



QUALITY ASSURANCE SCHEME **STANDARDS and SPECIFICATIONS**

A: PURPOSE

The purpose of the LC Standards is to ensure the best interests of students studying or planning to study English and/or French in Canada.

B: QUALITY ASSURANCE

Adherence to the LC Standards and Quality Assurance Scheme is a requirement of membership of Languages Canada.

If students have concerns with respect to a Language Program and are unable to clarify them at the program level, they may refer the matter to Languages Canada

Explanation of Procedure:

- **B.1a** Languages Canada reviews the observation of the Standards within Language Programs on an annual basis.
- **B.1b** Site visits are conducted at Language Programs once every three years.
- **B.1c** The first line of communication for students with respect to concerns is with the Language Program.
- **B.1d** The role of Languages Canada is to act as an advocate on behalf of the student and to ensure that full information is available to review the matter with both the student and Language Program.
- **B.1e** Should a resolution not be possible, the matter is referred to the Board of Directors of Languages Canada for resolution in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Operational By-law for Languages Canada.

C: STUDENT ADMISSIONS

C.1 Registration:

Accurate and current information on program offerings, services and costs is readily accessible in print-based and web-based formats.

Requests for information from prospective students are processed promptly.

Before registration, students receive a clear statement of the Language Program's fee and refund policy as well as any other contract required by the program.

Additional Specifications:

- **C.1a** *Program information is comprehensive covering all program options.*
- **C.1b** *Procedure in place for handling responses. Programs may refer to Best Practice Guidelines for Handling Student Requests as set forth by Languages Canada.*
- **C.1c** *Statement of fees includes:*
 1. *tuition, including applicable dates*
 2. *description of what services tuition includes*
 3. *enrolment and cancellation terms, including financial penalties*
 4. *details on additional charges, clearly stating whether mandatory or optional.*

C.2 Records:

Student records are kept confidential in accordance with applicable federal and provincial legislation. Policies regarding confidentiality are clearly stated and followed.

Additional Specifications:

- **C.2a** *Student records kept in a secure location. Access controlled.*
- **C.2b** *Policy for handling student records in writing.*
- **C.2c** *Process in place to keep records and contact information current.*

C.3 Immigration and Insurance:

The Language Program provides international students with general information on immigration requirements and refers students to government sources and contacts as required.

The Language Program operates in accordance with the policy and regulations with respect to international students as set forth by Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

The Language Program ensures that students have access to, and have been informed that they are required to have medical insurance

D: STUDENT SERVICES

D.1 Orientation

Upon the students' arrival, the Language Program provides orientation to introduce students to their institution, programs and services as well as to studying and living in Canada.

Additional Specifications:

- **D.1a** *General orientation to studying and living in Canada includes information on: accommodation, weather, clothing, food, immigration regulations, dental and medical information, travel, local transit, etc.*
- **D.1b** *Academic Orientation includes:*
 1. *testing and placement procedures*
 2. *course structure and levels*
 3. *requirements for progression to a higher level*
 4. *course descriptions and objectives*
 5. *course assessment criteria*
 6. *requirements for certificates and/or diplomas*
 7. *course and program schedules*
 8. *policy and procedure on attendance and participation.*
- **D.1c** *Orientation to institution and/or services included.*

D.2.1 Support Services:

In addition to orientation services, the Language Program provides a range of support services to help students function within the programs at their educational institution and to adjust to living in Canada.

Additional Specifications:

- **D.2.1a** *Clearly identified person or department available to students for advice and counselling.*
- **D.2.1b** *In addition to in-house counselling, referral services available for:*
 1. *financial advice*
 2. *legal advice*
 3. *tutoring*
 4. *child care*
 5. *medical services*
 6. *housing*

- **D.2.1c** *Age, background, special circumstances and/or special needs taken into consideration.*
- **D.2.1d** *Also, advice and assistance may be provided on:*
 1. *local facilities, services and amenities*
 2. *general banking information*
 3. *personal safety and care of valuables*
 4. *who to contact with any problem or complaint*
 5. *medical and personal insurance*
 6. *local places of worship*
 7. *compliance with the law, e.g. in relation to the use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs*
 8. *academic counselling and further training*
 9. *generic immigration advice and contact information*

D.2.2 Problem Resolution:

A written statement that explains the procedures for problem resolution within the Language Program is available to students.

Additional Specifications:

- **D.2.2a** *Copies of the problem resolution policies readily accessible.*
- **D.2.2b** *Procedure for responding to students' feedback, suggestions and complaints.*

D.3 Activities:

The Language Program presents opportunities for students to experience the diversity of Canadian culture within the target language by participating in local cultural, social and recreational events.

Additional Specifications:

- **D.3a** *Regular schedule of possible events communicated.*
- **D.3b** *Any additional costs for activities clearly stated.*
- **D.3c** *Activities sponsored by the program/institution carefully planned and supervised.*
- **D.3d** *Provision made for liability coverage for program activities. Supervision and liability terms for minors covered.*

D.4 Accommodation:

If the Language Program offers accommodation services, clear, written guidelines are provided outlining the rules, terms and conditions of the homestay/residence program.

Additional Specifications:

- **D.4a** *All housing options inspected.*
- **D.4b** *Listing of housing options provided upon request.*
- **D.4c** *Confirmation of accommodation includes:*
 1. *detailed information about the type of accommodation*
 2. *description of services provided*
 3. *location and transportation information*
 4. *fee and payment requirements*
 5. *cancellation terms, including any penalties*
 6. *dispute resolution*

D.5 Care of Junior Students:

If the Language Program offers programs to groups where the participants are younger than 16 years of age, it has a comprehensive policy and set of procedures to supervise them.

Additional Specifications:

- **D.5a** *Clearly identified person/department responsible for junior students.*
- **D.5b** *Duties and responsibilities of above person(s) in writing.*
- **D.5c** *Security clearance may be required for persons working with junior students depending on applicable provincial and federal legislation.*
- **D.5d** *Supervision at the level of 1:15 minimum.*
- **D.5e** *Junior students issued with ID Card to be carried at all times. Contact information for responsible guardian(s) included.*
- **D.5f** *Policy in place to deal with any perceived bullying or abuse.*

E: TEACHING STAFF

E.1 Education and Training:

Teachers have university degrees and specialist training and experience in English and/or French language teaching.

Teachers are fully trained in the approaches, methods and techniques used in second language teaching and learning.

Additional Specifications:

E.1a *The definition of specialist training is as follows:*

- *for English Programs, a minimum of TESL Canada Level One Professional certification or the equivalent is required. A Master's degree in applied linguistics OR education with specialization in TESL can be considered as equivalent if the degree includes a practicum component of a minimum of 20 hours indicated on the transcript OR an observed practicum in the program which they are employed.*
- *For French program, a degree in Education or a degree with experience in teaching French as a Second Language required.*
- *For ESL junior programs, programs must employ language instructors who possess one of the following minimum qualifications: Bachelor's degree in Education, preferably with 2nd language teaching experience or TESL Canada Level 1 (which requires an undergraduate degree or equivalent undergraduate degree), preferably with experience teaching juniors*

- **E.1b** *All teachers and the academic leader satisfy minimum education and training requirements of LC. Verified true copies of original diplomas / certificates will be required for the on-site visit.*
- **E.1c** *Core of regularly employed teachers.*
- **E.1d** *Process for orientation and monitoring new teachers in place to ensure consistency and standards in delivery of program.*

E.2 Linguistic Competency:

Teachers are either native speakers of the language to be taught or are able to demonstrate native level competency.

E.3 Cross Cultural Awareness:

Teachers demonstrate cross-cultural knowledge and sensitivity in their interactions with students.

E.4 Performance Appraisals:

The Language Program conducts performance reviews for each teacher.

Students are offered the opportunity to evaluate each course in each session.

Additional Specifications:

- **E.4a** *Teachers evaluated by students at end of each term of study.*

- **E.4b** *Process in place for evaluating new and/or casual teachers may include:*
 1. *student evaluations*
 2. *review of lesson plans*
 3. *classroom observations*
 4. *peer observations*
- **E.4c** *Criteria for evaluation is measurable and available in writing.*
- **E.4d** *Performance appraisals may be subject to terms and conditions of applicable collective agreements within institutions.*

E.5 Professional Development:

The Language Program provides a range of professional development options for teachers

Additional Specifications:

- **E.5a** *In-service training provided on on-going basis.*
- **E.5b** *Professional development activities may include:*
 1. *in-house workshops*
 2. *access to/review of current publications*
 3. *conference attendance*
 4. *conference presentations*
 5. *participation in professional organizations*

F: CURRICULUM

F.1 Definition of Programs:

Full time intensive language programs provide a succession of proficiency levels designed to achieve program completion. Individual courses (levels) provide a minimum of 15 instructional hours per week not including any additional laboratory hours for a period of at least 4 weeks.

Specialized courses and programs provide varying delivery options sufficient to meet the stated course objectives.

F.2 Skills:

An intensive program covers all language skills so that students have the opportunity to develop balanced communicative competency.

Other specialized courses and program offerings may focus on specific skills and objectives. The outcomes of these courses are clearly stated.

F.3 Curriculum:

The Language Program has a written curriculum, which specifies goals and objectives.

Curriculum reflects up to date research into second language acquisition and encourages innovation.

Additional Specifications:

- **F.3a** *Curriculum in writing and includes:*
 1. *detailed description of program options and course offerings*
 2. *measurable performance objectives*
 3. *criteria for completion of levels and program*
 4. *methodology and content taking into consideration target audience and variety of learning styles*
 5. *list of required texts and reference materials, including rationale*
 6. *other learning resources available to teachers*

- **F.3b** *Curriculum reflects up-to-date research into second language acquisition and encourages innovation.*

F.4 Curriculum Review:

The Language Program has a process in place for curriculum review at least every five years, and for modification as required.

Additional Specifications:

- **F.4a** *Curriculum review and development considers:*
 1. *student feedback*
 2. *evaluation of courses*
 3. *needs of current student population*
 4. *student success rates*
 5. *feedback from teachers and program administration*
 6. *feedback from marketing/recruiting staff*
 7. *student enrolment patterns*
 8. *findings from professional development options of teachers*
 9. *recent trends in second language acquisition*

F.5 Testing and Placement:

Diagnostic and test placement procedures are employed to ensure that each student is placed in an effective teaching-learning environment.

F.6 Levels:

Several proficiency levels are available so that appropriate placement is possible.

F.7 Academic Records & Reports:

The students' progress is measured and recorded. Such records are kept current and accurate.

Students are provided with a final achievement report at the end of each term of study.

Additional Specifications:

- *refer to specifications stated in C.2*

F.8 Academic Resources:

The Language Program ensures that a range of learning material and academic resources for all program offerings are current (up to date), readily available and in sufficient supply for the student enrolment.

Additional Specifications:

- *refer to specifications stated in F.3a*

F.9 Academic Excursions:

The curriculum includes activities that provide opportunities for students to develop language skills beyond the classroom.

Additional Specifications:

- *refer to specifications stated in D.3*

G: MARKETING and RECRUITING

G.1 Recruiting:

In all recruiting transactions, Language Programs are required to represent and maintain the standards of programs and services of Languages Canada.

Language Programs must not engage in conduct which is unethical or unprofessional and may be prejudicial to the reputation of Languages Canada or its members.

G.2 Agents:

Language Programs are required to adhere to the Best Practice Guidelines for Dealing with Agents as set forth by Languages Canada.

G.3 Publicity Materials:

All promotional materials and supplementary information present a clear, accurate and current description of the program options and services offered by the institution.

Additional Specifications:

- **G.3a** *Publicity materials reflect actual programs options, services, facilities and location at time of publishing.*
- **G.3b** *Process in place to update materials as changes occur.*

H: ADMINISTRATION

H.1 Overview:

The Language Program ensures that all program options and services stated in their publicity materials are delivered effectively. The provision of these deliverables and the best interests of students studying English and/or French direct the administration of the program.

Additional Specifications:

- **H.1a** *Documented minimum period of three years program delivery and operation required.*

H.2 Institutional Support:

If the Language Program is affiliated with a university, college or larger institution, provision is made for a degree of support from the parent institution.

Additional Specifications:

- **H.2a** *Support may vary depending on relationship and reporting structure to parent institution.*

H.3 Leadership:

There is a clear and effective management structure for the Language Program.

Additional Specifications:

- **H.3a** *Organizational Chart with reporting structure available to all levels of staff.*
- **H.3b** *Key responsibilities of academic leader are to language program.*
- **H.3c** *Academic leader has formal training in language teaching, methodology and curriculum development to provide guidance and support to program. (Refer to specification in E. 1 b)*

- **H.3d** *Program administration includes but is not limited to:*
 1. *teaching assignments*
 2. *timetabling*
 3. *student placement and records*
 4. *supply teacher arrangements*
 5. *student/teacher ratio*
 6. *attendance policies*
 7. *student services*
 8. *curriculum design and review*
 9. *marketing and recruiting*
 10. *physical resources*
 11. *fiscal management*

H.4 Policies:

Program policies and procedures are in writing and readily accessible to students as well as all levels of staff.

H.5 Orientation / Evaluation:

The Language Program has in place a system for monitoring and observing the performance of all levels of staff. Guidance is offered by the program administration.

Additional Specifications:

- **H.5a** *Orientation, guidance and in-service training provided to all new staff members.*
- **H.5b** *Procedure in place to monitor staff performance.*
- **H.5c** *Published criteria for dealing with unsatisfactory performance.*
- **H.5d** *Guidance and support provided to improve performance.*
- **H.5e** *Policies may be subject to the terms and conditions of collective agreements within institutions.*

H.6 Terms of Employment:

The terms and conditions of employment must be in compliance with all applicable federal or provincial regulations.

All levels of staff have appropriate working conditions to enable them to perform their required duties.

Additional Specifications:

- **H.6a** *Written position descriptions, including duties and responsibilities, for all levels of staff available.*

- **H.6b** Personnel policies for recruiting/appointing all levels of staff in writing and followed.
- **H.6c** Federal and provincial regulations for Labour Standards adhered to.
- **H.6d** Policies may be subject to terms and conditions of collective agreements within institutions.

H.7 Facilities:

The physical resources of the Language Program are conducive to meeting and delivering the objectives of the program as well as to accommodating the needs of staff and students.

Additional Specifications:

- **H.7a** Physical resources used by all levels of staff:
 1. meet all applicable fire and safety regulations (and that all levels of staff are aware of these)
 2. have regularly scheduled cleaning and maintenance
 3. are adequately lit, heated and ventilated
 4. accommodate space and requirements for number of student and staff
 5. accommodate any special needs of staff and students
 6. have clearly posted signage

H.8 Operational Review:

The Language Program has a process in place for the periodic review of programs and services and for modification as required.

Additional Specifications:

- **H.8a** Refer to process described in F.4a
- **H.8b** The focus of the review may vary depending on the intent: financial, staff utilization, facilities, marketing plans, curriculum review, etc.
- **H.8c** Guidance may be sought from external organizations, the parent institution or Languages Canada.