

Clarification regarding supports for students learning English or French as an Additional Language

Purpose	This bulletin clarifies permitted supports for students learning English or French as an Additional Language (EAL/FAL) on provincial assessments. Use professional judgment within these guidelines and consult your principal or Regional Assessment Lead when needed.
Audience	School administrators, teachers, and assessment leads
Applies to	All provincial assessments
Action required	Review these guidelines before determining supports for provincial assessments for students learning English or French as an Additional Language.
Effective date	May 2026; revised August 2026

1. Do supports for students learning EAL/FAL need to be documented adaptations?

- No. Translation supports and additional time do not need to be documented adaptations for students learning EAL/FAL. See the participation section of the Assessment Handbook.

2. What kind of translation supports are permitted and not permitted?

- Translation supports for words or short phrases (3-4 words) are permitted.
 - These include but are not limited to: the built-in, one-way translator tool in the online assessment platform and two-way translation supports such as bilingual dictionaries, glossaries, and other translation tools like Google Translate.
 - Students may use other translation supports whether or not their first language is represented in the built-in tool in the online assessment platform.
 - Translations of up to 3-4 word phrases in the student's first language can be read aloud if required, without elaboration.

- iPads or other devices can be used as long as they are teacher-monitored and not personal devices. Note that increased supervision is necessary if students can access the internet.
- For online assessments, students may also have a lockdown exception enabled to access external translation (refer to the Quick-Start Guides). Increased supervision will be necessary if students have this exception as they will be able to access the internet.
- Translation supports that are not permitted include:
 - Scanning, photographing, or reproducing large amounts of text from the assessment.
 - Using the photo feature of a translation support.
 - Translating large chunks of the assessment at a time.
 - Translating student written responses (for example, completing the writing in another language then translating it to English or French).
 - Using personal devices.
 - In mathematics, using dictionaries that provide definitions.

3. Can students who require additional time write a part of the assessment over two days?

- No, per the Assessment Handbook, each part of the assessment must be completed in a continuous sitting. Students may use up to double time, with periodic supervised breaks.

4. Why can't students translate whole passages and questions?

- Nova Scotia Assessments are based on the provincial curriculum and measure student performance in the language of the curriculum; therefore, extensive translation support is not appropriate for students completing provincial assessments.

5. What does it mean for a student to have enough English or French-language proficiency to participate independently in the assessment?

- Independent participation means that the student has enough proficiency in the language of the assessment to complete the reading, writing, and mathematics tasks on their own, without relying on extensive translation or outside help.
- Students may use the supports described above, but they must still be able to:
 - Access reading passages without needing full-sentence or full-passage translation;
 - Access mathematics questions with only single word or small phrase translations;
 - Write their responses directly in the language of the assessment, not in another language and then translated.
- In other words, independent work means the student can access the content and demonstrate what they know and can do in relation to the curriculum outcomes of the assessment using only the permitted supports.
- If a student's language proficiency may prevent them from participating independently, refer to the participation section of the Assessment Handbook for guidance.