

SCREENING PROCESS FAQ

What is the screening process and why does it exist?

Every student who registers to compete at the CPF National *Concours* fills out a registration form that provides us with comprehensive information on that student's history with the French language. These histories are then analyzed by a screening committee. The screening committee determines whether the student is currently competing at the appropriate level and then directs CPF staff as to whether certain students should be changed into a different category. The screening process ensures a fair competition for everyone so that students within each category are competing at roughly the same proficiency level when it comes to their grasp of the French language.

I competed in Core French at the branch level of the competition but now I've been placed in Level 2 [Core Extended]. What's the deal?

Screening processes vary across the country, as do French-second-language programs. Some branches follow a similar screening process as the national office, but some branches use a different process. Furthermore, in one province or territory, "Core extended" and "Late immersion" might mean something very different from what they mean in another. National categories are based on the most typical definitions of these programs across Canada, but they might not match a province or territory's ministry of education definitions exactly. All this means that your branch's criteria for Core French, for example, could differ quite a bit from the criteria for Level 1 [Core French] at the national office, so some students might see themselves placed into a different category when they come to Ottawa.

How does the screening committee interpret student information?

The screening committee's recommendations are strictly based on CPF's categorization system. The

screening committee consults each student's history with the French language and compares his or her experience with the criteria for each category. Students who exceed the language qualifications for his or her current category will usually be placed into higher-level categories. Take a look at the category sheet and you will probably be able to tell what category you fit into even before the screening results are announced.

Who is in the screening committee and who gets the final say?

The screening committee is composed of individuals outside the CPF organization. To ensure impartiality, screening committee members can not be branch or national CPF staff or directors, and they can not serve as judges at any level of the competition. The committee is usually composed of two or three individuals familiar on some level with CPF or *Concours*. The official screening process, which lasts a few hours, is supervised by the national *Concours* coordinator, although s/he does not actively participate in the screening.

The screening committee does not authorize final decisions but makes recommendations to the CPF national executive director. The executive director takes these recommendations seriously and under his or her authority the recommendations for category change are either accepted or rejected. Recommendations from the screening committee are almost always accepted.

I've never been enrolled in French immersion, so why am I competing in French immersion?

Category criteria at the national level are based on more than a student's academic history. Each category is "based on" a program, but some students can be assumed to have a similar proficiency level as a student in that program even if they've never studied it academically. Some students might have extra-curricular activities in French; they might have

experience with a French student exchange program; they could have French-speaking parents who converse in the language with them at home. So while the third-level category might be modeled after "Level 3 [Late Immersion]," for example, what that really means is that students in that category are expected to have a level of proficiency similar to the proficiency of a student who's taken Late Immersion, even though s/he might never have taken the program.

Now that I've been screened into a different category, there are two competitors from my province in the same category. Is this allowed?

Yes, and there are usually one or two cases of this each year. Branches are only permitted to send one student per branch category, but because branches do not have authority over the national screening process, it is only fair to allow all of these same students to compete at national according to our own qualifications and rules.

When will I know what my final category is?

The screening process is usually held about ten to fourteen days before the national *Concours* and national office staff will inform all students—even those who have not been screened into different categories—of final category confirmation as soon as the executive director signs off on the final decisions, usually within a day or two. Staff will send an email to all students confirming their categories so make sure to check your email. If you haven't heard anything by a week before the competition date, please contact staff immediately.