

## EQAO Testing – Advice to Members

The mandate of the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), established by the government in 1996, is to design standardized tests for grades 3, 6, 9, and 10 in reading, writing, and mathematics; manage their administration; report the results to the public; and collect data that can help measure the effectiveness of Ontario's education system.

From the outset, EQAO has faced controversy and criticism, as the testing creates raised levels of anxiety for students, parents, teachers, and school boards. Despite this, the EQAO tests continue to be administered each year.

Students' results on EQAO tests should not be considered a reflection of teacher performance in the classroom. While teachers in grades 3 and 6 may feel pressured to deliver high test results so that their class and school fare well, ETFO urges members not to succumb to this pressure. Poor score results are usually the result of multiple factors far beyond the teacher's control.

However, teachers are required to adhere to the professional responsibilities outlined in the [User Guide for the Administration of Assessments of Reading, Writing and Mathematics, Primary and Junior Divisions](#) and affirm agreement with them in a pop-up window prior to accessing the EQAO e-assessment system.

Since the 2021-2022 school year, EQAO has included universal accommodations for Grade 3 and Grade 6 students and specific accommodations are outlined in the [Administration Guidelines and Supports for all Students](#). These specific accommodations must be identified in the e-assessment platform and listed in a student's Individual Education Plan.

If test administration rules are not followed, a teacher may be accused of improperly administering the test, intervening, assisting students to influence test results, or even changing students' answers. Such allegations, if proved, can result in severe disciplinary measures and an allegation of professional misconduct at the Ontario College of Teachers.

Some recent cases have alleged:

- The teacher changed the answers in the e-assessment platform.
- The teacher provided students with inappropriate resource material.
- The teacher provided the students with the answers by writing information on the black board.
- The teacher spoke to and inappropriately coached student answers.
- The teacher previewed the test in the e-assessment platform and used the information to provide students with an opportunity to practice the content in class or as homework.

- The teacher re-opened testing sessions, allowing students to review and revise answers or opened all testing sessions at once.

When the EQAO receives test results, it searches for anomalous results or problems. This could mean similar wrong answers or many identical right answers to problems that do not lend themselves to the same answers. A suspicion of inappropriate application of the test may result in a prolonged investigation of the teacher's actions by the EQAO and the school board. Please be aware that teacher activity can be monitored by EQAO on the e-assessment platform.

Some reminders about EQAO testing:

- Before you begin preparing students for the test, read the [user guide](#) describing what you can and can't do around the testing.
- Be sure you understand the directions for the use of the e-assessment platform.
- Be sure that you understand how the test is to be administered, and how materials are to be safeguarded, if students are provided the paper and pencil response option.
- Do not modify the administration of the assessment in any way. If you are asked to do so, ask your principal for a copy of the memo from EQAO outlining the change.
- Do not assist your students unless you are permitted to do so under the EQAO's direction – be clear about the assistance you may provide.
- Never change students' answers on an EQAO test.
- Never provide answers to students during testing.
- Members are advised not to complete the EQAO voluntary *Webinar for Teachers: EQAO Primary and Junior Assessments* or the *Online Learning Module, Principals and Teachers: Primary and Junior Assessments* unless release time is provided.
- Members are advised not to complete the EQAO teacher questionnaire.
- Members are advised not to participate as an EQAO scorer or in the marking of any EQAO materials.

**ETFO has three advisories regarding EQAO, which can be found on the [secure member website](#).**

If you have any questions or concerns about EQAO testing, please contact your local ETFO president or ETFO Professional Relations Services staff at 1-888-838-3836 or 416-962-3836.

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