#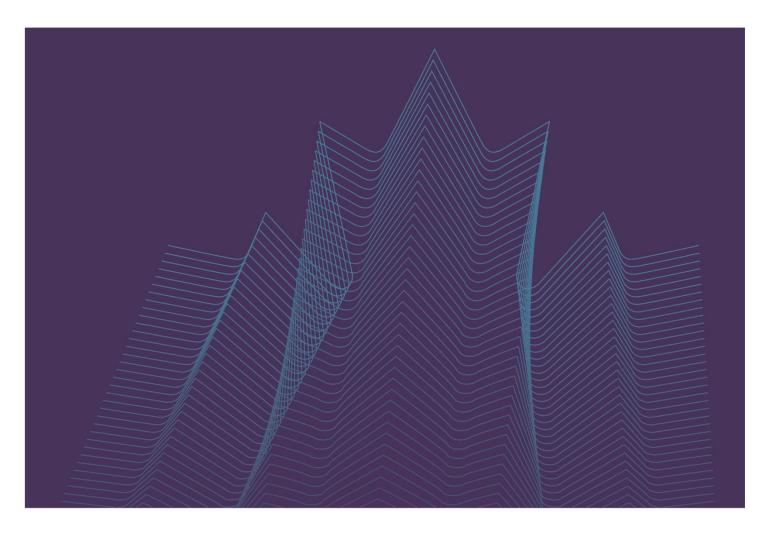 Guide to Official Languages Best Practices for Learning Product Design and Development at the Canada School of Public Service

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# Introduction

The Canada School of Public Service (the School) has the primary responsibility to provide a wide range of learning opportunities and to establish a learning culture for the Public Service that promotes inclusion and supports linguistic duality. In this context, it must offer products and services of equivalent quality in both official languages to provide a learning experience of similar, but not necessarily identical, quality in English and French.

To enable the School to meet its official languages obligations, the School's Official Languages Committee has developed this guide, which is intended to raise employees' awareness of the proper use of official languages, particularly in the development of learning products.

The guide has been updated to address the recommendations made in the Audit of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages and the establishment of the Official Languages Standard for Employees of the Canada School of Public Service for the Provision of Services to Learners and Client Organizations.

Any questions or comments regarding the content of this guide may be directed to the Official Languages Committee.

# 1. Events

Events are opportunities for dialogue on issues relevant to the public service. Learners from across Canada can participate in person or by webcast. Whether workshops, seminars or talks, the events provide an opportunity to learn and network.
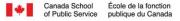
The Conferences and Special Events team can provide information on official languages requirements when organizing events.

## 1.1. Events presented by webcast

In accordance with clause 6.3.5 of the Standard, plenary sessions (presented in person or by webcast) as part of a learning program or event held in the National Capital Region (NCR) must be facilitated by bilingual speakers or offered with simultaneous interpretation. Some executive learning activities may be exempted at the discretion of the vice-presidents of the Learning Programs Branch and the Innovation and Policy Services Branch, such as the following:

- Deputy Minister Seminars
- Deputy Minister Orientation
- Assistant Deputy Minister Orientation
- Leadership Development Programs for Executives (EX-04/05)
- Transition program for new DGs (including the EXecuTalk series)

Simultaneous interpretation is required for any national live webcast session, unless the event is held once in each language.

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Public service stakeholders invited to participate in bilingual events, whether they are executives or managers in bilingual positions, are expected to express themselves equally in both official languages. In this way, they comply with their official languages obligations.

## 1.2.   Events presented without webcast

According to section 6.3.6 of the Standard, unilingual events (including learning activities that engage communities and focus primarily on interaction and spontaneous conversations) may be offered provided that an activity of equivalent quality, duration and content is offered in the other official language at a later date.

This includes the use and experimentation with new forms of learning (e.g., anti-conferencing, live events/videos broadcast on social media), as well as technologies and platforms with a unilingual interface. In such cases, continuous efforts will be made to offer the content or events simultaneously in both official languages. If this is not possible, an activity of equivalent quality, duration and content will be offered at a later date in the other official language.

Events that are presented in person (without webcasting) may be unilingual provided that they are offered at another time in the other language and that learners and client organizations have equitable access to learning products in the language of their choice. In the NCR, for example, events such as the Career Boot Camp are unilingual and without simultaneous interpretation because they are presented in both languages.

Section 6.3.7 of the Standard, which deals with offer planning, stipulates that the annual offer of learning products must include the provision of a learning activity in the minority official language for each of the regions served by the School. The choice of the type of learning activity, its duration and its content is left to the regional offices.

There may be more offers in one language than in the other for a workshop offered in a region, but there must be at least one session in each language.

Note: The School strongly encourages employees to do the necessary research to find bilingual speakers as much as possible. The use of simultaneous interpretation at unilingual events does not constitute an equivalent offer, as the participants' experience is not the same. Simultaneous interpretation can nevertheless be used. The School seeks to offer the same number of events in each of the two languages, with simultaneous interpretation, and favours bilingual events.

## 1.3.   Recommended practices for bilingual events

- When members of both language groups participate in the same event, organizers and facilitators must remind participants at the outset that the event is bilingual and that they can speak in the official language of their choice.

- Two screens must be placed in the room during the event to project the French content on one and the English content on the other. Presenters and facilitators use both languages alternately,

ensuring that they are fairly represented. The presentation templates of the School to be used are available on the intranet.

When it is not possible to use two screens, the presentation should be sent to participants in advance in electronic format, in both official languages, or be distributed in hard copy at the time of the presentation.

- All materials provided to participants must be available in both official languages.

- Simultaneous interpretation services are always available even if the event is not broadcast on the web. The request must be made to the Translation Bureau 5 to 6 weeks in advance. The Conferences and Special Events team only makes requests for the events it organizes.

## 2.  Social media and government collaboration platforms

The use of the same social networks in different spheres of life sometimes blurs the line between professional and personal life. It is increasingly difficult to have a personal identity that is not linked to a professional identity. It is therefore necessary to distinguish between the different possible uses: official, professional or personal.

### 2.1.  Different uses of social media

**Official Use**: Any content published by the School's Communications team from an official social media account of the School. The content is reviewed by the School's Linguistic Services and published in both official languages.

**Professional Use:** Public servants network, exchange, collaborate, conduct research and keep up to date on their profession and working community through a group or individual account. The group account belongs to a working group and remains in place even if the group members change, while the individual account follows its owner even when the owner leaves the department.

**Personal Use**: Public servants have the right to have a personal account where they can exchange and network on a personal basis. They should not use it to provide information on behalf of the School.

On the intranet, you can find information on the use of social media on the Communications Support, Social Media and Wiki page. The GCpedia page on social media within the GC and its accessible description contain additional information.

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2.2.    Best practices regarding official languages in the use of social media for professional purposes[1]

In communities of practice or working groups, it is important to address members of both language communities and behave as if they were in a bilingual meeting, for example by doing the following:

- Invite members to participate in the official language of their choice.
- Transmit documents in both official languages.

Participants have the right to speak in the language of their choice, but the facilitators or organizers are responsible for the group and must act in a professional and inclusive manner by promoting the use of both official languages.

The following best practices should be remembered:

- Use both official languages equitably, set an example by speaking as much as possible in both official languages and seek the assistance of a co-organizer or co-facilitator if necessary.
- Provide a brief summary of the comments or discussions.
- To have short texts translated (250 words maximum), use the School's Linguistic Services. For longer texts, use professional translators (for example, those from the Translation Bureau). It is also possible to use an automatic translation tool (such as DeepL), but it is strongly recommended that the translations generated be revised by Linguistic Services.
- When information from government organizations is to be transmitted, redirect users to the websites of these organizations, where content is posted in both official languages.
- All official School information for social media must be published from the School's official accounts in both official languages. For Twitter tweets, contact the Communications and Mobilization team, which manages the School's official accounts.
- Draft working documents do not have to be translated, but under Part V of the Official Languages Act, employees in regions designated bilingual for language of work purposes have the right to work in the language of their choice. Final versions of documents must be produced in both official languages.
- When information is shared (for example, when you retweet on Twitter or use the "share" function on Facebook), you have to try to be fair to both linguistic communities.
- It is customary to answer comments and questions in the language in which they were made and to re-transmit the tweets in their original language.
- When redirecting callers to unilingual websites, it should be mentioned that it is (in English only) or (in French only).

Employees are encouraged to promote inclusion in the public service by using both official languages in social media.

The Social Media at Work video, adapted by Transport Canada and based on a video produced by the Australian government, provides information on the use of social media.

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[1] See http://www.gcpedia.gc.ca/wiki/FAQs_on_the_GCTools

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# 3. Traditional or virtual-classroom courses and self-paced online courses

Traditional or virtual-classroom courses must meet the same official languages obligations. Sessions in each official language ensure that public servants have access not only to training in the official language of their choice, but also to equivalent content in both languages.

Learners must receive the teaching material in the same language as the course in which they have enrolled. Since all materials are available in both official languages, learners can request to receive them electronically in the other language. When the material is distributed electronically, it is recommended that it be sent in both languages.

For virtual-classroom sessions, on-screen display settings must be set so that the interface language corresponds to the language of the course.

Self-paced online courses, including help topics and frequently asked questions, must be published and made available simultaneously in both official languages in equal quality and quantity. In the case of language-training courses, they must be available in both official languages in an equivalent manner.

It is important to ensure a diligent and appropriate follow-up of the comments received with respect to official languages and language quality. When typos or errors are identified, the program responsible for the product must follow up and make the necessary corrections.

## 3.1. Translation and revision

It should be noted that the Learning Solutions Division is responsible for coordinating all stages of the development of learning products: text content revision, translation, formatting, layout, etc.

The Division manages and pays for revision and translation requests. Requests should be sent to the Learning Solutions Request mailbox. These are then redirected to the Linguistic Services mailbox.

Whenever possible, it is important to provide final texts to Learning Solutions, as any subsequent changes lead to the revision and translation process being restarted at its initial point and inevitably cause unwanted delays.

With respect to the translation and revision of published content, articles 6.3.2, 6.3.3 of the Standard specify that all products and services designed by the School and offered to learners and client organizations must be subject to the following:

1. A revision in their original language by the School's Linguistic Services to ensure quality;
2. Translation by professional translators, such as those from the Translation Bureau;
3. A revision of the versions translated by the Linguistic Services.

Thus, all textual content of a course must be reviewed in the original language (the language in which the text was written) by Linguistic Services to ensure that the language is of high quality, clear and simple. Then, the revised textual content must be translated by a professional translation service. The translation is then subjected to a comparative review by the Linguistic Services to ensure the quality of the target language (the language into which the document was translated), including respect for the

meaning and nuances of the source language. The Linguistic Services deadline estimator is used to estimate the time required to complete the work.

With regard to the use of translation software, Article 6.3.4 of the Standard states the following: For experimental purposes, it is possible to have the learning products developed by the School translated using translation software, with the exception of documents containing protected or classified information. Once translated, the texts must be revised by Linguistic Services to ensure conformity and quality of the language.

Linguistic Services offers writing and editing services (see their services on the intranet) and can answer any language question. For example, at the request of the Learning Solutions Division, Linguistic Services will review or compare a section of an existing product that requires updating after a policy or regulation has been amended.

## 3.2.    Use of images

The School is licensed to use Adobe Stock photos, images and graphics products. Learning product managers must note the reference numbers of the items they wish to use and send them in a graphic content request to the Learning Solutions Division for download. A School graphic designer may be able to insert text in French and English or modify graphic elements if copyright permits. The final texts must be revised by Linguistic Services.

Other image sources (from open content and licensed as "Creative Commons License") may be used in product development if copyright permits. In case of uncertainty. and for more information on the use of copyrighted content, please consult the Frequently Asked Questions section of the School's Learning Support Centre web page or write to csps.copyrightdroitsdauteurs.efpc@canada.ca.

Recommended practices:

- Choose (preferably) images without text.
- If the image contains text in one official language, find a different image for the product version in the other official language that conveys the same message and contains text in the language of the course.
- Seek the assistance of the Desktop Publishing and Multimedia Development team in the Learning Solutions Division.

## 3.3.    Production and use of videos and graphic animations

To integrate video material into products, contact the Learning Solutions Division at the start of the development process to determine which options are most effective in meeting official languages requirements. The Learning Solutions Division manages the production of transcripts, translations and descriptive captions for deaf and hard-of-hearing people that must accompany the videos. They work with Linguistic Services to ensure the quality of the language in English and French.

There are 3 options for producing videos that respect the use of official languages:

- Video produced in each of the two official languages: there is complete video production in each language.
- Bilingual videos: audio and on-screen text are 50% in French and 50% in English; transcription, subtitling and descriptive subtitling for the hearing impaired are unilingual, either in English or in French, depending on the site (French or English) from which the user is viewing the video.
- Unilingual videos: transcription, subtitling and descriptive subtitling for the deaf and hard-of-hearing are presented in English on the English site and in French on the French site.

The School favours videos produced in each of the two languages or bilingual videos. If, for example, the interviewees are bilingual managers, it is recommended to make a bilingual video.

### 3.3.1. Videos and graphic animations produced in both official languages

In order to meet accessibility requirements, all videos must include a transcript, captioning and descriptive captioning for the deaf and hard-of-hearing in each official language.

The English and French versions of the videos do not have to be identical, but they must convey the same messages, meet the same objectives and be of equivalent quality in terms of content and language.

### 3.3.2. Bilingual videos and graphic animations

Bilingual videos present an equivalent amount of content in French and English. They are published with the original bilingual audio, as well as a transcript, captioning and descriptive captioning for the deaf and hard-of-hearing who are in the same language as the website. For example, when a bilingual video is published on the School's website, the transcript, subtitles and descriptive subtitles for the deaf and hard-of-hearing are presented in the language of the site, either in English on the English site or in French on the French site.

### 3.3.3. Videos and graphic animations produced in only one of the official languages

The production of videos in only one official language is recommended only in the case of unilingual interviews or presentations.

In the case of a unilingual video production or its integration into a learning product, it is very rare to make a reproduction in the other official language with dubbing, as it is expensive and requires additional resources. However, transcription and subtitling make it possible to meet official language requirements in the absence of dubbing. The unilingual video is therefore presented with original audio and transcription, subtitles in the other language, and descriptive subtitling for the deaf and hard-of-hearing. The School wishes to have a comparable number of original videos in French and English. We must ensure that they are of equivalent quality in both official languages.

### 3.4. Production and use of podcasts

Podcasts provide quick information on many topics. Their informal nature makes them very popular. The School must ensure that they are offered in both official languages and in equal quality and quantity in each language.

As with videos, there must be a transcription of the audio. The French and English versions need not be identical, but they must convey the same messages, meet the same objectives and be of equivalent quality in terms of content and language level.

### 3.5. Production and uses of webinars

Webinars from external resources (not produced by the School) must comply with accessibility and official languages standards. Contact the Learning Solutions Division, which will manage the production or adaptation.

### 3.6. Production of job aids

The production of job aids includes revision in the original language to ensure that the text is written in plain language, translation, and then comparative revision, as with any textual content of an online product.

### 3.7. Editing and integration of external resources to our products

Editing existing online resources includes searching, sorting, selecting, collecting, organizing and sharing content, as well as commenting on content. You must keep in mind that external resources (videos, images, documents, websites, etc.) must be available in both official languages. The content may be different in French and English, but it must meet the same objective and be equivalent in quantity and quality.

For the use of content from external resources that is available only in one official language, the recommended practices are as follows:

- Have the content translated into the other official language (make sure you obtain the copyright first. See the Frequently Asked Questions on Copyright on the School's Learning Support Centre web page).
- Find equivalent content of equal quality in the other official language.

### 3.8. Testing of new courses and other learning products

Once the learning product has been refined in both official languages and is ready to be launched, it should be tested with focus groups in both linguistic communities.

According to section 6.3.1 of the Standard, testing (pilot projects) of new learning products must be conducted in parallel in both official languages.

## References

- Official Languages Standard for Canada School of Public Service Employees for Service Delivery to Learners and Client Organizations

- Canada.ca Content Style Guide

- *Official Languages Act*

- Official languages in the public service (TBS)

- Directive on Official Languages for People Management

- Directive on Official Languages for Communications and Services

- Directive on the Implementation of the *Official Languages (Communications with and Services to the Public) Regulations*

- Standard on Web Usability

- Internal Online Collaborative Tools Guidance/Official Languages

- Social Media in the Government of Canada - infographic