

XQ Competencies - FAQs

What are the XQ Competencies?

The [XQ Competencies](#) bring to life [XQ's Learner Outcomes](#): the things we believe all students should know and be able to do by the time they leave high school. Grounded in learning science, each of XQ's five Learner Outcomes (Holders of Foundational Knowledge, Masters of All Fundamental Literacies, Original Thinkers, Generous Collaborators, and Learners for Life) is translated into a set of discrete competencies, 37 in all. The 37 competencies are, in turn, broken down into 118 component skills. Each component skill has an associated 4-point progression, which articulates increasingly complex criteria to help learners achieve proficiency. Each progression describes what growth and success look like for that particular skill.

The XQ Competencies and component skills describe the crucial dimensions of adolescent growth and development. They can be used with existing content standards to create learning experiences that intentionally build students' academic knowledge and their cognitive, social, and emotional capacities—all together.

How can I use the XQ Competencies in my school or classroom?

The XQ Competencies enrich and deepen student learning when you incorporate them into lessons, units, or projects. Check out our teacher-tested Competency Builder activities, which help you plug the XQ Competencies into your classroom right away. Read through our [Learning Experience \(LX\) Design Brief](#) for tips on how to build engaging, rigorous learning experiences that combine an appropriate set of XQ Competency component skills with academic content. (We suggest choosing 2–4 XQ Competency component skills for each LX.)

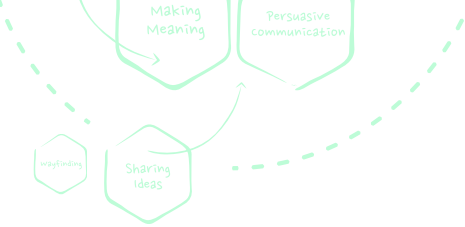
The XQ Competencies also provide a framework for setting goals and priorities, eliciting student voice, developing or clarifying a Graduate Profile, and planning each student's individualized learning journey. Use them to communicate with students, families, community, and employers about how your school supports the essential dimensions of student growth and development.

Does XQ have a fully developed curriculum connected to the XQ Competencies?

No. The XQ Competency framework is intended for use with any curriculum. However, XQ is building a set of model Learning Experiences (LXs) that demonstrate how to integrate XQ Competencies, rigorous academic content, and the principles of project-based learning to create rich and engaging LXs.

Do I have to implement the entire XQ Competency Framework at once?

No. While the framework is designed to have internal consistency and very tight alignment to the research on which it is based, we know that some competencies may be more relevant to you at this moment than others. We hope you will eventually implement the full framework, but we encourage you to jump in and get started with whichever areas of the framework are most important to you today!



How does a student “complete” or “achieve” the XQ Competencies?

Students have mastered the XQ Competencies when they can consistently demonstrate behavior and produce evidence of their learning that aligns to the third level of the XQ component skills progressions (i.e., “Proficient”). Students should be able to generate evidence—work product, observable behaviors, assessment performance, etc.—that they understand each component skill. Students should be able to demonstrate proficiency in multiple contexts, within multiple academic disciplines, across many points in time.

XQ has not developed a formal assessment regime for the XQ Competencies, but we are working with partners—from testing companies to individual classroom teachers—to build our understanding of what kinds of assessments will best support students in mastering the XQ Competencies. Have thoughts or suggestions? Please share by emailing us at competencies@xqinstitute.org.



Do the XQ Competencies cover my state’s standards?

The competencies are not meant to cover state standards; rather, the competencies address complex skills and mindsets that are not found in existing standards but are essential for healthy adolescent development and meaningful preparation for the future. The XQ Competencies are designed to complement state content standards when integrated into robust learning experiences. To discover which competencies best complement a particular state standard, enter a content standard into the XQ Competency Navigator search bar to see a list of relevant competencies and component skills that may enhance your students’ learning of that standard.

How does the XQ Competency framework compare with other similar frameworks?



[Harvard’s EASEL Lab](#) analyzed the XQ Competencies in relationship to a number of other SEL frameworks. To understand how XQ’s competencies relate to specific outcomes from other frameworks (such as your state’s Portrait of a Graduate), enter the outcome into the search bar in the [XQ Competency Navigator](#) to see a list of relevant competencies and component skills.

Can I change the language of the competencies to align to my specific classroom needs?

The XQ Competencies are written with intentional and precise language to ensure fidelity to the concepts they cover, in ways that align to the [research evidence on which the competencies are based](#). But, if there are places where you’d like to see revisions, please let us know! Provide feedback by emailing us at competencies@xqinstitute.org.

Are XQ Competency materials free?

Yes. Everything you need to bring the XQ Competencies into your school or classroom is available at no cost on the XQ Competency Navigator website. If you would like to request hard copy resources in addition to digital resources, contact us at competencies@xqinstitute.org.



Have other questions or feedback on the XQ Competencies?

We would love to hear from you! Contact us on Facebook at [@XQAmerica](#) or email us at competencies@xqinstitute.org.