

Frequently Asked Questions related to Law 14 and our Attestation of College Studies (ACS) Programs

What is Bill 96 or Law 14?

On June 1, 2022, the Quebec Government passed new legislation called an *Act respecting French, the official and common language of Quebec* (Law 14, previously known as Bill 96). Law 14 seeks to protect and promote French as the official language in Quebec through amendments to several pieces of existing legislation, mainly the *Charter of the French Language (the Charter)*.

The *Act* provides that obtaining a Diploma of College Studies or an Attestation of College Studies is conditional on knowledge of French and, where applicable, successful completion of French courses or courses given in French. It also makes amendments to the provisions relating to the policies of college- and university-level educational institutions concerning the use and quality of the French language.

As of June 1, 2023, certain aspects of the *Act* will affect students who register in Attestation of College Studies (ACS) programs in CÉGEPs. Specifically, it puts students pursuing post-secondary education, including ACS programs, into two (2) categories:

- Certificate of Eligibility Holders;
- Non-Certificate of Eligibility Holders.

The graduation of Non-Certificate of Eligibility Holders is conditional upon a French language requirement.

It is important to note that ALL STUDENTS who are qualified to study at a college in Quebec can be admitted to an English-language college, regardless of their high school of origin or their eligibility to receive instruction in English in an elementary or secondary school in Quebec.

What is a Certificate of Eligibility?

A Certificate of Eligibility is issued to a person who is allowed to receive instruction in English based on specific provisions. An explanation of these provisions can be found on the Quebec Government's Website (<http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/parents-and-guardians/instruction-in-english/eligibility/>). Those identified as Certificate of Eligibility Holders have no additional admission or graduation requirements.

Who is a Non-Certificate of Eligibility Holder?

Most Quebec citizens, or recently arrived immigrants, are identified as Non-Certificate of Eligibility Holders and therefore have not been issued a Certificate of Eligibility by the Government. Under Law 14, these individuals must have a certain level of French oral and written proficiency by the time they finish their ACS studies.

How do I know if I qualify for a Certificate of Eligibility?

If you meet the Government's [eligibility criteria](#), the Government would already have issued the Certificate to you. Whether or not you have the Certificate, you can inform the CÉGEP when you apply for admission. The CÉGEP will confirm your status with your permanent code which is issued to every person who attends an educational institution in Quebec.

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Do I have to submit my Certificate of Eligibility when I apply for an ACS program?

CÉGEPs have access to the Government's database to confirm an applicant's eligibility using your permanent code. Applicants are not required to submit their Certificate of Eligibility with their application.

What are the ACS graduation requirements for Certificate of Eligibility Holders?

Applicants who hold the Certificate of Eligibility are not required to prove a level of French proficiency and have no added admission or graduation requirements beyond those of the ACS program.

What are the ACS graduation requirements for Non-Certificate of Eligibility Holders?

Under [Law 14 Section 88.0.18](#), Non-Certificate of Eligibility Holders who have been successfully admitted to a program must prove that they have a level of French language proficiency before obtaining their program's ACS certification. The Government has declared that Non-Certificate of Eligibility Holders must prove that they have attained a level of oral and written French proficiency consistent with the Quebec scale of French proficiency levels for adult immigrants ("Échelle québécoise des niveaux de compétence en français des personnes immigrantes adultes") as follows:

- [Level 7 in oral French](#)
- [Level 4 in written French](#)

Applicants accepted into an ACS program who are Non-Certificate of Eligibility Holders will be required to prove their attainment of the required levels of oral and written French through the successful completion of a Ministry-approved test.

Information about local testing options will be made available to students at the beginning of the Academic Year. We will share details with students regarding the test to be successfully completed once the Government releases this information.

Can I be exempted from Law 14 French language provisions as a Non-Certificate of Eligibility Holder?

Students who are Non-Certificate of Eligibility Holders can be exempted from proving their level of French if they meet any of the following conditions:

1. Completed a Secondary School Diploma (SSD/DES, diplôme d'études secondaires) in French in Quebec;
2. Completed a Secondary School Diploma (SSD/DES) in English and passed the Secondary V French as a second language course in Quebec;
3. Completed an Attestation of Collegiate Studies (ACS, attestation d'études collégiales, AEC) program in French in Quebec;
4. Completed a Diploma of Collegiate Studies (DCS, diplôme d'études collégiales, DEC) in French in Quebec;
5. Completed a program abroad that is equivalent to a DCS (DEC) in French;
6. Passed the OQLF examination leading to an attestation of a French level appropriate to practice their profession;
7. Reside or have resided on an Indigenous or First Nations reservation, an establishment where the aboriginal community lives, or on Category I and Category 1-N within the meaning of an "Act respecting the land regime in the James Bay and New Québec territories (CQLR, c. R-13.1)", "Loi sur le régime des terres dans les territoires de la Baie-James et du Nouveau-Québec (RLRQ, c. R-13.1)"

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How do I determine the level of my French language skills?

The consortium of English-language CÉGEPs have developed a diagnostic test to help you determine your current level of French. It is a free service and can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

Note that you must still complete the official Government-mandated test. However, the results of the diagnostic test can help you decide how much additional training or how many additional courses might be needed to reach the acceptable level of French language proficiency. We encourage all Non-Certificate of Eligibility applicants to take this test prior to the first day of classes.

How can I improve French language skills?

There are many ways to improve your French language skills so that you can prepare for the Government-mandated test.

- a) The Government of Quebec offers French courses ("[Francisation](#)"). It consists of French courses that are free for immigrants and residents living in Quebec. Francization courses are offered in various locales in the province of Quebec, including CÉGEPs, school boards, adult education centers and more.

The Website is only in French and information can be found by clicking [here](#).

- b) Some CÉGEPs, like Dawson College, offer [non-credit French courses](#) through the Language Centre. The courses are designed according to French language standards and will help students prepare for the Government-mandated French test.

Their courses can be found by clicking [here](#).

- c) Applicants can also look at online French resources.