



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
UNIVERSITY

Bachelor of Education Handbook
Off-Campus
2026-2027

Welcome

Welcome to the Bachelor of Education (BEd) program within the Faculty of Education at St. Francis Xavier University (StFX) in Antigonish, Nova Scotia—situated on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw people. These lands are governed by Treaties of Peace and Friendship that come with obligations to sustain and renew this treaty relationship. As a program, the StFX BEd is committed to honouring the Treaties and our relationships with Mi'kmaw communities by meaningfully embedding Treaty Education and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action throughout the program. We recognize and value our longstanding partnership with Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey and its leadership in Mi'kmaw education across Nova Scotia. Through this commitment, we prepare future educators to understand their responsibilities within Treaty relationships and to advance reconciliation through their professional practice.

This handbook serves as both a guide and a reference for all members of our learning community, with particular emphasis on those participating in the field experience component of the program. More importantly, it reflects our shared commitment to preparing educators who will inspire, lead, and positively influence the lives of future generations.

At the heart of our program is the belief that teaching is a learner-centred, relational, and transformative profession. We believe that exceptional teachers are lifelong learners who continually reflect on and refine their practice, embrace innovation, and work collaboratively with colleagues, families, and communities to create meaningful learning opportunities for every student. As educators, we are entrusted with the responsibility of fostering curiosity, critical thinking, compassion, and a commitment to equity and inclusion.

This handbook outlines the purposes, practices, policies, and procedures that guide the B.Ed. program and support your professional growth. **Preservice teachers are expected to become familiar with the contents of this handbook and to uphold the highest standards of professionalism throughout the program, including adherence to the expectations outlined herein and the Nova Scotia Teachers Union (NSTU) Code of Ethics.** These expectations are designed not simply as requirements, but as the foundation of the trust, integrity, and responsibility that define the teaching profession.

On behalf of the faculty and staff in the Department of Teacher Education, we welcome you to this exciting journey. We are honoured to accompany you as you develop the knowledge, skills, confidence, and professional dispositions to become an outstanding educator. We wish you every success as you pursue one of the world's most meaningful and rewarding professions.

Dr. David Young
Interim Dean of Education

Dr. Katarin MacLeod
Chair of Teacher Education



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Program Support

Off-Campus BEd Program Office

The Off-Campus BEd email address serves as a central point of contact for various questions, concerns, and general inquiries related to the program.

General Inquiries: If you have questions or concerns related to policies, resources, services, or any other general matters, contact OffCampusBEd@stfx.ca. We will connect you with the StFX department associated to your inquiry.

Please note: course-specific information, including questions about assignments, deadlines, or course material, should be directed to the respective course instructors. They are best equipped to provide accurate and timely information related to your courses.

OffCampusBEd@stfx.ca | Centre for Online Learning & Professional Studies

IT Services Help Desk
itservices@stfx.ca | 902-867-2356 | Angus L. MacDonald Library

Bachelor of Education Office

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Introduction

This handbook focuses on the educational and professional development of Preservice Teachers, both in P-12 schools and university classrooms. Its focal point is the field experience component of the program where Preservice Teachers, Associate Teachers, and FAs work together to bridge the theoretical and practical components of teaching. Field experiences enable Preservice Teachers to develop professional knowledge through pedagogical experiences interwoven with coursework in an incremental and developmental way.

While In-service Teachers and University Instructors work most closely with Preservice Teachers, other educators, such as school and school system administrators, provide essential support. Without the assistance of these people, individually and collectively, initial teacher preparation would not be possible. Preservice Teachers are carefully and expertly mentored in schools and other educational settings as part of a shared stakeholder responsibility within job-embedded professional communities of practice. Developing and accessing resources, field experience planning, preparation of Associate Teachers, and Preservice Teacher and program assessment are shared responsibilities delivered within a stakeholder partnership that includes the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (NSDEECD), the Nova Scotia Teachers Union (NSTU), Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey (MK), Regional Centres of Education (RCEs), Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP), and universities.

Definition of Terms

- **Preservice Teacher (PST):** a person who is enrolled in the BEd program in order to become certified as a practicing teacher in elementary/secondary schools
- **In-service Teacher:** a person who is in professional practice as a teacher
- **Associate Teacher (AT):** an In-service Teacher who works with a PST who is developing professional knowledge through practical experience
- **University Instructor:** a person who teaches PSTs in the university setting
- **Field Advisor (FA):** a teacher/mentor from the University who visits and advises PSTs during their field experience
- **Field Experience/Practicum:** a time when PSTs develop professional knowledge of teaching/learning in a school setting and under the supervision of an AT (synonymous with practicum/internship)
- **Student:** The individuals that PSTs teach within school settings during practicum.
- **Professional Growth Target (PGT):** a specific individualized goal that a PST has identified for their own growth and is actively working on in the classroom context

Program Expectations

You are now a Preservice Teacher and began your professional journey upon confirmation into the StFX Bachelor of Education program. That confirmation carries a myriad of professional responsibilities, some of which will carry with you throughout your teaching career. The StFX BEd program expectations include:

- **Professional Conduct:** Because the StFX BEd program leads to teacher certification, all Preservice Teachers are expected to adhere to the [StFX University Community Code of Conduct](#), as well as the [NSTU Code of Ethics](#). This Code of Ethics extends beyond the classroom and includes your online and public presence.
- **Professional Communication:** Check your emails regularly, reply when required, and please include your student ID in your correspondence. Do not address emails with, "Hey,". Even though we are friendly at Xavier Hall and address each another by our first names, this is not an acceptable email greeting in a professional program.
- **Assignments:** To set yourself up for success in your future teaching career, establish work habits that allow you to manage your time well and pass assignments in on time. Late work may delay or prevent practicum. Remember, there are no extensions in the teaching profession; report cards, etc. have absolute deadlines.
- **Grades:** The passing grade in BEd courses is 60% and PSTs must maintain an average grade of 65% to continue in the program.
- **Scent Aware Buildings:** StFX is committed to providing a safe and healthy space for all. Chemicals in scented products can trigger serious health reactions in people. Please be considerate to all by not wearing scented products.
- **Professional Event Attendance:** Please see the Calendar of Events for **mandatory** events that do not fall into the regular BEd timetable.
- **Course Attendance:** In-person attendance is mandatory for all classes as participation in class discussions will enhance your assignments and benefit not only yourself but also your fellow PSTs. If you miss more than **two classes per term**, your name will be forwarded to the Dean and the Chair for their attention (Section 3.7 University Calendar. Class Attendance and Withdrawal from the University). If you do know ahead of time that you need to miss a class, please inform the instructor as soon as possible. In the case of illness or emergency that prevent you from missing a class unexpectedly, please inform the instructor directly by email or phone call prior to the class. Extenuating circumstances for missed classes (such as family emergencies) will be considered on an individual basis.
- **Programmatic Notice of Concern (PNOC):** PSTs not meeting program expectations may be issued a PNOC to be reviewed by the Chair and the Professionalism Committee.



Common Threads of the BEd Program

There are four common threads to StFX's BEd program. These threads are foundational to all that is done in the BEd program; they are modeled and taught in all the BEd courses:

- **Equity, Social Justice, and Anti-racism:** Our faculty subscribe to the fundamental belief that all students should be treated equitably. We have prioritized common core courses which focus upon sociology of education, inclusive practices, and contemporary issues in P-12 education; we believe these courses will assist PSTs in becoming more capable of meeting the needs of all students.
- **Professionalism in Practice:** As professionals, PSTs are expected to contribute all that they can to their chosen profession. PSTs must act always in ways that are consistent with the NSTU Code of Ethics. This will require a focus on commitment to students, other teachers, employers, and the wider community. This code is a guide for all PSTs as they progress through the program.
- **Technology and Ingenuity:** Our program encourages all PSTs to be critical consumers and users of educational technology. We believe that the purpose of technology in professional practice is to assist and improve opportunities for students to maximize learning.
- **Experiential Learning:** Learning to teach is a developmental lifelong process that requires teachers to continually reflect upon moral, pedagogical, and societal dimensions of practice. Through continuous interactions in a variety of learning experiences in schools, social events, and university classrooms, teachers come to know more about their profession and themselves as professionals. We believe that much about the teaching-learning process can best be achieved through direct experiences. Discussion, group work, projects, micro-teaching, and case studies are ongoing and normal parts of the program. A variation on the old proverb, "I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand, I reflect and I am renewed" is considered to be central in much of what PSTs do as they learn to teach.

BEd Program Structure

The program is delivered as 20 3-credit courses, 16 regular courses interwoven with 4 additional practicum courses, typically over three academic years. Regular courses are normally offered in a blended format involving three intensive in-person weekends (9 hours per weekend) and two online evenings (3 hours per evening).

Below is an overview of a *typical* program structure for cohorts commencing in the fall term. Courses can be offered in various sequences for each cohort, with each academic year containing core courses and a variety of special topics. Practicum sessions are spread throughout the program, with an increase in teaching responsibilities during each session.

The specific course sequence and schedule for each cohort will be communicated at the beginning of the academic year.

YEAR	FALL: SEP-DEC	WINTER: JAN-APR	SPRING: MAY-JUN
YEAR 1	COURSE 1	COURSE 4	PRACTICUM 1
	COURSE 2	COURSE 5	
	COURSE 3	COURSE 6	
YEAR 2	COURSE 7	COURSE 10	PRACTICUM 2
	COURSE 8	COURSE 11	
	COURSE 9	COURSE 12	
YEAR 3	COURSE 13	COURSE 15	Convocation (May)
	COURSE 14	COURSE 16	
	PRACTICUM 3	PRACTICUM 4	

Field Experience Professional Growth Sequence by Practicum

#	PLACEMENT	PURPOSE	INTENDED PROFESSIONAL GROWTH	PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS
Practicum 1 5-6 weeks	ELEMENTARY in P-3 or 4-6 grade range SECONDARY in 7-9 or 10-12 grade range	INITIATION TO TEACHING -through orientation, observation, and practice, PSTs will be introduced to school and classroom policies, structures, and procedures, provincial curriculum guides, teaching materials, strategies and techniques, extra-curricular activities, and teaching	TEACHING RESPONSIBILITIES -normally prepare and teach at least one detailed lesson plan daily (by the middle/end of the first week), about 25% of a full-time teacher's teaching load OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES -become familiar with and try a number of classroom management strategies -become familiar with the learning needs of a particular group of students -continue to learn through observation and discussion with others -participate in school routines, such as attendance taking, meetings, lunch time supervision, etc.	EXPECTATIONS -the PST will be expected to set Professional Growth Targets (PGTs), keep a Plan Book, and write daily reflections that lead to continued professional development -the FA will make at least two classroom visits and provide written feedback -the AT is encouraged to provide frequent oral and written feedback; the AT should provide two written reports per term for the FA and PST -the PST, AT, and FA will meet together at least once to discuss the progress of the PST
Practicum 2 5-6 weeks	ELEMENTARY in P-3 or 4-6 grade range SECONDARY in 7-9 or 10-12 grade range	DEVELOPMENT -PSTs will continue the development begun in EDUC 471	TEACHING RESPONSIBILITIES -normally prepare and teach at least two detailed lesson plans daily (by the middle/end of the first week), of which at least one is part of a longer unit, about 50% of a full-time teacher's teaching load OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES -continue to develop and use a variety of classroom management strategies which are age appropriate and appropriate for the intended learning outcomes -become more familiar with how to meet the learning needs of a particular group of students and the individual needs of particular learners -have the opportunity to design and teach a full unit of study -continue to learn through observation and discussion with others	EXPECTATIONS -the PST will be expected to set PGTs, keep a Plan Book, and write daily reflections that lead to continued professional development -the FA will make at least two classroom visits and provide written feedback -the AT is encouraged to provide frequent oral and written feedback; the AT should provide two written reports per term for the FA and PST -the PST, AT, and FA will meet together at least once to discuss the progress of the PST

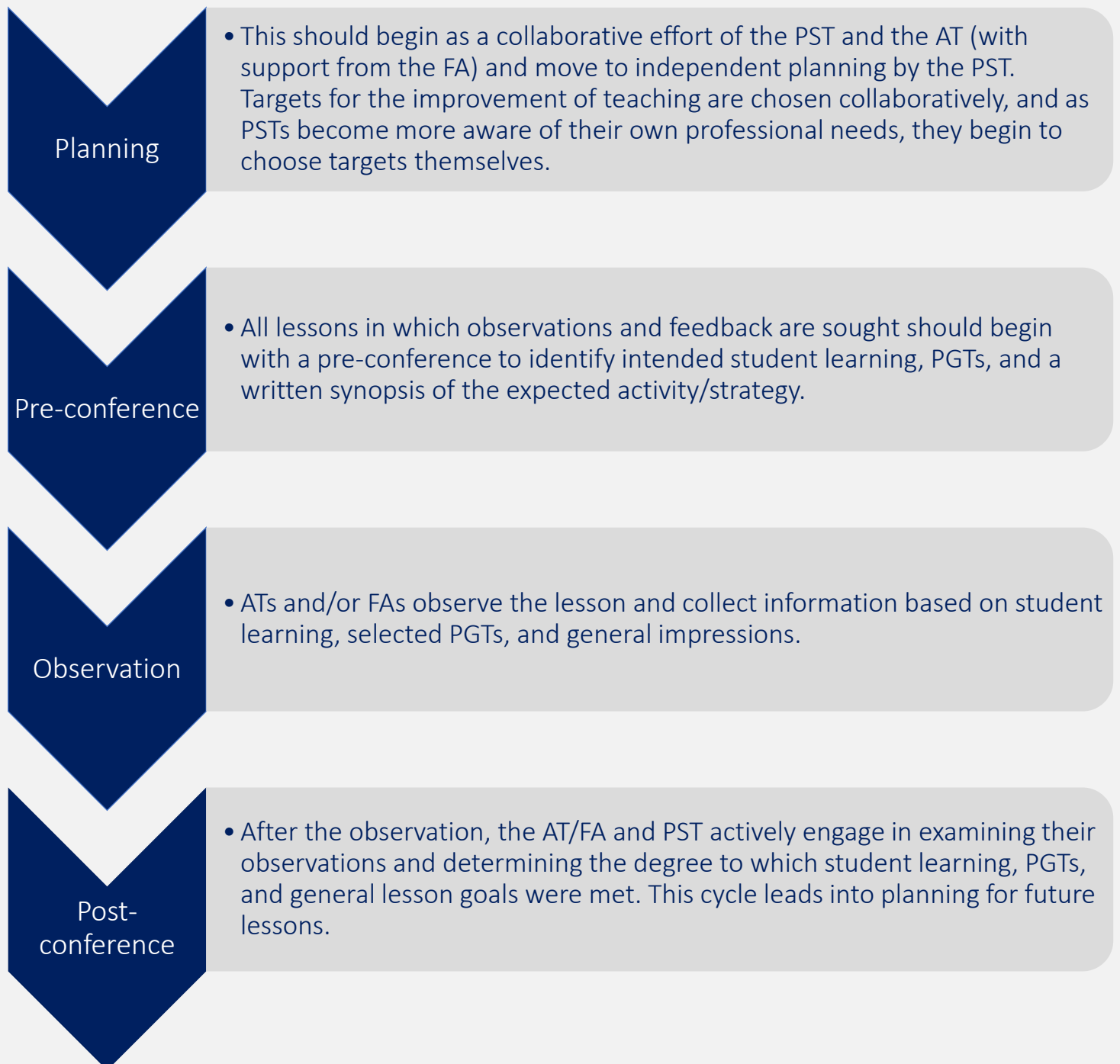
Field Experience Professional Growth Sequence Continued...

#	PLACEMENT	PURPOSE	INTENDED PROFESSIONAL GROWTH	PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS
Practicum 3 5-6 weeks	ELEMENTARY usually in a range that varies from previous placements SECONDARY usually includes teaching subjects in subjects not yet taught	EXPANSION OF TEACHING RESPONSIBILITIES -PSTs widen their experience and abilities in a different setting from Year I	TEACHING RESPONSIBILITIES -teach about 75% of a full-time teacher's teaching load (by the middle/end of the first week) OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES -continue to develop and use a variety of classroom management strategies which are age appropriate and appropriate for the intended learning outcomes -become more familiar with how to meet the learning needs of a particular group of students and the individual needs of particular learners through a variety of instructional strategies -have the opportunity to design, teach, and assess a full unit of study -use formative and summative assessment strategies to support and assess progress -continue to learn through observation and discussion with others and carry out professional duties	EXPECTATIONS -the PST will be expected to set PGTs, keep a Plan Book, and write daily reflections that lead to continued professional development -the FA will make at least two classroom visits and provide written feedback -the AT is encouraged to provide frequent oral and written feedback; the AT should provide two written reports per term for the FA and PST -the PST, AT, and FA will meet together at least once to discuss the progress of the PST
Practicum 4 5-6 weeks	normally PSTs will return to their practicum 3 placement if it is in the same academic year; Alternative Individualized Placements and International Field Experience opportunities are also available for PSTs	CONSOLIDATION -PSTs normally returning to a previous placement are expected to further develop their expertise and professional knowledge	TEACHING RESPONSIBILITIES -teach about 100% of a full-time teacher's teaching load (by the middle/end of the first week) OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES -continue to develop and use a variety of classroom management strategies which are age appropriate and suitable for the intended learning outcomes, and be able to choose strategies that meet whole group, small group, and individual needs --become more familiar with how to assess and meet the learning needs of a group of students and the individual needs of particular learners through a variety of instructional strategies -have the opportunity to design, teach, and assess a full unit of study -use formative and summative assessment strategies to support and assess progress -continue to learn through observation and discussion with others and carry out professional duties	EXPECTATIONS -the PST will be expected to set PGTs, keep a Plan Book, and write daily reflections that lead to continued professional development -the FA will make at least two classroom visits and provide written feedback -the AT is encouraged to provide frequent oral and written feedback; the AT should provide two written reports per term for the FA and PST -the PST, AT, and FA will meet together at least once to discuss the progress of the PST
Alternate Placement/ International Field Experience	Depending on their professional development needs, in consultation with their FA, PSTs may request an alternate individualized placement during their final practicum. Alternate placements provide opportunities for development of a specific area related to the PST's professional development goals. Examples of past alternate placement locations include museums, early intervention programs, adult learning centres, IWK Hospital, private schools, etc. PSTs may also apply for an International Field Experience opportunity during their final practicum when available.			

The Practicum Professional Development Process

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The Practicum Professional Development Process (PPDP) encourages PSTs to be actively engaged in developing their professional knowledge. Therefore, responsibility and ownership for the PPDP will gradually and continually shift to PSTs. The phases of the PPDP are planning, pre-conferencing, observation, and post-conferencing.



PST - Preservice Teacher

AT - Associate Teacher

FA - Field Advisor

PGT - Professional Growth Target

Plan Books

Preservice Teachers are expected to keep an account of their ongoing professional development in a Plan Book (physical or digital). This Plan Book will be started in the 'Principles and Practices' course and will be used throughout the BEd program. It constitutes the written portion of your practicum courses and will be reviewed by your FA during observations. This Plan Book provides a place for the collection of artifacts from, and reflection on, field experiences and professional development. The Plan Book also provides a visible presentation of a PST's professional development. **Plan Books should always be available to your AT and must be shared with your FA.** If using a digital Plan Book, share the link at the beginning of practicum with your FA and AT. Suggested content follows:

- **Personal and Professional Information**

- ☐ academic information (e.g., undergraduate degree, teachable areas)
- ☐ record of PST experiences during field experience placements
- ☐ copies of evaluations from field, plus any additional information, letters, etc. from ATs
- ☐ philosophy statements and handbooks from field placement school
- ☐ rules, policies, and procedures from field placement school
- ☐ information about specific students and their needs
- ☐ information about special classes or services available
- ☐ duty to report documentation for the region you are in

Please note: Do not collect & share documentation that is confidential in nature (e.g. IPPs) in your Plan Book.

- **Planning**

- ☐ teaching timetables
- ☐ lesson plans and critical analyses/reflections of them
- ☐ unit plans and critical analyses/reflections of them
- ☐ new ideas, techniques, strategies, and resources to assist in planning
- ☐ a section for the collection of interesting and relevant articles and anecdotes about classrooms, students, and teaching
- ☐ a collection of teaching ideas and resources

- **Reflection**

- ☐ a section for critical analysis/reflection of one's own teaching
- ☐ space for reflection of experiences related to teaching
- ☐ space for setting new Professional Growth Targets (See Practicum Documents in shared folder for PGT exemplar)

The Plan Book is not only a learning aid and a support for growth as a teacher; it will also be a valuable tool in the future when applying for future teaching positions. PSTs are encouraged to organize this Plan Book in a thoughtful way that will assist them in the collection of the material needed to make it personally useful.

Lesson Plans

Preservice Teachers are expected to prepare detailed plans for all lessons. While the structure of these lesson plans do not need to be uniform, they should contain all essential lesson plan elements, including the following:

- Date:
- Name:
- Grade:
- Topic/Theme:
- Lesson Purpose: What is the overall purpose of the lesson?
- Learning Outcomes: What knowledge, skills, and attitudes do you want students to develop? What curricular outcomes are being met by this lesson? How will you relate these to students' interests and understanding?
- Prior Knowledge: What do the students already know about the topic? What skills and attitudes are relevant to the students' topic?
- Lesson: How will you introduce the lesson to create interest and to link prior knowledge? What instructional strategies will you use to address the Principles of Learning? How will you and your students become more actively involved? How will your plan include all learners and contain adaptations and modifications where required? Your lesson needs to provide a series of steps to demonstrate an appropriate learning sequence.
- Materials: What materials do you need to do the lesson? Why are these particular materials important in developing the students' understanding? Do your materials reflect cultural diversity?
- Closure: What will you and/or the students do to finish up or link to new learning?
- Authentic Assessment: What will help show you that the students have met the outcomes you have set? Have you provided adaptations and/or modifications?
- PGT: How will you determine how your lessons went? What can you change for the next time?
- Reflection on Lesson and Follow-up:
 - Describe the learning event.
 - Did the students meet the learning outcomes? Why? Why not?
 - What are the implications for future lessons?
 - What are my new outcomes for the next lesson?
 - Have I met my own PGT for this lesson? Why? Why not?
 - If I have not met my own PGT for this lesson, what am I going to do about it?
 - What is my new PGT and how will I reach it?

The Professional Portfolio

All StFX Bachelor Education PSTs will, over the course of four terms, create a portfolio which: 1) includes a number of artifacts, taken most often from Umbrella Curriculum-aligned BEd coursework and assignments (Artifacts may also come from other sources, including, for example, the field experience); 2) increases in quantity and quality over the four terms, and 3) is a ‘normal’ part of the BEd program.

	TERM I INITIATION	TERM II DEVELOPMENT	TERM III EXPANSION	TERM IV CONSOLIDATION
Portfolio Stage	Introducing Program Outcomes	Drafting the Portfolio	Advancing the Portfolio	Transitioning to Professional Practice
Required Elements	-Title Page -Table of Contents -Initiation to the NS Teacher Education Accreditation Standards (GCOs) -Beginning collection of artifacts to demonstrate competence with respect to GCOs	-Title Page -Revised Table of Contents -Professional Resume -Statement of Beliefs -Further development of GCO Sections -Development of additional artifacts to develop competence with the GCOs -Summary of Term 2 Additions/Revisions	-Title Page -Revised Table of Contents -Revised Professional Resume -Revised Statement of Beliefs -Expansion of GCO sections -Expansion of artifacts to demonstrate competence with respect to the GCOs -Summary of Term 3 Additions/Revisions	-Title Page -Revised Table of Contents -Professional Resume -Statement of Beliefs -Teaching Philosophy -Consolidation of GCO sections -Final addition of artifacts to demonstrate competence with respect to the GCOs -Summary of Term 4 Additions/Revisions
Possible Artifacts	Examples could include: -Evidence of Classroom Management Knowledge and/or Skills -Evidence of Equity-mindset -Lesson Plan (Subject A) -Lesson Reflection -Positive Space I Certificate -Professional Development Evidence 1	Examples could include: -Adaptation Sample -Differentiation Sample (e.g., differentiated task) -Educational Research Analysis/Reflection -Positive Space II Certificate -Field Experience Evaluations with Reflection(s) 1 -Professional Development Evidence 2 -student Work Sample with Reflection 1 -Unit Plan (Subject A)	Examples could include: -Formative Assessment Task -Lesson Plan (Subject B) -Mental Health in Schools Certificate -Professional Development Evidence 3 -School-site (Field Experience or Service Learning) Artifact 1 -Summative Assessment Task -Technology Integration Sample	Examples could include: -Evidence of Knowledge and/or Skills for Including Students on Individual Program Plans -Elective Course-related Artifact -Individual Program Plan -Evidence of Knowledge and/or Skills for Teaching Literacy in the Content Areas -Professional Development Evidence 4 -student Work Sample with Reflection 2 -Unit Plan (Subject B; integrated unit for ELEM)
Assignment Value	CREDIT/NO CREDIT Formative feedback only by EDUC 432/439A instructor	May be part of course grade (Check syllabus) Formative feedback only by EDUC 432/439A instructor; failing portfolios may require bridging work	May be part of course grade (Check syllabus) Assignments or formative feedback may be given in 438/463 & 434	May be part of course grade (Check syllabus) Assignments or formative feedback may be given in EDUC 436 & 440 or 415

Practicum Expectations

Teaching is a job that extends far beyond the classroom. Learning the professional responsibilities of a teacher begins on campus. Strong teachers are individuals who, among other things, are willing to—and enjoy—going the extra mile for their students and colleagues. Over the years, we have developed a number of program expectations that help foster and promote a sense of professionalism, community, and life-long learning. These include:

- **Professional Conduct:** Professionalism not only includes honesty, integrity, respect for self and others, but also being trustworthy and reliable. Professionalism is critical from the onset of the program and continues into your professional life upon program completion. Because the BEd program leads to teacher certification, all PSTs are expected to adhere to the [StFX University Community Code of Conduct](#), as well as the [NSTU Code of Ethics](#). This Code of Ethics extends beyond the classroom and includes your online and public presence.
- **Confidentiality:** A PST in a school must regard any information of a personal or domestic nature as confidential. PSTs must not divulge any details concerning students, including their personal lives, obtained through the course of their professional duties, other than through professional channels.
- **Duty to Report:** As professionals working with children, PSTs may come to learn information regarding potential harm to students. You have a legal obligation to immediately report any knowledge or suspicion of abuse or neglect of a child under the age of 19 to child welfare authorities [in your area](#). There are similar processes to follow outside of Nova Scotia. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with these documents in whatever region you are in. For more information about duty to report in Nova Scotia see [Duty to Report](#). In addition to your FA and school staff, the StFX Health and Counselling Centre continues to be available to PSTs during the year.
- **Attendance:** Full attendance is expected for all courses. Any unexplained absences will be reported to the Chair. PSTs may be required to meet with the Chair to explain their absences. Full attendance during field experience is also essential.
- **Notice of Concern (NOC):** PSTs not meeting program expectations may be issued a programmatic NOC to be reviewed by the Chair and the Professionalism Committee.



NSTU Code of Ethics

Although PSTs are not NSTU members, they are expected to abide by the NSTU Code of Ethics. This Code of Ethics is a guide to members in maintaining at all times the high integrity of their profession including professional conduct in relation to all communication whether verbal, written or via social media. PSTs are responsible for reviewing this Code of Ethics and ensuring they adhere to these requirements.

Professionalism

The St FX Department of Teacher Education expects PSTs to adhere to the Nova Scotia Teachers Union Code of Ethics outlined above, as well as the professionalism guidelines as outlined in the Nova Scotia Teaching Standards (see Standard Six: Teachers model and promote professionalism in teaching; 2018). Accordingly, PSTs are expected to demonstrate professional conduct in a variety of settings, including schools, communities, digital sites, and social media. Professionalism is related to the following seven areas:

- modelling high standards of teaching characterized by collegiality, honesty, integrity, fairness, and accountability;
- attending to and advocating for the welfare and dignity of students;
- engaging in collaborative and respectful professional relationships with students, parents, colleagues, and other partners in education;
- modelling professionalism, through appropriate dress, punctuality, communication, and conduct in school, community, and on-line environments;
- complying with school, school authorities (e.g RCEs, Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey, CSAP), and provincial regulations and adhering to directions given by those in authority;
- complying with confidentiality requirements associated with their work, including the recording, storing, accessing, releasing, and handling of confidential information; and
- fulfilling all legal, ethical, contractual, and professional duties associated with their assignments.



Professionalism continued...

In the event of unprofessional conduct of a PST, in practicum or in community, a FA or faculty member is required to bring it to the immediate attention of the Chair of Teacher Education. The Chair of Teacher Education shall call a meeting of the BEd Professional Committee, which will examine the circumstances of the reported incident(s). In some cases, such as when the professional conduct of a PST falls outside of the expertise of the committee, and/or occurs in a time and/or location outside of the field experience, the Chair and the BEd Professional Committee may request investigative assistance from other university officers (e.g., Human Rights and Equity Advisor). In instances where conduct is related to alleged violations of the StFX Community Code or the StFX Sexual Violence Policy, these cases will be referred to those relevant bodies (i.e., Discipline Committee, Responsible Authority for Sexual Violence). Findings and/or penalties imposed from these bodies will also inform the decisions made by the BEd Professional Committee.

When warranted, the Professionalism Committee may choose to recommend restorative practices as part of the process to address the harms that have been done.

This committee may also recommend to the Dean of Education the imposition of penalties, which may include delay or failure of the field experience, probation, suspension, or dismissal from the BEd program. PSTs may appeal the penalty to the Committee on Studies - Professional Programs within seven days of receiving the BEd Professional Committee's decision. (See section 3.13 of the academic calendar)



The faculty, staff, and PSTs in the Department of Teacher Education are dedicated to embracing equitable educational principles—listed herein—and to adhering to the Canadian Human Rights Commission Statement on Anti-Black Racism in Canada.

- “The roots of anti-Black racism and systemic discrimination in Canada run deep. They are historically embedded in our society, in our culture, in our laws and in our attitudes. They are built into our institutions and perpetuate the social and economic disparities that exist in everything from education, to healthcare, to housing and employment.”
- “Racist comments and racist acts, no matter how subtle, must no longer be ignored or tolerated in Canada. Even the most subtle forms of racism contribute to the conditions that permit overt racism and violence to occur. When we are complacent, we are complicit. When we are silent, we are complicit.”
- “It is not enough to say that we embrace diversity and human rights as the foundation of our democracy. Racism violates human rights. Whether conscious or unconscious, subtle or overt, it diminishes human dignity and it erodes democracy.”

[From the Canadian Human Rights Commission](https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/en/resources/anti-black-racism-canada-time-face-the-truth)

(<https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/en/resources/anti-black-racism-canada-time-face-the-truth>)

Foundational Understandings

Preservice Teachers should:

- have experiences in an educational or other capacity that supports the challenging of stereotypical and deficit views of Mi'kmaq and other Indigenous peoples, African Nova Scotian and Black communities, and other culturally and linguistically diverse peoples.
- have an understanding of the concepts of culture, language, class, race and racialization, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability and neurodiversity, ethnicity and religion and how they shape educational experiences.
- understand how the contemporary and historical Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotian experiences are shaped by the broader social context.
- demonstrate an understanding of the effects of societal influences including oppression and systemic discrimination on Indigenous, Black, racialized and culturally and linguistically diverse peoples.
- understand how their own biography and identity shape their pedagogical orientation towards students with diverse and intersecting social identities.

Content Knowledge

Preservice Teachers should:

- have an understanding of the historical events and political issues that have influenced and continue to influence Mi'kmaq and other Indigenous peoples, including an understanding of Treaty education.
- have an understanding of the historical events and political issues that have influenced African Nova Scotians since their arrival in North America through enslavement and migration.
- recognize the distinctiveness of Indigenous Peoples, languages, and knowledge systems.
- recognize and affirm the value and legitimacy of dialects spoken by diverse cultural populations.
- understand the current educational context in Nova Scotia for Mi'kmaq, African Nova Scotian, and other culturally and linguistically diverse students. including the priorities and policies that pertain to education from provincial, Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotian organizations.
- use appropriate, current language and terminology when addressing cultural groups, and recognize that terminology continues to evolve.

Classroom Environment

Preservice Teachers should:

- understand the value of creating culturally inclusive and responsive learning spaces that affirm students' identities.
- create learning environments that foster an appreciation and understanding of cultural diversity.
- Identify, disrupt, and address racism and other forms of bias and discrimination in their school settings, following established school procedures and policies.

Curriculum Issues

Preservice Teachers should:

- teach about Mi'kmaq, African Nova Scotian and other culturally and linguistically diverse peoples in both historical and contemporary contexts.
- present information that shows the diversity within Indigenous, Black, and other culturally and linguistically diverse populations.
- foreground the strengths, influences and contributions of historical and contemporary groups of culturally and linguistically diverse peoples.
- foster students' awareness of the historical issues that have shaped current cultural identities in Nova Scotia.

Teaching Approaches

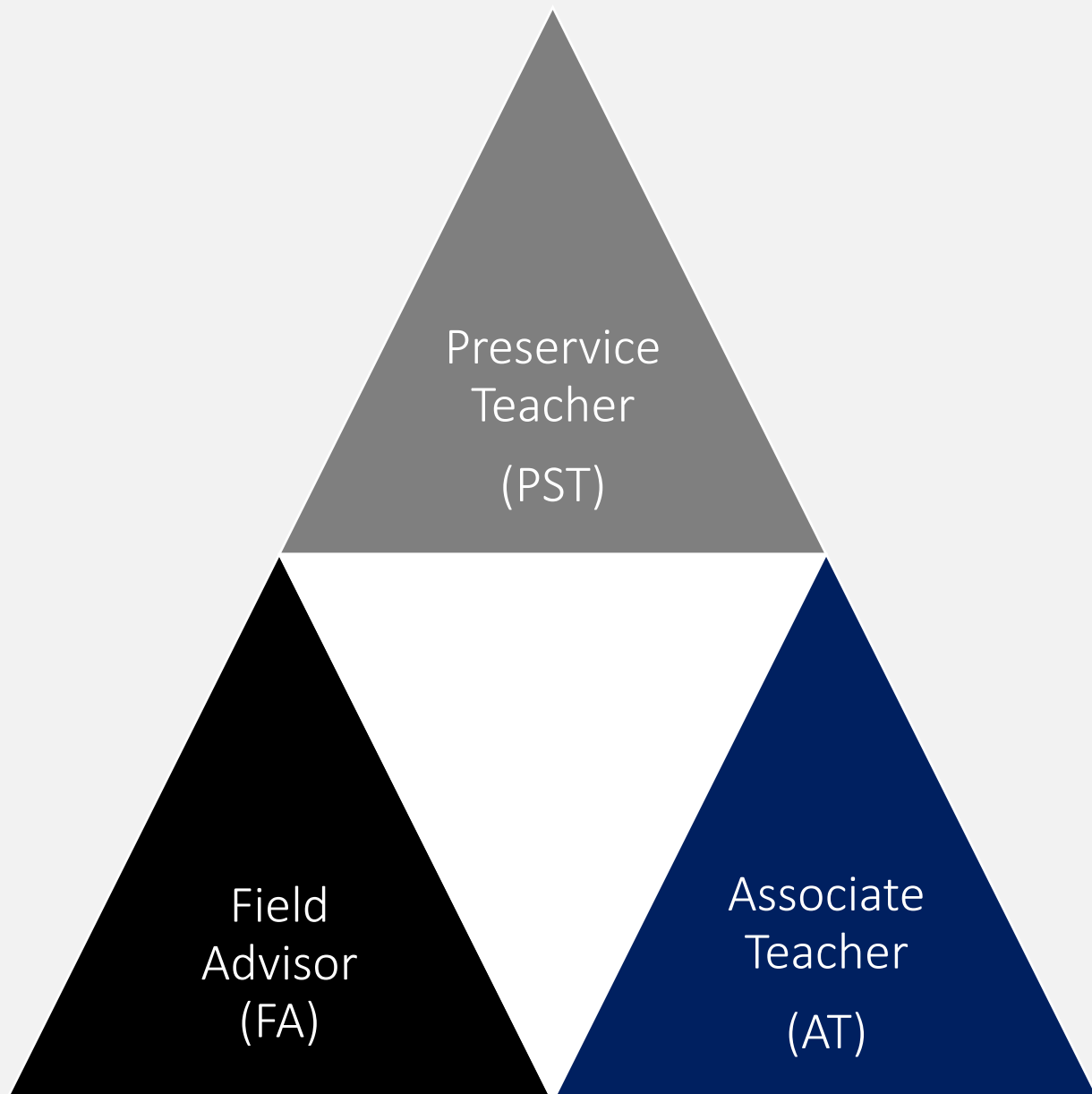
Preservice teachers should:

- be familiar with culturally responsive and sustaining approaches and follow protocols for engaging in practices, such as the talking circle, the invitation of elders, traditional storytelling, modeling, and oral history.
- understand that a high quality student-centered, democratic, and anti-racist classroom environment supports culturally responsive and sustaining practices
- evaluate teaching and learning materials for bias and stereotyping and select resources accordingly.
- be familiar with teaching materials and content that reflect cultural and linguistic diversity and cross-cultural perspectives across all subject areas.
- recognize and respond to issues of cultural bias when assessing students

Sources: Battiste, 2013; BLAC, 1994; CAST, 2024; Christensen et al., 2019; Gay, 2018; hooks, 1994; Mackey, 2025; Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2019, 2021, 2023; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017; Teacher Certification Review Committee, 1994; Treaty Education Nova Scotia, n.d.; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015; StFX Education Department, 1995; Ware, 2006

Learning from Each Other: A Shared Responsibility

Teaching is a professional and collegial practice. It is also a life-long process of learning from and with others in the educational community. Therefore, as a triad, Preservice Teachers (PSTs), Associate Teachers (ATs), and Field Advisors (FAs) are always simultaneously teachers and learners. This section includes overviews of the roles and responsibilities of these three individuals - in the three areas of Communication, the Practicum Professional Development Process (PPDP), and Assessment. Open communication among participants is essential for meaningful learning to occur.



Learning from Each Other: A Shared Responsibility

Role of Preservice Teachers

Communication	☐ present themselves to the principal upon arrival at schools on the first day ☐ provide, in advance, a weekly schedule of teaching times to their FAs ☐ notify the AT, the FA, the Field and Admissions Coordinator, and the school administration in the event of illness or an anticipated absence ☐ serve as good role models for students concerning communication (verbal and non-verbal messages) ☐ respect other people (students, teachers, and members of the broader community) and their property ☐ demonstrate willingness to take on tasks beyond those that are required ☐ show enthusiasm for teaching and learning ☐ adhere to professional and personal codes of conduct ☐ Reach out to FAs, ATs, or other StFX faculty or staff if having difficulty (including questioning their place in the teaching profession) ☐ keep their StFX email accounts open and active as it is the primary form of communication between PSTs and the University
Professional Development Process	☐ assist their ATs and school administration in carrying out all the normal teaching functions including supervision outside of classrooms ☐ take the same professional approach to school responsibilities required of teachers, including the adherence to the NSTU Code of Ethics ☐ teach diligently their assigned lessons ☐ prepare detailed lesson plans ☐ incorporate strategies learned in method courses ☐ set PGTs which emerge from daily reflections and assess the degree to which these targets are achieved ☐ determine the customs of the school (e.g., dress code, general department, use of staff room, etc.) ☐ engage actively in or observe as many facets of school life as possible, including extra-curricular activities ☐ observe all aspects of school operations (e.g., observe different grade or subject classes, observe specialist teachers, visit the guidance department, visit the library, talk to the principal or vice-principal about administration, and visit the central office) ☐ participate in professional development activities at the school, district, or provincial level
Assessment	☐ keep Plan Books which include lesson plans, critical reflections about lessons taught, comments about classes and individual students, and records of daily activities being mindful to not remove confidential documentation from the school ☐ be open-minded, seek and welcome suggestions for the improvement of teaching and professional growth ☐ use Plan Book reflections to assess personal professional growth and develop PGTs

PST - Preservice Teacher

AT - Associate Teacher

FA - Field Advisor

PGT - Professional Growth Target

Learning from Each Other: A Shared Responsibility

Role of Associate Teachers

Communication	☐ foster communication, which is a key element of the helping relationship provided by the AT; the relationship between the AT and their PST will be a collegial one typified by trust, empathy, genuineness, and equality ☐ adopt the role of key mentor for their PST ☐ serve as the main point of communication between the school and the StFX Department of Teacher Education ☐ consistently and genuinely affirm the value and the potential of their PST as they face the complexities of classroom teaching and guide them to deepen their use of and comfort with the principles of the PPDP ☐ feedback on their PST's performance should be given in a supportive environment that promotes personal and professional growth
Professional Development Process	☐ enable their PST to find their unique productive teaching/learning style ☐ be a positive role model ☐ help integrate their PST into the life of the school ☐ help their PST feel at ease and secure in new situations ☐ ensure that their PST becomes familiar with the many non-teaching duties of the classroom teacher ☐ provide observation of, and teaching opportunities for, their PST ☐ increase teaching opportunities gradually but steadily ☐ inform their PST well ahead of time what they will be teaching ☐ confer with their PST about appropriate lesson plans ☐ help their PST develop appropriate lesson plans
Assessment	☐ provide frequent oral and written feedback to their PST, as well as two written reports (per term) using the FA/AT Field Experience Report Form (and share the written reports with the FA and PST) ☐ discuss their PST's professional growth with their FA ☐ keep school administration informed about their PST's progress and performance ☐ notify the Field and Admissions Coordinator or the Chair of the Teacher Education program regarding program concerns ☐ complete a Notice of Concern (NOC), if appropriate ☐ the FA will consult with the AT about the assessment of the PST in each placement

PST - Preservice Teacher

AT - Associate Teacher

FA - Field Advisor

PGT - Professional Growth Target

Learning from Each Other: A Shared Responsibility

Role of Field Advisors

Communication	☐ serve a liaison role among schools, ATs, and the StFX Department of Teacher Education ☐ pass on concerns of school personnel to appropriate persons in the StFX Department of Teacher Education if/when necessary ☐ inform the ATs and PSTs when they plan to visit classrooms ☐ serve as an advisor to their PSTs ☐ discuss PSTs' progress with ATs and use the information for the establishment of PGTs ☐ provide ATs and PSTs with a copy of each supervision report
Professional Development Process	☐ undertake a formative role in the PPDP assessments of PSTs ☐ supervise PSTs ☐ meet PSTs virtually or in person to provide feedback on their performance and to establish specific targets for improvement ☐ ensure that PSTs are critically assessing their own teaching practices and help them as they set appropriate PGTs ☐ read PSTs' reflections and Plan Books, and respond to questions raised and reflections made ☐ make at least two visits to each PST during each field experience placement and complete the FA/AT Field Experience Report Form
Assessment	☐ notify the Field and Admissions Coordinator if a PST is not performing at a satisfactory level and/or is not showing an acceptable level of professional growth ☐ consult with ATs about formative and summative professional growth assessments of PSTs ☐ provide a written formative assessment to PSTs and ATs for each visit and provide summative assessment at the end of each year ☐ encourage ATs to complete two copies of the FA/AT Field Experience Report Form for each PST each term ☐ complete a NOC, if appropriate

PST - Preservice Teacher

AT - Associate Teacher

FA - Field Advisor

PGT - Professional Growth Target

Vulnerable Sector Check and Child Abuse Registry Check

At the beginning of each academic year, PSTs must submit original Vulnerable Sector Checks (VSC) and Child Abuse Registry (CAR) Letters to the StFX BEd Office. These documents will be sent on the PSTs' behalf to the corresponding school authority where individuals are placed. Both documents must be **original** and are due at the beginning of the academic school year. Both the VSC and the CAR letters are required to be permitted to enter schools for EDUC 471/472/481/482. In cases where receipt of this documentation is delayed, PSTs must keep the BEd Field and Admissions Coordinator regularly apprised of when this documentation will be submitted. Any days missed due to a delay in obtaining and submitting the original documents must be made up. A pass mark will not be entered for practicum until the time is made up. Additionally, PSTs should be aware that an extended delay in the submission of this required documentation may result in the delay or cancellation of their practicum. While enrolled in the BEd program, PSTs are responsible to inform the Chair of the Department of Teacher Education of any changes that occur to the Vulnerable Sector and/or Child Abuse Registry Checks; changes in this status could result in denial of field experience and/or denial of teaching license.

Field Experience Placement Priorities

Please understand that our number one priority is the placement of PSTs in valuable learning experiences in the field(s) that they have chosen. Geography may be considered, but it is not our number one priority. PSTs who wish to request priority in being assigned a local placement may indicate this on their placement request form to be reviewed by the BEd Chair and the Field and Admissions. Normally PSTs with the following needs will receive priority for placements if possible:

- PSTs with children (in day care or school) for whom the individual is the sole/primary caregiver and who show reason that their placement elsewhere would jeopardize their ability to fulfill their role as a parent.
- PSTs with accessibility issues or medical reasons.
- PSTs who have other valid reasons.

Inclement Weather & Travel During Practicum

If PSTs travelling for field experience deem travel conditions too dangerous or unfit for travel, they may delay departure/arrival time. In extreme cases, they may cancel their day at the school (in which case they must submit all lesson plans to their AT prior to the start of the school day). Whether PSTs expect to arrive late or be absent for the day, they must inform the Field and Admissions Coordinator, FA, school administration, and the AT. If school is open and PSTs do not attend due to inclement weather, it will be at the discretion of the Field Committee to review the circumstances to determine what, if any, time needs to be made up.

Field Experience Readiness

Satisfactory course attendance: Any course absence must be reported to the course instructor as outlined in the syllabus. The course instructor will report any unexcused absences to the Chair of Education.

Completed coursework: All coursework must be satisfactorily completed before a PST will be permitted to begin practicum. Any missed practicum days for this reason will be made up before a pass mark can be assigned to EDUC 471, 472, 481, or 482.

Professional and pedagogical readiness: Professional readiness (as described in the NSTU Code of Ethics and the professionalism guidelines in the Nova Scotia Teaching Standards) and pedagogical readiness as indicated by successful completion of all coursework and full participation in and punctuality for all BEd classes, are both necessary for admittance to the field experience.

Attendance: Full attendance during field experience is essential other than for serious illness and family emergencies, permission will not normally be granted for absences during the field experience. In the event of a required absence, PSTs must notify their AT, school administration, FA, and Field Coordinator. PSTs also must send lesson plans, prior to the start of the school day, to their AT and school administration for the portion of the day they would normally instruct. The BEd Chair and Field Coordinator will review absences toward the end of each practicum. PSTs may be required to make up absences. If this is the case, PSTs will receive an “Incomplete” mark for EDUC 471, 472, 481, or 482 until the time has been made up. PSTs will be notified in writing with respect to the number of days they will be required to make up.

Field readiness protocol: Faculty concerns regarding potential field issues will be directed to the Chair, who in consultation with the BEd Professional Committee (comprised of the BEd Chair, the BEd Field Coordinator, and two elected Faculty members) will rule on field readiness. The BEd Professional Committee is a standing committee, which may invite the FA to assist in decisions regarding field conduct. This ruling may delay the field placement or may result in removal from and failure in the field. Failure in the field experience will normally result in suspension as per Faculty of Education Regulations (Section 6.4) in the [StFX University Calendar](#). A suspension or ruling of the BEd Professional Committee may be appealed to the Dean of Education and will be heard by the Committee on Studies - Professional Programs. Decisions regarding professional conduct are based on professional standards as outlined in this handbook, the StFX Community Code, the NSTU Code of Ethics, and the professionalism guidelines as outlined in the Nova Scotia Teaching Standards—as per Professional Conduct (Section 6.5) in the StFX University Calendar.

Request for leave: A PST may request a leave of absence from the BEd program for personal or medical reasons. This request for a leave of absence from the program must be made in writing to the Chair of the BEd program and must specify the reason for the request and the duration of the requested leave. A return to the program does not guarantee course sequence or requested field placement.

Alternate Individualized Placements

Depending on the professional development needs identified by PSTs, in consultation with their FAs, they may request an alternate individualized placement during their final field experience. The intent of this placement is to provide an opportunity for PSTs to gain experience which is not available through the usual placements and to expand upon their professional preparation. These are exceptional placements that interested individuals research on an individual basis and require the approval of the BEd Field Experience Committee through an application process.

- PSTs normally stay in the same placement for fall and winter each year. Graduating PSTs, with the endorsement of their FA, may apply for an alternate placement which would be in a different educational setting. Applications for specialized placements should be focused on promoting personal PGTs.
- Interested graduating PSTs must discuss their intentions with their FA during Building Bridges in the fall of their final year.
- If tentative approval is given by the FA, the PST must inform their AT and principal that they are requesting an alternate placement and may not be returning.
- A formal application will be emailed to all graduating PSTs. The application includes a link to a form that must be completed by the FA and submitted to the Program Assistant, with the admission fee, by **January 11th**. This proposal shall include the name of the contact person, the rationale and objectives of the proposed experience, and any other pertinent information that can assist the BEd Field Experience Committee in assessing the request. Decisions will be based on the degree to which the proposed plan is consistent with the PST's professional growth plans, cost, and the availability of FAs.
- PSTs will be responsible for paying any additional costs incurred due to the alternate placement and are **not** eligible for the travel reimbursement outlined earlier. The Field and Admissions Coordinator will calculate the expected additional costs in advance of the start of the alternate field experience. The PST must pay this cost before the alternate field experience placement begins.
- The Field and Admissions Coordinator will review the proposal with the BEd Field Experience Committee and, if deemed feasible, will make an official request to the administration of the proposed institution.
- The Field and Admissions Coordinator will inform the PST, FA, AT, and site administrators if an alternate placement has been confirmed.
- **Alternative placement applicants are required to teach 100% during their third field experience.** It is understood that PSTs will continue in their original placements and teach 100% in EDUC 482 if the alternate placement requested is denied.

Certification in Nova Scotia

In order for all graduating PSTs to apply for their Nova Scotia teacher license, the following steps and documents must be completed/submitted:

Online through the Office of Teacher Certification

- Application form (Please include a permanent email and mailing address.)
- Proof of ID
- Paid fee
- Official electronic transcripts (certification@novascotia.ca)

Hard-copy documents to the BEd Office and later sent to Office of Teacher Certification

- Official paper transcripts from **all** universities and colleges (If you signed a transcript release form, your StFX transcript will be gathered on your behalf.) Mailed to:
St FX Faculty of Education
c/o BEd Administrative Assistant
4545 Alumni Crescent
Room 218 Xavier Hall
Antigonish, Nova Scotia
B2G 2W5
- A recent official Criminal Record Check (issued after July 31st)
- A completed Nova Scotia University Teacher Certification Evaluation Sheet

A meeting is scheduled in September by the BEd Program Manager with all graduating PSTs to review the certification process. Any questions regarding certification can be addressed to the Bachelor of Education office. PSTs who are identified with discrepancies will be notified in writing. Failure to resolve these discrepancies within the negotiated time frame may result in suspension from the program. Transcripts from other universities and colleges must be requested using the normal procedures for those institutions. **All documentation should be sent to the Department of Teacher Education Administrative Assistant for the Bachelor of Education Program before October 26th.** This means that requests for transcripts from other universities should be made early in the fall term. The BEd Office will secure transcripts from StFX for PSTs.

Candidates for a teacher license may be asked to disclose disciplinary action at an educational institution or violations of the law that resulted in penalty (see StFX University Calendar).

Upon completion of the Bachelor of Education program, PSTs are eligible for the Initial Teacher's Certificate (ITC) awarded by the NSDEECD.

Certification in other Provinces

Each province has its own requirements for Teacher Certification. There is, however, reciprocity among provinces, and it is required that you receive your Nova Scotia Teaching Certificate before applying elsewhere for licensing.

Your Space in Xavier Hall

The Curriculum Resource Centre (CRC) is located on the third floor of Xavier Hall, room 319B but we have created the Virtual Curriculum Resource Centre (VCRC) to better support the off-campus community and PSTs studying from a distance. The VCRC allows you to search for resources in our library as well many other educational libraries in the province through the Novanet inter-library loan system. Resources can be requested and delivered at no cost to a library near you for easy pick up and return, without having to come to the StFX campus.

The CRC supports BEd and MEd students, as well as local in-service teachers, through accessibility to current resources and with support in curriculum planning. The CRC supports the common threads of the BEd program: equity and social justice, professionalism in practice, technology and ingenuity, and experiential learning by providing a variety of helpful resources that are culturally relevant and connect to the goals and objectives of the NSDEECD Public School Program, the NSTU, and the schools operated under the jurisdiction of Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey.

The CRC houses over 10,000 resources ranging from a variety of books and teacher guides in all subject areas, Chromebooks, makerspace materials, math manipulatives, musical instruments, novel sets, STEM educational kits, puppets, and so much more. Be sure to check out the Virtual CRC (VCRC) below to search our library system and for links to educational RCE's and educational websites. Please don't hesitate to reach out to the Curriculum Support Advisor, abeaton@stfx.ca, for guidance in coursework, field experience, and in locating resources.

Most resources from the CRC can be accessed through the interlibrary loan system which allows patrons to request items and have them sent to other libraries in the province for those PSTs studying from a distance or doing their practicum outside the Antigonish area.

Hours:

Monday- Wednesday 815am-7pm

Thursday & Friday 815-4pm

Allana Beaton, Curriculum Support Advisor

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stfx.libguides.com/vcrc