

Program Quality Standards

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why all the changes?

The Canadian Path promotes a new approach to the way Scouting is done in Canada. With a new approach to the program, there needs to be a new approach to the way we measure the program's success. The new Program Quality Standards are youth-set, youth-assessed and of course, youth-led!

2. Where did the checkboxes go?

Gone are the days of Program Standards that require Scouters to check a bunch of boxes. The key change with the new PQS is that the youth set their own goals for the year, and evaluate their own progress towards those goals. Scouters need to ensure that they are setting SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely) goals for themselves and meeting the core metrics, but there are no longer rigid requirements to meet.



3. Do I still get an award?

Although it will no longer be called an 'award', Sections will still receive recognition for meeting their goals and assessing their progress regularly.

4. Will Groups still have recognition in Find a Group online?

Yes, Groups will still receive recognition for their quality program on the Find a Group feature of **MyScouts.ca** in the form of a PQS icon.

5. Do the new PQS apply for this year?

Yes, one of the goals for each Section in 2015-16 is to work towards the new PQS. Kick off your year by introducing your youth to the standards and help them set some goals for themselves.

6. Who do I submit the paperwork to?

No formal paperwork is required. Each Section should discuss its goals and assessment with the Group Committee. Sections work during program cycles to create plans for the near future. A Section should log its progress and submit a copy of its log to the Group Committee. The process is complete when the Section has reviewed all four program cycles with the Group Committee. Shazam! No need for additional forms or paperwork. Your Group Commissioner will inform the Area/Council Commissioner that you have a quality program.

7. What if the youth don't want to do this?

Being part of planning cycles, it will feel natural for our youth to actually use and consider many of the items on the standards. You will find them ready and willing to reflect on and improve their desired program.

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Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

8. What if the youth set the bar too low?

Living up to their expectations is tricky. Setting low goals for the year can be an outcome of working with the Program Quality Standards, but we expect that over time the youth will want to get more adventurous.

9. What if I don't have a functioning Group Committee?

Just like with other matters facing independent Sections, your Area will support you in the process.

10. What if the Scouters have youth in the Section and can't stay after a meeting for the Scouter assessment?

Scouters don't need to complete their assessment at the same time as the youth do theirs. Scouters can arrange a get-together at a different time so that they can do their review and complete the assessment.

11. I don't keep the statistics on which we're assessing ourselves. Do I have to start?

The metrics that you should use to assess the Section don't need to be perfectly accurate. Most Scouters can make a fairly accurate guess at the relevant statistics. For example, Scouters have a general idea of which youth regularly attend the meetings and which don't, even without taking detailed attendance.

12. What's a personal progression review?

Personal development is a lifelong process. It's a way for Scouts to assess their skills and qualities, consider their aims in life and set goals in order to realize their potential. The review is an opportunity to each Scout, in an age-appropriate manner, to discuss with a mentor (Scouter or experienced youth) his/her goals in Scouting and how those goals are developing. An individual's quest for achievements like badges may be part of this discussion, but badges should not dominate the discussion.

The discussion should not be too long nor scripted. It is an opportunity for each youth to share his/her experiences in Scouting in a self-reflective manner.

For more information on personal progression, see:

[Scouts.ca/canadianpath/download/badges-not-personal-progression.pdf](https://scouts.ca/canadianpath/download/badges-not-personal-progression.pdf) and **[Scouts.ca/canadianpath/download/Personal-Progression.pdf](https://scouts.ca/canadianpath/download/Personal-Progression.pdf)**

13. The youth don't want a Section Code of Conduct. How do I make them do one?

A Section Code of Conduct doesn't need to be a complicated or onerous document. It's really a conversation with the youth about what behaviour is unacceptable in the Section, and how inappropriate behaviour should be dealt with. Maybe it's only a few golden rules posted on a wall, or maybe it is a detailed code of conduct. The youth will let you know what they think they need. They are used to a fairly controlled environment at school, and (just like the Scouters) most youth want everyone to behave appropriately.

14. If I have questions about the new PQS, who should I ask?

You can ask one of your local Support Scouters, like your Area Support Manager or Area Commissioner. If they don't have the answers, contact the Help Centre: **helpcentre@scouts.ca**

15. Do we really have to answer all these questions?

Not all of the questions need to be asked or answered every time you complete a review. It is most important to help the youth set their goals and have an honest conversation about whether or not they're achieving their goals. If the youth get into a great conversation amongst themselves, there's no need for you to ask any questions; just let them review. Make sure they touch on all the topics.

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