School of Education

Initial Teacher Education Handbook

2026/27

ACADIA UNIVERSITY | SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

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General Information

School of Education Key Dates Calendar

Please refer regularly to the Key Dates Calendar located on the School of Education website. Take special note of: Practicum Orientation, In-School Practicum, On-Campus Classes Begin/End, and Practicum Debrief Dates.

- All classes in the School of Education are on-campus and 100% attendance is required.
- Due to the Acadia School of Education course and in-school practicum requirements, B.Ed. students will not have the fall study breaks as indicated on the University Registrar's website. You will have the winter study break.

Website and Email

Important information can be found on the School of Education and Registrar's webpages, and you are required to check it regularly. Key links that we recommend you bookmark are:

- Education Homepage
- Current Education Student's Homepage
- Registrar
- Key Dates Calendar

You are also expected to check your Acadia email regularly (daily please) as important communications happen through this email.

To get your Acadia email address, in the not-too-distant future, you will be prompted to go to your application portal to access your username, email address, and initial password, along with further instructions on how to claim your account.

If you need to contact the School of Education, please use infoed@acadiau.ca.

GNSPES Account

You must create a GNSPES email account before you commence your studies. These accounts are used by Nova Scotia public schools. You will need to set up your own account here for use during practicum and course work within the B.Ed. program. This is a new Department of Education and Early Childhood Development system that is managed by the province. Accounts are temporary and will be disabled on the program end date (as indicated upon setting up the account).

Professional Commitment

The School of Education has adopted guidelines for the conduct of professionals enrolled in the School's programs. As students and aspiring teachers, all members of the School of Education must sign and adhere to the Guidelines as outlined in the School of Education Professional Codes of Conduct specific to each program.

These Guidelines make reference to a number of documents, including, but not limited to, the Academic Calendar, the Acadia Non-Academic Judicial Student Code of Conduct, Acadia's Policy Against Harassment and Discrimination, Acadia's Sexualized Violence Policy, and the Nova Scotia Teachers Union Code of Ethics. As a student in the School of Education, you are expected to follow certain protocols both in your course work and in your practicums. While all students and professors in universities are bound by certain procedures and professional rules of conduct, these procedures and rules are of particular importance in Faculties of Professional Studies, such as the Acadia School of Education, since they lie at the core of teaching practice.

While undertaking coursework, it is expected that students will be aware of and adhere to the policies found on our website, including Course Attendance and Engagement Requirements. While on practicum, students will adhere to the expectations outlined in the Practicum Guidebook. In both course work and practicum, students will adhere to the professional Code of Ethics of the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union.

At the start of your program, you will be asked to sign a Declaration Statement stating that you have read, understood and agree to adhere to protocols outlined in all the documents/sites referenced within the Guidelines for Professional Conduct document.

In the event of perceived unprofessional conduct of a student, a university advisor or faculty member is required to bring it to the immediate attention of the Director of the School of Education. The Director of the School of Education shall call a meeting of the School of Education Professional Concerns Committee (PCC), which will examine the circumstances of the reported incident(s). In some cases, such as when the professional conduct of a student falls outside of the expertise of the committee, and/or occurs in a time and/or location outside of the field or practicum experience, the Director and the School of Education PCC may request assistance from other internal university officers (e.g., Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer or Executive Director of Student Services) or other external practicum partners (e.g., Annapolis Valley Regional Centre for Education). In instances where conduct is related to alleged violations of the Acadia Non-Academic Judicial Code of Conduct or Acadia's Sexualized Violence Policy or Acadia's Policy Against Harassment and Discrimination, these cases would be referred to those relevant bodies (e.g., Discipline Committee, Responsible Authority for Sexual Violence). Decisions and actions taken by these bodies will also inform the decisions made by the School of Education PCC.

Social Media

The School supports an active social media platform where we celebrate the successes in our School, announce key events, send reminders, and share ideas about teaching and learning.

We invite you to join our Instagram (acadiauschoolofeducation), Facebook (AcadiaUSchoolofEd), and X (@AcadiaEducation)

Photo Consent

At the start of your program, you will be invited to sign a waiver providing your consent to have your photos use in our promotional material, including, but not limited to our website, newsletter, and social media platforms. If you ever wish to change your consent, please reach out to our school office.

Information on Bursaries, Scholarships, and Student Assistantships

The School of Education is pleased to be able to offer several bursaries and scholarships each year thanks to the generosity of our donors. Students will receive an email informing them of the application date for awards. Information pertaining to bursaries and scholarships can be found on our website under Our Programs, Bachelor of Education, Current Students, General Information.

Supports Available to Students

Acadia University provides several student support programs, including the accessible learning services, a writing centre, supports for mental health, sexual health resources, supports for women, indigenous students, black students, LGBTQI students, etc. Please become familiar with these supports which are described here.

Academic Policies and Procedures

You should become familiar with the School's academic policies and procedures, which describe the School's approach to matters such as attendance and engagement requirements, children in classes, class cancellation, course modality, complaints, requests for re-reads of assignments, requests for extensions, etc.

Campus Map

School of Education classes occur primarily in Seminary House and Emmerson Hall. These buildings have a longstanding tradition at Acadia, and you'll enjoy learning about their history. You might find this map helpful if you are new to Acadia.

Spaces for Study and Socializing

The majority of your classes will occur in Seminary, where we are delighted to provide you the following spaces for your study and socializing needs.

- **Student Lounge (SEM 223):** This is the beautiful lounge located on the main floor of Seminary. It has just had the floors re-done and after two years of not being opened during COVID, we are delighted to welcome you to this space. This is a social space for you to gather, connect, share a cuppa, and have your lunch. This space is unlocked. We hope this will become a vibrant gathering place for you to relax, socialize, connect, and restore!

- **Breakout Rooms (SEM 238 and SEM 244 s):** These two spaces located on the main floor of Seminary are dedicated for use by B.Ed. students *during* their classes. There are times when your faculty member might split you into working groups and you may be directed to these spaces. These are small spaces – meant for small group meetings during class time primarily. It's not a space for eating or socializing outside of class time. If you want to study in these spaces (outside of class time), you can but be mindful that some other students who are IN CLASS have priority over those in non-class time. These spaces are unlocked.

We are delighted to be sharing these spaces with you and ask that in return, you treat them with care and respect. They need to stay clean and tidy. The furniture needs to stay in the same formation (please!). Please be sure to do all your dishes in the student lounge. If we all help out with this, then these spaces can continue to serve our learning community members!

The School is also a zero-waste school space. So please be sure to sort all your garbage – into the compost and recycling. We also pride ourselves in avoiding disposable plastics, straws, bottles, and bags. We have got a new water dispenser for you as you arrive in Seminary, so please bring your water bottle.

Course Schedule by Term and Program

The Bachelor of Education program is a full-time, in-person, professional and accredited program. It consists of 60 credit hours of classes (20 courses in total): 48 credit hours of these are on-campus classes (16 courses); 12 credit hours consist of your practicum courses (4 courses).

Your on-campus Acadia courses are scheduled Monday through Friday - across morning, afternoon, and evening timeslots. They all occur on-campus and in-person at Acadia – so if you live far away from campus, be sure you have a sensible travel plan, especially through the winter term.

We have a strict attendance and engagement policy for all our on-campus classes. We expect 100% attendance at all classes. If you need to miss a class, the expectation is that you will contact your professor to alert them to your absence. If you miss more than two classes (irrespective of the reason), you may risk having to repeat the course. We strongly suggest you review our various academic policies and procedures. You may be able to work part time and study, but this program is very much your full-time endeavor – studying with us! Do what you need to do now to set up systems around childcare, work, family support, finances to be able to focus fully on your studies.

Please note, due to the Acadia School of Education course and in-school practicum requirements, B.Ed. students will **not** have the fall study break as indicated on the University Registrar's website.

Registration Information

All students will need to self- register for their courses. Depending on your program of study, you may also have electives to register for. You can see which electives are being offered here. These change often, so please be sure to check back regularly. You will be able to view the courses through your self-service portal, however, you will be unable to register for courses until the registration date for your cohort.

Registration for Intersession courses is typically mid-late April. Registration for Fall and Winter is typically mid-late June. You will receive an email detailing when your registration period opens, and guidance on which courses you need to register for. **You will be responsible for any registration errors and any implications that may result from this**. Please note there are strict requirements around Teacher Certification so you must carefully register for the right courses – or risk not being certified.

You will need to pay particular attention to any registration notes for your program as they will be very important if applicable to you.

Secondary students are asked to pay particular attention to registering their teachable methods courses. Being registered in the wrong teachable methods courses can have serious implications for degree completion/teacher certification.

You can find a list of courses on our School of Education website, as they are made available, or in Acadia's Academic calendar found here.

Practicum Information

You will participate in four practicum courses during your program (Practicum 1, 2, 3 and 4). As you move through the practicum experiences, your teaching load will increase from approximately 25% in Practicum 1, 50% in Practicum 2, 75% in Practicum 3, and finally 100% in Practicum 4. These courses will be supported by your Associate Teacher as well as a University Advisor. For comprehensive information on our practicum courses, please see the following link.

We pride ourselves on getting you into schools early in your time at Acadia. In September, you will start your practicum with 2 days before students arrive followed by the first day of school! You will also be on practicum every Wednesday as you complete your Acadia classes during the fall terms. Read below for more information.

Practicum Orientation (Mandatory)

To help prepare you to enter schools in September, you must attend the Program/Practicum Orientation session. Please check Key Dates Calendar for confirmation of date and time. It will include opportunities to get to meet in person other students and faculty, and to become more familiar with the B.Ed. program. You will find the agenda for orientation on the Education website later this summer. Please note attendance at orientation is mandatory.

In-School Practicum

Typically, all students will have the following practicum components during the fall and winter terms:

- In-school planning and preparation with your Associate Teacher two days prior to students' arrival (usually late August/early September – see Key Dates Calendar for exact dates for these and all dates below)
- First day for public school students
- Every Wednesday, mid-September to early November
- Weekly seminars September to early November (6 seminars in total)
- November to December will be a four-week in-school practicum block
- March to June practicum block (11-weeks – Pract. #3 and #4)

Practicum Placement forms (Action Required)

A Practicum Placement form, which will enable you to submit important information required for your practicum placement, must be submitted. Click on the link below to access the correct form for your program and geographical region.

a. 16-month Practicum Placement Form

If you wish to complete your fall practicum in the Halifax Regional Centre for Education, you must complete this form as well: HRCE Placement Form.

All Placement forms must be submitted to bedpract@ACADIAU.CA by the last Friday in May.

Practicum placements are dependent on several factors including the availability of Associate Teachers. We rely on Centres of Education to identify current teachers willing to host pre-service teachers. We do not have control of all aspects of placements including specific schools, teachers, or geographic locations. *Please Note: All practicum placements are arranged by the B.Ed. Practicum Coordinator.*

Travel to/from Practicum

You are responsible for arranging your own travel to your assigned practicum site. The region for our placements in the AVRCE (where most placements occur) extends approximately 120 km either side of Wolfville and you could be placed anywhere in this region.

Child Abuse Registry Check AND Criminal Record Check/Vulnerable Sector Check (Action Required) *** Do not begin this process until June 3rd. Security checks must be dated no earlier than 3-months prior to starting practicums.

To be eligible to go on practicum, you must complete two forms. Read the below carefully.

FORM 1. A "Child Abuse Register (CAR) Request for a Search" form must be completed.

> This can now be completed online here. Please read the form carefully and be sure to complete all parts accurately. Please note that you must also provide a photo as proof of identity as indicated on the form.
>
> After processing, you will receive, via a letter, confirmation that your name does not appear on the registry. You must then return this confirmation to the School of Education.

FORM 2. A" Criminal Record Check (CRC)" that includes a "Vulnerable Sector Check" is also required.

> To complete a CRC, we suggest you start by contacting your local police for more information. This process differs by region in Canada: some include a fee; some require fingerprints; some require lots of time. You may be required to provide your local police services with this letter.

These are mandatory checks that must be dated after June 3rd. The proper date is very important. If you do it too early, it won't be within the acceptable window.

All CAR and CRC forms must be submitted to bedpract@ACADIAU.CA by August 15th.

Pre-service teachers **are not** permitted in schools without completed checks on file. There will be no exceptions. You risk not being able to graduate if you delay this paperwork.