

# National Survey: Learning Outcomes Assessment

---

Welcome to the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario's (HEQCO) Learning Outcomes Assessment Survey.

Gauging what students know and accomplish as a result of their college and university education is an essential, challenging responsibility of virtually every Provost and Vice-President Academic in the country. To understand more about how this responsibility is carried out, HEQCO is asking Provosts and VPAs at every public college and university in Canada to share some basic information about assessment practices in certificate, diploma, and undergraduate degree programs at their respective institutions. This survey was originally created by the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA), based out of the University of Illinois, and has been modified to suit the Canadian context. Results from this study will be compared to NILOA's findings regarding the assessment practices used in the postsecondary education system in the United States.

Please take a few moments to tell us about the approaches and tools your institution is using. This is not a ranking exercise, and no institutions will be identified in HEQCO's report. Results from the survey can inform and be useful to all institutions, and we will provide you with a copy of the results prior to public release. Thank you in advance for your participation.

The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary and all information collected will be used for research purposes only.

Please note that, at any point in the survey, you can return to any of the previous screens by using the survey navigation buttons at the bottom of each screen. You can also exit the survey at any time and return to finish the survey at a later date. All of the information that you have entered will be saved if you decide to exit the survey. When you return you will be taken directly to the last question you answered. To return to the survey please enter the following web address into the address field in your web browser: [www.learningoutcomes.HEQCO.net](http://www.learningoutcomes.HEQCO.net). You will also need to re-enter your access code: [insert code].

If you have any questions or require help to complete the online survey, please call R. A. Malatest & Associates at 1-855-598-0161 (toll free), or e-mail [j.lamb@malatest.com](mailto:j.lamb@malatest.com) for assistance.

Do you agree to participate in the survey?

- Yes, continue
- No, thank you

The survey is being conducted by the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO). It is a modified version of the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) survey conducted in 2013. We would like to thank NILOA for allowing use to use their survey. If you have any questions about the survey or HEQCO, contact Alexandra MacFarlane ([amacfarlane@heqco.ca](mailto:amacfarlane@heqco.ca)). For more information on HEQCO see <http://www.heqco.ca/en-CA/Pages/Home.aspx>

1. Has your **institution** adopted or developed an explicit set of student learning outcomes **common to all students** enrolled in certificate, diploma, and undergraduate degree programs?

Yes  No

2. Have specific departments, programs, schools, or majors at your institution adopted or developed intended learning outcomes applicable to all students in the unit and aligned those outcomes with institutional learning outcomes? Mark the one that best describes your institution.

- Yes, ALL departments/schools/programs have defined learning outcomes that ALIGN with institutional learning outcomes.
- Yes, SOME departments/schools/programs have defined learning outcomes that ALIGN with institutional learning outcomes.
- Yes, ALL departments/schools/programs have defined field-specific learning outcomes, but they may not align with institutional learning outcomes.
- Yes, SOME departments/schools/programs have defined learning outcomes, but they may not align with institutional learning outcomes.
- No, individual departments/schools/programs do not specify learning outcomes.

**[PROGRAMMER: INCLUDE MOUSE OVER DEFINITIONS FOR APPLICABLE TERMS]**

3. What assessment approaches are used **at the institution level** (as contrasted with specific departments or units) to represent certificate, diploma, and undergraduate student learning? By institution level we mean approaches used across the entire institution or with valid samples to represent the whole institution. Select all that apply.

- Incoming student placement exams (e.g. ELP, CAEL, CELT, TOEFL, ACCUPLACER, ACT Compass)
- National student surveys (e.g. NSSE, NGS, CCSSE, UCUES)
- Locally developed surveys
- General knowledge and skills measures (e.g. CLA, AHELO)
- Locally developed knowledge and skills measures
- Classroom-based performance assessments such as simulations, comprehensive exams, critiques, etc.
- Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Externally situated performance assessments such as internships or other community-based projects
- Portfolios (a purposeful collection of student work showcasing achievement of learning objectives)
- Capstone projects (including senior theses), courses, or experiences
- Rubrics (published or locally developed)
- Alumni surveys, focus groups, or interviews
- Employer surveys, focus groups, or interview

4. Of the approaches your institution uses, please list the THREE that are most valuable or important to assess student learning at the institution level.

a. \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_ c. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Are the results of certificate, diploma, and undergraduate student learning outcomes assessment included in the **review of programs**? Mark the one that best describes your institution.

- Yes, in the review of ALL programs.
- Yes, in the review of SOME programs.
- No.
- We do not require program reviews.

6. To what extent do the following institutional structures, resources, and features **support assessment activities**? Mark one response for each item.

**Very Much**      **Quite a Bit**      **Some**      **Not at All**

- |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Institutional policies/statements related to assessing certificate, diploma, and undergraduate learning | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Assessment committee  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Institutional research office and personnel   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Professional staff dedicated to assessment  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Professional development opportunities for faculty and staff on assessment                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Center for teaching and learning  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. Significant involvement of faculty in assessment  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. Significant involvement of student affairs staff in assessment  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i. Student participation in assessment activities  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| j. Funds targeted for outcomes assessment  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| k. Assessment management system or software  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| l. Recognition and/or reward for faculty and staff involvement in assessment activities                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| m. Other (Specify: _____)  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

7. What are the most effective means for sharing assessment results within the institution, across units and levels? Check up to three.

- |   |   |                                      |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Deans council                | <input type="checkbox"/> Website     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Email updates              | <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment committee         | <input type="checkbox"/> By request  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty meeting or retreat | <input type="checkbox"/> Online data management tools | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

8. To what extent are the following publicly available (such as on the institution publications, or in press releases)? Mark one response for each item.

- |  | <b>Very Much</b>         | <b>Quite a Bit</b>       | <b>Some</b>              | <b>Not at All</b>        |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Student learning outcomes statements            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Assessment plans                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Assessment resources                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Current assessment activities                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Evidence of student learning                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Improvement plans                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. Examples of use of evidence of student learning | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. Impact of use of assessment data                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

9. To what extent are student learning assessment results **used** for the following? Mark one response for each item.

- |                          | <b>Very Much</b>         | <b>Quite a Bit</b>       | <b>Some</b>              | <b>Not at All</b>        | <b>N/A</b>               |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Program accreditation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- |   |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| b. External accountability reporting requirements | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Governing Board/ Senate deliberations          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Strategic planning                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Institutional benchmarking                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Academic policy development or modification    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. Learning goals revision                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. Program review                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i. Curriculum modification                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| j. Institutional improvement                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| k. Resource allocation and budgeting              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| l. Professional development for faculty and staff | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| m. Alumni communication                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| n. Prospective student and family information     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| o. Other (specify: _____)                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

10. To what extent have you made **changes** in policies, programs or practices **based on assessment results** for each of the following? Mark one response for each item.
- |   | <b>Very Much</b>         | <b>Quite a Bit</b>       | <b>Some</b>              | <b>Not at All</b>        |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. At the institution level                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. At the school/college level                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. At the department/program level                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. In specific curricular requirements or courses | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

11. How well does your current institutional **organization and governance structure(s)** support assessment of student learning?
- |  | <b>Very Much</b>         | <b>Quite a Bit</b>       | <b>Some</b>              | <b>Not at All</b>        |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

12. How **important** are the following **factors or forces** in prompting your institution **to assess** certificate, diploma, and undergraduate student learning outcomes? Mark one response for each item.
- |  | <b>High Importance</b>   | <b>Moderate Importance</b> | <b>Minor Importance</b>  | <b>No Importance</b>     |
|--|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Faculty or staff interest in improving student learning | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Institutional commitment to improve                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. President and/or governing board direction or mandate   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| d. Program accreditation   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Participation in a consortium or multi-institution collaboration            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. External funding (federal, provincial, or foundation grants)                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. National calls for accountability and/or transparency                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. Concerns about the effectiveness and value of postsecondary education       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i. Institutional membership initiatives (e.g., Transparency by Design, AAUDE,) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| j. Other (specify: _____)  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

13. What would be **most helpful** to your institution as you assess certificate, diploma, and undergraduate student learning? Mark no more than five of the following.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> More professional development for faculty and staff                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional financial or staff resources   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greater institutional assessment staff capacity                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Information on best practice approaches   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increased student participation in assessment activities                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Greater sharing and access to assessment results across units and levels of the institution                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More faculty involved in assessing student learning                         | <input type="checkbox"/> More valid and reliable assessment measures   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More faculty using the results of student learning assessment               | <input type="checkbox"/> More student affairs staff involved in assessing student learning   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More opportunities to collaborate with other institutions                   | <input type="checkbox"/> External funding (federal, provincial, or research grants)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More student affairs staff using the results of student learning assessment | <input type="checkbox"/> Technologies and analytics that aggregate assessment results at various levels to represent overall institutional performance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stronger administrative and leadership support                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify: _____)  |

14. What are you **most hopeful** about in terms of assessing student learning at your institution?

15. What are your **main concerns** in regard to assessing student learning at your institution?

16. What is the **most positive outcome** of your institution level student learning assessment activities? Who might we contact to learn more about this?

17. With what **issues or topics** regarding assessing student learning does your institution need assistance?

18. May we **contact you** to obtain additional information about what your institution is doing in terms of student learning outcomes assessment?

Yes

No

Thank you for your help!

## Key Terms

AAUDE	The Association of American Universities Data Exchange (AAUDE) is a public service organization whose purpose is to improve the quality and usability of information about higher education.
ACCUPLACER	ACCUPLACER placement tests evaluate students' knowledge in math, reading, and writing
ACT Compass	ACT Compass is an untimed, computerized tests that helps a college evaluate students' skills and place them into appropriate courses. ACT Compass offers tests in reading, writing, math, writing essay and English as a Second Language (ESL).
AHELO	Assessment of Higher Education learning outcomes (AHELO) is an assessment of what students in higher education know and can do upon graduation
CAEL	The Canadian Academic English Language Assessment (CAEL) is a standardized test of a student's ability to use English in an academic context.
CCSSE	The Community College Survey of Student Achievement (CCSSE) provides information on student engagement
CELT	The Comprehensive English Language Test (CELT) is an assessment of English Language proficiency for English as a second language students
CLA	The Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) is a test that uses performance-based tasks to evaluate the critical thinking and written-communication skills of post-secondary students.
ELP	The English Language Proficiency (ELP) test is used to assess undergraduate students' writing skills. It is a 70 minute hand-written essay exam.
NGS	The National Graduate Survey (NGS) was designed to determine such factors as the extent to which graduates of postsecondary programs had been successful in obtaining employment since graduation and the graduates' job and career satisfaction.
NSSE	The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) collects information at hundreds of four-year colleges and universities about first-year and senior students' participation in programs and activities that intuitions provide for their learning and personal development. The results provide an estimate of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from attending college.
TOEFL	The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) measures students' ability to use and understand English at the university level. It evaluate how well you combine your listening, reading, speaking and writing skills to perform academic tasks.
Transparency by Design	A consortium of accredited colleges and universities aimed at providing adult learners with better information about choosing a degree-granting, online education institution.
UCUES	The University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) provides a detailed portrait of students' background, academic and co-curricular activities, goals and aspirations, experiences with academic and administrative units, self-assessments of gains in academic and social skills, interactions with other students, engagement in community service and civic activities, perceived obstacles to academic success and many other topics.