



GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q: How long has the Ontario Science Centre had a Science School?

A: The Science School is celebrating its 30th year of operation in the 2011/2012 school year. It is one of the Science Centre's longest running programs. In 2010 the Science School received the CASCADE award for "Best Program" from the Canadian Association of Science Centres.

Q: What are the semester dates?

A: The Fall semester begins on the first day of classes for the Toronto school boards in September and runs until the end of January (with a break for the holidays in December). The Winter semester runs from early February to June with breaks over March Break and Easter.

Q: Are summer classes available?

A: No. We only offer courses during the Fall semester and Winter semester.

Q: How many students are in each class?

A: The entire school consists of up to 30 students each semester. However, enrollment in any particular class can range from 15 to the full 30 depending on subject popularity.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Q: Is acceptance to the Science School based on grades exclusively?

A: No, we do not base acceptance to the Science School on marks alone. In addition to your grades, we consider the additional information in your application package to help determine if you are a student who would benefit from our program and succeed here. A complete application includes a student application form AND an official transcript AND two teacher recommendation reports. Sometimes, we ask applicants to attend an interview.

Q: Is there any way of choosing which semester to attend?

A: Yes. On your application you may note which semester(s) you are available to attend the Science School. You should only choose semesters that you are prepared to attend if accepted. However, your chance of being accepted may be higher if you note you are able to attend either semester. Acceptances are given for a specific semester (Fall or Winter).



Q: I am from outside of Toronto. Can I still apply?

A: Absolutely! We take students from any Ontario Catholic or public school board. Students from as far away as Red Lake Ontario (1900 km from Toronto) have attended the Science School. We have guidance counsellors from the Toronto Public and Catholic boards to oversee the transfer of your enrollment, your university applications and provide you with general guidance support.

Q: How competitive is acceptance to the Science School?

A: The program is competitive, but not unreasonably so. We attempt to select students with high enough academic standing that they will benefit from the enriched environment of the Ontario Science Centre. We also choose students whose applications demonstrate to us that they are confident and mature enough to handle moving to a new environment for a semester.

Q: I attend a non-semestered school. Can I come to the Science School?

A: Yes. You may choose to transfer to a semestered school in your hometown for the upcoming school year upon acceptance to the Science School and take one semester with us and one at the semestered school. Or, you can check with your home school and make arrangements with them. This will require a lot of commitment on your part! You should discuss this option fully with your parents and your guidance counsellor.

Q: I'm from a non-semestered school – I don't get midterm marks. How can I provide them with my application?

A: The application provides an area where your teachers can indicate the level at which you are achieving at the date of your application.

Q: I don't have any midterm marks yet – can I just send in first semester marks?

A: No. The application provides an area where your teachers can indicate the level at which you are achieving as of the date of your application.

Q: Can I send my application form separately from the other required documents?

A: Yes. We will make sure that everything matches up at this end. Please make sure all parts of the application have your name on them.

Q: The teacher I want to write my recommendation is my Grade 6 teacher – is that OK?

A: No. All teacher recommendations must be from secondary school teachers. One of the two can be from a non-science or math teacher if you wish.



Q: Is an interview part of the application process?

A: We sometimes ask students to attend an interview. We will send you more information about this once we have received all the applications.

Q: When will I be informed if I am accepted?

A: Complete applications are due in April. Offers of acceptance are communicated in May. You will hear from us in time to choose your courses for next year with your home school's guidance department.

COURSES AND SCHOOLWORK

Q: I've already completed several of my Grade 12 science credits – can I retake one of them at Science School?

A: No. To be considered for the Science School, you must be able to take three of the four courses without repeating any courses for which you have already gained a credit.

Q: I'm not sure of the courses I will want to take at the Science School, can I change this later?

A: Yes. Your course selection does not become final until you are registered by guidance counsellors here at the Science Centre. You need to carefully plan your Grade 12 year so you are eligible to take 3 courses here at the Science School.

Q: How many subjects can I take at the Science School?

A: You **MUST** take 3 of the 4 subjects offered. No more. No less. We require students to be full time, taking three subjects. All four courses can overburden you given other activities around the Science Centre in which you will be involved. All pre-requisites must be met before your term here, and the courses in which you register cannot be repeats of courses already taken.

Q: I am in Grade 10 now. Can I attend the Ontario Science Centre Science School next year?

A: Yes. To be eligible, you must have completed the Grade 11 pre-requisites. The Science School only offers Grade 12 University Preparation credits. If you are eligible to take 3 of the courses offered in one of the semesters, then you are eligible to attend the OSCSS. However, please consider the commitment required of the program; as one of our students, you will need to be mature and responsible.



Q: AP courses are offered at my school. Can I take AP courses at the Science Centre?

A: No. We do not offer AP courses. Depending on which semester you attend, and how you plan your courses, you might be able to do your AP courses at your home school in your non-OSCSS term.

Q: What are the pre-requisites for the courses?

A: For Grade 12 Biology (SBI4U) the pre-requisite is: Grade 11 Biology (SBI3U).
For Grade 12 Chemistry (SCH4U) the pre-requisite is: Grade 11 Chemistry (SCH3U).
For Grade 12 Physics (SPH4U) the pre-requisite is: Grade 11 Physics (SPH3U).
For Grade 12 Advanced Functions (MHF4U – offered Fall semester) the pre-requisite is: EITHER Grade 11 Functions (MCR3U) or Grade 11 Functions and Relations (MCF3M).
For Grade 12 Calculus and Vectors (MCV4U – offered Winter semester) the pre-requisite is: Grade 12 Advanced Functions (MHF4U).

Q: I have not completed the pre-requisites, but I'm taking them now. Is that OK?

A: Yes! Please submit your midterm marks for those courses with your application.

Q: I am applying for University – who handles my application?

A: Guidance counsellors from our partner schools – Don Mills Collegiate Institute in the Toronto District School Board and Senator O'Connor College School in the Toronto Catholic District School Board – visit the Science School every other week. They will handle your University applications, submission of your grades and provide general guidance support. They are also available by phone or e-mail when they are not at the Ontario Science Centre.

Q: How does Graduation work at the Science School?

A: This special event is planned, organized and produced by the graduating class. The graduation consists of presentations, skits, slide shows and the awarding of certificates, followed by a reception. Family and friends are encouraged to attend.

Q: Do you award scholarships or bursaries?

A: No. There are no scholarships or bursaries awarded through Science School, but you can still be considered for awards at your home school. In late June, we transfer your marks back to your home school.

Q: What is the Science School daily schedule?

A: Students are at the Science Centre between 8:30 AM and 3:45 PM and have four instruction periods per day. Please see a sample schedule at the end of the FAQ document.



THE UNIQUENESS OF THE ONTARIO SCIENCE CENTRE SCIENCE SCHOOL

Q: How are the courses at the Science School different from my high school?

A: The courses are part of the Ontario curriculum and therefore the same as would be followed in your high school. The difference is that you are in a unique environment! We emphasize group work, real problem solving and labs. Some students find the change from their home school difficult at first – the teachers know this and provide support and assistance as needed. Students have reported to us that they find the experience prepares them for university studies very well.

You will have the challenge and opportunity to apply your knowledge of science to robust questions and to produce thoughtful, well-communicated solutions. The Science School also provides you with the opportunity to take part in a well-respected, long-standing program that has produced graduates who have gone on to remarkable careers in science, math, engineering, medicine, art, music, and business.

Q: What will I do when I'm not in class?

A: The Science School gives students the opportunity to be involved in many activities. Some of these include:

- Communicating with Ontario Science Centre visitors. You will be trained by our experienced floor staff to engage visitors with puzzles and activities that communicate science concepts for this 'practicum' experience that can count towards the 40 hours of Community Service.
- Working with young students. The Ontario Science Centre has a long-standing partnership with a local elementary school. Science School students will choose whether to produce a curriculum correlated science storybook or science lesson for the young students at this school.
- Special Events. Occasionally, there are special events in which Science School students participate. In the past students have tested Science Centre exhibit prototypes, participated in a video conference with NASA, attended a David Suzuki event and assisted with a Space Day event for Grade 6 students.

Q: Is there a dress code?

A: Yes. The dress is business casual – no jeans, no running shoes, no baseball hats, no logos. Because classes are held in a lab environment, no sandals or other open-toed shoes are permitted for health and safety reasons.



Q: I'm from out of town – where will I live?

A: Sometimes students arrange to live with extended family or friends in Toronto. We can provide you with a list of people in the area that offer student accommodations. This list is made available to you once you have been accepted to the Science School. In general, most accommodations are approximately \$400-600/month for a furnished room in a family house with access to kitchen and laundry facilities. Some housing arrangements include meals. Please note that the Science School does not screen these accommodations or the people offering them. It is up to you and your families to make sure that the facilities are suitable.

Q: Does the Science School charge tuition?

A: No. The program is funded by the Ontario Science Centre and supported by the Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Catholic District School Board. The only financial commitment for students is for your lab coat and field trips (approximately \$150/semester). Other costs you may need to consider in your budgeting are housing and/or transportation.

Q: What type of field trips will we take?

A: Past field trips have included attending a science based university lecture series, museums visits, and even chocolate factories! Students are also encouraged to participate in various student-led initiatives like a Blue Jays game or skating in Nathan Phillips Square.

Q: Do we have to go on the field trips?

A: Yes. Field trips are an important part of the school.

Q: Do you have an alumni group?

A: Yes. Our graduates feel a very strong affinity to the Science Centre and the Science School. The Ontario Science Centre maintains contact with the alumni with pride.

Q: Who are the Science School teachers?

A: Our teachers are seconded from the Toronto District School Board or the Toronto Catholic District School Board. Teachers apply for the opportunity to work at the Science School and are selected through an interview process. They have a wealth of experience and knowledge and are excited to teach in a unique environment.

Q: Where can I get more information?

A: Please contact us! The Science School Coordinator can be reached by email at science.school@ontariosciencecentre.ca or by phone at 416-696-4620.



Sample Schedule:

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:30 10:00	MATHEMATICS DRY LAB	BIOLOGY WET LAB	HOMEROOM DRY LAB	CHEMISTRY WET LAB	PHYSICS DRY LAB
10:05 12:00	CHEMISTRY WET LAB	MATHEMATICS DRY LAB	PHYSICS DRY LAB	BIOLOGY WET LAB	HOMEROOM DRY LAB
12:05 1:10	L	U	N	C	H
1:15 2:15	BIOLOGY WET LAB	PHYSICS DRY LAB	MATHEMATICS DRY LAB	INNOVATION Supervisor Booked in Advance	CHEMISTRY DRY LAB
2:20 3:45	PHYSICS DRY LAB	CHEMISTRY WET LAB	BIOLOGY WET LAB		MATHEMATICS DRY LAB