



Frequently Asked Questions – Certificate of Qualification Exam

What is a Certificate of Qualification (C of Q) exam?

A C of Q exam is a test of an individual's knowledge and competency related to the performance of tasks involved with the practise of a trade.

Does my trade have a C of Q exam?

Of the 156 trades in Ontario, 75 trades require a C of Q exam. To find out if your trade has a Certificate of Qualification exam, please visit the Ontario College of Trades [website](#).

When do I write the C of Q exam?

If your trade requires a C of Q exam, you are eligible to write the exam after you have completed an Ontario apprenticeship training program, or after you have been approved through the College's [Trade Equivalency Assessment \(TEA\)](#) process.

Do I need to pass the C of Q exam to legally work in my trade?

If your trade is designated as compulsory, you must pass the C of Q exam to legally work in the trade. For exceptions to this rule, please visit the College's [website](#).

If your trade is designated as voluntary, you are not required to pass the C of Q exam to work in the trade.

Why should I write the C of Q exam if it's not mandatory?

There are many benefits to obtaining your C of Q, even if it's not legally required. Obtaining your C of Q shows you are qualified in your trade by having the skills, knowledge and experience that meet industry standards in Ontario, and across Canada. In addition, C of Q holders experience better employment prospects, wages, mobility and advancement opportunities, as well as appear on the College's [Public Register](#).

What is the C of Q exam format?

C of Q exam questions are multiple-choice. Exams have between 90 to 150 questions with each question having four answer options to choose from. You will have up to four hours to write you C of Q exam.

What does the C of Q exam test?

Exam questions test your knowledge and competency related to the tasks in the [Training Standard](#) for your trade. For Red Seal trades you are tested on your knowledge and competency related to the [National Occupational Analyses \(NOA\)](#). Both the Training Standard and the NOA describe trade terminology and concepts, and why and how a task is done.

What grade do I need to achieve to pass the C of Q exam?

You need to score at least 70 per cent to pass the C of Q exam.

How should I prepare for the C of Q exam?

The College has developed an [Exam Preparation Guide](#) to help you prepare for your C of Q exam. The Exam Preparation Guide contains a wealth of information including specialized supports, exam preparation resources, information on study plans, exam day tips and requirements, self-assessment checklists, getting your results and more. Please use and refer to this guide as part of your C of Q exam preparation.

Can I request special accommodations to write the exam?

Yes. Accommodations, such as extra time or readers are available for those who need them and request them prior to their C of Q exam. Please consult the College's [Exam Preparation Guide](#) for more information on accommodations.

Requests for accommodations must be made to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities at the time of scheduling your C of Q exam. Accommodations are considered on a case-by-case basis and if you require a person to offer accommodation, the ministry must approve the person you have selected prior to the exam.

There are some trades which offer a practical exam. A practical exam involves performing the skills of the trade in front of an examiner rather than answering written question.

How do I schedule my C of Q exam?

1. Contact the College at 1-855-299-0028 to confirm your eligibility to write the exam and to pay your \$150+HST exam fee.
2. Schedule your C of Q exam by contacting your local Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities [Apprenticeship Office](#).

It's my exam day. What do I need to bring? What is provided?

In order to write the C of Q exam, you need to schedule your exam through the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. You will not be admitted to write the C of Q exam without a scheduled time.

On the day of your exam, arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled exam time. You must bring one piece of government-issued photo ID in order to confirm your eligibility to write the exam.

If you have been approved for special accommodations, such as a reader or interpreter, you are responsible for making sure this person has been approved by the ministry and that they are available at your scheduled exam time.

Pencils, calculators, code books and dictionaries will be provided at the exam site. If you require a dictionary, you must contact the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities exam centre before your exam day to confirm there is a dictionary available in the language you require.

I've written my exam. Now what?

After you've written your exam, the College will mail you a C of Q exam result letter within 10 business days of writing the exam. In order to protect your privacy, the College does not provide exam results over the phone or in person.

If you pass the exam and meet the College's other registration requirements, you will be eligible to obtain your C of Q and membership in the College's Journeypersons Class.

If you fail the exam you must wait at least 15 days before you can re-schedule your next exam attempt. This information will be outlined on your exam result letter. Before scheduling your next C of Q exam, make sure to review your exam results and prepare accordingly.

If your trade is compulsory, and you are a member of the Journeyperson Candidates Class, your membership will remain valid for 12-months from your initial start in that membership class. In the Journeyperson Candidates Class, you can work in your trade while you prepare to challenge the C of Q exam. Please note that if your Journeyperson Candidates Class expires, you are legally not able to work in your compulsory trade until you pass your C of Q exam and become a member in the College's Journeypersons Class.

If you hold an approved Trade Equivalency Assessment (TEA) and a Provisional C of Q, you may apply for an additional 90 day extension, under certain conditions.

If your trade is voluntary, you may challenge the C of Q exam at any point, or choose to not write the exam. If you choose not to write the exam, you will be eligible for the College's Tradespersons Class, rather than the Journeypersons Class.

If you pass the Red Seal exam you will be eligible to identify yourself with the official [Red Seal Endorsement \(RSE\) acronym](#) that confirms your certification and accreditation.

Who can I contact if I still have questions?

Please consult the College's [Exam Preparation Guide](#), available at <http://www.collegeoftrades.ca/> for detailed information on the C of Q exam and its process. If you still have questions, please call our Client Services Department at 1-855-299-0028, Monday to Friday 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. One of our Client Service Agents will be pleased to assist you.