

Council on Higher Education

Annual Report

September 1, 2023 - August 31, 2024

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Chairperson's Message

The Council on Higher Education is defined as a category three entity pursuant to the **Transparency and Accountability Act**. As Chairperson, I am pleased to submit the 2023-24 Annual Report of the Council on Higher Education. This report covers the period of September 1, 2023 to August 31, 2024.

The Council on Higher Education works within the authority granted under the **Council on Higher Education Act**.

My signature below is on behalf of the Council on Higher Education and is indicative of its accountability for the actual results reported herein.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Howell", written in a cursive style.

Honourable Krista Lynn Howell
Chairperson of the Council on Higher Education

Overview

The Council on Higher Education (the “Council”) is a partnership between Memorial University (MUN), College of the North Atlantic (CNA), and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Council is tasked with the promotion of a shared approach between MUN and CNA with respect to program planning, promoting collaboration on issues related to economic development in the province, and enhancing cooperation in the delivery of public post-secondary academic programs.

Mandate

As outlined in section 8(1) of the **Council on Higher Education Act**, the Council is responsible for making recommendations to MUN, CNA, and the Minister of Education with respect to the following:

- Strategic directions for post-secondary education in the province;
- Reduction of unnecessary duplication of effort and expense;
- Sharing of resources, information and student support services;
- Cost-effective provincial, national and international recruitment policies, standards and activities;
- Student credit transfer arrangements; and
- Other related matters.

Guiding Principles

Recommendations provided by the Council are guided by the following principles:

- Promotion of a shared approach between the university and the college with respect to program planning and delivery;
- Fostering and promoting the collaboration of the university and the college on issues related to economic development in the province; and
- Enhancing cooperation and specialization in the delivery of post-secondary academic programs in areas agreed upon by the Council.

Membership

The Council encourages collaboration at the highest levels of leadership and ensures the continued engagement of students in setting priorities and decision-making. As specified in section 3(1) of the **Council on Higher Education Act**, Council membership includes:

- Minister of Education (Chair);
- Deputy Minister of Education;
- Chair, MUN Board of Regents;
- Chair, CNA Board of Governors;
- President of MUN;
- President of CNA;
- MUN Student Representative; and
- CNA Student Representative.

As appropriate, the Minister of Education may appoint three additional members to the Council.

Council membership as of August 31, 2024 is listed below.

Name	Position	Membership Details
Hon. Krista Lynn Howell	Minister, Education	By virtue of position
Tracy King	Deputy Minister, Education	By virtue of position
Justin Ladha	Chair, Memorial University Board of Regents	By virtue of position
Mark Bradbury	Chair, College of the North Atlantic Board of Governors	By virtue of position
Dr. Neil Bose	President and Vice Chancellor, Memorial University	By virtue of position
Elizabeth Kidd	President and CEO, College of the North Atlantic	By virtue of position
Vacant	MUN Student Member	Lieutenant-Governor in Council
Vacant	CNA Student Member	Lieutenant-Governor in Council

Members serve without remuneration. The Council is not subject to the **Independent Appointments Commission Act**.

Staff

There are no staff positions directly employed by the Council; however, the Director of Literacy and Institutional Services of the Department of Education provides support to the Council and acts as officer under the **Council on Higher Education Act**. The officer does not have voting privileges.

Budget

The Council does not have a defined budget and is not required to submit separate financial statements; all expenses are charged to the Department of Education's Literacy and Institutional Services Division. The Council did not incur expenditures during the reporting period.

Highlights and Partnerships

The Council is a tripartite alliance between MUN, CNA and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, with focus on increasing collaboration between the entities. The Council aims to identify ways for the institutions to collaborate, assist in supporting and facilitating the transfer of students between the two institutions, and pool resources.

During the 2023-24 year, the Council did not meet. With legislation proclaimed in 2007, the role and function of the Council is dated and requires a review to remain relevant and responsive to today's educational and societal standards. Discussions between the Department of Education and key stakeholders regarding the best path forward for the Council in terms of, but not limited to, composition, duties and responsibilities, and measurable mechanisms of accountability, are ongoing.

While the committee did not meet during the 2023-24 year, related work outlined within this report was conducted by the department to support the issues and objectives of the Council for the year.

Committees and Subcommittees

In addition to the Council itself, there have been a number of committees and subcommittees that supported the work of the Council. These committees and subcommittees were not active in the 2023-24 period.

Comprised of senior officials from MUN, CNA, and the Department of Education, the Advisory Committee has provided advice in the past and support to the Council, while ensuring the work of the Council remained reflective of its mandate, Council members' priorities, and Government's strategic priorities.

Specialized Council subcommittees have been established as needed to address current and relevant areas of concern in relation to post-secondary education in the province. The Council has previously had three subcommittees: Articulation and Transfer, Applied Research Priorities, and Indigenous Education. Subcommittee membership included officials from MUN, CNA, and the Department of Education. Each subcommittee had its own area of focus. Articulation and Transfer focused on enhancing student mobility between the public post-secondary institutions. Applied Research Priorities focused on increasing collaboration between MUN and CNA on applied research initiatives. Indigenous Education focused on exploring opportunities to enhance Indigenous education and share information between institutions.

Report on Performance

To ensure work undertaken by the Council is relevant and responsive to provincial educational standards, the Council's 2023-26 Activity Plan consists of one main objective with specified annual indicators.

Issue 1: Revitalization of the role of the Council on Higher Education

The Council is utilizing the 2023-2026 Activity Plan timeframe to review the mandate set out in the **Council on Higher Education Act**, which will include a fulsome review of Council composition, duties and responsibilities, and measurable mechanisms of accountability.

Objective: By August 31, 2026, work undertaken by the Council will be relevant and responsive to provincial educational standards.

2023-24 Work Accomplished

The following chart highlights the successful work accomplished to support and facilitate the revitalization of the role of the Council on Higher Education during the 2023-24 reporting cycle.

Indicator	Results (2023-24)
Completed jurisdictional scan to identify provincial/territorial best practices	<p>On January 25, 2024, the Minister of Education, announced the creation of Education Accord NL (Accord). The purpose of the Accord is to develop a 10-year Education Accord with short, medium, and long-term goals targeted at transforming and modernizing Newfoundland and Labrador's education system to better meet the needs of students in the province.</p> <p>Jurisdictional scanning activities related to a modernized CHE were carried out as part of the Education Accord process. Throughout the process attention was given to review of the CHE and how it would align with opportunities and actions identified during the Education Accord. Final recommendations will inform future plans for the Council on Higher Education and include roles and responsibilities for participating entities.</p> <p>Dedicated to supporting a modern educational experience for all students in Newfoundland and Labrador, the Accord will reimagine the education system to ensure students and learners at all levels receive the educational services they need in the classroom, are prepared for the modern global economy, and develop strong decision-making skills to foster positive health and well-being. To achieve this goal, the Accord is comprised of four key pillars, one</p>

	<p>of which focuses specifically on post-secondary education and learning across the life span. To this end, a committee of subject matter experts in this area was struck.</p> <p>Over the 2023-24 reporting period, the Committee has worked diligently to gather key stakeholder input, research, and expert opinion to identify actions that will lead the province toward improved post-secondary and adult education outcomes. The committee has additionally looked to other jurisdictions, both nationally and internationally, where post-secondary and adult education systems are achieving results that align with the social, economic, innovation and technological priorities of Newfoundland and Labrador.</p>
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2024-25 Objective

By August 31, 2025, work undertaken by the Council will be relevant and responsive to provincial educational standards.

2024-25 Indicator

- By August 31, 2025, Council will have identified potential areas for change including Council composition, duties, responsibilities, and measurable mechanisms for accountability.

Opportunities and Challenges

Since the establishment of the Council of Higher Education in 1992, the primary goal of delivering quality educational programming to learners in the province has never faltered. Unfortunately, factors such as changing labour market demands, skill shortages, advances in digital technology, and inflationary cost, can directly impact the design and delivery of post-secondary and adult education services in the province.

The establishment and work of the Post-Secondary Education and Learning Across the Life Span Pillar Committee has proven to be a motivating catalyst for Council revitalization. Identification of opportunities for collective and collaborative work to support and facilitate the revitalization of Council's role are ongoing and hold great potential.

Conclusion

The Department of Education, MUN, and CNA, recognize the importance of Council revitalization to remain relevant and responsive to learner needs in the province. Identification of emerging and potential opportunities for collaboration have resulted in prospective modernizations for the Council including new priorities, responsibilities, and partnerships. Work dedicated to the revitalization of the Council will continue throughout the 2023-26 reporting period.