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MODERNIZING THE SKILLED TRADES &

Apprenticeships

AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAXIMIZE

Literacy and Basic Skills expertise in
adult skills training.

PREPARED BY:

The Learning Networks of Ontario

MODERNIZING THE SKILLED TRADES AND APPRENTICESHIP

An Opportunity to Maximize Literacy and Basic Skills Expertise in Adult Skills Training

@Learning Networks of Ontario, 2020

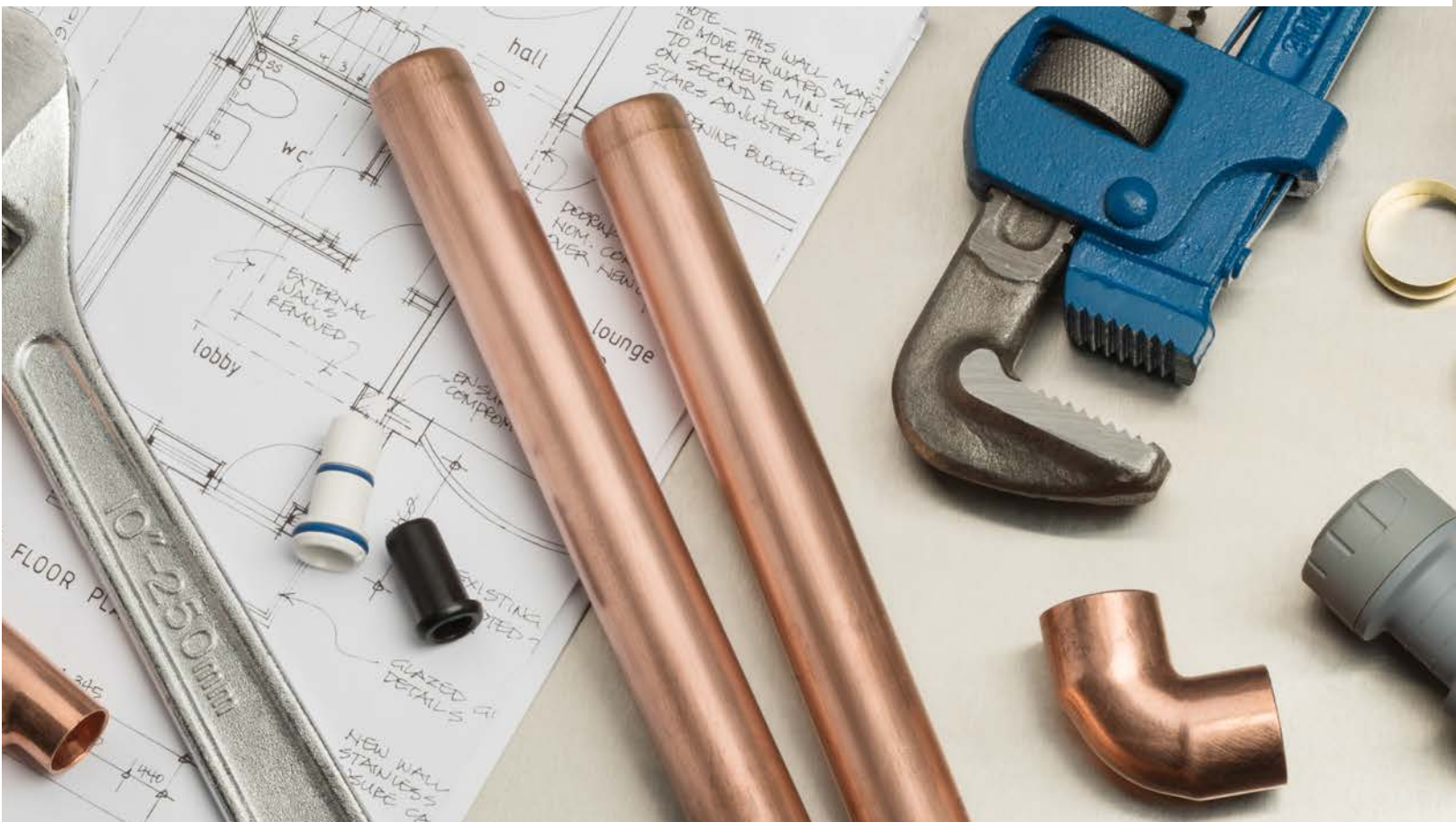


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE STRENGTH OF PARTNERSHIP

We applaud the government's efforts to modernize the skilled trades and apprenticeship system. We support the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development's (MLTSD) implementation of the portable skill set framework that allows training and certification within and between trades. In light of this, the Learning Networks of Ontario (LNO) would like to position the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Service Providers and Support Organizations as a key partner in the transformation. Together, we can increase apprentice preparedness and ultimately, increase completion rates – critical for Ontario's economy. Let's work together to help Ontario meet the skilled labour shortage and low Apprenticeship completion rate.

Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) programs are funded by the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development. They provide numeracy, digital, communication and writing skills upgrading. This assists learners to achieve their goals of further education, employment and apprenticeship.

LBS can support the new competency-based, portable skill sets outlined in the *Modernizing the Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2019*.

We have

- expertise helping adult learners build their essential skills
- a long history of employer engagement and outreach in the Skilled Trades
- a plethora of evidence-based, employer-driven pre-apprenticeship training and task-based activities and resources



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONTINUED

THE STRENGTH OF PARTNERSHIP

We can

- support adult learner to explore and prepare for apprenticeship training with specific targeted training and resources
- assist signed apprentices with an assessment of their essential skills compared to what is needed for their apprenticeship training
- support active apprentices to increase their essential skills ahead of and throughout their training sessions
- ensure that apprentices fully comprehend health and safety requirements on the job
- provide specific support to help apprentices prepare for the Certification of Qualification

PILOT PROJECT IDEA

Literacy and Basic Skills Service Providers encourage the Ministry to test a new approach of assessing newly registered Apprentices before or at the beginning of their in-class and on the job training. We believe that early identification of any numeracy, digital, and reading comprehension challenges is key. Then, they can be strengthened through a tailored learning plan that will increase the probability for Apprenticeship completion and successful workplace performance. It is a win – win for the province of Ontario and the Apprentice!

This document serves to provide an overview of the impacts that Literacy and Basic Skills organizations can have for apprenticeship modernization. We are at the ready to support the Modernization of Skilled Trades and Apprenticeships.





STRENGTHS

The move to portable skills sets is an opportunity to leverage the competency-based approach used in Literacy and Basic Skills.



COMPETENCY-BASED LEARNING WITH LBS

Portable Skills Sets

The Modernization of Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Act introduces a competency-based approach to certification through the introduction of portable skills sets.

This will not only provide workers with greater flexibility, but will speed up the certification process. This concept offers the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD) an opportunity to leverage the expertise of Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) programs.

Using the competency-based framework of the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF), LBS programs can assess and identify task-based activities to match a number of the proposed portable skills sets. This will support workers to attain skills, comply with health and safety and achieve certification faster.

LEVERAGING THE OALCF

Skilled Trades Skills | OALCF Competencies

Problem solving ability
Good communication skills
Attention to detail
Mathematical and analytical skills
Aptitude for technology
Creativity and imagination
Coordination and dexterity
Ability to conceptualize the end-product
Teamwork
Continuous learning skills

Find and Use Information
Communicate Ideas and Information
Understand and Use Numbers
Use Digital Technology
Manage Learning
Engage with Others

From Competencies to Individual Tasks

The OALCF “focuses on the ways in which individuals use their abilities to accomplish tasks outside a learning context” (Curriculum Framework p. 4). Using a task-based approach helps workers link their essential skills learning to the world around them. It helps them understand how they will use skills to respond to real-world demands in the workplace.

Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) practitioners develop individualized learning plans with their learners to work on specific skills needed on the job.

Explore the [Task-based Portal](#) to view the quality curricula developed by LBS Practitioners.

ADVISING AND PREPARING FUTURE WORKERS

LEARNING TO EARNING

LBS programs prepare learners for 5 goal paths - Apprenticeship is one of these pathways.

LBS Practitioners are adept at

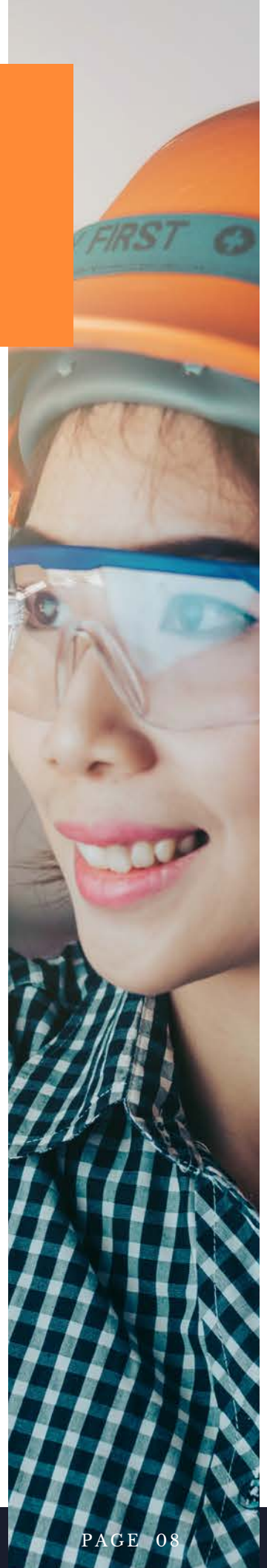
- exploring the benefits and opportunities of pursuing an apprenticeship with the learner
- assisting potential apprentices understand what is involved in the process
- determining if apprenticeship is appropriate, feasible and suitable based on educational and employment factors

LBS service providers prepare a learner by providing the necessary literacy and essential skills to support an effective transition to apprenticeship. In many cases, signed apprentices attend LBS programming while completing in-class and on-the-job training.

The **“A” Word video series**, launched by Literacy Link South Central, is an example of tools that were developed to assist LBS Practitioners and potential workers to determine if a career in the Skilled Trades or Apprenticeship is right for them.

Literacy Link South Central, in partnership with the Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board, launched a comprehensive overview called **“Fabricating the Future: Building Tomorrow’s Manufacturing Workforce.”**

The following video outlines how LBS programs can support individuals from **Learning to Earning**.



SKILLS TRAINING

Some Apprenticeships can be achieved by attending skills training for up to one year or less. LBS Practitioners support and help the worker to explore the skills training options available in the community.

They can help learners explore

- what academic credentials are necessary
- how the available skills training links with local employment opportunities
- the importance of the level of education, technical skills and competencies required for entry into a specific skills training program
- the necessary literacy and essential skills to support the effective transition to the skills training goal
- how to link what they earned in class with what they learn on the job



STRENGTH-BASED ASSESSMENT

Early skills assessment of each Apprentice before registration has the potential to dramatically impact apprenticeship completion rates. As each potential Skilled Trades or Apprentice worker enters the LBS program, they are given a strengths-based literacy and essential skills assessment that highlights strength areas and also identifies skill areas that need development.

Early detection and intervention means that individuals will receive ongoing support during in-class training rather than struggling and falling behind, resulting in early non-completion.

We believe that administering an assessment for all registering Apprentices would reduce the stigma of accepting skills training support during their Apprenticeship

- reduce incidents of early non-completion
- increase retention on the work site
- contribute to a strong skilled labour force.



Early Assessment

LBS Practitioners will leverage tools such as the Foundational Assessment for Skilled Trades (**FAST**). This tool assesses skills in 3 subject areas - **Math, Communications and Concepts of Science** for each **designated trade**. By completing these assessments, the learner could determine if there were areas they needed to upgrade for success in the in-school component of their chosen trade. FAST is based on the program known as Evaluating Academic Readiness for Apprenticeship Training (EARAT).



"By completing these assessments, the learner could determine if there were areas they needed to upgrade for success in the in-school component of their chosen trade."



Supporting Apprentices

- Build computer skills needed to explore the skills, supports and education needed for a chosen apprenticeship
- Help someone become more confident in returning to a learning environment so they can succeed in a classroom setting
- Assess if the person has the skills (such as math, computer use, and understanding documents) and ability to learn during their apprenticeship
- Develop a learning plan that supports the growth and strengthening of an apprentice's essential skills for use on the job and in school



SUPPORTING SUCCESS AND COMPLETION

FROM CONCEPT TO REAL-LIFE APPLICATION

The focus of the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF) is to provide workers with skills that can be transitioned to the workplace. With the worker's employment or apprenticeship goal as the outcome, LBS practitioners select task-based activities that build confidence and increase literacy and essential skills. Working at their own pace, workers test their skills through Milestone assessments and verify their skills through a Culminating task.

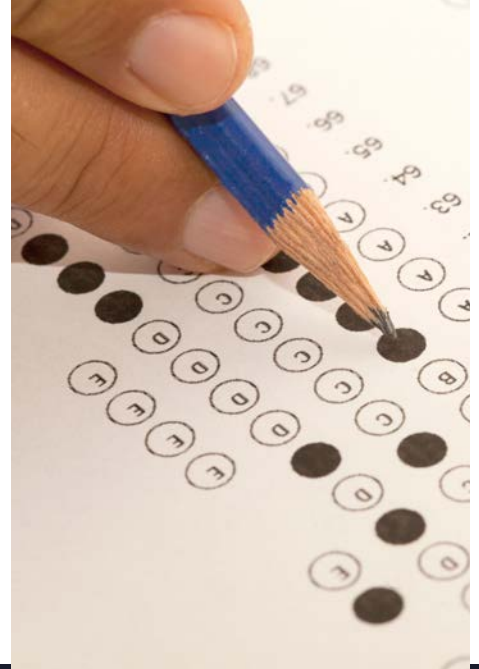
The following are examples of the innovative materials Literacy and Basic Skills Service Providers and Support Organizations create.

- Explore the quality curriculum on the [Task-based Portal](#)
- Literacy Link Eastern Ontario (LLEO) developed two trades 6 - 8 week occupational curricula called [Essential Skills for the Trades and Skilled Trades Helpers & Labourers](#).
- [Academic Career Entrance](#) (ACE) Apprenticeship Math is an online course. It is designed for learners preparing for various college and apprenticeship programs and/or the workplace who want to upgrade their math skills and improve their problem solving techniques for the trades.
- The following [Occupational Courses](#) Based on the Essential Skills are available for specialized short-term courses: *Hospitality, Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance, Labourer, Material Handler, Printing Machine Operator Public Works and Maintenance Labourer, Retail, Service Station Attendant and Truck Driver*

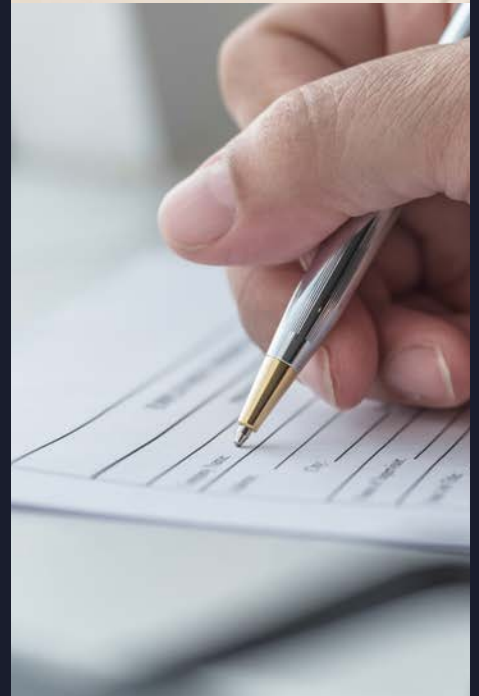


LBS and the Certificate of Qualification

Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) programs have worked with individuals who have attempted the Certificate of Qualification and failed. They work with these learners to build their confidence, manage their anxiety and prepare them for the next assessment. Some of these learners have been referred by an Employment and Training Consultant (ETC) who provides a referral to the apprentice for a local LBS program.



LBS and the Certificate of Qualifications



Lowering failure rates

Ideally, apprentices would receive support and practice through their local LBS program prior to sitting the exam for the first time. This would minimize the chance of failure and lower the provinces non-completion rates. Free “Getting the Job Done” workbooks for CoQ preparation are just one example of the resources that have been developed to support apprentices. These workbooks were developed by Northern Literacy Networks around 5 trades: *Automotive Service Technician, Construction and Maintenance Electrician, General Carpenter, Industrial Mechanic (Millwright), and Plumber*



MOVING FORWARD

THE STRENGTH OF PARTNERSHIP

Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) is often referred to as the “best kept secret” in Ontario. With over 300 locations across the province, we stand poised and ready to support the implementation of the new competency-based Modernizing Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Act. We specialize in adult skills development through task-based learning that relates to the workplace. LBS programs can support the ministry to quickly and safely implement portable skill sets to get Ontarians into the skilled trades and apprenticeship.

LBS has a history of supporting apprentices to prepare, write and pass the Certificate of Qualification exam. These are reasons to formalize and leverage the services offered for free and in both official languages. A viable solution to addressing the skills shortage in Ontario, LBS programs are eager to support an increased role in meeting these shortages and welcome a dialogue with the ministry about how this might take shape.

In summary

- LBS aspires to participate and share its experience and expertise through the development of the new apprenticeship structure
- LBS seeks to offer our existing supports, services and training to support apprentices
- LBS desires to develop and pilot an assessment service to pinpoint skills that apprentices need to develop before/while starting in-class and on the job training

Why LBS? We have

- experience supporting adult learners
- experience supporting learners on the apprenticeship goal path
- expertise to help with numeracy, digital, communication and writing skills, health and safety, essential skills and reading
- connections with employers pre-apprenticeship training and task-based activities and resources

