Science
- **T** = Technological Education

Grade/Language = **2**

The fourth digit indicates the grade or language level. **In this case, 2 = Grade 10**

These are the codes for Grades and Languages:

Grades

- 1 = Grade 9
- 2 = Grade 10
- 3 = Grade 11
- 4 = Grade 12

Languages

- A = Level 1
- B = Level 2
- C = Level 3
- D = Level 4
- E = Level 5

Course Type = **D**

The fifth digit indicates the course type. **In this case, D = Academic**

Here are the different course types:

- **C** = College
- **D** = Academic
- **E** = Workplace
- **L** = Locally Developed Compulsory
- **M** = College or University
- **O** = Open
- **P** = Applied
- **U** = University
- **N** = Non-Credit

Science, Grade 10, Academic (French Immersion)

This course enables students to enhance their understanding of concepts in biology, chemistry, earth and space science, and physics and of the interrelationships between science, technology, society, and the environment. Students are also given opportunities to further develop their scientific investigation skills.

Prerequisite: Science, Grade 9, Academic or Applied

Program or Credit differentiation = **F**

The sixth digit indicates program or credit differentiation. **In this case, F = French Immersion/Extended French course**

Here are the different program or credit differentiations:

- **A** = Single credit Cooperative Education course (Immersion)
- **B** = Double credit Cooperative Education course (Immersion)
- **C** = Single credit Cooperative Education
- **D** = Double credit Cooperative Education
- **E** = Enriched Course
- **F** = French Immersion/Extended French course
- **G** = Gifted course
- **H** = Advanced Placement course (AP) where language of instruction is French
- **I** = Gifted course where language of instruction is French
- **J** = French Immersion, Enriched where language of instruction is in French.
- **K** = Arts Canterbury course
- **L** = Special Education Credit course
- **M** = Regular Non-credit course
- **N** = Special Education Non-credit course
- **O** = Credit Recovery
- **P** = Female Physical Education
- **Q** = Male Physical Education
- **R** = Advanced Placement course (AP)
- **S** = Sheltered course (ESL/ELD)
- **T** = eLearning course
- **U** = Yearbook
- **V** = Special Education Credit Recovery
- **W** = First half of full credit course
- **X** = Second half of full credit course
- **Y** = First half of full credit Special Education course
- **Z** = Second half of full credit Special Education course
- **1-4 and 8-9** = Schools may use for internal scheduling purposes
- **5** = Dual Credit — Team Teaching
- **6** = Online French courses in Summer School and French Credit Recovery
- **7** = Credit Recovery, Independent Learning Course and Mini-Alternative Program
- **0 (zero)** = Focus Program Credit

COURSE SELECTION GUIDE

Course selections should reflect what students need to support their pathway and career plans and their high school diploma or certificate requirements.

The Education and Career/Life Planning Program infographic below offers a four-step process based on four key questions linked to four areas of learning:

- Who am I? (Knowing Yourself)
- What are my opportunities? (Exploring Opportunities)
- Who do I want to become? (Making Decisions and Setting Goals); and
- What is my plan for achieving my goals? (Achieving Goals and Making Transitions).



Who should the student talk to?

Parents, Friends, Teachers, Other adults in their life

What should the student talk about?

Wishes, hopes, and dreams; Hobbies and interests; What environment would the student like to work in (i.e. shop, outdoors, classroom, etc.); Family history and traditions; Student's thinking from their Individual Pathway Plans; Preferred learning style; Academic progress; Strengths; Learning and skills that the student is working on...

SAMPLE COURSE SELECTION

Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
English	English	English	English
Math	Math	Math	
Science	Science		
Geography	Geography		
Phys. Ed & Health Education	Civics/Careers		
French	Electives (G1, G2, G3)		
Arts	Electives (G1, G2, G3)		
Electives (G1, G2, G3)	Electives (G1, G2, G3)		

Fifth year plan (optional)

Many students graduate high school after four years. However, some students may want to return to their high school for a fifth year to reinforce previous learning

For more information, visit the [OCDSB Student Guide for Course Selection webpage](#).

ADDITIONAL LEARNING PATHWAYS

Click on each topic to know more.

Co-op

Students who are at least 16 years old can earn credits while working in the community with community partners.

Continuing Education Programs

The OCDSB Continuing Education Department offers a variety of programs throughout the year that support lifelong learning for students of all ages.

Dual Credit

Students in Grades 11 or 12 have an opportunity to attend college and explore career and post secondary opportunities earning a college and a high school credit.

School within a College (SWAC)

Students who have disengaged or are disengaging from school attend the college 5 days a week, working with a high school teacher and college professors on high school and college credits.

eLearning

Students have the opportunity to learn in an online asynchronous environment supporting the completion of their learning around their unique schedule.

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP)

The IBDP is a rigorous pre-university course of studies and is offered to students over grade 11 and grade 12.

Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)

Students can earn co-op credits and gain apprenticeship training leading to a Certificate of Qualification with journey person in a skilled trade.

International Certificate Program (ICP)

A pathway for students looking to study an international language, increase their global awareness, contribute to local and foreign communities and more.

Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM)

Students can earn a SHSM designation on their OSSD by exploring career paths through specific courses, certifications and connections with industry partners.

Arts Canterbury program

Students receive instruction in their chosen art discipline (dance, drama, literary arts, music or visual arts) on a daily basis in addition to a full academic load.

Students are in the driver's seat for their experience at High School. Each of these opportunities provides students with amazing learning experiences that will guide their learning, shape their growth, and support their chosen pathway goals.

If you need any help, please reach out to your child's school and they will be happy to speak with you and discuss options.

TOOLS TO HELP IN COURSE SELECTIONS

- *Course descriptions*
- *Prerequisites*
- *Course levels and course codes*
- *English Language support*
- *Special Education support*

XELLO

Students will be using an online tool called Xello for course selection. Students complete interactive career, personality, and learning style assessments to help them better understand their unique interests, skills, and strengths. Each engaging assessment encourages reflection, helping students connect who they are with relevant career options. Students can approach their Guidance and Student Success teachers for help with Xello.

Step-by-Step Guide with detailed instructions on making and submitting course selections.

Video Guide for Course Selection