INFORMATION BOOKLET

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EVALUATION

Oral
Reading
Writing

Linguistic Services, Secretariat of Official Languages
October 2025

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PREFACE

The Secretariat of Official Languages' Linguistic Services, offers Oral, Reading and Writing Language Proficiency Evaluations.

These language evaluation services are available to provincial government departments, agencies, organizations, private institutions as well as members of the public.

Please contact us for any language evaluation needs.

Linguistic Services
E-Mail: LS-SL@gnb.ca

REQUEST FOR LANGUAGE EVALUATION

To request an evaluation, contact your Human Resources Services' Team. Members of the public can submit their application at:

https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/services/services_renderer.201468.Language_Proficiency_Evaluation.html

Please note that personal information asked is for the sole purpose of:

- confirming your identity to administer the evaluation and therefore ensure the validity of the result.

Oral Language Proficiency evaluation

- request must be made **at least five (5) business days** prior to the desired evaluation date
- Linguistic Services will contact you by email to schedule an evaluation. Please note that Linguistic Services operate on Atlantic time, consequently, if you are in a different time zone, you will need to adjust the time accordingly
- ensure to call **at the precise scheduled time**. Calling too early or too late will be deemed a missed appointment for which your payment will not be returned
- at the beginning of the interview, personal information will be verified for identification purposes
- oral Language Proficiency Evaluations are recorded for quality control and are strictly confidential
- postpone an Oral Language Proficiency Evaluation date **at least one (1) full business day (prior to 9:00 am Atlantic time)** before the scheduled date to avoid rescheduling fees
- a request for an audit of your previous recorded Oral Language Proficiency Evaluation must be received by Linguistic Services **within ten (10) business days of the evaluation date**
- a new Oral Language Proficiency Evaluation may be requested at any time
- evaluation expenses (e.g. travel expenses or telephone charges), if applicable, are the responsibility of the department/agency, organization or institution) making the evaluation request.

Fraud

If fraud is suspected, Linguistic Services reserve the right to take measures to verify the person's identity. A face-to-face evaluation may be requested, and identification must be presented.

Online Reading and Writing Language Proficiency Evaluation

- Linguistic Services will send a code (token) by email that will give you access to the online evaluation
- you must have a stable high-speed internet and be in a room without distraction
- you have ten (10) business days from the reception of your token to complete the online evaluation otherwise the token will expire, and no refund will be issued
- a new request to rewrite Reading and Writing Evaluations can be submitted after **thirty (30) days**

A photo identification is mandatory to be able to access the evaluation. Your web camera will snap photos of you throughout your evaluation. These photos will be compared with the photo on your ID card to verify that you are the person completing the evaluation and ensure that the guidelines are followed.

You can take additional steps to protect your privacy by:

- covering up all elements on the photo ID except for the photo, name, and day and month of date of birth;
- taking the test in a neutral background and removing personal effects from the frame;
- caution persons not to come into the room during the evaluation, as they may be photographed and your evaluation may be flagged for irregularities.

Accommodations

- a *Request for Accommodations for Linguistic Services* and supporting documentation must be received by Linguistic Services **at least two (2) weeks** prior to your desired evaluation date
- during an evaluation, if a serious problem occurs, physical or psychological, that affects the performance, the person responsible for overseeing the evaluation must be informed immediately.

Fees

Language evaluation fees are as follows:

- Oral: $60 + HST
- Reading: $45 + HST
- Writing: $45 + HST
- Audit of the previous Recorded Oral Language Proficiency Evaluation: $30 + HST

Language evaluation fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.

Quality Control

Evaluators are trained and certified by Linguistic Services of Finance and Treasury Board. They conduct and rate evaluations according to their standard procedures.

Quality control measures are in place to ensure quality service.

Results

An official letter that certifies the level(s) obtained on your New Brunswick government linguistic evaluation will be sent by email.

A feedback form accompanies the result. It provides an overview of the objectives achieved during the evaluation. It is for information purposes only and is not intended to be a diagnostic tool as a performance can vary from one evaluation to the next without changing the level obtained.

Linguistic Services strive to produce results (letter and appropriate documentation) by email **within ten (10) working days following the date of the evaluation.**

Results may be sent to a third party upon written authorization.

Period of Validity

Oral Language Proficiency Evaluation - **three (3) years**.

Reading and Writing Language Proficiency - **five (5) years**.

Please note that a result at the ***Superior*** level does not have an expiration date; however, **an employer can request an evaluation at any time** regardless of the previous level achieved.

ORAL LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EVALUATION

Description

The Oral Language Proficiency Evaluation is an assessment of a person's *overall ability* to communicate in English or in French in both professional and social settings.

Proficiency is how well one can speak, in English or in French, based on:

- **Functions/Tasks** - the ability to ask questions, describe events, give explanations, express opinions, justify a position.
- **Accuracy** - the quality and precision of the message conveyed (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and the overall ability to communicate).
- **Content -** refers to the topics that have been broached during the conversation, all of which have a bearing on professional and social life.

The Oral Language Proficiency Evaluation is a 20 to 40-minute one-on-one **telephone conversation** with a certified evaluator. The goal of the conversation is to obtain a speech sample that will demonstrate the highest level at which someone can function consistently.

Interview structure (i.e. the conversation)

- Warm-up

  Allows the verification of the person's identity and puts them at ease.

- Level check

  Situate where the person is on the global scale using performance criteria. The questions are adapted according to performance.

- Probing the upper level

  Explore the highest level someone is able to communicate before seeing linguistic breaking points.

- Relaxation

  Used to return to an easier level of speech and to answer questions about the process.

At any time, the person can indicate to the evaluator if a subject is too personal to discuss. However, **participation** is very important and personal opinions and points of view are asked so a candidate can show his / her ability to speak the language at the highest level.

A landline is strongly recommended due to its reliability and clear connection. **If you do not have a landline and must use a cellphone**, please do not use headphones, a headset or speakerphone and instead speak directly into the cellphone. An evaluator may terminate a conversation if the connection is not clear. In such a case, the candidate would have to reschedule and would be responsible for additional fees.

The use of notes or electronic devices is not allowed during the evaluation.

There are nine (9) levels for the Oral Language Proficiency: *Unrateable (0)*, *Novice (0+), Basic (1), Basic Plus (1+), Intermediate (2), Intermediate Plus (2+), Advanced (3), Advanced Plus (3+)* and *Superior (4)*. (See Appendix A)

Tips

Prior to the evaluation:

- Practice, practice, practice is the key. Use the target language as often as you can: speak to colleagues and friends, listen to radio, watch television and read the target language.

During the evaluation:
Remember that what is being assessed is the ability to communicate, not the ideas or opinions expressed. The evaluation is confidential, so feel free to express thoughts as your ability to tell, describe, express and support opinions is evaluated.
It is not what you say that is important, it is how you say it.

- Be alone in a quiet room/location so you can concentrate

- Use the target language right from the beginning of the evaluation to adjust quickly to the language

- Listen carefully to the question so you can respond accordingly and with accuracy

- Do not get hung up on your mistakes. If you realize you made a mistake and wish to correct it, then do so. But remember that if you correct yourself all the time, it may slow down the natural flow of the conversation

- If you are searching for a word, use another word or paraphrase, but avoid using words from another language than the one which is being tested

- Don’t be offended if you are interrupted. Interruptions and changes of topics occur if the evaluator feels the sample he/she was looking for is sufficient and it is necessary to move on to other functions/topics

- Do not memorize responses as it is often obvious when someone does so and it can have a negative impact on the rating. Authentic answers and spontaneity provide better responses, therefore, better ratings

- Be in a good state of mind, and most importantly, relax and enjoy the conversation.

READING LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EVALUATION

Description

The Reading Language Proficiency Evaluation is an assessment of proficiency in reading comprehension in English or in French. It verifies your general comprehension of a text and you will be asked to choose among four (4) statements the one which best describes the text or its purpose.

The Reading Language Proficiency Evaluation is available online and can be done anytime and from anywhere. The duration of the evaluation is **sixty (60) minutes** and has **one hundred (100) questions.**

A request for an audit of your Reading Language Proficiency Evaluation must be received by Linguistic Services **within ten (10) business days of the evaluation date.**

There are five (5) levels for the Reading Language Proficiency: *Unrateable, Basic*, *Intermediate*, *Advanced* and *Superior*. (See Appendix B)

Tips

Prior to the evaluation:

- Review vocabulary and grammar but concentrate on reading and understanding texts written in the target language.

- Be on time for the evaluation since you will not be permitted to write if the others in the session have already begun answering questions.

During the evaluation:

- To maximize your score, answer as many of the easier questions as possible. Only correct answers will contribute to your score.

- Because the evaluation is used to assess all levels of proficiency, you may not have time to answer all the questions.

WRITING LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EVALUATION

Description

The Writing Language Proficiency Evaluation is an assessment of your knowledge of grammar, vocabulary and other aspects of written in English or in French. It assesses your knowledge of grammar, vocabulary and other aspects of written expression required in English or French writing.

The Writing Language Proficiency Evaluation is available online and can be done anytime and from anywhere. The duration of the evaluation is **forty-five (45) minutes** and has **seventy-five (75) questions.**

A request for an audit of Writing Proficiency Evaluation must be received by Linguistic Services **within ten (10) business days of the evaluation date**

There are five (5) levels for the Writing Language Proficiency: *Unrateable, Basic*, *Intermediate*, *Advanced* and *Superior*. (See Appendix C)

Tips

Prior to the evaluation:

- Review vocabulary, grammar, write short texts (for example, simple statements or short letters, memoranda or reports) and discuss them with others who are highly proficient in the target language.

- Be on time for the evaluation since you will not be permitted to write if the others in the session have already begun answering questions.

During the evaluation:

- To maximize your score, answer as many of the easier questions as possible. Only correct answers will contribute to your score.

- Because the evaluation is used to assess all levels of proficiency, you may not have time to answer all the questions.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - ORAL LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY SCALE

The *Oral Language Proficiency Scale* states oral communication proficiency based on a scale that describes nine (9) levels of linguistic competence: *Unrateable (0)*, *Novice (0+), Basic (1), Basic Plus (1+), Intermediate (2), Intermediate Plus (2+), Advanced (3), Advanced Plus (3+)* and *Superior (4)*. Except for the *Unrateable* level, the functions associated with each level include the functions of previous levels. Thus, the *Intermediate* level means that all the functions at the *Novice* and *Basic* levels as well as those at the *Intermediate* level are acquired. A *plus* (+) indicates some functions of the next level are acquired, but not all functions.

UNRATEABLE (0)

No communicative capacity

May be able on occasion to utter an isolated word or phrase.

NOVICE (0+)

Able to satisfy immediate needs using learned utterances

No real autonomy of expression, flexibility or spontaneity. Can answer *simple* questions with reasonable accuracy using memorized phrases. Repetition and rephrasing of questions are often necessary. Vocabulary is insufficient for conversation.

BASIC (1)

Able to satisfy basic survival needs and minimum courtesy requirements

Can ask and answer questions on simple, familiar topics. Within the scope of very limited language experience can understand simple questions and statements, often requiring to slow speech, repetition and paraphrasing. Vocabulary is adequate to express most elementary needs. Errors in pronunciation and grammar are frequent. Can provide simple autobiographical information on such topics as family, leisure activities, education and employment (*where appropriate*). Can provide a simple description of a person, place or thing.

At this level, someone can:

- identify herself / himself and give a simple personal biography
- indicate where a person, object or document is
- ask how to obtain something (document, tool, number…)
- give simple instructions concerning a file or a task
- give simple information on an event or a public service
- ask for directions.

BASIC PLUS (1+)

Able to satisfy survival needs and participate in informal conversations in areas of personal experience

Has difficulty participating fully in an informal conversation. Can offer a sequence of comprehensible sentences on a particular topic, but errors in basic structures are frequent. Some functions of the next level are acquired, but not all functions.

INTERMEDIATE (2)

Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements

Can participate fully in informal conversations on personal topics and topics of general societal interest. Can provide detailed autobiographical information and give explanations with some degree of accuracy, but language is awkward. Can express facts, provide narration, describe, report on and speak about current, past and future activities. Able to provide accurate instructions in a field of personal expertise. Can express opinions and make comparisons. Can handle limited, routine work requirements, but would need help in handling any complications or difficulties. Able to use paraphrasing when vocabulary is inadequate. Uses high frequency language structures accurately, but grammatical errors do occur and may be distracting. Pronunciation, though quite often faulty, is intelligible.

At this level, someone can:

- explain the hiring process
- explain certain simple procedures or policies
- describe objects/documents (color, size, texture…)
- describe the circumstances of an event
- deal with problem solving
- explain taste and preference regarding a service / an event.

INTERMEDIATE PLUS (2+)

Able to participate fully in general conversation

Able to participate fully in informal conversations in social and work-related contexts. Control of language structures may vary, but communication of facts and ideas is usually clear. Some functions of the next level are acquired, but not all functions.

ADVANCED (3)

Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations in both professional and social contexts

Can discuss work-related subjects, educational pursuits and areas of particular interest with reasonable ease. Can describe and narrate with precision. Can discuss abstract topics and ideas, in addition to factual subjects. Can discuss issues unrelated to personal experience, such as current events and general societal concerns. Can justify an opinion and develop a hypothesis. Comprehension is quite complete if the rate of speech is normal. Vocabulary is adequate to deal with a variety of topics. Control of grammar is generally good and errors do not impede communication. As for the pronunciation, it does not hinder the message.

At this level someone can:

- present the features of a program and answer questions related to the program
- explain the complex procedures for handling ministerial correspondence
- explain the stages of an event or an experiment
- explain the impact of a change on work and productivity
- advise on the best method of handling a difficult situation or project
- can defend and express opinions regarding sensible subjects / situations.

ADVANCED PLUS (3+)

Can speak the language with sufficient ease to participate in formal and informal exchanges in a variety of contexts

Although there may be occasional errors in grammar and lapses in vocabulary, overall communication is not affected. Some functions of the next level are acquired, but not all functions.

SUPERIOR (4)

Able to use the language fluently and accurately in all contexts requiring complex language structures

Can organize extended discourse with ease and precision in social and professional discussions. The speech is formal and well organized. Can demonstrate firm command of grammar and use complex language structures. The vocabulary is rich, precise and nuanced. Can advise, persuade, negotiate and entertain different points of view.

At this level, someone can:

- defend an idea, an argument, a person
- direct a bargaining team in negotiations/mediation
- deliver a speech in front of a crowd/dignitaries
- deal with complaints in tactful manner
- present a performance review of an employee
- conduct a press conference, on an issue of interest.

APPENDIX B - READING LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY SCALE

The *Reading Language Proficiency Scale* states reading proficiency based on a scale that describes five (5) levels of linguistic competence: *Unrateable, Basic*, *Intermediate*, *Advanced* and *Superio*r.

UNRATEABLE (0)
No ability to understand texts.

BASIC (1)
Can understand texts on topics of limited scope and very simple texts. Grasp the main idea of texts about familiar topics. Read and understand elementary points of information such as dates, numbers or names from relatively more complex texts to perform routine job-related tasks.

INTERMEDIATE (2)
Can understand most descriptive or factual material on work-related subjects. Grasp the main idea of most work-related texts, locate specific details and distinguish main from subsidiary ideas.

ADVANCED (3)
Can understand texts on a wide variety of work-related topics and most complex details, inferences and fine points of meanings. Read with good comprehension specialized or less familiar material.

SUPERIOR (4)
Can understand texts exceeding that of Advanced Level.

APPENDIX C – WRITING LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY SCALE

The *Writing Language Proficiency Scale* states writing proficiency based on a scale that describes four (5) levels of linguistic competence: *Basic*, *Intermediate*, *Advanced* and *Superior*.

UNRATEABLE (0)
No ability to produce/reproduce isolated words and short phrases.

BASIC (1)
Can produce/reproduce isolated words and short phrases to perform very simple tasks such as making a list, writing a short message, etc. Uses very simple vocabulary and spelling errors impede communication.

INTERMEDIATE (2)
Can produce/reproduce short texts to achieve simple transactions such as reserving a meeting room, changing an appointment, providing simple instructions, etc. Frequent grammatical inaccuracies and spelling errors may confuse the reader.

ADVANCED (3)
Can produce/reproduce texts to achieve a range of transactions, both informal and formal. Sentences are generally well formulated and linking words enhance readability. Although grammatical and spelling inaccuracies may be evident, they do not affect the accuracy of the message.

SUPERIOR (4)
Can produce quality well-formulated texts/messages on a wide variety of topics. Command of grammar is excellent. Sentences are well constructed and there is a good flow of ideas. Vocabulary is rich and precise and idiomatic expressions are present.