

# Mandatory Entry Level Training (MELT) Experience and Equivalency Class 1 Program Overview

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## Standard

The *Traffic Safety Act's* Operator Licensing and Vehicle Control Regulation requires an applicant for a first-time Class 1 driver's licence to successfully complete a training course that aligns with government standards and is approved by the government.

There are two sets of government standards for these training courses:

- The Class 1 Mandatory Entry Level Training Program standards; and
- The Experience and Equivalency Class 1 Mandatory Entry Level Training (MELT) Program standards.

This is the standard for the **Experience and Equivalency Class 1 MELT Program**.

The purpose of this standard is to ensure that applicants possess the basic knowledge and driving skills to safely operate a commercial vehicle that requires a Class 1 driver's licence to operate on Alberta roads.

While some of the elements related to work environments, it is not intended to focus on training and knowledge related to employment environments. Additional training and learning is expected to be provided on the job, related to employment specific business operations and policies.

It is required that all licensed driver training schools and licensed driving instructors adhere to this standard when providing training under the Experience and Equivalency Class 1 MELT Program. There is no constraint on licensed driver training schools and instructors going beyond this minimum specification.

This standard contains three parts:

- Course Delivery Standard
- Curriculum Standard
- Curriculum Framework

# Course Delivery Standard

## A. Learning Environments

Training will occur in three learning environments:

- In-class - refers to an educational setting inclusive of classroom, digital, and/or blended instruction facilitated by an licensed driving instructor. If self-directed through a Learning Management System, as described below, the student requires access to assistance by a licensed driving instructor.
- In-yard (around the vehicle) - refers to activities that occur around the vehicle when the vehicle is not moving (e.g., vehicle inspection). This component of training does not involve actual operation of the vehicle or any of the components.
- In-cab (behind the wheel) refers to the student operating behind the wheel of the vehicle either off-road or on-road. This includes coupling/uncoupling, backing exercises, and driving along.

Each of these learning environments lends itself to different methods of instruction. Simulators can be used as a learning tool for in-class instructor, but cannot be used to replace in-cab or in-yard hours.

## B. Digital Delivery Methods

The following are acceptable methods for delivering the in-class portion of the training digitally. Each curriculum, whether digital or blended, may utilize the following digital delivery methods, provided the solution meets the minimum learning standard:

- A Learning Management System (LMS) – a self-paced, self-directed course, which may include a virtual classroom component. The software manages the administration, documentation, tracking, grading, reporting, and delivery of educational training programs as opposed to a live instructor.
- A Virtual Classroom – A course that is delivered in real time by a live instructor using a video conferencing software/solution. Any video conferencing software/solution may be used for delivering the training in a virtual classroom, provided the solution meets the requirements stated in the learning standard.

Online driver training courses must meet the requirements specified in section 4.03.01 of the Licensed Driver Training Schools Policies and Procedures Manual.

## C. Course Structure

This course structure and content will continually reinforce driving theory, skills practice and promotion of positive driving attitudes in all educational settings/environments (i.e. in-class, in-yard and in-cab) using a variety of instructional strategies and methods as reasonable within each setting/environment.

Course structure and curriculum will:

- address all competencies as outlined in the framework. It is important to continually reinforce driving theory, skills practice and promotion of positive attitudes in all learning environments using a variety of instructional strategies and methods.
  - present all topics in a logical sequence allowing for the development of knowledge and skills throughout the different stages of learning to ensure all prerequisites are met.
  - be adaptable to meet individual learning needs (e.g. age, ability, culture) and regional needs.
1. There is a maximum 8 hours/day of instruction, unless a learning management system is used to provide in-class instruction. A combination of different training components may be incorporated within the eight hours. The eight hours include two 15 minutes breaks and a 60-minute lunch break. It should be recognized that lessons of increased duration may cause trainee fatigue and a decreased ability to learn. One 15-minute break is required if a lesson exceeds two hours. It should be provided near the mid-point of the lesson and may not be provided more than two hours into the lesson. Daily instruction may be, for example:
    - a. a) 1 hour of in-cab following 7 hours of classroom
    - b. b) 4 hours in-class, 2 hours in-yard, 2 hours in-cab
    - c. c) 1 hour in-class, 2 hours in-yard, 5 hours in-cab

2. In-class instruction requirements:
  - a. For in-person in-class instruction, licensed driving instructors and students must be present in the classroom during the instruction.
  - b. For virtual classroom instruction, licensed driving instructors must be available for facilitation or support and learners must be present during digital classroom instruction.
  - c. For learning management system instruction, licensed driving instructors must be available for support and learners must be present during digital classroom instruction.
3. In-yard and in-vehicle instruction requirements:
  - a. Behind-the-wheel training should not exceed six (6) hours in a day for each trainee.
4. Course work begun, but not completed, in another jurisdiction is non-transferable.

## D. Course Hours

For the purpose of determining the minimum hours required to meet the training requirements, the total hours represent 1:1 instruction between the student and instructor.

The following minimum required Instructional hours must be adhered to:

Course/ Hours	Classroom	In-Yard (Around the Vehicle)	In-Cab (Behind-the-Wheel)	Total Training Duration
<b>Experience and Equivalency Class 1</b>	11	6.5	22.50	40
<b>Air brake</b>	6.5	2.0 (including practical training and testing for a group of 3 trainees)	-	8.5
<b>Total</b>	17.50	8.5	22.50	48.5

## D. Student to Instructor Ratio

1. In-class - a maximum of 15 students (excluding Learning Management System delivery) will be permitted.
2. In-yard - one hour of in-yard time is required for 1:1 instruction, for up to four (4) students. The instructor must be present and leading activities. With four students who are working alone or together, without instructor-led activities, the in-yard time is not credited to the overall time. All students must be given equitable time for hands-on training.
3. In-cab - a maximum of two (2) students will be permitted. The behind-the-wheel time allotment is calculated by the number of students.

**Example: If one hour of BTW time is required, with two students in the cab, the time increases to two hours. A student may observe another student who is behind the wheel, however, observation time is not calculated toward completion of mandatory training hours.**

## E. Facility Requirements

The facility where the training is to take place must meet all *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) requirements, local municipal by-laws and adhere to the Alberta Transportation's requirements. The facility must have the following:

- Appropriate seating and tables for the number of trainees and instructors
- Washrooms
- Easily accessible emergency exits
- Adequate lighting
- Heating/cooling systems
- Exclusive use of an off-road facility large enough for off-road training and secure from other traffic to ensure student safety. The size of the facility must allow adequate space for all training manoeuvres.
- An alternative MELT off-road training facility must be within 15km from the driver training school classroom location.

Driving instructors must also wear high visibility clothing (e.g. reflective vests) as per the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* requirements when delivering training in the off-road facility.

## F. Vehicle Configuration

Training must be completed using a truck or tractor with the following configuration:

- Fully-equipped manual-shift tractor-trailer (minimum of 13 speed)
- Tractor-trailer combination gross vehicle weight of at least 11,794 kg
- Full-air brake system on both tractor and trailer
- Minimum tandem axle tractor and a tandem axle trailer
- Fifth wheel coupling device
  - a. Single trailer with a minimum length of 48 feet and a minimum distance of 35 feet measured from the kingpin to the centre of each rear axle
  - b. The vehicle be mechanically sound and must meet all applicable requirements outlined in the *Vehicle Equipment Regulation* and the *Commercial Vehicle Safety Regulation*.

## G. Student Qualifications

The following student qualifications must be met at the time of application to take the Experience and Equivalency Class 1 MELT Program, as demonstrated by the student having a letter from Alberta Transportation indicating they meet the qualifications.

Students must:

1. Be at least 18 years of age
2. Hold a non-probationary driver's licence
3. Hold a valid Alberta Class 1, 2 or 3 driver's licence;
4. Have held an Alberta Class 1, 2 or 3 driver's licence or the equivalent driver's licence from another Canadian jurisdiction for two (2) or more years;
  - a. Drivers who gained their two year of experience with holding a Class 1, 2 or 3 equivalent driver's licence in another Canadian jurisdiction must provide a driver's abstract from the other Canadian jurisdiction.
5. Have two (2) or more years of work experience operating a single motor vehicle with three (3) or more axles. To demonstrate that they meet this criterion, drivers must provide at minimum one of the following:
  - a. A signed letter(s) from an employer that states you have a minimum of two years' work experience operating a single motor vehicle with three or more axles. The letter must include the employer's contact information
  - b. A signed letter(s) from customers or suppliers that specifies that you operate a vehicle with three or more axles to provide your service to them and have provided the service for a minimum of two years. The letter must include the customers' or suppliers' contact information.
  - c. A daily log book for two year-period that meets the requirements under outlined in the Drivers' Hours of Service Regulation or the Government of Canada Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service

Regulation.

Applicants must submit a completed application and supporting documentation to [trans.driver.prog@gov.ab.ca](mailto:trans.driver.prog@gov.ab.ca). Once approved by the government, the applicant will receive an approval letter by email that they can bring to a licensed driver training school as verification of their eligibility to take the Experience and Equivalency Class 1 MELT Program. This applicant can then be registered to take the training.

## H. Organization Qualifications

Driver training schools must be licensed to provide the Experience and Equivalency Class 1 MELT Program. The requirements for licensed driver training schools for this program are the same as the Class 1 MELT Program. The application process and requirements are outlined in the *Licensed Driver Training School Policies and Procedures Manual*.

Once operating, the driver training school must:

- Indicate on student records that they are taking the “Experience and Equivalency Class 1 MELT”, including the Notice of Course Completion form.
- Attain from Alberta Transportation the Notice of Course Completion forms that have the ability to select the “Experience and Equivalency Class 1 MELT” as the type of training completed.
- Driver training schools will need to continue the existing MELT practice of emailing Alberta Transportation at [trans.driver.prog@gov.ab.ca](mailto:trans.driver.prog@gov.ab.ca) information for each student that has completed the MELT program, so that their driving record can be updated to indicate they are ready for Class 1 MELT testing.

## I. Instructor Qualifications

Driving instructors must be licensed to provide the Experience and Equivalency Class 1 MELT Program. The requirements for licensed driving instructor for this program are the same as the Class 1 MELT Program. The application process and requirements are outlined in the *Licensed Driver Training School Policies and Procedures Manual*.

# Curriculum Standard

## Purpose

This standard is for a pre-licensing training program for Class 1 driver licensing applicants. It is not intended to address ongoing employment training which may require additional experience with vehicle types, loads, employer hiring practices and job requirements. The elements outlined in the standard are minimum requirements.

## Development Format

If the curriculum to be used is not provided by the Government of Alberta, the course provider is responsible to provide a curriculum for approval to the Government of Alberta.

The submission must meet all requirements specified in section 2.00.01 of the Licensed Driver Training Schools Policies and Procedures Manual.

The curriculum must meet all the required content and learning outcomes outlined in section 4.01.01 of the Licensed Driver Training Schools Policies and Procedures Manual and the *Experience and Equivalency Class 1 MELT Curriculum Development Standards* (available at: [www.open.alberta.ca/publications/experience-and-equivalency-class-1-melt-curriculum-development-standards](http://www.open.alberta.ca/publications/experience-and-equivalency-class-1-melt-curriculum-development-standards)).

## Instructional Methods

Driving instructors are required to address all competencies as outlined in the curriculum outline. It is important to continually reinforce driving theory, skills practice and promotion of positive attitudes in all learning environments using a variety of instructional strategies and methods.

All topics should be presented in a logical sequence allowing for the development of knowledge and skills throughout the different stages of learning to ensure all prerequisites are met.

# Curriculum Framework

## Purpose

This part of the standard sets out a framework for the curriculum and the learning outcomes for training delivered to individuals aspiring to become a Class 1 driver. This framework is aligned with the National Safety Code Standard 16 on Entry Level Training on topics to be covered and is based on the National Occupational Standard for Commercial Vehicle Operators (truck drivers).

The purpose of this curriculum framework is to provide consistent training within entry level Class 1 driver training programs. It is important to recognize that this curriculum framework addresses the first stage of entry level Class 1 training.

Air brake instruction is mandatory for Class 1 driver licensing and is taken as a separate training program, the Air Brake Program. If trainers choose to deliver air brake training within the Experience and Equivalency Class 1 MELT Program, the hours for the course would be increased accordingly.

## Content and Learning Outcomes

The required content and learning outcomes are outlined in the *Experience and Equivalency Class 1 MELT Curriculum Development Standards* (available at: [www.open.alberta.ca/publications/experience-and-equivalency-class-1-melt-curriculum-development-standards](http://www.open.alberta.ca/publications/experience-and-equivalency-class-1-melt-curriculum-development-standards))

Some of the modules in the Experience and Equivalency Class 1 MELT curriculum are not covered in detail, as participants who are enrolled in the program are required to have acquired knowledge through their experience holding a Class 1, 2 or 3 driver's licence for a minimum of two years.

Students are encouraged to become familiar with longer Class 1 MELT Program curriculum in order to prepare for the Class 1 knowledge test. The Class 1 MELT Program curriculum is available at: [www.alberta.ca/mandatory-entry-level-training-for-class-1-and-2-drivers-licences.aspx](http://www.alberta.ca/mandatory-entry-level-training-for-class-1-and-2-drivers-licences.aspx).