



Premier's Council on Skills

Terms of Reference

It is vital that Alberta's adult learning system produces post-secondary graduates who are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to meet current and future labour market demands and drive research and innovation to make our province, workforce, and citizens competitive in a 21st century economy. Global trends are reshaping post-secondary education and the skills students need for success. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, a global recession, and the changing demands of employers are rapidly altering the employment landscape and increasing the need for technical, social, emotional, higher cognitive, critical thinking, and leadership skills in employees. As noted in the Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs strategy, Albertans must continue to reskill and upskill to meet the challenge of a transforming economy.

To better understand and manage the challenges and opportunities with respect to the changing needs in Alberta's workforce, the Government of Alberta (GoA) is establishing the Premier's Council on Skills (the Council) to be composed of key industry stakeholders.

The creation of a Premier's Council on Skills fulfills a platform commitment and a recommendation of the Skills for Jobs Task Force.

1. Mandate and Accountability

Mandate of Council

The Council is an advisory body responsible for providing advice to the Premier of Alberta (the Premier), through the Minister of Skilled Trades and Professions (the Minister), regarding skills and training needed in Alberta's evolving economy, especially with regard to select strategic industries identified in *Alberta's Recovery Plan*, and the alignment of such with current or planned programming in Alberta's adult learning system. As a key liaison between industry and GoA on skills development, the Council will help to facilitate input from these critical industries to inform GoA policies.

The Council's Accountability and Transparency

The Council is accountable to the Premier through the Minister.

Although the Council is not subject to the *Conflicts of Interest Act*, its Code of Conduct reflects the spirit of the legislation and is designed to maintain the effectiveness of the Council and ensure the integrity and impartiality of its advice. The Chair of the Council is responsible for administering the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct is to be drafted by the Secretariat for the Council for inclusion in the agenda and review by Council at the inaugural meeting.

2. Membership, Recruitment, and Appointment

Council Members

The membership on the Council consists of the following members appointed by the Premier:

- At least seven members with extensive experience in one or more of the following strategic industries identified in *Alberta's Recovery Plan*:
 - Agriculture and Forestry;
 - Tourism;
 - Construction;

- Energy;
- Technology;
- Aviation, Aerospace, Logistics;
- Finance and Fintech; and

- at least one member of an Alberta-based labour organization;
- at least one member with extensive experience in the health industry;
- at least one member with extensive experience in the post-secondary and/or education industry.

The Premier shall designate one member of the Council as its chair and one member as its Vice-Chair.

The Council shall consist of no more than 13 members at any one time.

Recruitment

The founding members of the Council are appointed by the Premier, on recommendation from the Minister.

Moving forward, the Council will use a matrix outlining desired competencies and skills for members as part of the recruitment process for new members. This matrix is developed by the Council in coordination with the Secretariat for the Council (the Secretariat).

The recruitment and selection process will be supported by Public Agency Secretariat, Public Service Commission and the Secretariat.

Appointments and Terms

The Premier appoints individuals to the Council, on the recommendations of the Minister (which recommendations, for subsequent appointments, will be in alignment with the competency and skills matrix for the Council).

Appointment of each member of the Council is for a fixed term of up to three years.

The Premier may reappoint an individual based on mutual agreement and the individual's demonstrated ability to assist the Council in achieving its objectives and performing its functions. An individual cannot be appointed as a member for a term that would result in the person serving as a member for more than six consecutive years.

Notwithstanding the above, the Chair of the Council will continue for up to three months following the expiration of their appointment or until successor is appointed, whichever occurs first.

3. Responsibilities and Duties of the Council

Council works collaboratively, collectively, and strategically in the following areas:

Provision of Advice

- Advises the Premier, through the Minister, on issues and emerging trends with respect to the skills needed in Alberta's workforce, particularly as they relate to educational programming in Alberta's adult learning system and/or GoA policies, goals, and priorities with respect to adult education.
- Advises the Premier, through the Minister, on specific issues or additional opportunities for action, as identified by the Premier, through the drafting and submission of formal reports to the Minister.
- Is a resource for and provides advice to GoA departments, committees, and working groups (coordinated through the Secretariat) on topics of interest or concern with respect to alignment of current and planned programming in Alberta's adult learning system with the needs of strategic industries.

Engaging Stakeholders

- Engages and coordinates with other GoA agencies, boards, and commissions working on issues related to skills development and education (most notably, the Minister's Advisory Council on Higher Education and Skills (MACHES), the Alberta Board of Skilled Trades (ABST), and the Career Education Task Force).

- The Chair of MACHES and the Chair of ABST shall be provided notice of meetings and be invited to participate, as appropriate and necessary, as guests at meetings of the Council in order to ensure coordination and dialogue on skills and education priorities.
- Ensures informed advice is provided by building, maintaining, and promoting relationships with organizations engaged in economic and skills development in Alberta, as appropriate.

Evaluation and Reporting

- Develops an annual report for submission to the Premier, through the Minister, on the prior year's activities, in accordance with the GoA's reporting cycle.
- Conducts an annual self-evaluation to determine Council's effectiveness in achieving its mandate and to promote a culture of continuous improvement.

4. Roles of Council Members, Premier, and Minister

The Chair of the Council

The primary focus of the Chair of the Council is to provide strategic leadership and guidance to the Council in fulfilling its mandate.

The Vice-Chair of the Council

The Vice-Chair of the Council assumes the duties and responsibilities of the Chair in the absence of the Chair.

Council Members

All Council members, including the Chair and Vice-Chair, engage with their industries and/or networks to develop an informed opinion on the issues of concerns with respect to the skills needed in Alberta's economy.

The Premier

The Premier provides and confirms the Council's mandate and appoints the members of the Council. The Premier is also responsible for approving updates to these Terms of Reference.

The Minister

The Minister keeps the Premier apprised of the Council's activity and the advice and recommendations that the Council provides. The Minister also keeps the Minister of Advanced Education (or the member of Executive Council who is designated pursuant to the *Government Organization Act* as the Minister responsible for the *Post-secondary learning Act*, in case of a government re-organization) apprised of any advice and recommendations that Council provides that may pertain to issues and emerging trends with respect to the skills needed in Alberta's workforce, particularly as they related to the educational programming in Alberta's adult learning system.

In consultation with the Minister of Advanced Education, the Minister is responsible for providing recommendations to the Premier for individuals to be appointed to the Council.

The Minister provides oversight of the performance of the Council to ensure that it is fulfilling its mandate and monitors its operations to ensure that it is in compliance with these Terms of Reference and keeps the Premier apprised of the Council's performance.

The Minister is responsible for informing the Council of GoA policies and direction affecting the work of Council.

5. Council Governance and Operations

Meetings

The Council will meet at least three times a year, with at least one of those meetings being in-person (in either Calgary or Edmonton).

The Council will invite the Premier, the Minister, the Minister of Advanced Education (or other member of Executive Council who is designated pursuant to the *Government Organization Act* as the Minister responsible for the *Post-secondary learning Act*, in case of a government re-organization), and other ministers involved in *Alberta's Recovery Plan* (or their respective designates), as well as the Chairs of ABST and MACHES, to attend at least one in-person meeting each year. The Council may choose to invite other guests to meetings of the Council, whether in-person or virtual.

The Chair will ensure that meetings minutes are recorded and communicated or made available in a concise, written format to the Minister, as appropriate, after each meeting.

Quorum

Quorum shall be met when a majority of existing Council members are present, one of whom must be the Chair, or Vice-Chair if the Chair is unable to attend.

Sub-committees

The Council may approve and establish sub-committees of Council members that support the mandate of the Council. These sub-committees are accountable to the Chair. Specific terms of reference for each sub-committee are to be developed and approved by the Council, and will be reviewed regularly by the Council.

Secretariat

The department of Skilled Trades and Professions (STP) is responsible for supporting the Council through the Secretariat, which will provide for the administrative, logistic, policy, and information needs of the Council.

The Secretariat ensures that the business of the Council is efficiently and effectively conducted and is in alignment with these Terms of Reference. The Secretariat is the primary contact between the Council and the department of STP and coordinates the Council's communication with other areas of the GoA, as needed, and assists the Council in the following areas:

- the recruitment process for new members;
- strategic and operational planning;
- completion of orientation and training of members;
- budget and financial administration;
- coordination of meetings; and
- advice on GoA processes and protocols.

The Chair and Secretariat will develop and maintain a strong and effective working relationship. They will discuss Council's resource and support needs and work together to adjust plans in accordance with available resources and in light of any emerging issues.

6. Remuneration of Council Members

Council members are not entitled to remuneration.

Council members may be entitled to receive reimbursement for eligible and approved travel and accommodation expenses reasonably incurred by members in the performance of Council business in accordance with the *Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Policy*, as amended.

The Ministry of Executive Council and STP have agreed that reimbursement of eligible and approved expenses will occur through STP budget and expense process and in accordance with the *Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Policy*.

7. Communication between the Council and the Minister

The Chair will meet at least twice yearly with the Minister and update the Minister, on behalf of the Premier, on the status of the Council's activities and achievements.

8. Administration and Records Management

The Terms of Reference must be reviewed by the Premier and Chair at least once every three years. Amendments to the Terms of Reference can only be effected through Ministerial Order signed by the Premier.

In the event of a reorganization of GoA departments in name or function under the *Government Organization Act*, the Minister of Executive Council that is designated under the *Government Organization Act* as the Minister responsible for the *Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Education Act* becomes "the Minister," as named in these Terms of Reference, without need for amendment to these Terms of Reference to effect this change in assignation of responsibility.

Pursuant to Schedule 1 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Regulation AR 186/2008, as an advisory body established under section 7 of the *Government Organization Act*, the Council is a public body. For purposes of carrying out the duties and responsibilities under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIP), the Executive Director whose responsibilities include the Secretariat is the head of the public body, pursuant to section 1(f)(ii) of FOIP.