

French-language Services Plan

French-language services plan 2026–27

Department of Advanced Education

Ce document est également disponible en français sous le titre : Plan de services en français 2026-2027

Message from the Deputy Minister

I am pleased to present the 2026–2027 French-language Services Plan for the Department of Advanced Education.

Our department is committed to ensuring that French-language services are accessible, coordinated, and responsive to the needs of Nova Scotia’s Acadian and Francophone communities. Supporting learners in both official languages is an important part of strengthening post-secondary education, skills development, and workforce participation across the province.

This plan reflects our ongoing commitment to inclusion, partnership, and equitable access to programs, services, and information in French, while contributing to the vitality and sustainability of Francophone and Acadian communities in Nova Scotia.

Tracey Barbrick, Deputy Minister
Advanced Education

What we’re doing to contribute to the growth of the Acadian and francophone community

We recognize the importance of French-language services and endeavour to fulfil our responsibilities under the *French-language Services Act* and regulations. We believe Nova Scotians should have access to quality government services in French, and this plan demonstrates our commitment to ensuring our programmes, policies and services address the priorities expressed by the Acadian and francophone community. To achieve this aim, we collaborate with other designated public institutions across government – including the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie – through the French-language Services Coordinating Committee. We greatly value this partnership, which ensures a continued understanding of the unique needs of our province’s Acadian and francophone community.

We encourage Nova Scotians to request services from government in French. We also encourage Acadians and francophones to have their voices heard by participating on agencies, boards and commissions, which are regularly advertised by the Executive Council Office. As we continue to maintain and improve our French-language services, we welcome feedback on our progress and invite you to share with us your comments or questions by contacting our French-language services coordinator. If you wish to make a formal complaint regarding French-language services, please contact the Office of the Ombudsman.

French-language services coordinator:
Michael Reardon

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Services we offer in French

- Official communications and documentation with Université Sainte-Anne are delivered in French, as they are Nova Scotia's only French language post-secondary institution.
- Select staff in the Department are available to communicate with students and other stakeholders in French, upon request.
- Government translation services are used by the Department to provide French-language versions of documents, correspondence, and program materials when needed. This includes program and service delivery for the Student Assistance Program and Post-Secondary Accessibility Services.

How we communicate with the public in French

- Letters and emails received by the Department in French are responded to in French wherever possible. Government translation services are engaged for formal communications.
- Written translation protocols are in place to support preparation of funding letters, official documents, and correspondence in French.
- Where requests are received verbally, staff identify available internal or external supports to facilitate communication in French.

What we did to maintain or improve our French-language services in 2025–26

Goal: Improved Departmental processes and readiness to provide services in French.

- The Department has updated internal protocols for obtaining written translations of official documents and correspondence.
 - This is coupled with an increased focus on proactive planning for French-language communications with partners and stakeholders where relevant.

Goal: Promote French-language programs in post-secondary education

- The Department of Advanced Education, along with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, entered into the Official Languages in Education Protocol (OLEP) bilateral agreement with the federal government. This four-year agreement provides funding until 2028 which is supporting Université Sainte-Anne in implementing various initiatives to attract students and support their studies in French.
- The Department supports three preferred admissions seats for Nova Scotia residents in the Medical Doctor (MD) program delivered at Université de Moncton through an agreement with Université de Sherbrooke (Québec). This provides Nova Scotians access to MD training in French.

- The university bilateral funding agreements encourage universities to consider ways to increase French language training by:
 - Exploring partnership with Sainte-Anne on French language options for B.Ed. programs in an effort to increase the number of French language teachers available in the province.
 - Explore B.Ed. program pathways with an accelerated time horizon to graduation and/or additional delivery modes.

How we plan to maintain or improve our French-language services in 2026–27

Strengthen frameworks for French-language services

Goal: Continue to improve Departmental readiness and consistency in responding to French-language needs.

- The Department is:
 - working on developing standardized templates in French to support faster communication and reduce ad hoc translation requests.
 - Continuing to strengthen internal protocols and staff awareness of available French-language supports.
 - Encouraging staff to enroll in French language training at Université Sainte-Anne.

Engage with the Acadian and francophone community

Goal: Support access to services and engagement with francophone partners and stakeholders.

- Continue proactive outreach and communication with French-speaking partners such as Université Sainte-Anne, in meeting post-secondary education objectives.
- Encourage participation of francophone stakeholders in applying to Board vacancies available through the Corporate Agencies, Boards and Commissions process.

Goal: Continue to collaborate with and provide funding for French-language initiatives in the post-secondary sector.

- Enhance French Language Post-Secondary Options
 - Support initiatives that offer opportunities to Francophone learners in Nova Scotia and strengthen transitions into francophone post-secondary education.
 - This includes such continued funding through 2028 via OLEP and continued work with Université Sainte-Anne through the bilateral agreements to explore expansion of French language post-secondary programs.
- Advance medical education opportunities in French

- Maintain and promote Nova Scotia's participation in preferred admissions to the French-language MD program through the Centre de formation médicale du Nouveau-Brunswick.

Develop and deliver programmes and services in French

Goal: Increase availability of program materials and supports in French.

- Improve access to French-language services across the Department by continuing to integrate French-language considerations into communications on policy, program and service delivery to ensure equitable access for Francophone and Acadian Nova Scotians.