

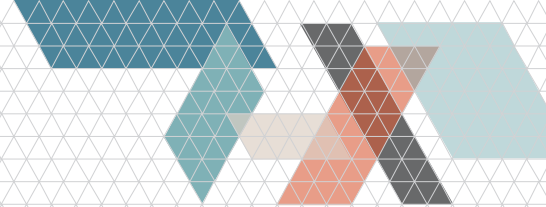


# TRADE EXAMS IN ONTARIO EXAM PREPARATION GUIDE

**JULY 2015**

# EXAM PREPARATION GUIDE

## FOR TRADE EXAMS IN ONTARIO



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# EXAM PREPARATION GUIDE

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Many of the skilled trades in Ontario have a final certification exam that you must pass to become certified in your trade. Passing the exam allows you to become a member in the Journeypersons' Class at the Ontario College of Trades (the College) and receive a Certificate of Qualification (C of Q) in your trade.

There are two types of trade certification exams in Ontario:

- ① **PROVINCIAL (ONTARIO) C OF Q**
- ② **INTERPROVINCIAL C OF Q, ALSO KNOWN AS THE RED SEAL C OF Q**

Trades designated as Red Seal in Ontario require a Red Seal exam. Trades not designated as Red Seal trades in Ontario require an Ontario-only exam. The College is responsible for developing Ontario's certification exams. The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) is responsible for hosting exams on our behalf at their exam centres, across the province.

## 2 GETTING STARTED



It's important to prepare for your trade certification exam. How much you prepare, of course, is up to you. Your preparation options range from reviewing a few subject areas to studying trade textbooks and code books, taking sample tests, or completing exam preparation courses.

No matter what you decide, it helps to know where to find the resources and information that can best help you prepare. In this guide, you will find resources and tips, along with useful printable PDF sheets, to help you succeed on exam day.

## 3 BASIC EXAM DETAILS

### *How much time will I have to write the exam?*

You will have four hours to write your exam. If you require more time, you must ask for additional time when you schedule the exam, not on the day of your exam. You may leave the exam centre if you complete the exam in less than four hours. To learn more about requesting additional time or other possible accommodations, please refer to the [Accommodations](#) document.

### *What mark do I need to pass the exam?*

You need a mark of 70% to pass.

### *How many questions and what kind of questions are on the exam?*

Exam questions are multiple choice with four options to choose from. Your exam may have between 90 and 150 multiple choice questions.



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## 4 SCHEDULING YOUR EXAM

The exam scheduling process is currently outlined in detail on the College's website: [www.collegeoftrades.ca/membership/resources/exam-process](http://www.collegeoftrades.ca/membership/resources/exam-process). Additionally, you can find more information in the [Provincial Resources](#) document.

Remember these 3 basic steps:



Confirm your eligibility to write the examination by contacting the College.



Contact Client Services at the College to pay your exam fee (\$150.00 plus HST) at 647 847-3000 or Toll-Free at 1 855 299-0028. Payment can be made by phone (credit card only) or in person (debit, credit card or cheque).



Contact your local MTCU apprenticeship office to schedule your exam at <http://services.findhelp.ca/eo/tcu/appoff>. You will require proof of payment to the College when scheduling your exam with the MTCU office.

Accommodations (i.e. interpreters, readers, extended time, private writing room) are available for individuals who may have challenges with written exams. Your local MTCU office approves accommodation measures. To learn more about possible accommodations, please refer to the [Accommodations](#) document.

## 5 SPECIALIZED SUPPORTS

As you prepare for the exam, and especially if you have been unsuccessful in previous exam attempts, you may be interested in seeking additional supports relevant to your circumstances. These may include accommodation requests for the day of the exam, essential skills upgrading, language training and/or other specialized support programs. You can find more information on how to access these support programs in the [Skills and Language Upgrades](#) document.

Specialized supports include:

- A. ESSENTIAL SKILLS UPGRADING
- B. LANGUAGE TRAINING
- C. HIGHER LEVEL LANGUAGE TRAINING PROGRAMS
- D. EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO RESOURCES



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### A. ESSENTIAL SKILLS UPGRADING

Essential skills upgrading gives you a way to improve your reading, writing and/or math skills. Some programs also include supports for improving employability and workplace skills. Essential skills programs are available across the province. A list of essential skills is available in the Appendix section of this guide on page 11.

### B. LANGUAGE TRAINING

If you are interested in improving your English or French language skills before you take the exam, training is available in Ontario through federally and provincially funded organizations. Program eligibility may vary depending on your status in Canada and fees may apply. Additional information can be found in the [Skills and Language Upgrades](#) document.

### C. HIGHER LEVEL LANGUAGE TRAINING

There are several occupation-specific training programs available that you may take to help prepare for your trade exam. These include enhanced language training, occupational specific language training and bridge training programs. More information can be found in the document titled [Skills and Language Upgrades](#).

### D. EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO RESOURCES

You may feel you need to work in Ontario for a while before you try writing the certification exam. Even if you are an experienced international worker, working with a local company or business will help you understand how your trade is practised in Ontario and get you more comfortable with any required codes, tools and terminology. If your trade is compulsory in Ontario, you can discuss a short apprenticeship with an employer and MTCU, based on your prior experience and trade education.

The Employment Ontario Employment Service is delivered by service providers across Ontario. Their services can help you look for employment and other resources for success. They also offer skills and experience assessments and job placement support. For more information or to find services in your area go to:

<http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/employmentontario/eoes.html>

<http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/search.asp?chosen=22>

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### EXAM PREPARATION RESOURCES

FOR PROVINCIAL AND RED SEAL EXAMS

#### THIS SECTION DESCRIBES THE FOLLOWING RESOURCE OPTIONS

- A. RESOURCES FOR RED SEAL TRADES
- B. APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING STANDARD LOG BOOK
- C. EXAM PLANS FOR PROVINCIAL CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS
- D. PREPARATION COURSES
- E. SAMPLE QUESTIONS / TESTS
- F. OTHER RELATED RESOURCES: CODE BOOKS, TEXTBOOKS, AND HEALTH & SAFETY INFORMATION

There are many resources available in Ontario to help you prepare for the exam. These include preparation courses, sample exams, study guides, materials and texts. You can also use your own network of support by speaking to your employer, previous instructors, and work colleagues. Your Apprenticeship Training Standard Log Book, along with the National Occupation Analysis (NOA) and the Interprovincial Program Guide (IPG) documents are helpful to determine what will be asked in your exam, according to your specific trade. For a more detailed look at how to use these resources, including samples and tips, please refer to the [Provincial Resources](#) document.

If your trade is a Red Seal trade, you may also want to read the [Red Seal Trades](#) document which contains helpful information specifically related to the Red Seal skilled trades.

#### A. RESOURCES FOR RED SEAL TRADES

If you are taking an Interprovincial (Red Seal) exam, the Red Seal website offers a number of excellent resources to help you prepare. These include:



www.red-seal.ca

##### ..... NATIONAL OCCUPATION ANALYSIS (NOA)

The NOA describes the skills and knowledge required to perform duties of the trade. Each NOA consists of blocks; each block is divided into tasks and each task is then divided into sub-tasks. Red Seal exam questions are specifically based on the NOA sub-tasks. The Task Profile Chart in the NOA outlines all the blocks, tasks & sub-tasks in your trade.

##### ..... INTERPROVINCIAL RED SEAL EXAM PREPARATION INFORMATION GUIDE

This document describes how to use the NOA to prepare for your exam. From the NOA structure to study plans, it gives you a detailed approach to exam preparation.

##### • INTERPROVINCIAL PROGRAM GUIDE (IPG)

The IPG outlines content for the technical training of a Red Seal trade & serves as a curriculum outline for a trade. IPGs do not exist for all trades so you may not find one for your trade. The IPG sets out learning outcomes, objectives and content for the in-school training for your trade. Referencing the IPG may help refresh your memory as to what you already learned and may help to guide your study process.

##### • SAMPLE QUESTION LIBRARY

Sample questions on the Red Seal website show the structure and phrasing of the types of questions you will be asked on the exam. To find the support material for your trade, visit the Red Seal Resource Centre.

##### • EXAM COUNSELLING SHEET

The exam counselling sheet provides you with a breakdown or distribution of the percentage of questions for each topic area on the exam. Red Seal exams have between 90 and 150 questions.



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### B. APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING STANDARD LOG BOOK

The Apprenticeship Training Standard Log Book (ATSLB) is the workbook that apprentices in Ontario use to identify and track the skills they learn as part of their on-the-job training. It is developed by industry experts to ensure that apprentices across Ontario are trained to the same standards and learn skills that industry has identified as necessary to work at the journey person level in their trade.

It is also the workbook that trade applicants who have not completed an Ontario apprenticeship review as part of the Trade Equivalency Assessment (TEA) process.

Most exam candidates, both apprentices who have completed their training and experienced workers, find it helpful to review the Training Standard Log Book for their trade to prepare for the examination. To find a copy of the ATSLB for your trade, go to: <http://www.collegeoftrades.ca/membership/resources/training-standards>

Provincial exams are based on the skills described in the Ontario training standards. Red Seal exams are based on the National Occupation Analysis document used across the country, which is also used to develop Ontario's training standard logbooks for Red Seal trades.

### C. EXAM PLANS FOR PROVINCIAL CERTIFICATION EXAMS

There are examination plans available for some of the trades that are not designated as Red Seal in Ontario. Ask about them when you pay your examination fee to the College. Additionally, more information can be found in the [Provincial Resources](#) document.



If you are writing a provincial exam, it can be useful to visit the Red Seal website to review their general exam tips and techniques, since the provincial exam questions use the same structure and phrasing as the Red Seal exams.

### D. PREPARATION COURSES

Exam preparation courses generally target individuals who know their trade but may have difficulty preparing for or writing the exam. Contact your local Training Delivery Agent (TDA) such as community colleges, union training centres, community organizations or private career colleges for information on fee-based courses in your area.

You can also contact your local apprenticeship office to ask about registering for these courses:  
<http://services.findhelp.ca/eo/tcu/appoff>



Course costs may vary and the College does not endorse any particular course or TDA.



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### E. SAMPLE QUESTIONS & TESTS

The Red Seal website is an excellent resource for sample questions for Red Seal exams. In addition, other provinces may have practice exams available for a reference, as well there are fee-based services that provide sample exam options for certain trades. Services not based in Ontario can provide great supports, though it is important to remember that terminology, regulatory codes, skills and other requirements may vary between provinces.



The College does not endorse any particular website or resource related to question or exam banks.

### F. OTHER RELATED RESOURCES

Relevant textbooks, code books, health and safety manuals and other trade-based information are available in a number of locations such as community colleges, union training centres, private career colleges, local libraries, bookstores and the internet. Sector-based associations and industry bodies may also have materials available to help you prepare.

The Apprenticeship Curriculum Standards used by TDAs who deliver apprenticeship in-school training can also help you prepare by outlining topics that apprentices learn through formal instruction. To find the Apprenticeship Curriculum Standard for each level of in-school training for your trade, go to:  
<http://www.collegeoftrades.ca/membership/resources/training-standards>

Additionally, “Getting the Job Done: Preparing to Write for the Certificate of Qualification Exam in Ontario” series of guides put together through the Mid North Network are currently available online through their website. This series of “Getting the Job Done” workbooks for C of Q preparation have been developed for five trades:

- Automotive Service Technician
- Construction and Maintenance Electrician
- General Carpenter
- Industrial Mechanic (Millwright)
- Plumber

They are available to download, free of charge, at

[http://northernliteracy.ca/index.php?option=com\\_phocadownload&view=category&id=101:supporting-apprenticeship-completions&Itemid=590&lang=en](http://northernliteracy.ca/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=101:supporting-apprenticeship-completions&Itemid=590&lang=en)





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## MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CODE BOOKS

When preparing for your exam, it is important to know that there are some trades in Ontario and other provinces that use code books. You should familiarize yourself with the code book for your trade. When you schedule your exam, make sure that you inquire as to whether there will be a code book for your exam. The MTCU will notify you before the exam as to whether code books & calculators are required and if they will be supplied.

## LIBRARIES

For a large and cost effective pool of resources, visit your local public library to access text books and other resources to aid in exam preparation. Find your local library in Ontario:  
<http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/libraries/libraries.shtml>

## STUDYING FOR THE EXAM

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### GENERAL TIPS

- Decide on a study plan and strategy that works for you and what you are trying to study.
- Try to set specific times to study and stick with them.
- Find a comfortable place to study, away from distractions.
- Use short study periods with regular breaks as they are the most effective for peak concentration and retention. Reward yourself for study success.
- Assign yourself study time for a topic based on its importance on the exam (use the Red Seal & Ontario exam plans mentioned to find out the number of questions to be asked).
- Effective study begins well before the exam and depends on spreading out your study times. Your ability to remember will be greatly improved if you look at your study materials and re-read them frequently.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDY SCHEDULES & PLANS

Studying for any test can be stressful. This is especially true if it has been a while since you have written a test. By organizing yourself and creating a study schedule and plan, you can reduce your stress levels as well as increase your productivity.

### STUDY SCHEDULE

Balance is important. Include all other commitments in your study schedule and plan out a specific time to devote to studying.

### STUDY PLAN

Identify your needs. Include all the subjects or topics in your study plan and set aside extra time for subjects that may require more focus.

Study templates and tips can be found in the [Provincial Resources](#) document.



ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES  
ORDRE DES MÉTIERS DE L'ONTARIO

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## EXAM DAY: WHAT TO KNOW

It is important to be organized in order to decrease stress on the day of the exam. For a detailed and helpful reminder of what you must know about exam day, refer to the document titled [Exam Day](#). MTCU will ask you to provide proof of identity when you arrive at your exam. A photo identification such as your driver's licence or passport is mandatory. If the College gave you a receipt when you paid your exam fee, bring that receipt with you as well.

### WHAT WILL BE PROVIDED FOR YOU

MTCU will supply everything that you will need. You will be given:

- The examination book, which you **MUST NOT WRITE IN**
- The answer sheet
- Scratch paper
- A pencil and an eraser
- A code book and/or a non-scientific calculator (if you need one for your exam): you will not be allowed to bring your own into the exam centre.



Every exam centre has English & French dictionaries and a number of dictionaries in other languages. If you need a dictionary in a language other than English or French, check with your exam centre to see if they already have one. If they don't, you may be allowed to bring your own. If you bring your own, it will be checked for notes, marks or any other writing before you will be allowed to use it.

### WHAT IS BEING TESTED

1. Your understanding of trade terminology and concepts.
2. Your knowledge of the timing and order of tasks.
3. Your knowledge of the reason for performing tasks.
4. Your knowledge of how to perform each task.
5. Your knowledge of standards and permissions for your trade.
6. Your understanding of consequences for each task.

### *Use the time you are given*

This time is yours. Even if you finish early, you still have time to review your answers and / or return to questions you may have been unsure about

### *Answer all the exam questions*

Even if you are not sure of the answer, answer anyway. By answering the question, you have a one in four chance of selecting the correct answer.

### EXAM WRITING STRATEGIES

- Apply three principles: use time wisely, read directions and questions carefully, and use good reasoning.
- Consider each alternative and read through all answers / options before choosing the best one.
- Relate each answer / option to the question. Use the process of elimination to rule out wrong answers.
- Read the question carefully and then answer it on your own before looking for the answer that matches your own.
- Use information from other questions to help you, by looking for similar questions on the same topic.
- Look for words such as always, never, etc. They indicate that there are no exceptions to the statements. Be careful not to accept answers using such extremes unless you are certain that there are no exceptions.
- If you are not sure of the correct response: eliminate the "definitely not" option(s); balance the remaining options against each other then choose the best answer remaining.

### CONDUCT, BEHAVIOUR & COMPLAINTS

Any inappropriate behaviour during the exam, such as cheating or misconduct, will not be tolerated. It may affect your eligibility to become a member of the College or to continue to be a member if you are already in another trade. It may affect your ability to work in your trade if you are in a compulsory trade. Anyone found guilty of cheating could be subject to a maximum fine of \$10,000.

If you have a complaint about the exam content, ask for an exam complaint form as soon as you finish your exam and before leaving the exam room. On the form, note the question and number(s) you have concerns about and explain your complaint in detail. You will be contacted by the College to acknowledge receipt of your complaint and notify you of any changes to your mark based on your complaint.





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### 9 EXAM RESULTS

The College will mail your results within three weeks of your writing the exam. MTCU cannot give you your results, nor can you get your results from the College over the phone or in person.

### 10 EXAM REWRITES

You can write the exam again if you did not pass. It is not uncommon for exam candidates to try their exam more than once. You will be allowed to schedule another exam 15 days after your previous exam date unless your exam has been blocked pending an investigation of misconduct. You must pay an exam fee to the College for each attempt.

If you do not pass, the following information will help you prepare for your next attempt:

- The exam results letter that you receive from the College will break down your marks according to the topics on which you were tested.
- Review these results to identify areas of strength and weakness that will help you focus your study efforts for your next attempt.
- Use the resources and supports listed in this guide to help you prepare.
- Do not re-schedule the examination until you have prepared and feel confident in your knowledge and skills.

If you fail the exam two times, you must provide the College with proof that you have done something to improve your chances of passing every other attempt from now on.

Below is an example of what you would find in an exam results letter outlining an unsuccessful attempt:

Re: T33201 EXAM: HAIRSTYLIST – ONTARIO

Thank you for participating in the Certificate of Qualification examination for trade 332A-Hairstylist. I regret to inform you that you did not achieve a passing score on the exam. The required pass mark for both provincial and Inter-Provincial Certificate of Qualification exams is 70%. You obtained a score of 78 out of a possible 120. This represents a percentage score of 65%. The results of your exam and your score report are given below. The score report is intended to draw your attention to areas for improvement:

| Section            | Description                       | Possible Marks | Your Mark |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----------|
| 1                  | Occupational Skills               | 9              | 6         |
| 2                  | Hair and Scalp Care               | 10             | 7         |
| 3                  | Cutting Hair                      | 25             | 16        |
| 4                  | Styling Hair                      | 16             | 12        |
| 5                  | Chemically Waving & Relaxing Hair | 20             | 12        |
| 6                  | Colouring Hair                    | 28             | 19        |
| 7                  | Specialized Services              | 5              | 3         |
| 8                  | Sales & Marketing                 | 7              | 3         |
| <b>Total Marks</b> |                                   | <b>120</b>     | <b>78</b> |

Areas to improve on.

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## 11 CHECKLISTS

As you move through your exam preparation process, the following checklist may be a good reminder of things you need to do:

### SELF-ASSESSMENT STUDY CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Did you download/save/print a copy of your Apprenticeship Training Standard?
- ☐ Did you download/save/print a copy of your Exam Counselling Sheet?
- ☐ Are you using your Apprenticeship Training Standard as a study tool?
- ☐ Have you accessed other study resources (i.e. texts, provincial/territorial standards)?
- ☐ Are you using your own network for support (i.e. colleagues, instructors, employer)?
- ☐ Have you created a study plan / schedule?
- ☐ Have you made use of the sample question library?  
# times? \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Did you time yourself?
- Have you accessed information on essential skills upgrading in your area? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Have you accessed information on language training in your area? ☐ Yes ☐ No

### RED SEAL TRADES ONLY:

- What is my trade's Red Seal name (is it different from the Ontario trade name)? ☐
- Did you download/save/print a copy of your NOA? ☐
- Are you using your NOA as a study tool? ☐

### DAY BEFORE WRITING CHECKLIST:

- Do you have the appropriate Photo Identification ready? ☐
- Do you know the time and location of the exam? ☐
- Do you have the appropriate devices (i.e. calculators)? ☐
- Do you have transportation to the exam? ☐
- Do you have the necessary resources to get to your location (i.e. bus ticket)? ☐
- Are you giving yourself enough time to get to the exam location? ☐
- Have you considered factors (i.e. traffic, construction) in your transportation plan? ☐
- Have you printed a map / directions to get to the exam location (or do you have GPS)? ☐
- Did you set your alarm? ☐
- Did you get enough sleep prior to the exam? ☐
- Did you provide notice to your employer (time off)? ☐
- Did you take enough time off from work / school to attend the exam? ☐



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## APPENDIX

### ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Foundational skills needed to carry out work tasks as well as the building blocks needed to learn new skills. Having strong Essential Skills, such as reading, writing, speaking and thinking, greatly increase the chance of success in these exams. There are 9 essential skills for the workplace:



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### APPENDIX

#### ACRONYMS

**ATSLB** - Apprenticeship Training Standard Log Book  
**C of Q** - Certificate of Qualification  
**ES** - Employment Ontario Employment Service  
**IPG** - Interprovincial Program Guide  
**MTCU or the Ministry** - Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities  
**NOA** - National Occupation Analysis  
**The College** - Ontario College of Trades  
**TDA** - Training Delivery Agent

#### FINANCIAL RESOURCES: GRANTS AND BONUSES FOR COMPLETION

There are many financial resources and incentives available to you upon completion. Don't forget to check your eligibility and submit your application.

#### RED SEAL TRADES:

**NAME OF GRANT:** *Apprenticeship Completion Grant*  
**SOURCE:** Service Canada  
**ELIGIBILITY:** Red Seal Trades only  
**DESCRIPTION:** Taxable cash grant of \$2,000 maximum available to registered apprentices who have successfully completed their apprenticeship training and obtained their journeyperson certification in a designated trade on or after January 1, 2009.  
**LINKS:** You can apply for the ACG online or download a paper application.  
<http://www.edsc.gc.ca/eng/jobs/trades/apprenticeship/index.shtml>  
\*Note: There is an application deadline period  
<http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/goc/apprenticeship/completiongrant/faq/application.shtml#a1>

#### NON-RED SEAL TRADES:

**NAME OF BONUS:** Apprenticeship Completion Bonus in Non-Red Seal Trades  
**SOURCE:** Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities (MTCU)  
**ELIGIBILITY:** Non-Red Seal Trades only  
**DESCRIPTION:** Taxable cash grant of \$2,000 available to registered apprentices after they successfully complete their apprenticeship training and obtain their Certificate of Apprenticeship and, where available, their C of Q in any Ontario non-Red Seal trade, on or after April 1, 2009.  
**LINKS:** MTCU will send out an application to eligible apprentices.  
\*Note: There is an application deadline period (any application received following the 180 day time limit will not be eligible for the Bonus). Contact the Coordinator, Bonus to Apprentices Program at 1 800 448 9656 or at the toll-free Employment Ontario Hotline at 1 800 387 5656  
[http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/employmentontario/employers/apprenticeship\\_bonus.html](http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/employmentontario/employers/apprenticeship_bonus.html)