

Council on Higher Education

Annual Report

September 1, 2017 – August 31, 2018

Chairperson's Message

As Chair of the Council on Higher Education, a Category Three government entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, I am pleased to submit the 2017-18 Annual Report of the Council on Higher Education. This report covers the 2017-18 academic year and compares actual results to those anticipated in the first year of the Council's 2017-20 Activity Plan.

Through increased collaboration, the Council on Higher Education is having an impact on the strategic direction of public post-secondary education in the province. The Council provides opportunities to identify key areas for collaboration, and works together to provide the people of this province with the best public post-secondary education opportunities available.

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

Respectfully submitted,



HON. BERNARD DAVIS
Chairperson

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Overview

Activated in 2017, the Council on Higher Education is a partnership between the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Memorial University (MUN) and College of the North Atlantic (CNA). The Council is tasked with the promotion of a shared approach between MUN and CNA with respect to program planning and delivery, fostering and promoting collaboration on issues related to economic development in the province, and enhancing cooperation and specialization in the delivery of public post-secondary academic programs in areas agreed upon by the Council.

Mandate

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

- Strategic directions for public post-secondary education;
- Reducing duplication of effort and expense;
- Shared program areas;
- Cost-effective international recruitment policies, standards and activities;
- Student credit transfer arrangements; and
- Other related matters.

The Council on Higher Education encourages collaboration at the highest levels of leadership and ensures the continued engagement of students in setting priorities and decision-making. Information on the Council's lines of business can be found in its 2017-20 Activity Plan available at: [www.aesl.gov.nl.ca/publications/2017-20 CHE Activity Plan.pdf](http://www.aesl.gov.nl.ca/publications/2017-20%20CHE%20Activity%20Plan.pdf).

Membership

Section 3(1) of the **Council on Higher Education Act** provides for the membership of the Council; members as of August 31, 2018 are listed below.

Table 1 Council on Higher Education Membership

Name	Position	Membership Details
Hon. Al Hawkins	Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour	By virtue of position
Genevieve Dooling	Deputy Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour	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. Gary Kachanoski	President and Vice Chancellor, Memorial University	By virtue of position
Bruce Hollett	President and CEO (Acting), College of the North Atlantic	By virtue of position

Name	Position	Membership Details
Robert Gardiner	Deputy Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development	Ministerial appointee, approved by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council
Aubrey Gover	Deputy Minister of Indigenous Affairs	Ministerial appointee, approved by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council
Ted Lomond	Deputy Minister of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation	Ministerial appointee, approved by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council
Alex Noel	MUN Student Member	Lieutenant-Governor in Council
Vacant	CNA Student Member	Lieutenant-Governor in Council

Members serve without remuneration. The CHE 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 provides support to the Council and acts as officer under the **Council on Higher Education Act**.

Budget

The Council on Higher Education does not have a defined budget and is not required to submit separate financial statements; all expenses are charged to the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour's Literacy and Institutional Services Division. For the reporting period, there were \$618 in expenditures related to travel and accommodation for student representatives.

Highlights and Partnerships

The Council on Higher Education is a tri-partite alliance between CNA, MUN and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, with the goal to increase collaboration between the entities. The Council directly supports **The Way Forward** commitment for the Government to work with MUN and CNA to identify ways for the institutions to collaborate, partner and pool resources in applied research areas and to assist in supporting and facilitating the transfer of students between the two institutions.

Committees and subcommittees

During the 2017-18 academic year, the Council on Higher Education identified its priority areas for collaboration and established subcommittees in the following areas: articulation and transfer of credits, Indigenous education, and applied research. An advisory committee of senior executives from MUN, CNA and the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour was formed and met three times during the 2017-18 academic year. The advisory committee focused on organizing the operation of the Council on Higher Education, creating subcommittees for priority areas, formalizing terms of reference for the subcommittees and ensuring the work of the Council on Higher Education remained reflective of the **Council on Higher Education Act**, **The Way Forward** commitments and Council members' priorities.

Council on Higher Education membership

Under subsection 3(a) of the **Council on Higher Education Act**, two students are appointed to the Council, one from MUN and one from CNA. Under current Provincial Government policy, Lieutenant-Governor in Council approval is required for their appointment to the Council. In the reporting period, the CNA Student Representative position became vacant as the student graduated. The Department engaged with CNA to seek nominations for a new student representative.

The **Council on Higher Education Act**, subsection 3(b), allows for three additional representatives; these individuals require Lieutenant-Governor in Council approval. The Council on Higher Education determined that additional members would assist in meeting its objectives and identified Robert Gardiner, Deputy Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, Ted Lomond, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation, and Aubrey Gover, Deputy Minister of Indigenous Affairs as potential members. These members were subsequently confirmed through the Lieutenant-Governor in Council approval process in May 2018.

Indigenous education

In addition to priorities directly related to **The Way Forward**, the Council on Higher Education identified Indigenous education as a priority area for collaboration. A subcommittee was formed and priorities included finalizing a terms of reference and identifying members.

Presentations by subject matter experts

In determining areas of priority, the Council on Higher Education received presentations from subject matter experts on the following topics:

- Recommendations from the Premier's Task Force Report on Improving Educational Outcomes;
- Government's response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action; and,
- The province's applied research priorities.

Report on Performance

The Council on Higher Education's work is guided by two priorities identified in **The Way Forward** and reflected in its 2017-20 Activity Plan: to foster collaboration in applied research areas and support; and to facilitate the transfer of students between the two institutions.

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.

Applied research in public post-secondary education is essential to creating opportunities for students and industry to work collaboratively; this contributes to the province's economic growth. MUN and CNA are leaders in degree and diploma programs, arts and science, and in areas such as health, ocean technology, engineering, business, and other industries specific to our province. The applied research activities at each institution continue to develop innovations that help businesses throughout the province grow and strengthen Newfoundland and Labrador's competitiveness in key sectors nationally and internationally. Supporting economic and labour market growth requires coordination and collaboration between the province's two public post-secondary institutions and its stakeholders, specifically in the areas of applied research in priority sectors. The following objective and indicators apply to the 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 academic years.

Issue 1: Engagement to identify further research opportunities in the province and foster collaboration to partner and pool resources in applied research areas.

Objective: By August 31, 2018, the Council on Higher Education will have assessed current research programs and initiatives, to identify opportunities to enhance research programs and initiatives through collaboration, partnership and the pooling of resources.

Indicator	2017-18 Results
1. Assessed the current level of research programs and initiatives.	During the 2017-18 academic year, the Council on Higher Education completed this indicator. During the reporting period, MUN and CNA completed an internal data collection and review of joint applied research funding applications for the period 2013-14 through 2017-18 (five years). While the information is internal to the respective institution, it may inform future work of the Applied Research Priorities Subcommittee.
2. Identified opportunities to enhance the amount of research programs and initiatives undertaken by public post-secondary institutions.	During the 2017-18 academic year, the Council on Higher Education completed this indicator. During the reporting period, the Applied Research Priorities Subcommittee was established with representatives selected from CNA, MUN and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. The subcommittee drafted a work plan that identified opportunities. Once finalized, approval will be sought from the Advisory Committee and the Council on Higher Education.

Indicator	2017-18 Results
3. Identified opportunities and made recommendations to members for collaboration, partnering and pooling of resources to further support applied research.	During the 2017-18 academic year, the Council on Higher Education was not able to fully complete this indicator. During the reporting period, the Council set up appropriate mechanisms to ensure that work is underway and that all objectives and indicators will have results in the 2018-19 academic year. The Applied Research Priorities Subcommittee was established with representatives selected from CNA, MUN and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador; the subcommittee held its first meeting on June 15, 2018. This subcommittee began drafting a work plan to identify opportunities. Once completed, approval will be sought from the Advisory Committee and the Council on Higher Education. While the subcommittee identified opportunities for collaboration, partnering and pooling of resources to further support applied research, recommendations were not made to members in 2017-18.

Educational attainment is essential to labour market attachment and success. The province's public post-secondary system seeks to be responsive to the needs of the local labour market while remaining an attractive destination for students. To facilitate this, institutions work to identify commonalities in programming and credentials achieved to ensure seamless academic mobility for students, non-duplication of effort, and cost-efficiency. The following objective and indicators apply to the 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 academic years.

Issue 2: Supporting and facilitating the transfer of students between the two institutions.

Objective: By August 31, 2018, the Council on Higher Education will have assisted the two-way transfer of students between institutions.

Indicator	2017-18 Results
1. Assessed current student transfer opportunities.	In the 2017-18 academic year, the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour worked with MUN and CNA to assess, update, and release the Newfoundland and Labrador Credit and Program/Block Transfer Guide (released December 1, 2017). The Transfer Guide lists established transfer of credit and program precedents available to students in Newfoundland and Labrador; the document is available online and through an online database http://www.aesl.gov.nl.ca/postsecondary/transferguide/index.html .
2. Consulted regarding opportunities to support the transfer of students between the two institutions.	During the 2017-18 academic year, the Articulation and Transfer Subcommittee was established with representatives selected from CNA, MUN and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador; the subcommittee held two meetings, June 8, 2018 and August 29, 2018. This subcommittee began drafting a work plan to identify further opportunities to support the transfer of students between the two institutions. Once the work plan is completed, approval will be sought from the Advisory Committee and the Council on Higher Education.

Opportunities and Challenges

While the Council was not able to complete all objectives and indicators in this reporting period, the Council set up the appropriate mechanisms in 2017-18 to ensure that work is underway and that all objectives and indicators will have results in the 2018-19 academic year. Priority areas and relevant subcommittees have been identified (Applied Research Priorities Subcommittee; Articulation and Transfer Subcommittee; and Indigenous Education Subcommittee), terms of references have been approved and MUN, CNA and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador are committed to achieving results in all areas.

A review of the public post-secondary education system was announced in Budget 2018 and recommitted in phase three of **The Way Forward**; MUN and CNA will play an active role in the review. The completion of the review will have no impact on the current priorities of the Council on Higher Education; however, future work may be guided by the results of the review.