

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Regarding TESL Canada Program Teacher Training Program Recognition

1. *What is the purpose of TESL Canada Program Recognition?*

The TESL Canada teacher training program recognition process was set up to ensure that teachers have access to a certain standard of teacher education in Canada. This is for the benefit of the entire field—ESL learners, teachers, employers and programs. In addition, TESL Canada program recognition supports the TESL Canada professional certification process, ensuring that the adjudicator for that process knows that applicants have taken teacher training programs that meet national professional standards.

2. *Who can apply for TESL Canada Teacher Training Program Recognition? Are any programs exempt from this process?*

Canadian-based programs wishing to receive TESL Canada Teacher Training Program Recognition are encouraged to apply. Only programs that do apply may be recognized; there are no exemptions to the process. Programs using any portion of another program that has previously been approved must apply separately. This is to ensure equal adjudication in all applications.

3. *When during the year can applications be submitted for TESL Teacher Training Program Recognition?*

Applications are taken on a continuous basis; a program can apply at any time of the year for TESL Canada Teacher Training Program Recognition. To ensure continuous recognition, reapplication should be made 1 month prior to the expiry date of the recognition period.

4. *What happens to an application once TESL Canada receives it?*

A paid adjudicator reviews the application based on the teacher training program recognition standards outlined on the TESL Canada website. Once the adjudication process is complete, the adjudicator will write to the applicant with one of the following responses: award full or interim recognition; make inquiries for further information or suggest minor changes; or inform the program that it has not met the standards for teacher training program recognition. TESL Canada will also inform approved programs regarding the due date of their annual reports and the date of expiry of their recognition.

5. *What is the role of the Standards Committee*

The Standards Committee is a volunteer group TESL professionals from across Canada. The Standards Committee supports the adjudicator by advising on inquiries, issues, and appeals, and will adjudicate in special cases. The committee will also revise and set new criteria for the standards as required, and ensure that the standards are clear and fair.

6. *How long will the adjudication process take?*

The initial adjudication process will take approximately 3 to 4 weeks and can take up to 8 weeks. If the adjudicator has questions for the applying program, it will take an additional 3 to 4 weeks. If there is an appeal, it will take an additional 5 to 6 weeks to complete the process. This allows for turn-around time and thorough adjudication.

7. *What is “interim” teacher training program recognition?*

Interim recognition is provided for programs that meet all the requirements, but have not yet been offered for a full cycle as outlined on the TESL Canada website. Interim status is necessary to ensure that programs are ongoing and have been pilot tested and evaluated. Programs holding interim status will be listed on the TESL Canada website. Students will be able to use the program for professional certification retroactively once the program receives full recognition.

8. Is there an appeal process if an application is not recognized?

The Standards appeal committee will receive appeals and review them. Unsuccessful applicants must wait one year before reapplying for TESL Canada Teacher Training Program Recognition.

9. What are the practicum requirements for TESL Canada Program Recognition?

Programs must have a required 20 hours of supervised practicum. Ten of these hours must be directed observation and ten of these hours must be supervised practice teaching as outlined below. In addition, the practicum must be thoroughly described in the application for TESL Canada Teacher Training Program Recognition.

The ten hours of directed observations must

- be under the direction of a qualified practicum supervisor and/or sponsor teacher.
- be conducted in adult settings (a minimum of 80% of students must be 18 years of age or older) with classrooms of five or more ESL/EFL students
- have specific required observation tasks associated with the observation
- cover a range of lesson types and a range of focus areas (i.e., in areas covered in the theoretical part of the program curriculum and required by TESL Canada)
- include opportunities for reflection and discussion of observations with the sponsor teacher and practicum supervisor

The ten hours of supervised teaching must

- be under the direction of a qualified practicum supervisor and/or sponsor teacher to ensure proper assessment and constructive feedback to the trainee
- provide assessment and feedback orally and in writing to the trainee using both standardized forms and qualitative comments on a range of teaching skills as covered in the program curriculum and required by TESL Canada
- be conducted in adult settings (a minimum of 80% of students must be 18 years of age or older) with classrooms of five or more ESL/EFL students
- cover a range of lesson types and a range of pedagogical aspects as outlined in the areas covered in the theoretical part of the program curriculum and required by TESL Canada
- include opportunities for reflection and discussion of teaching with the sponsor teacher and practicum supervisor.

10. What is the purpose of the practicum?

The goal and purpose of the practicum is to help trainees demonstrate their knowledge and skill of TESL in both theory and practice and to support them in the development of their teaching. Serious applicants should want their program graduates to be able to accomplish these goals. Therefore, programs should outline how their practicum helps trainees apply theory in their classroom teaching and how the practicum supports the improvement of trainees' teaching skills over the course of the practicum. Details of the practicum must be thoroughly described in the application for TESL Canada Teacher Training Program Recognition.

11. What is the difference between a practicum supervisor and a sponsor teacher? Do I need both?

The role of the practicum supervisor is to guide and observe the trainee. This person has the main role in assessing whether or not the trainee has achieved the goals of the practicum. Observation by the practicum supervisor for purposes of assessment should be for all ten hours.

The role of the sponsor teacher is to provide the trainee with a class of English language students, act as a teaching model, and provide daily teaching guidance to the trainee.

It is possible that one person may be both sponsor teacher and the practicum supervisor.

12. Can an approved program use TESL Canada Teacher Training Program Recognition for promotional purposes?

Programs are encouraged to announce their recognition status in their promotions for the benefit of the profession. However, programs must not misrepresent what recognition means. Programs should not imply that students will receive automatic TESL Canada Professional Certification, which is a separate process that each teacher must pursue.

13. Can programs receive recognition if students do not have baccalaureate degrees, or if they are mature students?

Yes, but all students must be informed in writing that they will not receive TESL Canada Professional Certification if they do not hold a baccalaureate degree. This is to ensure that those who wish to receive good training to work in programs, such as volunteer settings, are not prevented from doing so.

14. Can a program receive recognition if students are admitted without a minimum language requirement?

Yes, ELP scores are required for individual certification, but not for entrance into a TESL Canada Recognized teacher training program. Programs are expected to adhere to minimum language requirements for students in order to ensure that students in such programs are not held back by students whose linguistic abilities require improvement.

15. Will a program maintain its recognition status if it changes its name or is purchased by another institution?

Major changes must be reported in writing to TESL Canada within two months. The TESL Canada adjudicator will review the change and ascertain if a new application is required. Minor changes can be reported in the required annual report to TESL Canada.

16. Will programs denied recognition receive a refund of the application fee or TESL Canada membership?

Application fees cover the cost of adjudication. TESL Canada membership fees are refundable.

17. Can programs offered outside of Canada by Canadian organizations, individuals or groups apply?

No, TESL Canada will only consider programs based in Canada. This is regardless of who owns and/or operates the program.

18. Can Canadian distance delivered teacher training programs apply?

Yes, special considerations for distance delivered and blended programs are outlined in the TESL Canada Teacher Training Program Recognition Application Form – Appendix A – on Page 15.

19. Will TESL Canada provide information regarding what to include in the annual report?

TESL Canada will send an annual report form to all approved programs at least 1 month prior to the annual report due dates. Annual reports are due on June 1st, for four years following recognition.

20. Will TESL Canada visit programs for monitoring purposes?

Yes, TESL Canada reserves the right to visit programs to ensure that teacher training program recognition standards are being upheld. Programs will be given one week's notice if a site-visit is going to occur. Programs are expected to cooperate in full with the program evaluators.

21. Can a program lose its recognition status?

Programs can lose their recognition status under the following conditions:

- Failure to comply with recognition standards
- False advertising/promotion related to implications of TESL Canada Teacher Training Program Recognition
- Misuse of TESL Canada Teacher Training Program Recognition status
- Failure to submit an annual report
- Failure to reapply by the 5-year expiry date
- Failure to pay application and annual report fees
- Serious complaints by students or program staff; such complaints will be investigated thoroughly before recognition is withdrawn.