



Briefing Note

Developing an Additional Qualification on Holocaust Education and Countering Antisemitism and Developing a Professional Advisory to Counter Hate and Intolerance

Issue

In recent years, there has been an alarming rise in incidents of antisemitism specifically, and hate crimes in general. Statistics Canada data shows that police-reported hate crimes have increased 72% over the last two years, with the majority of these crimes targeting religion. Hate crimes against Jewish people account for over half of the hate crimes reported nationally and those committed against Muslims represent almost one third.

In Ontario, the 2020 Toronto Police Services publication on Hate Crimes noted that antisemitism accounted for 43.3% of all hate crimes in Ontario last year, while the Jewish population represents approximately 1.8% of the province's population. Almost half of the youth respondents in a recent study, conducted by Western University and Liberation 75, on Antisemitism and Holocaust knowledge in Canada had witnessed an antisemitic event. The youth study also found that one in three students think that the Holocaust was fabricated.

Within this climate, the College has received several requests from community organizations regarding the development of a Professional Advisory (PA) and/or an Additional Qualification (AQ) course to address antisemitism. The College has also received requests from stakeholders to develop responses to Islamophobia and other forms of hate. In November 2022,

the provincial government announced that Ontario will implement its first mandatory learning requirement in elementary school on Holocaust education in the Grade 6 curriculum. New professional learning opportunities will help prepare Ontario teachers to respond both to the current social context and to enhanced curriculum expectations.

Background

The authority to initiate the development of an AQ belongs to the Council, as recommended by the Standards of Practice and Education (SP&E) Committee. AQ topics are identified in several ways, including through requests from stakeholders. The authority to initiate the development of a Professional Advisory (PA) belongs to the SP&E Committee. As with AQs, topics for PAs may be brought forward to the College by stakeholders prior to being reviewed and researched by College staff.

In fall 2022, the Chair of Council received a letter from the Minister of Education, directing the College to propose amendments to Ontario Regulation 176/10 (Teachers' Qualifications) by adding an Additional Qualification (AQ) course on *Holocaust Education and Countering Antisemitism*. The development of an AQ to support Holocaust education and counter Antisemitism is in alignment with the College's commitment to eradicating

discrimination from the province's education system.

The last PA published by the College was the 2021 *Professional Advisory (PA) on Anti-Black Racism*. This PA was well-received by stakeholders for its examination of how Ontario Certified Teachers (OCTs) can work toward overcoming long-standing and historical legacies and break down deeply entrenched systemic barriers. Professional Advisories are plain language summaries of policies and legislation that govern the practices of Ontario's teachers. They are aligned with the College's Standards of Professional Practice and Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession. The College has produced eleven Professional Advisories since 2008, addressing topics such as professional boundaries, supporting students' mental health, and teachers' duty to report suspected neglect or abuse of children.

Legislative Context

The duties of the SP&E Committee as established in Ontario Regulation 563/21 include:

- reviewing and approving policy guidelines for programs of additional qualification; and
- reviewing and approving professional advisories to guide the practice of members of the College.

The SP&E Committee's recommendation will enable Council to proceed with the following:

- proposed amendments to Ontario Regulation 176/10 (Teachers' Qualifications) that would add an Additional Qualification (AQ) course on *Holocaust Education and Countering Antisemitism*
- development of a new Professional Advisory (PA) to inform members of the

College of their professional responsibilities to uphold human rights and combat hate and intolerance.

Considerations

It can take approximately two years for the necessary amendment to Ontario Regulation 176/10 to add a new AQ and for the guideline development for a dedicated additional qualification on *Holocaust Education and Countering Antisemitism* to be completed.

In the meantime, AQ providers could offer a focused version of the existing Social Studies, Primary and Junior AQ, that would offer professional learning in alignment with curricular change. No regulatory amendment is required. A *Holocaust Studies and Countering Antisemitism Focused Social Studies, Primary and Junior AQ (Schedule D)* could potentially be developed by providers and accredited by the College within six months.

When a teacher completes the focused version of an existing AQ, the qualification recorded on their certificate of qualification and registration (CQR) is the AQ name as it appears in Regulation, with no mention of the focus. This approach would provide an intermediary response to needs identified in the sector while awaiting AQ development and regulatory amendments.

The College often informs providers of the possibility of developing a focused version of an existing AQ. This approach allows providers to address specific professional learning needs identified in the sector in a timely manner. This is a regular part of AQ accreditation procedure, and requires neither Committee approval nor regulatory change. Existing focused AQs include:

- Principal's Qualification Program, Parts 1 and 2 – Private School Focus
- ABQ - Junior Division – Leadership Focus
- Reading, Parts 1, 2 and Specialist – Early Years Focus.

Schedule D AQs consist of three parts that enable teachers to pursue a Specialist qualification in a given subject area. The College received feedback from stakeholders that the fact that the Anti-Black Racism (ABR) AQ was developed as a Schedule D AQ limited opportunities for educators who were unable to commit to a 3-part AQ; this was noted particularly by the Ontario Principals' Council.

Nonetheless, the advisory committee of scholars and educators convened to guide the development of the ABR AQ advocated strongly for it to be offered as a Schedule D AQ. Confining the AQ to another Schedule (e.g., Schedule C) that does not enable candidates to achieve the Specialist qualification that Schedule D AQs provide, poses a risk of being interpreted as perpetuating oppression of marginalized peoples.

For this reason, if a new *Holocaust Studies and Countering Antisemitism* AQ is to be developed, it should appear in Schedule D. Further consideration should be given to developing both the proposed new AQ and the ABR AQ to appear in Schedule C as well.

College staff can offer an information session for AQ providers that would raise awareness of the following:

- pending development of a new AQ entitled *Holocaust Studies and Countering Antisemitism*;
- the possibility of submitting a focused version of the existing Social Studies, Primary and Junior AQ for accreditation;
- existing resources provided by organizations such as Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies (FSWC) and Liberation 75 to support teachers' ongoing professional learning and professional practice in relation to Holocaust Education and antisemitism; and
- the pending development of a Professional Advisory (PA) addressing teachers' professional responsibilities to uphold human rights and combat hate and intolerance.

Staff regularly provide information sessions for AQ providers on a variety of topics. This is a procedural practice that supports risk reduction and stakeholder engagement.

Development of the proposed AQ and a PA will be informed by broad community consultation. FSWC and Liberation 75 will contribute to the development of the AQ. PA development will involve a number of stakeholder and advocacy organizations including The Abraham Global Peace Initiative and Muslim Educators of Ontario.

An approach to deliver both an AQ and a PA highlights the Standards of Practice *Ongoing Professional Learning and Professional Knowledge* by fostering multiple professional learning opportunities that respond to sector needs and align with curricular change.

Options

- Recommend the development of the new Schedule D AQ and the new PA described above.
- Recommend the development of the Schedule D AQ only.
- Recommend the development of the PA only.

- Do not recommend the development of either the AQ or the PA.

Recommendation

- The Standards of Practice and Education (SP&E) Committee recommend to Council that a new Additional Qualification in Schedule D, entitled *Holocaust Education and Countering Antisemitism*, be developed
- The SP&E Committee endorse the development of a new Professional Advisory to inform members of the College of their professional responsibilities to uphold human rights and combat hate and intolerance.

Council Motion

That the Standards of Practice and Education Committee request that the Council recommend to the Minister of Education that a new Additional Qualification entitled, *Holocaust Education and Countering Antisemitism / Éducation à l'Holocauste et lutte contre l'antisémitisme* be enacted in Schedule D of the Teachers' Qualifications Regulation.

Next Steps

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATION COURSE DEVELOPMENT

- If the SP&E Committee supports the development of a new AQ course guideline entitled *Holocaust Studies and Countering Antisemitism*, the SP&E Committee will recommend to Council that a request for an amendment to Regulation 176/10 be made to allow for the addition of the new AQ course guideline.
- If Council endorses the development of the new AQ course guideline, the

College will send a letter to the Minister, outlining Council's request for the required regulatory amendment.

- Once the amendment is enacted, College staff will assemble a group of subject matter experts to develop guidelines for the new AQ. Guideline development will be informed by consultation and provincial validation.
- Once the SP&E Committee reviews and approves the final AQ course guideline, the guideline will be posted and AQ providers can submit courses for accreditation.

PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY DEVELOPMENT

- If the SP&E Committee supports the development of a new Professional Advisory to inform members of the College of their professional responsibilities as teachers to uphold human rights and combat hate and intolerance College staff will commence research and development.
- PA development will include rigorous consultation with stakeholders and experts in the field. The SP&E Committee will be provided with regular updates on the advisory development process and an opportunity for interim reviews of the advisory document. The PA will require SP&E Committee approval prior to publication.
- Council will be kept apprised of developments of the PA via the Registrar's Report and a final version will be tabled as information at the appropriate Council meeting.
- The PA will be published on the College website and distributed to members electronically.

Prepared by:

Standards of Practice and Accreditation, and
Policy, Governance and Tribunals
Departments

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