



FAQs – Frequently Asked Questions about Adult Literacy Programs and Project READ

LBS

What is LBS?

LBS stands for Literacy & Basic Skills.

LBS is:

- basic education for adults in the area of reading, writing and numeracy.
- it also includes basic education in speaking/listening, computer and self-
- management/self-direction skills

LBS has:

- 5 levels for each of these above areas
- 4 streams: Anglophone (English), Francophone, Native, and Deaf

How long does LBS take?

Once you have reached Level 5 you are considered to be ready for Grade 10-12 level credit studies or equivalencies such as GED preparation or academic upgrading at community colleges. The timing depends on the individual – their pace of learning and the level they are starting at.

Who can attend LBS classes?

Anyone over the age of 18 can attend an LBS program. Some programs may allow students over the age of 16 to attend. You should have some identification to prove your residency status in Ontario.

How do I know if LBS programs are right for me?

LBS programs are right for anyone who needs to improve their reading, writing or math skills. Even if you finished Grade 12 but you feel that you have difficulty with basic skills, you can still participate in a LBS classes.

Where can I find LBS classes?

LBS classes are available in every region of Ontario. Within each region there are often multiple providers. Go to the [Alphaplus](#) site for a complete list.

Who offers LBS programs?

There are many different providers for LBS. In your area LBS may be provided by a school board, community college or community based program such as a literacy council or pre-employment program.

Who funds LBS?

The Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities (MTCU), which is a part of the Ontario provincial government. LBS is a part of the Employment Ontario umbrella of MTCU services.

How much does it cost to be a student in an LBS program?

Most LBS program are free. Some programs may charge a small fee to register (less than \$25).

How many students are in an LBS class?

Class sizes vary (2 to 20+); some programs provide tutors who work 1 to 1 with students.

When can I take LBS classes?

Most LBS classes are continuous intake – you can start anytime. Note that some program may close during the summer. Most LBS classes are offered during the day, but many locations also offer evening classes.

Are LBS programs full-time or part-time? Can I study at home?

Most LBS programs are offered on a full-time basis; some are offered on a part-time basis. Programs with tutors may be flexible in terms of when and where they can meet with students. There are no home study or independent study LBS programs.

What is the difference between LBS and adult high school credit programs?

There are 2 major differences:

- 1 LBS programs help you achieve specific goals and acquire specific educational skills, whether related to employment, training or independence; high school credit programs are curriculum-directed (-everybody studies the same thing).
- 2 LBS programs studies go up to Grade 9-10 level equivalency - you do not complete LBS with a Grade 12 equivalent diploma; high school credit programs work towards achieving a Grade 12 diploma or providing pre-requisite credits for college or university studies

Can I take LBS classes to a Grade 12 level?

Community colleges in Ontario that offer LBS classes also have programs that bridge between LBS Level 5 and college-level studies. These programs are only considered as a Grade 12 equivalency by community colleges and apprenticeship. You do not receive a Grade 12 diploma. These programs are generally referred to as OBS (Ontario Basic Skills) or C&CP (Career & College Preparation) programs. Community-based or School Board-based LBS programs do not offer OBS programs.

What is the difference between LBS and ESL?

LBS is for students who have English as a first language. If English is not your first language but you have a high level of English speaking & listening skills you may be eligible to attend LBS classes.

Can I take LBS in French?

Yes, most regions in Ontario have LBS classes available in French.

Can LBS help me with learning disabilities?

Most LBS programs do not have specific classes for students with diagnosed with learning disabilities, however, many instructors can help you increase your functional skills in literacy/numeracy and inform you of strategies and accommodations to help you manage learning disabilities.

Can I study LBS on the Internet?

[Alpharoute](#) offers online LBS studies, however, you must be attending an LBS program to full access to this resource.

If I am on Ontario Works (welfare), can I attend an LBS program?

Yes, and in most cases attending LBS classes can help you meet your participation agreement requirements.

If I am on EI (Employment Insurance), can I attend an LBS program?

Yes, but check to see how many hours you are approved by EI to attend. Some EI offices will only approve academic upgrading for less than 10 hours per week and other offices will approve Essential Skills training for more hours per week.

What commitment do I have to make when I attend an LBS class?

Whether you attend on a part-time or full-time basis, instructors are looking for you to make and commit to a schedule and specific goals.

What can I do after LBS?

Once you complete LBS you will be ready for employment, training or higher level academic upgrading.

What is Employment Ontario?

[Employment Ontario](#) is a network for all of the employment, training and education services offered or funded through MTCU. This includes LBS programs.

Literacy Networks in Ontario**What does a Literacy Network do?**

The main role of Literacy Networks is to facilitate Literacy Service Planning (LSP) process. They function as a liaison between Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities (MTCU) and local literacy providers as a group. Literacy Networks also function to build partnerships and collaboration in the community between literacy providers and other community stakeholders. Literacy Networks may also undertake a variety of other activities related to literacy, such as research, training or assessment services.

Do Literacy Networks have classes?

No. However, every literacy network can provide referral to all of the LBS programs in its region.

Who funds Literacy Networks?

The Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities. Literacy Networks are part of Employment Ontario umbrella of MTCU services.

What does LSP mean?

LSP stands for Literacy Service Planning. This is a process by which all of the literacy service providers in a region co-ordinate and plan services. This co-ordination culminates in an annual Literacy Service Plan (LSP). It is also known as Literacy Community Planning (LCP).

Literacy Issues:**What is literacy?**

An international definition of literacy was established from the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS-1994) study: "Literacy is the ability to understand and employ printed information in daily activities, at home, at work and in the community, to achieve one's goals and to develop one's knowledge and potential."

How does Project READ define literacy?

Literacy is more than knowing how to read and write.

People who are literate can use reading, writing, speaking, and numerical skills effectively to understand and participate in the world around them.

Literacy is not a fixed skill. It needs to be exercised and challenged. Otherwise, the skill will not strengthen and may weaken.

Is literacy an issue?

Both the IALS (1994) and the follow-up Adult Learning & Lifeskills Survey (ALLS-2003), found that 42% of all Canadians have difficulty with everyday literacy tasks.

What are Essential Skills?

The term Essential Skills, in Canada, is generally used to refer to the system developed by Human Resources & Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) as a comprehensive description of the range of skills which are “essential” for work, learning and life. This includes: Reading Text, Document Use, Numeracy, Writing, Oral Communication, Working with Others, Continuous Learning, Thinking Skills, and Computer Use. Go to the [Essentials Skills homepage](#) for further information.

What is a Learning Disability?

An official definition of Learning Disabilities can be found at [Learning Disability Association of Ontario](#).