

Desk Aid for Employment Counsellors – Get SET (Skills, Education and Training) Referrals (formerly Literacy and Basic Skills)

December 2025

Our goal is to create seamless and coordinated client service for job seekers. Refer clients to [Get SET](#) based on the referral criteria below. This referral becomes a plan item in the client's broader employment plan. **Job seekers can be IES and Get SET clients at the same time.** Clients will continue to work with you during their upgrading/training. We encourage communication between you and the Get SET program to assist the client to move through their plan to secure and retain employment. Referrals can happen after intake or throughout your work with job seekers and workers.

What is Get SET?

The Get SET program

- provides **free**, client-focused, individualized upgrading in reading, writing, math and digital skills in order for learners to transition to their next step
- assists learner to transition to 5 goal pathways – employment, post-secondary, apprenticeship, secondary school and greater independence
- is flexible and provided in a variety of formats – full/part-time, in-person/remote, core programming, targeted skills training

Check out these videos for a [quick overview of Get SET](#) and some [success stories](#). There are also more detailed [success stories](#) showcasing the partnership between Employment Services, Ontario Works and Get SET.

This desk aid is in partnership with our local learning networks

- [Adult Basic Education Association](#) (ABEA) – Hamilton
- [Literacy Link Niagara](#)
- [Literacy Link South Central](#) – Brant, Haldimand-Norfolk
- [Peel-Halton-Dufferin Adult Learning Network](#) – Halton

Jump to - [Make a Referral](#)

Employment Readiness Checklist

A skills or education gap will create barriers to employment. This checklist highlights certain areas of the Common Assessment Tool (CAT) that connect to the work of Get SET programs. The checklist was built as a reference tool to help you determine if a referral to Get SET could be beneficial for the job seeker/worker you're working with. It's not mandatory to complete this checklist to make a referral. You can refer to Get SET at any time using the [referral links](#) for your region.

You can use this checklist

- when you're administering the CAT
- after you've administered the CAT or when you're reviewing CAT results/comments from Ontario Works
- at any time throughout your work with a client if you think your client might benefit from upgrading

Refer Job Seekers to Get SET if they Meet **Any** of the Following Criteria

Any of the referral suggestions below are enough to consider making a referral to Get SET as a plan item (Skill Development - Other – Referral to Get SET, formerly Literacy and Basic Skills). The specific markers are taken from the "Fedcap common assessment reference guide".

Employment	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>What type of job are you looking for? (by NOC code)</p> <p>Depending on the skills and training/education needed, the client may benefit from LBS if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you deem them to be pre-employment as opposed to employment-ready • they need to prepare for more advanced level jobs and/or pre-requisites <p>Employment Retention - Refer clients to Get SET that are already working if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they need to upgrade their skills to keep their job • need specific training for their job (for example, digital technology training) • need to explore upskilling for career advancement
Skills – your client needs to upgrade their skills for work or training	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>I am comfortable reading and understanding written information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if a client answers 1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, they may benefit from a referral to Get SET to determine if they need skills upgrading for work
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>I am comfortable communicating information in writing (hand-written or typed).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if a client answers 1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, they may benefit from a referral to Get SET to determine if they need skills upgrading for work
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>I am comfortable exchanging information verbally (or using sign language) – this is more suited for language referrals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if a client answers 1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, they may benefit from a referral to Get SET to determine if they need skills upgrading for work
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>I am comfortable understanding and using numbers and simple math.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if a client answers 1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, they may benefit from a referral to Get SET to determine if they need skills upgrading for work
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>I am comfortable using computers and other digital technologies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if a client answers 1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, they may benefit from a referral to Get SET to determine if they need skills upgrading for work

Learning Challenges – your client may indicate learning challenges or cycle in and out of employment services, not retaining work for longer periods of time	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>I can perform effectively on many different tasks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> if the client answers 1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, more questions may need to be asked to uncover if it’s a skills issue or refer back to how the client rated their comfort level with the skills above (reading, writing, math, digital technology)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Do you have any difficulty learning, remembering, or concentrating?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> if the client answers sometimes, often or always, this is likely a strong indication that they may benefit from Get SET for skills upgrading and learning strategy development
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Do you think you have a condition that makes it difficult in general for you to learn?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> if the client answers sometimes, often or always, this is likely a strong indication that they may benefit from Get SET for skills upgrading and learning strategy development
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Has a teacher, doctor or other health care professional ever said that you had a learning disability?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> if the client answers sometimes, often or always, this is likely a strong indication that they may benefit from Get SET for skills upgrading and learning strategy development this is especially true if they answer sometimes, often or always to “How often are your daily activities limited by this condition?” and if they answer some difficulty, a lot of difficulty or cannot do at all to “How much difficulty do you have with your daily activities because of this condition?”

Education – if your client needs their Grade 12 diploma/equivalent or to pass a test for work (like the Certification of Qualification exam for apprentices)



What is the highest level of schooling you attended?

- anyone with less than a grade 12 or equivalent education may need upgrading
- answers to consider for referral - Grade 0-8, 9, 10, 11
- also, those with an OSSD or higher may still require skills upgrading for their goal path (in 23-24, while 31% of LBS learners across the province had less than a Grade 12, 27% had a Grade 12 diploma and another 40% had post-secondary education
- answers to consider for referral - 12 or equivalent, OAC or 13, some college, some apprenticeship



What year did you stop or complete this schooling?

- if clients haven't been in school for a long time (5+ years), it's possible that they'll need to upgrade their essential skills to be successful on the job

Newcomers – your client went to school outside of Canada and needs to upgrade their skills



What is your status in Canada?

- clients who identify as not being a Canadian-born citizen may need to upgrade their language skills if their first language isn't English or French and may need other skills or training/upgrading for work
- answers to consider for referral - Permanent Resident, Refugee Claimant, Convention Refugee



Where did you complete this schooling?

- if clients completed their schooling outside of Canada and not in English or French, they may need to upgrade their skills in the language that they'll be working in
- answers to consider for referral – Outside of Canada

<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Do you need help to improve your language skills to help you get or keep a job?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in this case, employment counsellors should refer to their local CLARS centre for CLB assessment instead of LBS <p>CLARS Coordinated Language Assessment and Referral System</p> <p>CLB Canadian Language Benchmark</p> <p>LBS Literacy and Basic Skills</p>
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How to Refer

Referral Protocol – Brant

Please use the following email address for Brant County referrals. The Get SET programs in that region will take turns checking it, connecting with the client and making the appropriate Get SET referral.

brantlbsreferrals@gmail.com | [List of Programs in Brant](#)

Referral Protocol – Haldimand-Norfolk

LBS.Simcoe@fanshawec.ca

519-426-8260 x 35025 | [List of Programs in Haldimand-Norfolk](#)

Referral Protocol – Hamilton

[Refer to the Adult Learning Network – Adult Basic Education Association \(ABEA\)](#)

ABEA offers free educational planning services. They work with people to create learning plans across the education continuum. This includes skills upgrading, short-term training, Grade 12/equivalent, post-secondary and apprenticeship/skilled trades. Learning plans include program referrals and timelines. They will keep you updated on their work with the client and send you a copy of the learning plan when it's completed (with consent).

[List of Programs in Hamilton](#)

Referral Protocol – [Niagara](#) | [List of Programs in Niagara](#)

Referral Protocol – Halton

[Adult Learning Centres Halton](#) has locations throughout Halton Region. Please connect with them for the first point of contact for a referral.

[List of Programs in Halton](#)

About Get SET (Skills, Education and Training), formerly Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS)

Get SET helps adults in Ontario to develop and apply communication, numeracy, interpersonal and digital skills to achieve their goals. Services are free. The Get SET program serves people who have goals to successfully transition to

- employment
- postsecondary
- apprenticeship
- secondary school
- increased independence

The program serves people who may have a range of barriers to learning.

A client can participate in Get SET if they are

- an adult 18+ - some exceptions for 16-17 with rationale
- an Ontario resident
- unemployed, with special emphasis on people receiving income support
- employed and need to improve their skills to maintain or upgrade their work skills
- can speak well enough in English/French to benefit from programming

Case Studies/Success Stories

Meet Komal

Where was he referred from?	Ontario Works
Identified goal	Employment
Concurrent services	Ontario Works/Employment Services

Back story/assessment results	Komal was looking for computer skills. He was assessed at Reading Level 1, Writing Level 2 and Digital Level 2. He had a bachelor's degree, but he was struggling to find employment. He wanted to build his digital skills to be more comfortable applying for work online.
What he worked on in Get SET	Completed a targeted training course – MS Office - Word, Excel, PPT, Outlook (how to add attachments), using Word to create a resume and cover letter (formatting).
Accommodations provided	N/A
How long he worked in Get SET	For about 18 hours over 5 weeks
Next Steps/Results	A word from Komal - "With the knowledge I gained through taking this course, I was able to create a cover letter and resume and find a job."

Meet Mya

Where was she referred from?	Self-referral
Identified goal	Employment – Mya was living in a youth shelter and needed lots of support with becoming ready to work (soft skills, resume and cover letter writing, and financial literacy and budgeting).
Concurrent services	Mya had just finished a federal youth employment program and decided to enroll in Get SET. She was still with an Employment Service agency.
Back story/assessment results	She was 18 years old at intake. She had her Grade 12 diploma. Jane took the initiative to refer herself to Get SET based on a

	presentation she saw about Get SET when she was in the federal youth employment program.
What they worked on in Get SET	Soft skills development – time management, problem solving, teamwork, personal presentation + resume and cover letter writing, financial literacy and budgeting, and digital technology to create resumes and cover letters.
Accommodations	Mya gets bus cards through Get SET and lots of one-on-one support while she works in a small group. She identifies as someone who has a disability (mental health). She may explore ODSP in the future, but she wants to work.
How long she has worked in Get SET	4 hrs/wk x 14 weeks (She is still involved in programming. 8-10 more weeks will likely be required).
Next Step/Result	Mya is actively job searching with Employment Services and working with Get SET.

Meet Miranda

Where was she referred from?	MLITSD
Identified goal	To pass the Red Seal exam.
Concurrent services	N/A
Back story/assessment results	Miranda was laid off as a hairstylist because she had run out of time to successfully complete her Red Seal Exam. She had tried the exam at least 4 times previously to no avail.
What they worked on in Get SET	Miranda worked on reading comprehension, note-taking, and test-taking, and she used the textbook from hairdressing school (to make the learning applicable). The Get SET program helped her develop study habits that fit her learning style. They also helped

	Miranda with practice questions and how to handle multiple-choice questions.
Accommodations	Get SET staff supported the client to receive a reader, a private room, and additional time for her Red Seal exam. The reader was a volunteer from the program. Get SET staff coordinated with MLITSD to submit paperwork to get accommodations approved.
How long she worked in Get SET	Approximately 40 hours over 10 weeks (not including the time it took to get paperwork done).
Next Step/Result	She passed her Red Seal exam! “If you were to ask me if I learned something through all of this, it would be to never give up on something you want, because eventually you’re going to get there, even if it does take a little bit of time.”

Meet Jake

Where was he referred from?	His employer
Identified goal	Jake was employed as a cleaner for commercial buildings but was struggling to be assigned to certain workplaces because he “could not read.” Jake was at risk of losing his job if he didn’t upgrade.
Concurrent services	N/A
Back story/assessment results	Jake had a Grade 12 Certificate but not a diploma. He was assessed at Level 1 for Reading and Writing. He identified as having a disability - low vision and a learning disability. He was 59 years of age at intake.
What he worked on in Get SET	He started with phonics, sound blends, letter formation, etc. He then began to work on building his digital literacy skills.

Accommodations	With support from the Get SET program, Jake has learned how to use digital literacy tools like Google Assistant, Siri and speech to text to support his work performance. The program provided Jake with funds for transportation.
How long he has worked in Get SET	58 weeks (2 hours/wk with LBS instructors and one hour/wk on his own). The LBS program provides work for him to take home to practice his skills.
Next Step/Result	Jake has retained his job!

Version Control

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