

# **INFORMATION DOCUMENT**

Examinations for

Elementary and Secondary School

**Québec** 

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Elementary and Secondary School

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## INTRODUCTION

This document contains information on uniform, compulsory and complementary examinations whose preparation is ensured annually by the ministère de l'Éducation. The purpose of this document is to inform school boards and private schools about the aims and procedures involved in producing each type of examination intended for elementary and secondary school students in the youth sector.

These examinations are developed by teams of teachers and education consultants working under the persons responsible for evaluation at the Direction de la formation générale des jeunes of the ministère de l'Éducation.

## **PART I: Uniform Examinations**

### **1. Definition**

Uniform examinations are summative examinations used for the evaluation of student learning of subjects designated as compulsory for the certification of studies. Other subjects may be selected providing they are prerequisites to certain college-level programs. These compulsory examinations are administered to students in Secondary IV or V under standardized conditions on a date determined in the official examination schedule.

These examinations are prepared for the June, August and January sessions.

The pass mark is set at 60 percent and the examination counts for 50 percent of the final mark.

### **2. Subjects and Levels**

In 1997-98, the subjects and levels are as follows:

- Language of instruction, Secondary V
- Second language, Secondary V
- History of Québec and Canada, Secondary IV
- Physical sciences, Secondary IV

### **3. Aims**

Uniform examinations are designed primarily to:

- certify secondary school studies;
- issue diplomas whose requirements are socially recognized;
- standardize students' marks in compulsory subjects for the certification of studies and in subjects which are prerequisites to college studies.

#### **4. Type of Examination**

Uniform examinations are comprehensive examinations used for summative evaluation. They measure students' attainment of objectives determined in the programs of study according to the breakdown specified in the definition of the domain.

These examinations are compulsory for school boards and private schools.

#### **5. Preparation of Examinations**

##### **5.1 Definition of the Domain**

Since the definition of the domain synthesizes a program's orientations and objectives and presents a table of the essential and representative elements, it serves as the basis for the preparation of a uniform examination.

##### **5.2 Procedure**

The Direction de la formation générale des jeunes is responsible for the preparation of uniform examinations. It coordinates the following: the writing of questions or tasks, the validation of content, linguistic revision, field-testing (if applicable) and the preparation of the final version.

In order to fulfil its mandate, the Direction de la formation générale des jeunes asks teachers and education consultants to assist with the writing, validation and testing of the examination. These professionals come from different administrative regions.

##### **5.3 Information Documents**

During the fall, the Direction de la formation générale des jeunes sends school boards and private schools information documents about these examinations. These documents specify such things as the form and content of the examinations.

## **6. Composition of Examinations**

A uniform examination generally contains the following: a student booklet, an answer booklet, an answer sheet or a writing booklet, an examiner's booklet, a marking guide and an answer key or a marking scale.

## **7. Printing and Distribution of Examinations**

The Ministère prints the examination for all students and is responsible for its distribution.

## **8. Administration of Examinations**

Uniform examinations are administered to Secondary IV or V students under standardized conditions on a date determined in the official examination schedule.

## **9. Marking of Examinations**

Multiple-choice questions are corrected at the Ministère and free-response questions are corrected locally under the responsibility of school boards and private schools. For free-response questions, the Ministère provides an answer key or marking scale and a marking guide, which markers must respect when correcting the examinations.

## **10. Analysis of Results**

The Ministère may analyze a sample of corrected student examinations. In this case, the Ministère provides school boards and private schools with a report on the results of this analysis.

## **PART II: Compulsory Examinations**

### **1. Definition**

Compulsory examinations are summative examinations used for the evaluation of student learning of certain subjects that are not required for the certification of studies. These examinations are prepared by the Ministère and administered to students under standardized conditions on a date determined in the official examination schedule.

These examinations are prepared for the June session only.

### **2. Subjects and Levels**

Until now, compulsory examinations have been used for the evaluation of French, language of instruction, in Elementary 6 and Secondary III.

Eventually, compulsory examinations could be developed in other subjects.

### **3. Aims**

Compulsory examinations are designed primarily to:

- promote improvement in students' competence in a given subject;
- determine students' performance level at a given time in their schooling;
- highlight student's strengths and weaknesses;
- promote fair and equitable practices for all students.

#### **4. Type of Examination**

Compulsory examinations are comprehensive examinations used for summative evaluation. They measure students' attainment of objectives determined in the programs of study according to the breakdown specified in the definition of the domain.

These examinations are compulsory for school boards and private schools.

#### **5. Preparation of Examinations**

##### **5.1 Definition of the Domain**

Since the definition of the domain synthesizes a program's orientations and objectives and presents a table of the essential and representative elements, it serves as the basis for the preparation of a compulsory examination.

##### **5.2 Procedure**

The Direction de la formation générale des jeunes is responsible for the preparation of compulsory examinations. It coordinates the following: the writing of questions or tasks, the validation of content, linguistic revision, field-testing (if applicable) and the preparation of the final version.

In order to fulfil its mandate, the Direction de la formation générale des jeunes asks teachers and education consultants to assist with the writing, validation and testing of the examination. These professionals come from different administrative regions.

##### **5.3 Information Documents**

During the fall, the Direction de la formation générale des jeunes prepares and sends school boards and private schools information documents about these examinations. These documents specify such things as the form and content of the examinations, and the conditions for administering them.

## **6. Composition of Examinations**

For the time being, the only compulsory examination is the writing examination, which generally contains a student booklet, a writing booklet, an examiner's guide and a marking guide.

For the Secondary III examination in French, language of instruction, a preparation booklet is given to students several days prior to the examination.

## **7. Printing and Distribution of Examinations**

The Ministère prints the examination for all students and send it to school boards and private schools.

## **8. Administration of Examinations**

School boards and private schools are responsible for administering compulsory examinations. They must, however, respect the examination schedule established by the Ministère and the conditions for administration which are described in the teacher's guide; in no case may the examination date be altered.

## **9. Marking of Examinations**

The examinations are corrected locally under the responsibility of the school boards and private schools according to the marking guide provided by the Ministère.

## **10. Analysis of Results**

The Ministère may analyze a sample of corrected student examinations and provides school boards and private schools with a report on the results of this analysis.

Until now, the analysis has been used to obtain information on the performance of Québec students and to highlight their strengths and weaknesses. The analysis could also shed light on the progress of student performance over several years, for example.

This analysis is not used for comparing student results obtained in the various school boards and private schools. Rather, it is intended for obtaining data on the examination itself and on student learning.

## **PART III: Complementary Examinations**

### **1. Definition**

Complementary examinations are summative examinations used for the evaluation of student learning of compulsory or optional subjects and offered to school boards and private schools as support material. These optional examinations are administered to students on a date determined in the official examination schedule.

These examinations are prepared for the June session only.

### **2. Subjects and Levels**

Complementary examinations may be prepared for any subject. In elementary school, however, priority is given to the subjects taught at the end of each cycle and, in secondary school, to the compulsory subjects.

For elementary school, the Ministère annually prepares French examinations for Elementary 3 and 6 students and, occasionally, a mathematics examination for Elementary 6 students and English Language Arts examinations for Elementary 3 and 6 students. For secondary school, the Ministère annually prepares examinations in French, language of instruction, and mathematics.

With respect to the other programs in elementary and secondary school, a calendar specifies the programs and levels for which examinations will be prepared. This calendar is established two years in advance and is sent every March to school boards and private schools.

### **3. Aims**

The complementary examinations prepared by the Ministère are designed primarily to:

- support the school boards and private schools in their summative

- evaluations of student learning;
- contribute to the application of programs;
  - encourage the practice of making summative evaluations as accurate as possible;
  - explore new practices in summative evaluation;
  - gather data periodically on student learning.

#### **4. Type of Examination**

Complementary examinations are comprehensive examinations used for summative evaluation. They measure students' attainment of objectives determined in the programs of study according to the breakdown specified in the definition of the domain.

These examinations are optional for school boards and private schools. However, if they are used, it is strongly recommended that they be used as they are. The examination in its original form guarantees a balance between the various skills and the different areas of knowledge covered by the program, as explained in the table of dimensions in the definition of the domain.

Preparation of a complementary examination may provide an opportunity to introduce a new type of evaluation instrument.

#### **5. Preparation of Examinations**

##### **5.1 Definition of the Domain**

Since the definition of the domain synthesizes a program's orientations and objectives and presents a table of the essential and representative elements, it serves as the basis for the preparation of a complementary examination.

##### **5.2 Procedure**

The Direction de la formation générale des jeunes is responsible for the

preparation of complementary examinations. It coordinates the following: the writing of questions or tasks, the validation of content, linguistic revision, field-testing (if applicable), the setting of a performance standard (if necessary) and the preparation of the final version.

In order to fulfil its mandate, the Direction de la formation générale des jeunes asks teachers and education consultants to assist with the writing, validation and testing of the examination. These professionals come from different administrative regions.

### **5.3 Information Documents**

During the fall, the Direction de la formation générale des jeunes sends school boards and private schools information documents about these examinations. These documents specify such things as the form and content of the examinations.

## **6. Composition of Examinations**

A complementary examination generally contains the following: a student booklet, an answer booklet, an answer sheet or a writing booklet, a marking guide and an answer key or a marking scale.

## **7. Printing and Distribution of Examinations**

The Ministère sends two copies of the examination to all school boards and private schools, which are responsible for printing it for their students. In the case of an examination that requires colour printing, the Ministère prints the examination for all students.

## **8. Administration of Examinations**

School boards and private schools are responsible for administering complementary examinations. They must, however, respect the examination schedule established by the Ministère. In no case may the examination date be moved forward.

## **9. Marking of Examinations**

The school boards and private schools are responsible for marking the examination according to the answer key or marking scale and marking guide provided by the Ministère. The results may be interpreted using the suggested performance standard or the pass mark.

## **10. Analysis of Results**

The Ministère may analyze a sample of corrected student examinations. In this case, the Ministère provides school boards and private schools with a report on the results of this analysis.

This analysis is not used for comparing student results obtained in the various school boards and private schools. Rather, it is intended for obtaining data on the examination itself and on student learning.

### Characteristics of Ministry Examinations

Responsibility	Uniform Examinations	Compulsory Examinations	Complementary Examinations
	Secondary Cycle Two	Elementary and Secondary Cycle One	Elementary and Secondary
<b>Preparation of examinations</b> Ministère de l'Éducation School Boards and Private Schools	X	X	X
<b>Printing of examinations</b> Ministère de l'Éducation School Boards and Private Schools	X	X	X
<b>Marking of examinations</b> Ministère de l'Éducation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student population</li> <li>• Sample</li> </ul> School Boards and Private Schools	X X*	X X	X X
<b>Processing of examination results</b> Ministère de l'Éducation School Boards and Private Schools	X	X	X
<b>Redoing of examinations</b> Ministère de l'Éducation School Boards and Private Schools	X		

\* Language examinations, with the exception of the Secondary V writing examination, and free-response questions on other uniform examinations





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