



4.4 New Brunswick

Population – 751,171
Total Area – 72,908 km²
Population Density – 10.30 people/km²
Capital (Population) – Fredericton (56,224)
Number of K–12 Schools – 317 (2011–12)
Number of K–12 Students – 102,579 (2011–12)
Number of K–12 Distance Education Programs – 2
Number of K–12 Distance Education Students – 2235⁵
K–12 Distance Education Policy – Distributed Learning Policy Handbook

Distance Programs

New Brunswick continues to operate two distance education programmes out of the Ministry of Education: one for the Anglophone school system and one for the Francophone school system. Both programs utilize the Ministry-hosted learning management system (LMS). The majority of distance education enrolments in the province are from supplemental students (i.e., students enrolled in a bricks-and-mortar school who are taking one or more courses at a distance), with fewer than 10 students enrolled in distance education on a full-time basis. During the 2011–12 school year there were 2235 enrolments in distance education, 650 of which were in the Francophone system. The Ministry also allows classroom teachers to use online courses with their face-to-face students. These students comprise approximately 45% of the enrolments in the provincial LMS, and are not included in the official distance education enrolment figure.

Governance and Regulation

The K–12 distance education system in New Brunswick operates based on collaboration between the Ministry of Education and individual school districts, and a Ministry published policy handbook (i.e., *Login to e-Learning: Distributed Learning Policy Handbook*). The policy handbook outlines in a very specific fashion the responsibilities of a variety of individuals at the Ministry, district and school level to ensure the orderly implementation of the distance education program. Like many provinces, New Brunswick is currently revising the Ministry’s policy handbook to reflect changes in technology and delivery models, as well as to clarify the roles and responsibilities for each group in its target audience.

While not a specific regulation, the Ministry has begun to encourage teachers of mandatory courses (i.e., courses required for graduation) to enrol in an online professional development version of the course when an online option exists for that course. The goal of this program is to provide these teachers with additional support materials, as well as to provide the Ministry with additional feedback on those specific online courses.

⁶ This represents the number of student enrolments and not necessarily the number of students.

Interprovincial and International

While the graduation requirements for the province are currently under review, in order for a student in New Brunswick to receive credit for a course taken from an online program in another province or territory the student would first have had to enrol in the course in New Brunswick and have been unsuccessful. In these instances, this online course would be considered an independent study course. Students can only have one independent study course count towards their graduation requirements. To date, approval to apply outside credit for a single course is infrequently sought or approved. The same process applies for a student seeking to obtain credit for a course from an online program in another country. In both cases, the curriculum for the course in question would need to be reviewed and approved (generally in advance of the student beginning the course).

In instances where a student living in another province or territory—or even another country—took a course from an online program located in New Brunswick, a transcript would be issued by the Ministry and sent to the district or school-based coordinator working with the distance education program (as outlined in the *Login to e-Learning: Distributed Learning Policy Handbook*). Whether the student receives credit for the course is determined by the individual jurisdiction where the student resides. At present, both Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island have agreements in place to allow students to receive credit for courses taken through New Brunswick’s French language distance education program. Usually, the individual group interested in this kind of arrangement examines the New Brunswick curriculum in advance to ensure that the student would get credit if the student ended up taking the course (in much the same fashion that New Brunswick reviews the curriculum of other programs before granting credit to the students who wish to take courses from other jurisdictions).