

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **How does the OYAP option differ from regular co-op?**

OYAP is a specialization of co-operative education with a focus on providing co-op students with work experience placements in the skilled trades. Students in a skilled trade placement fall under the OYAP option of co-operative education.

## **Who qualifies for OYAP?**

Students who are at least 16 years of age, with sixteen credits can be considered for the OYAP option of co-operative education.

## **Who are the best candidates for the OYAP option?**

Students who demonstrate a career interest in a skilled trade, are hands-on learners and have an aptitude in the skilled trades are good candidates for the OYAP option.

## **How does a student enrol in the OYAP option?**

Students interested in OYAP are required to enrol in co-operative education. Students who are in placements in the skilled trades are recognized by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development as students in the OYAP option. Students are required to complete an OYAP Participant Application Form and are entered in the Ministry database for follow-up.

## **How many OYAP work experience placements can a student participate in?**

Since OYAP has a long-term focus students are encouraged to take more than one co-op course over a two-year period. Additional placements increase the opportunity for registration as an apprentice and enable the student/apprentice to achieve additional skills and hours toward journey person status.

## **When are students registered as apprentices?**

Students can be officially registered as apprentices at any time during their work experience placement. Once they demonstrate an interest and aptitude for a skilled trade, and the employer is agreeable, arrangements are made with the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development. It is advantageous to register students as apprentices while they are in high school. Approximately 25% of students enrolled in the OYAP option are registered as apprentices. Registration is not automatic.

## **Why register students as apprentices while they are in high school?**

It is not easy for young people to find apprenticeship opportunities without a support system. Once they have graduated they are on their own. Students who wait until they have graduated from high school often experience difficulty finding apprenticeship opportunities.

Often they are not familiar with the process, where to go and who to approach. With a school board support system in place through OYAP, high school students who are suited for an apprenticeship, receive the direction and support they need to begin an apprenticeship while they are in high school.

### **How does a student get signed on as an apprentice?**

Co-op teachers and employers are vital in supporting OYAP and in identifying students who are suitable candidates for apprenticeship registration. Once the co-op teacher has identified students as apprenticeship ready, arrangements are made with the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development, employer and the student to sign Ministry documents. These documents consist of an Application for apprenticeship Training, Training Agreement and Sponsor Agreement and Membership Application to the Ontario College of Trades.

Students under the age of 18 must have these signed by a parent or guardian.

### **Will the apprenticeship continue once the student graduates from high school?**

The intent of OYAP is to provide students with a stepping-stone towards an apprenticeship with the hope of continuation. However, continuation largely depends on the circumstances of the employer. Students who do well have a distinct advantage over those who have not taken the OYAP option. To support continuation a number of subsidies are available for employers who wish to retain the apprentice after high school graduation.

### **What is the credit value of an OYAP work experience placement?**

Students can take a two-credit co-op, which is a half-day work experience placement or a four credit full day work experience placement. In addition, summer school offers students the opportunity to complete credits. Summer co-op allows students who are registered as apprentices to continue to accumulate hours and skills toward their trade.

### **Is additional support available for students in the OYAP option?**

The OYAP program provides support and vocational information for students interested in pursuing the skilled trades. This may include support for the purchase of safety boots, safety glasses, exemption from paying registration fees to the Ontario College of Trades, participation in Skills Ontario competitions, copies of training standards, additional certifications, etc.

### **What are the main advantages of participating in the OYAP option?**

OYAP students have a definite advantage. Students are provided with enriched work experience placements and resources that can help them begin a career in the skilled trades as an apprentice. Many students secure part time jobs after school hours, during the weekends or during the summer months. While working, registered apprentices continue to develop skills and accumulate hours toward a skilled trade.

Specifically, the OYAP option allows students to officially register as apprentices while they are in high school, resulting in a considerable acceleration toward journey person status at a young age. For example, students who are signed on as apprentices while in high school, assuming they continue their apprenticeship after high school graduation, become qualified journey persons eight to ten years ahead of their peers. Many co-op students in the OYAP option become qualified

journey persons by age 23. This is significant given that the average age of an apprentice in Ontario is between 26 – 28 years while the average age of an OYAP apprentice is 18. Approximately 25% of students in the OYAP option are registered as apprentices while in high school.

### **Must apprentices complete a college post secondary program?**

Students who take the apprenticeship route through OYAP are not required to complete a college post diploma secondary program. Registered apprentices are provided with the opportunity to attend in-school training at a college (trade school) or approved training delivery agent after graduation. This is available as either a day release or a block release program. In-school training is subsidized by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development.

### **What is in-school training?**

In-school training is the theoretical component of an apprenticeship program and usually takes place after high school graduation. The financial value of in-school training is approximately \$3,000 per apprentice per level, a portion paid by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development.

The apprentice is required to pay \$400 – \$600 for each level of in-school training. Since apprentices earn while they learn, subsidized in-school training is cost effective in comparison to paying regular college tuition/fees. In-school training is also available to OYAP apprentices at Cambrian College through the school college work initiative in General Carpentry, Welding and Commercial Vehicle/HDET.

### **How does a Training Standard benefit a co-op student in the OYAP option?**

**Registered apprentices in the OYAP option are provided with a Training Standard related to their trade. Apprentices refer to the Training Standard during their co-op placements. The employer signs off skill sets once the apprentice can demonstrate proficiency.**

### **What if a student in the OYAP option wants to enrol in a college post-secondary program?**

No doors are closed. If they are registered as apprentices while in high school and they wish attend a community college post secondary school diploma after graduation, they can put their apprenticeship on hold. Once they graduate from college they can resume their apprenticeship.

### **Is it acceptable to place a student in the OYAP option with their parents or relatives during work experience placements?**

Yes, it is acceptable to place students with a parent or relative under the OYAP option if they are qualified journey persons. This arrangement nicely supports succession planning, in situations where the parent or relative owns the business.

**Can students in the OYAP option receive pay during school hours?**

Yes, students receiving co-op credits in the OYAP option can receive pay during school hours in addition to co-op credits. However, the employer must assume WSIB responsibility.

**If a student wishes to take the OYAP option but this poses a timetable conflict, can the school accommodate the student?**

Students are assessed on an individual basis. It is important to accommodate the student's learning style to increase the likelihood of graduation. Students who are hands on learners tend to better grasp math, English and science as a result of being in a work experience placement. Flexibility in timetabling can be beneficial to the student.

**What level of education is required to go into the skilled trades?**

A majority of the skilled trades require a Grade 12 diploma. The OYAP program enables high school students to begin their apprenticeship training while working toward an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. This is an agreement with the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development.

**What level of math, English and science is required to pursue an apprenticeship?**

MAESD's main focus is with the completion of an Ontario Secondary School Diploma or working towards the completion of an OSSD. Senior math and science is recommended.