POLICY NO. 10

FRENCH LANGUAGE

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- 397-04 November 26, 2019
- 421-08 April 25, 2023
- 428-06 April 30, 2024

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PREAMBLE

The *Charter of the French Language* (CQLR, c. C-11) (the "**Charter**" or the "**Act**") states the following (article 88.1):

> "Every institution that provides college instruction […] must adopt a policy applicable to college-level instruction regarding the use and quality of the French language that promotes respect for the fundamental language rights conferred by this Act and the institution's contribution to the achievement of the objectives of this Act. […]"

The Charter further prescribes what such a policy must pertain to in the case of an English-language college (articles 88.3 & 88.2); this includes, notably, the command of the French language required of students, the language used by the institution in some of its written communications, the teaching of French as a second language, the services provided in the official language, priority admission measures for certain students in certain situations, policy implementation, etc.

The College has been designated as an English-language institution pursuant to *An Act respecting French, the official and common language of Québec* (2022, c. 14, article 191), commonly known as Bill 96.

As used herein, the expression "**certificate holders**" shall mean those eligible to receive instruction in English in Québec who have received a certificate from the government; and "**non-certificate holders**" shall mean those who are not certificate holders.

ARTICLE 1 - TEACHING OF FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

1.01 As a College in the Province of Québec, aware of its responsibility to contribute to the intellectual, economic and social development of our society, John Abbott College recognizes the importance for its students to learn French. The intent is to prepare students to take full advantage of opportunities to participate in and contribute to Quebec society.

1.02 As part of their Diploma of College Studies (DEC program), all students will be required to complete successfully at least five college-level French courses or program courses in French, as further detailed below.

1.03 All students are required to pass a language exit exam to receive their DEC. For students admitted in Fall 2023 or later, certificate holders will continue to be required to pass the English Exit Exam and non-certificate holders will be required to pass the French Exit Exam.

1.04 For **non-certificate holders**:

a. Those admitted in Fall 2023 or later, to ensure their adequate preparation to be successful in the French Exit Exam, will need to take three (3) preparatory French courses (these replace what were, prior to Fall 2023, two French as a Second Language (FSL) courses and one complementary course); and

b. Those admitted in Fall 2024 or later will be required to take two additional (2) program courses in French.

1.05 For **certificate holders** admitted in Fall 2024 or later, they will be required to take three (3) courses in French or of French to improve their French language skills.

1.06 Any specific program exceptions to Sections 1.04 and 1.05 above are detailed in Appendix 1.06 attached hereto.

1.07 Program curriculum will include content and strategies to foster the mastery of the appropriate French terminology required for the program of studies.

1.08 Students who arrive at John Abbott College without adequate preparation to achieve the exit standard may be required to take more than five college-level courses.

1.09 To receive their Attestation of College Studies (AEC), all students are required to have a sufficient knowledge of French to function in their field; the required level of French and exceptions are as set forth in Appendix 1.09 attached hereto.

ARTICLE 2 - WRITTEN COMMUNICATION IN FRENCH

2.01 Official written correspondence with the civil administration of Québec, with legal persons and enterprises established in Québec will normally be in French. However, this correspondence may be accompanied by documentation (bylaws, policies, reports, appendices, etc.) that, by the nature of its development, adoption, presentation and conservation, exists in English only.

2.02 Official written correspondence with legal persons established in Québec that, by their nature retain a special or bilingual status under the preamble or any article of the Charter, may be in English; without limitation, this includes official written correspondence with other English-language institutions.

2.03 Notwithstanding Section 2.01 above, official written correspondence received in English from a member of the civil administration of Québec or from legal persons established in Québec will be responded to by the College in English.

ARTICLE 3 – PRIORITY ADMISSION, SERVICES & COMPLAINTS RESOLUTION

3.01 For students admitted in Winter 2024 or later in a DEC program, certificate holders will receive priority admission where the number of admission applications is higher than the number of students that may be admitted. Such priority will be applied as follows:

a. For Round 1 applications, no priority admission will be applied; admissions will be based on academic record and other regular admission requirements; and

b. For applications in subsequent rounds, admission priority will be given to certificate holders in a manner consistent with ensuring the success of the student and in collaboration with other English-language colleges that are striving to admit all qualified certificate holders; this may therefore result in admission in a different program, in a pathways program or in another English-language college.

3.02 For AEC programs, admission priority will be given to certificate holders in a manner consistent with admission requirements and ensuring the success of the student.

3.03 The following student services will be available in French: *Centre d'aide en français* and student tutoring.

3.04 Any and all complaints in connection with the application of this policy or the Charter shall be dealt with in accordance with the procedure set forth in Appendix 3.04 attached hereto.

ARTICLE 4 - RESPONSIBILITIES ARISING FROM THIS POLICY, REPORTING AND REVIEW

4.01 The Director General is responsible for the application of this policy; including its dissemination among staff members and students and publication on its website. Without limitation, application of this policy extends to any *centre collégial de transfert de technologies* (CCTT) for which the College is a *cégep fiduciaire*, unless such CCTT has adopted its own policy on the matter.

4.02 The Director General shall report to the Academic Council and the Board of Governors, every three (3) years, on the application of this policy. Once adopted by the Board of Governors, the report shall be sent to the Minister of the French Language.

4.03 This policy comes into effect when enacted; it shall be reviewed at least every 10 years. If no amendment is made to this policy after its review, the Minister of the French Language shall be notified accordingly.

4.04 For purposes of clarity, the report and review of this policy involves the Academic Council and the Board of Governors whose respective membership includes staff members and students. Further, any amendment to this policy will be subject to consultation with Academic Council in accordance with College By-law 5 *Concerning the Academic Council*.

APPENDIX 1.06

Specific Program Exceptions

[For purposes of clarity, this appendix is for information purposes only and any amendment thereto does not require board approval.]

Exceptions are provided with respect to Indigenous students, as further prescribed under the *Regulation respecting the French knowledge requirements for the issue of an Attestation of College Studies* (c. C-11, r. 7.1) and the *Regulation to authorize the Minister of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology to make an exception to the application of section 88.0.17 of the Charter of the French language* (c. C-11, r. 9.1).

APPENDIX 1.09

AEC French Levels and Exceptions

[For purposes of clarity, this appendix is for information purposes only and any amendment thereto does not require board approval.]

Under Section 88.0.18 of the Charter, the minimum French proficiency levels, in accordance with the "*Échelle québécoise des niveaux de compétence en français des personnes immigrantes adultes*", are as follows:

- Level 7 in oral French (expression and comprehension)
- Level 4 in written French (expression and comprehension)

Please refer to the *Regulation respecting the French knowledge requirements for the issue of an Attestation of College Studies* (c. C-11, r. 7.1), and to the Continuing Education website for additional information.

APPENDIX 3.04
Complaints Procedure

Filing a Complaint

An individual who has a complaint in connection with the application of this policy or the Charter at the College may file a complaint to request that the situation be rectified.

The complaint must be in writing and include a detailed description of the situation giving rise to the complaint, the date or period of time when the situation occurred and the specific provisions that the College did not comply with.

The complaint must be addressed to the Secretary General. If the complaint involves the conduct of the Secretary General, it shall be addressed to the Director General.

Handling the Complaint

The Secretary General or the Director General, as the case may be, is responsible for processing the complaint within thirty (30) days of receipt; if the processing of the complaint is not possible within the said delay, the complainant shall be informed of the new applicable delay as soon as possible. In the event that the complaint is found to be justified, the College shall take the necessary measures to correct the situation as soon as possible. The Secretary General or the Director General, as the case may be, shall inform the complainant of the conclusion of the handling of the complaint.