

**Council on Higher Education**

**Annual Report**

**September 1, 2020 - August 31, 2021**

## 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 2020-21 Annual Report of the Council on Higher Education. This report covers the period of September 1, 2020 to August 31, 2021.

The Council on Higher Education works within the authority granted under the **Council on Higher Education Act**. The Council is working to accomplish increased collaboration, shared resources, and improved engagement.

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 blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Osborne", written in a cursive style.

**Honourable Tom Osborne**  
Chairperson

## Table of Contents

<b>Chairperson’s Message</b> .....	2
<b>Overview</b> .....	4
<b>Mandate</b> .....	4
<b>Membership</b> .....	4
<b>Staff</b> .....	5
<b>Budget</b> .....	5
<b>Committees and Subcommittees</b> .....	6
<b>Report on Performance</b> .....	7
<b>Opportunities and Challenges</b> .....	11
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	11

## 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

The establishment of the Council is outlined in the **Council on Higher Education Act**. The Council is responsible for making 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 recruitment policies, standards and activities;
- Student credit transfer arrangements; and
- Other related matters.

The Council encourages collaboration at the highest levels of leadership and ensures the continued engagement of students in setting priorities and decision-making. Additional information on the Council can be found in its 2020-23 Activity Plan available at: [2020-23 Activity Plan](#).

## Membership

Section 3(1) of the **Council on Higher Education Act** provides for the membership of the Council:

- 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.

In addition, the Council may appoint three optional members. Membership as of August 31, 2021 is listed below.

Table 1: Council on Higher Education Membership

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Membership Details</b>
Hon. Tom Osborne	Minister, Education	By virtue of position
Dr. Greg O'Leary	Deputy Minister, Education	By virtue of position
Iris Petten	Chair, Memorial University Board of Regents	By virtue of position
Alastair O'Reilly	Chair, College of the North Atlantic Board of Governors	By virtue of position
Dr. Vianne Timmons	President and Vice Chancellor, Memorial University	By virtue of position
Elizabeth Kidd	President and CEO, College of the North Atlantic	By virtue of position
Aubrey Gover	Deputy Minister, Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation	Ministerial appointee, approved by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council
Ted Lomond	Deputy Minister, Industry, Energy and Technology	Ministerial appointee, approved by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council
Fiona Langor	Deputy Minister, Immigration, Skills and Labour	Ministerial appointee, approved by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council
John Godfrey	MUN Student Member	Lieutenant-Governor in Council
Andrew Haire	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 the goal of increasing collaboration between the entities. The Council continues to identify ways for the institutions to collaborate, pool resources, assist in supporting and facilitating the transfer of students between the two institutions, and addressing impacts arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Committees and Subcommittees**

In addition to the Council itself, there are a number of committees and subcommittees that support the work of the Council.

The Advisory Committee provides advice and support to the Council. It is comprised of senior officials from MUN, CNA, and the Department of Education. The Advisory Committee is focused on ensuring the work of the Council remains reflective of its mandate, the Council members' priorities, the strategic directions of Government, and priorities outlined in the Minister of Education's Mandate Letter.

The Council currently has three subcommittees: Articulation and Transfer, Applied Research Priorities, and Indigenous Education. Subcommittee membership includes officials from MUN, CNA, and the Department of Education. Each subcommittee has its own area of focus. Articulation and Transfer focuses on enhancing student mobility between the public post-secondary institutions. Applied Research Priorities focuses on increasing collaboration between MUN and CNA on applied research initiatives. Indigenous Education focuses on exploring opportunities to enhance Indigenous education and share information between institutions.

## Report on Performance

The Council's work is guided by three priorities identified in its 2020-23 Activity Plan: to support and facilitate the transfer of students between MUN and CNA; identify further opportunities to foster collaboration to partner and pool resources; and assess opportunities for collaboration on possible impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. 2020-21 is the first year reporting under the 2020-23 Activity Plan. The Council continues to progress its important work in its priority areas through collaboration between MUN and CNA.

Performance measurement information was identified in the Activity Plan to assist both the Council and public in monitoring and evaluating progress in meeting these objectives.

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

To ensure seamless academic mobility for students, non-duplication of effort, and cost-efficiency, it is vital that all credentials achieved be recognized at the public post-secondary institutions in the province.

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.

Indicator	2020-21 Results
1. Continued collaborative initiatives to ensure academic mobility.	<p>In the 2020-21 academic year, the Department of Education worked with MUN and CNA to assess, update, and release the annual Newfoundland and Labrador Credit and Program/Block Transfer Guide (2020-2021 guide released December 1, 2020). The Transfer Guide lists established transfer of credit and program precedents available to students in Newfoundland and Labrador and is updated on an annual basis each December; the document is available online:</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.nl.ca/education/post-secondary-education/transfer-guide/">https://www.gov.nl.ca/education/post-secondary-education/transfer-guide/</a>.</p> <p>Additionally, after a delay in activity as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Articulation and Transfer Subcommittee resumed activity on its work plan, which included continuing work in initiatives to enhance current student transfer opportunities.</p>
2. Explored further opportunities to facilitate transfer	<p>In the 2020-21 academic year, the Articulation and Transfer Subcommittee resumed its activity and held two meetings: October 30, 2021 and May 26, 2021. The subcommittee further</p>

<p>of students between Memorial University and College of the North Atlantic</p>	<p>progressed work on its work plan. Key Goals of the work plan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing an overarching MOU between MUN and CNA to facilitate and guide work on articulation and transfer between the institutions;</li> <li>• Developing an inventory of existing articulation and transfer agreements between MUN and CNA;</li> <li>• Developing an agreement template to standardize the articulation and transfer process; and</li> <li>• Conducting analysis of data on the current and recent student mobility landscape between MUN and CNA.</li> </ul> <p>Of particular note, in 2020-21 the subcommittee developed an agreement template to standardize the MUN and CNA articulation and transfer process. The template was successfully piloted for CNA's Digital Filmmaking Program and Grenfell Campus' Bachelor of Fine Arts Theatre and a new articulation and transfer agreement was subsequently signed for this pathway. This standardized template will now be used for new agreements in business programming.</p> <p>Work toward completing remaining initiatives remains ongoing.</p>
--	--

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

Coordination and collaboration between MUN and CNA, specifically in the area of applied research, has seen great successes. Both institutions will continue to use this approach to identify and assess further opportunities to foster collaboration, partner and pool resources 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 with pool resources.



Indicator	2020-21 Results
1. Continued to pursue opportunities to increase research initiatives undertaken by public post-secondary institutions.	Opportunities to increase research initiatives undertaken by public post-secondary institutions through the Council were delayed in 2020-21 due to the ongoing COVID-19 response and the continued review and response to the Public Post-Secondary Education Review and the Report of the Premier's Economic Review Team "The Big Reset".
2. Explored opportunities for collaboration, partnering and pooling of resources to support initiatives, including, micro-credentialing and international education.	Opportunities for collaboration, partnering, and pooling of resources to support initiatives, including micro-credentialing and international education through the Council were delayed in 2020-21 due to the ongoing COVID-19 response and the continued review and response to the Public Post-Secondary Education Review and the Report of the Premier's Economic Review Team "The Big Reset".
3. Reviewed and prioritized the results of the Public Post-Secondary Education Review recommendations.	<p>The final report of the Public Post-Secondary Education Review, "All Hands on Deck: Responding to the Challenges of the 21st Century by Leveraging Public Post-Secondary Education," was released on April 29, 2021. The report is available <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>The Department of Education continues to review, analyze, prioritize, and respond to the Report and its recommendations.</p>

**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. However, with challenges come opportunities for our public post-secondary institutions, providing them with new areas of collaboration, and the ability to be responsive to future initiatives that will assist with the post-COVID-19 economic recovery. The Council was not able to meet this objective and its indicators during the reporting period, however communication and

collaboration between Council members continued in other forms. The Council will strive to address this issue during the 2021-22 reporting period.

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.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>2020-21 Results</b>
1. Assessed opportunities to support industry, economic recovery and growth.	Assessment of opportunities to support industry, economic recovery and growth through the Council were delayed in 2020-21 due to the ongoing COVID-19 response and the continued review and response to the Public Post-Secondary Education Review and the Report of the Premier's Economic Review Team "The Big Reset".
2. Created opportunities for student service innovation and flexibility.	Opportunities for student service innovation and flexibility through the Council were delayed in 2020-21 due to the ongoing COVID-19 response and the continued review and response to the Public Post-Secondary Education Review and the Report of the Premier's Economic Review Team "The Big Reset".

## **Opportunities and Challenges**

Towards the latter part of 2019-20, Newfoundland and Labrador experienced firsthand the effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic. The pandemic and related public health measures continued throughout 2020-21 and many are still in place today. Post-secondary institutions quickly pivoted to online and remote learning, moved student supports to virtual platforms, found new ways to safely allow for practical training, and established methods to allow in-person learning at times when it was safe to do so. These pressures impacted the work of the Council, the Advisory Committee, and all three subcommittees. However, communication and collaboration between MUN, CNA, and the Department of Education continued in other forums, which may be explored more fully in the coming years.

The final report from the Public Post-Secondary Education Review was released on April 29, 2021. The Department of Education, MUN and CNA continue to review and analyze the recommendations from the final report, which may provide additional opportunities for collaboration through the Council.

## **Conclusion**

The Council on Higher Education and its committees and subcommittees was greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, MUN, CNA, and the Department of Education continue to review the recommendations of the Public Post-Secondary Education Review. All members of the Council are committed to achieving results in all indicated priority areas, and the work of the Council will continue when it is appropriate to do so.