

Council on Higher Education

Activity Plan

September 1, 2020 - August 31, 2023

Chairperson's Message

Pursuant to the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, the Council on Higher Education is defined as a category three entity. As Chairperson, I am pleased to submit the three-year Activity Plan of the Council on Higher Education. The strategic directions of the Provincial Government were considered in the preparation of this activity plan. This plan covers the period of September 1, 2020 to August 31, 2023.

Since its revival in 2017, the Council on Higher Education continues to work within the authority granted under the **Council on Higher Education Act**. Through increased collaboration, improved engagement and shared resources, the Council is impacting the strategic direction of public post-secondary education in the province.

My signature below is on behalf of the Council of Higher Education, and is indicative of its accountability for the development of this plan and the achievement of its objectives.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Osborne', written in a cursive style.

Honourable Tom Osborne
Minister of Education

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Overview

The Council on Higher Education was formed in 1992 as a joint venture of Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Memorial University (MUN) and the five public Colleges of Applied Arts, Technology and Continuing Education (i.e., Cabot College, Eastern College, Central Newfoundland Community College, Westviking College and Labrador College). The Council provided advice on policy and planning issues and developed mechanisms for coordination and credit transfer among public post-secondary education institutions. Since that time, the five community colleges amalgamated into College of the North Atlantic (CNA).

The Council was reactivated in 2017 in alignment with the strategic directions of the Provincial Government. The Council is tasked with the promotion of a shared approach between MUN and CNA with respect to program planning and delivery, promoting collaboration on issues related to economic development in the province, and enhancing cooperation on the delivery of public post-secondary academic programs.

As specified in the **Council on Higher Education Act**, the Council consists of:

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

In addition, the Council may appoint three optional members. As of September 1, 2020, the Deputy Minister for Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation is an appointed member. Two additional members will be appointed in the coming months.

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

An employee of the Department of Education serves as an officer to the Council; the officer does not have voting privileges.

The Council may establish committees as needed to carry out its mandate and to assist in its purposes. At present, the Council has established the Advisory Committee, the Articulation and Transfer Subcommittee, the Applied Research Priorities Subcommittee, and the Indigenous Education Subcommittee.

Mandate

The establishment of the Council is outlined in the **Council on Higher Education Act**, which was proclaimed January 26, 2007. The Council is responsible for providing recommendations to MUN, CNA, and the Minister of Education with respect to:

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

Objectives

The following issues have been identified as key priorities for the 2020-23 planning period.

Issue 1: Supporting and facilitating the transfer of students between Memorial University and College of the North Atlantic.

The Council believes that all credentials achieved should be recognized by the province's public post-secondary institutions to ensure seamless academic mobility, non-duplication of effort, and cost-efficiency. The following objective and indicators will be the focus for each of the years ending August 31 in 2021, 2022 and 2023.

Objective: By August 31, 2021, the Council will have assisted the two-way transfer of students between institutions.

Annual Indicators:

- Continued collaborative initiatives to ensure academic mobility.
- Explored further opportunities to facilitate transfer of students between Memorial University and College of the North Atlantic.

Issue 2: Engagement to identify further opportunities to foster collaboration to partner and pool resources.

Over the next three years, the Council will work with the Provincial Government, Memorial University, and College of the North Atlantic to identify and assess further opportunities to foster collaboration, partner and pool resources, including in the areas of applied research, micro-credentialing, and international education. The following objective and indicators will be the focus for each of the years ending August 31 in 2021, 2022 and 2023.

Objective: By August 31, 2021, the Council will have identified and assessed current and additional opportunities to foster collaboration, partner and pool resources.

Annual Indicators:

- Continued to pursue opportunities to increase research initiatives undertaken by public post-secondary institutions.
- Explored opportunities for collaboration, partnering and pooling of resources to support initiatives, including, micro-credentialing and international education.
- Reviewed and prioritized the results of the Public Post-Secondary Education Review recommendations.

Issue 3: Discuss and assess opportunities for collaboration on possible impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created many challenges to the continuation and operation of post-secondary education provincially, nationally and internationally that public post-secondary institutions continue to meet. However, with challenges comes opportunities for our public post-secondary institutions to address new areas of collaboration and be responsive to future initiatives in a way that will assist with the post-COVID-19 economic recovery. The following objective and indicators will be the focus for each of the years ending August 31 in 2021, 2022 and 2023.

Objective: By August 31, 2021, the Council will have identified opportunities for collaboration between the public post-secondary institutions and the Provincial Government resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Annual Indicators:

- Assessed opportunities to support industry, economic recovery and growth.
- Created opportunities for student service innovation and flexibility.