

Ontario Ministry of Education - Identity-Based Data Census Content

IMPORTANT NOTES:

Boards are required to use the content in this draft document as the basis for their student census, subject to exceptions noted in the document.

References throughout this document to the “Standards” means the [Ontario’s Anti-Racism Data Standards](#) under the Anti-Racism Act, 2017. The Standards are applicable to specific Public Sector Organizations (PSOs), including school boards.

The Standards apply to the questions on Indigenous Identity, Ethnic Origin, Race and Religion. For questions on Indigenous Identity, Race and Religion the Standards set out a required list of responses. For the Ethnic Origin question, PSOs may offer a drop-down list or an open text box response. For all other questions, boards may determine whether to provide a drop-down list or an open text box for responses. Boards may consider factors such as which option is more likely to increase the response rate for the question; the requirements of a paper versus an electronic survey; and for analyzing responses.

Subject to the requirements in the Standards, boards may include additional questions and response options in their student census.

Text boxes throughout the census contain student friendly descriptions of the data categories (e.g. race, ethnicity, etc.) which boards may use.

Language(s) First Spoken ¹

What is the first language(s) you learned to speak as a child? Select all that apply.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Sign Language | <input type="checkbox"/> Gujarati | <input type="checkbox"/> Serbian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Albanian | <input type="checkbox"/> Hebrew ² | <input type="checkbox"/> Somali |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arabic | <input type="checkbox"/> Hindi | <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bengali | <input type="checkbox"/> Hungarian | <input type="checkbox"/> Tagalog |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous language(s) ³ | <input type="checkbox"/> Tamil |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Croatian | <input type="checkbox"/> Drop down menu | <input type="checkbox"/> Ukrainian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dari | <input type="checkbox"/> Italian | <input type="checkbox"/> Urdu |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dutch | <input type="checkbox"/> Korean | <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> English | <input type="checkbox"/> Malayalam | <input type="checkbox"/> A language(s)
not listed above
(please specify): |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farsi | <input type="checkbox"/> Polish | <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> French | <input type="checkbox"/> Portuguese | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> German | <input type="checkbox"/> Punjabi | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greek | <input type="checkbox"/> Russian | |

¹ Based on top languages spoken in Ontario (2016 Census Data). Boards to expand categories or add locally applicable languages as needed.

² Even if not commonly spoken in a local board “Hebrew” is provided to ensure representative languages of the major world religions are included.

³ The Ontario Human Rights Commission recommends listing Indigenous languages spoken in the communities of the board within a drop-down menu. An open text box should be provided for an Indigenous language not listed above.

Indigenous Identity ⁴

Do you identify as First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit? If yes, select all that apply:

- No
- Yes, First Nations
- Yes, Métis
- Yes, Inuit

⁴ Standard 13 requires there be a distinct question on Indigenous identity in the format shown above, with the exception that the question and responses may be changed at the request of Indigenous communities, or if data sharing agreements are in place with Indigenous communities or organizations. Boards must, however be able to map all responses to “First Nations,” “Métis”, and “Inuit” for the purpose of analyses and reporting under the ARA. Board must sequence the questions so that Indigenous identity and ethnic origin questions are asked immediately prior to race.

Ethnic origin

Do you consider yourself a Canadian? ⁵

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

What is your ethnic or cultural origin(s)? ⁶ For example⁷, Anishnaabe, Canadian, Chinese, Colombian, Cree, Dutch, East Indian, English, French, Filipino, German, Guyanese, Haudenosaunee, Inuit, Iranian, Irish, Italian, Jamaican, Jewish, Korean, Lebanese, Métis, Mi'kmaq, Ojibwé, Pakistani, Polish, Portuguese, Scottish, Somali, Sri Lankan, Ukrainian, etc. Specify as many ethnic or cultural origins as apply⁸.

Ethnic groups have a common identity, heritage, ancestry, or historical past, often with identifiable cultural, linguistic and/or religious characteristics.

Race

⁵ This question allows students to identify as Canadian. It has been shown that when this question precedes the question on ethnic origin, that students will provide a greater depth of responses about their ethnic or cultural origins.

⁶ The question is required by Standard 17 to be in this format.

⁷ If an open response text box is used, then the list of examples shown must follow the question. Boards may add to the examples to better reflect their population (e.g. Arab, Haitian, Hungarian, Moroccan, Trinidadian, Tunisian, etc.) but may not remove any of the required examples. If using a drop-down list of response options, school boards can decide if the examples need to be presented as part of the question, or not. The drop-down list should include a comprehensive, yet user friendly number of response options from the Ontario 2016 Census (there are approximately 300). The Standards do not define what a sufficient number of responses would be for a drop-down menu, but it is suggested that it would be significantly more than the examples provided as part of the question.

⁸ Whether using an open text box or drop-down menu, respondents should be directed to specify as many ethnic or cultural origins as applicable.

In our society, people are often described by their race or racial background.⁹
Which racial group(s) best describes you? Select all that apply.¹⁰

- € Black (African, Afro-Caribbean, African-Canadian descent)
- € East Asian (Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Taiwanese descent)
- € Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit descent)
- € Latino/Latina/Latinx (Latin American, Hispanic descent)
- € Middle Eastern (Arab, Persian, West Asian descent, e.g. Afghan, Egyptian, Iranian, Lebanese, Turkish, Kurdish, etc.)
- € South Asian (South Asian descent, e.g. East Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, Indo-Caribbean, etc.)
- € Southeast Asian (Filipino, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Thai, Indonesian, other Southeast Asian descent)
- € White (European descent)
- € A racial group(s) not listed above.
(please specify):

People are often described as belonging to a certain “race” based how others see and behave toward them. These ideas about who belongs to what race are usually based on physical features such as skin colour. Ideas about race are often imposed on people by others in ways which can affect their life experiences and how they are treated. Race is often confused with ethnicity, but there can often be several ethnicities within a racialized group.

⁹ Standard 14 requires a preamble and question that enables individuals to self-report race as a social description or category.

¹⁰ Standard 15 sets out the required response options (Black, East Asian, etc.) Boards may not introduce subcategories under the required race categories except that East/Southeast Asian may be collected as two separate categories. Note further that “Not sure” and “I do not understand” are not valid responses under the Standards. Wherever feasible, online surveys, forms, and interviews must include the examples or descriptions provided to help individuals select the appropriate responses.

Religion or Spiritual Affiliation

What is your religion and/or spiritual affiliation? ¹¹ Select all that apply. ¹²

- Agnostic
- Atheist
- Buddhist
- Christian
- Hindu
- Indigenous Spirituality
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Spiritual, but not religious ¹³
- No religious or spiritual affiliation
- Religion(s) or spiritual affiliation(s)
not listed above (please specify):
- Not sure
- I do not understand this question

People can be treated differently based on their religion, or perceived religion, which can lead to negative impacts and unequal outcomes. Islamophobia and antisemitism are examples of the way religion can be racialized. People can experience racism not only based on skin colour but also other perceived characteristics that are associated with religion.

¹¹ Standard 16 sets out the question to be used as show above. Some boards have tested the addition of “creed or belief” in the question on the basis that response options (e.g. Atheist, Agnostic) are not religious or spiritual in nature. For boards testing the alternative question, the Anti-Racism Directorate suggests adding a preamble explaining the difference between the concepts listed in the question.

¹² Standard 16 requires the following nine response options: Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Indigenous Spirituality, No religion, Another religion or spiritual affiliation (option to provide open text response). Subcategories may be added to any of the response options. For example, under “Christian”, a board may include Catholic, Anglican, Protestant, Lutheran, etc., as subcategories. However, boards must be able to map responses to the nine categories for analysis and reporting.

¹³ The Ontario Human Rights Commission recommends “Spiritual, but not religious” to avoid overlap with other responses.

Gender Identity

What is your gender identity?

Gender identity refers to a person's internal sense or feeling of being a woman, a man, both, neither or anywhere on the gender spectrum, which may or may not be the same as the person's sex assigned at birth (e.g. male, female, intersex) It is different from and does not determine a person's sexual orientation.

Alternative format, if your board is providing a list of response options:

What is your gender identity? ¹⁴ Select all that apply.

- Boy/man
- Gender Fluid
- Gender Nonconforming
- Girl/woman
- Non-Binary
- Questioning
- Trans boy or man ¹⁵
- Trans girl or woman
- Two-Spirit
- Gender identity(ies) not listed above
(please specify):
- Not sure
- I do not understand this question
- I prefer not to answer

¹⁴ Boards may include a glossary of terms consistent with the [Ontario Public Service Glossary on Gender Identity](#).

¹⁵ Boards have suggested to split “Transgender” response option into “Trans boy or man” and “Trans girl or woman” to allow for more accurate representation and identification.

Sexual Orientation

What is your sexual orientation?

Sexual orientation refers to a person's sense of sexual attraction to people of the same or different sex.

Alternative format, if your board is providing a list of response options:

What is your sexual orientation? Select all that apply. ¹⁶

- Straight / heterosexual
- Lesbian
- Gay
- Bisexual
- Two-Spirit
- Queer
- Questioning
- Asexual
- Pansexual
- A sexual orientation(s) not listed above
(please specify):
- Not sure
- I do not understand this question
- I prefer not to answer

¹⁶ The most common responses are listed first to minimize first response bias shown to skew responses in this data category when the responses are listed alphabetically.

Disability

Some people identify as having a disability because of a permanent or long-term health condition that makes it difficult for them to function in an environment that is not fully inclusive and accessible. A person's disability may be diagnosed or not diagnosed. It may be hidden or visible. Some students who have disabilities may have a special plan at school to help them (an Individual Education Plan or IEP), but some do not.

Do you consider yourself to be a person with a disability(ies)? (Select one answer only)

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- I do not understand this question
- I prefer not to answer

A disability may be physical, mental, behavioural, developmental, sensory, communicational or a combination of any of these. Barriers such as settings that are hard to access (like school, shops or public places), negative attitudes, and barriers to information contribute to a person's experience of having a disability.

If yes, select all that apply.

- Addiction(s)
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Blind or low vision
- Deaf or hard of hearing
- Developmental disability(ies)
- Learning disability(ies)
- Mental health disability(ies)
- Mobility
- Pain
- Physical disability(ies)
- Speech impairment
- Any disability(ies) not listed above (please specify):

Status in Canada

Were you born in Canada?

- Yes No

If no, are you currently:

- a Canadian citizen
- an international student (enrolled through a study permit)
- a landed immigrant/permanent resident
- a refugee claimant
- Not sure
- I do not understand this question

Socio-economic Status ¹⁷

Parent/Guardian 1 that you currently live with most of the time

Please check your relation with this person. (Select one answer only)

- Mother
- Father
- Stepmother
- Stepfather
- Grandparent
- Relative
- Guardian
- Foster parent
- Friend
- A person not listed above (please specify):
- I'm living on my own

Please check the highest level of education this person completed. (Select one answer only)

- Did not complete any formal education
- Elementary school
- High school
- Apprenticeship
- College
- University
- Not sure

What is this person's employment status? (Select all that apply)

- Works full-time
- Works part-time
- Self-employed (for example, has own business)
- Looking for work
- Stay-at-home parent/guardian
- Retired
- Not sure

What is this person's job or occupation?

-
- Not sure

Duplicate for Parent/ Guardian 2 or "Skip this section if you are living with only one parent or guardian."

¹⁷ Boards may opt out of any or all of the questions in this data category if they have other sources of data to indicate socio-economic status (e.g. the Ontario Marginalization Index).