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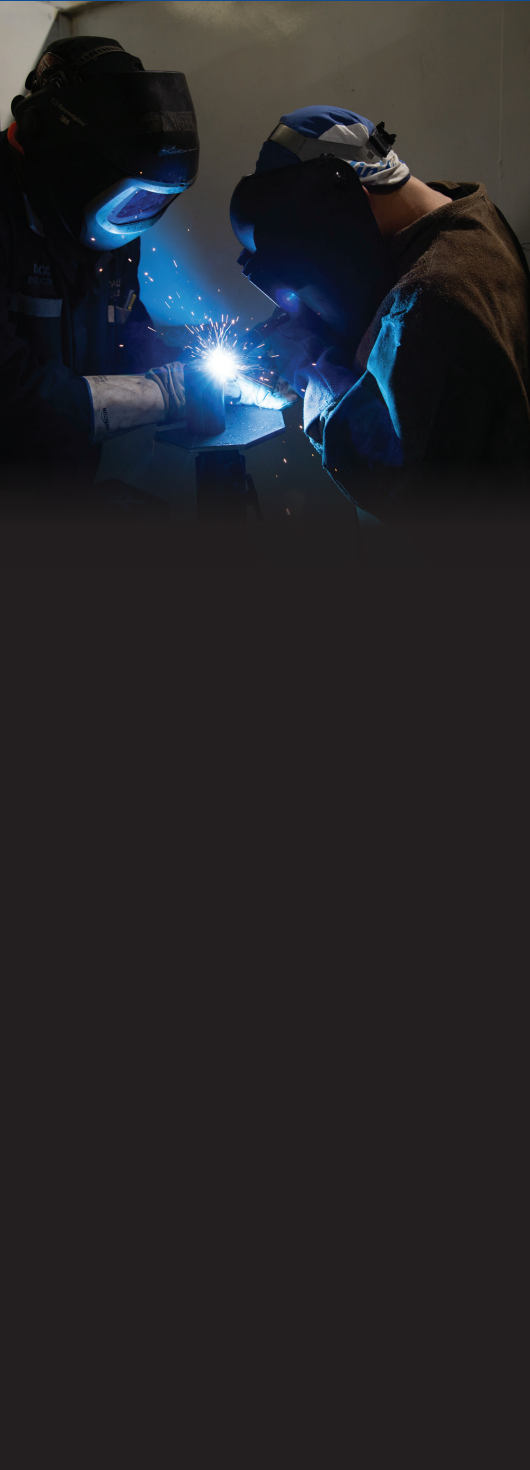
2020-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN



**BUILDING
ON SUCCESS**



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Building on Success

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (Agency) and Apprenticeship Board (Board) are pleased to provide the Agency's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan. This plan builds off of the strength and success of the Agency's first, five-year Strategic Plan (2015-2020) with the identification of four strategic directions and associated key actions.

Under the Board's direction, the Agency has undertaken an extensive, province-wide consultation process to better understand and determine the priorities of the four skilled trades sectors, our education and training partners, Indigenous Peoples, African Nova Scotians, women, equity-seeking organizations, and under-represented groups in Nova Scotia's apprenticeship system.

Nova Scotia's apprenticeship system has continued to play a unique and critical role in building a well-educated and highly skilled workforce – the workforce we need for our business and communities to prosper. Through a joint stewardship approach to the delivery of apprenticeship, we have seen growth, change, and meaningful involvement by industry and our other partners in the system.

Moving forward, the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency will continue our role as the centre of trades programming in the province – building relationships with industry and equity partners, making information and guidance easily accessible for all apprenticeship clients, and ensuring our legislative and policy framework is responsive to apprentice and employer needs. We will continue our work to improve the perception of apprenticeship as a viable post-secondary career option and, in fact, a career of choice with Nova Scotia's youth, parents, and educators.





Message from the Board Chair



*Apprenticeship Board
Chair, Brad Smith*

2019 was a year of accomplishment, capped off with an unprecedented pandemic crisis as the calendar year finished March 31, 2020. Throughout it all, Board and Agency staff remained focused on the primary mandate of delivering a responsive apprenticeship system. But the year leaves us with many questions to be answered as we adjust to a new reality – operating in a COVID existent environment.

Reflecting back on the accomplishments of the Board, it is important to note the vital role staff and committees play in reviewing and making recommendations on key strategic and operational activities. Our focus has been, and will continue to be, ensuring the Apprenticeship Agency is responsive to the needs of industry, apprentices and the diverse populations that make up Nova Scotia's workforce.

As the NSAA completed its first ever five-year strategic plan, we developed and validated with industry our next multi-year plan guiding us through to 2025. The pillars are similar to our founding principles, and remain core to guiding our activities: Attract Skilled Trades Talent; Support the Journey to Certification; Foster a Culture of Workplace Learning; and Advance the Value of Certification.

This work builds on successes to date, and in large part these accomplishments are reflective of the hard work and contribution of Board Members. Last year, the terms of some of our inaugural Members' were completed. I want to thank outgoing Chair Carol MacCulloch who worked tirelessly to develop and operationalize the joint stewardship approach that resulted in the successful partnership between industry and government we enjoy today. Additionally, it is important to recognize our other retiring Board Members, Karen Pictou, Doreen Parsons, Trevor Weldon, and Joel Marsman.

With the retirement of Board Members we are pleased to welcome the energy and ideas of our newest recruits: Michel Okoh (Member-at-Large), Trent Soholt (Member-at-Large with the Nova Scotia Construction Sector Council), and Carol Dayment (Represents Employers; Industrial/Manufacturing Sector with Nova Scotia Power).



The “Ready When You Are” marketing campaign and outreach activities continue to garner positive recognition and success. And these successes are reflected in the number of apprentices, engaged employers and underrepresented groups which continue to grow to record numbers. This growth has also resulted in an increased number of apprenticeable trades and training pathways. Trade Advisory Committees, a key component of our industry engagement, are evolving as we learn more, and do more to optimize the finite resources available to the Agency. We are proud and fortunate to have so many meaningful partnerships as highlighted in this report. These partnerships have been critical to expanding the reach and impact of the Apprenticeship Agency in both promotion and delivery of apprenticeship in Nova Scotia.

The Agency is well positioned with a new five-year strategic plan and annual business plan to guide our work. However, as the Board looks towards implementation of these plans, we face new and novel challenges on how we accomplish our goals in a COVID existent environment. I have high confidence in the Board, the leadership of the Agency and staff. Along with our partners, we will have continued success, and find new and innovative ways to deliver industry-led apprenticeship in Nova Scotia.



About Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications



The apprenticeship and trades qualifications system is a post-secondary option for high school graduates and career changers administered by the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency and ultimately governed by the Minister responsible for the associated legislation. The shape and execution of the system is driven by the strategic advice and guidance of industry through the apprenticeship board and industry partners. Individuals opting for a career in the skilled trades may register as an apprentice and work under a supervising journeyman. Through a combination of working in the trade, skills development and technical training, apprentices meet the requirements to challenge the certification examination and become journeymen in their own right.

While provincial in nature, apprenticeship authorities across the Atlantic region and Canada collaborate on the creation of occupational standards, training standards, and examinations to provide a level of consistency in skills for the labour market. All provinces and territories also provide mutual recognition to apprentices moving temporarily or permanently to another jurisdiction so that they can continue seamlessly in their apprenticeship program.





About the Apprenticeship Board

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency is governed by the *Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act*. The Board is composed of 15 members including: 10 trade seats across the four industry sectors – construction, industrial/manufacturing, motive power, and service; four members-at-large and the VP Academic, NSCC to support coherence across the trades training system. The Board is committed to achieving an employer/employee balance and representation from the Mi'kmaq community and groups currently under-represented in the system.

The Agency's operating charter describes the duties and powers of the Board and of its committees. These committees include Trade Advisory Committees.

Trade Advisory Committees (TACs) are provincial ad-hoc advisory committees established by the Apprenticeship Board in accordance with the Operating Charter of the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency. TACs advise the Board concerning policy, regulations and other matters specific to a trade(s), or on any matter assigned to the TACs relating to the apprenticeship and trades qualifications system.

The Board ensures a robust and comprehensive industry voice in recommendations it makes to the Minister responsible for the apprenticeship and trades qualifications legislation. The Board also has the power to designate voluntary trades and create associated trade regulations.

Our Vision

An industry-led apprenticeship system that builds and maintains a highly skilled, diverse and inclusive workforce, contributing to the economic success of Nova Scotia.

Our Mission

As advocates and stewards, the Agency, industry, and its partners will build a leading-edge apprenticeship system, creating more jobs for apprenticeship, giving broader access to training and certification, and demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement.



Our Vision
Our Mission
Our Values



Our Values

As we carry out the goals of the apprenticeship and trades qualifications system, we will build on what is working and reach for new levels of success.

We will do this in keeping with the following principles:

Diverse and inclusive: We will embrace the need for diversity and encourage entry into a much wider range of trades, helping apprentices and employers understand the value of a diverse and inclusive workforce.

Partnership-based: We will put the employer/apprentice relationship at the heart of the trades training system. The employer is the primary trainer and beneficiary; therefore, the system must be industry-led and industry-driven.

Service Excellence: We will strive to provide efficient, responsive service to clients and employers, leveraging technology to ensure access to resources and information.

Innovative and strategic: We will make system- and trade-level decisions with industry, being open to multiple, flexible solutions and recognizing the dynamic nature of industry.

Flexible and accessible: We will identify and provide system supports and training that will ensure success, including bridging programs and essential skills programming.

Results-focused and accountable: We will be accountable and transparent to apprenticeship system partners for decisions, resource allocations, and performance, and we will establish standards and accountabilities for all participants – apprentices, employers, joint registration agreement participants, training providers, and service providers.



Strategic Directions 2020-2025

In order to achieve success, the Agency plans to direct its work over the next five years in the following key areas with a focus on the desired results as indicated:

Attract Skilled Trades Talent

- Nova Scotia's youth, parents and educators are aware of and knowledgeable about trades, including pathways
- Youth have access to information and opportunities to experience the skilled trades
- Nova Scotians make informed decisions using relevant, timely, and accurate labour market information

Support the Journey to Certification

- Apprentices have a successful journey to certification
- Apprentices and trades practitioners have access to the learning resources they need to be successful through their careers
- Service delivery and trade programs will be innovative and responsive to changes in trades practice and technologies

Foster a Culture of Workplace Learning

- Employers understand and value their role as the primary trainer in the apprenticeship system
- Apprentices and journeypersons benefit from respectful workplaces that value and encourage learning
- The Agency is a model of affirming workplace learning culture

Advance the Value of Certification

- Trades workers in the system have pride in their career and promote the trades as careers of choice
- Nova Scotians are confident in the skills of the certified trades workforce
- Compliance is valued by industry with enforcement that is active, visible, and efficient
- Nova Scotians have fair, safe, and equitable workplaces
- Public investment decisions value certification in the skilled trades



Our Key Actions

Attract Skilled Trades Talent

Promote apprenticeship as a quality post-secondary option leading to rewarding careers in the skilled trades

Provide experiential learning opportunities to youth in the skilled trades

Grow the successful participation of women and diverse communities in the apprenticeship system

Enhance the availability of relevant, timely, and accurate labour market materials

Position the apprenticeship system to respond effectively to the labour market

Support the Journey to Certification

Develop a culture of service excellence in the apprenticeship system that recognizes the range of participants' needs

Retain apprentices through a suite of supports that meets the diverse learning needs of all participants

Expand and improve flexible and responsive training pathways

Work with our training partners to continuously improve training quality

Work with our regional and national partners to enable apprentices to complete their apprenticeship without disruption

Foster a Culture of Workplace Learning

Encourage learning environments within workplaces that are truly inclusive of all Nova Scotians

Support the essential role of employers as trainers in the apprenticeship system and their role in skill development

Support opportunities for continuous learning through post-journey initiatives including a mentoring program

Provide meaningful opportunities for workplace partners to advise on matters concerning their trade

Advance the Value of Certification

Promote broader public and industry awareness of the value of certification, particularly in diverse communities

Position government as a leader in the participation in apprenticeship and recognition of the value of certification

Identify and recognize leaders who understand the value of training and certification

Create an environment of compliance through education and enforcement

How We Will Measure Success

Key Indicators

SYSTEM INFLUENCE

The system will successfully influence the full continuum of trades training and regulation, including grades P-12, bridging programs, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, post-journey training, and regulation.

MEASURE	2019-2020 RESULT	2020-2025 TARGET	STATUS
Percentage of pre-apprentice graduates who register as apprentices in the compulsory trades	Ready in 2020-21 year		
Employer satisfaction with apprenticeship training	2018: 72.2%	biannual reporting	
Apprentice satisfaction with apprenticeship training	2018: 69.1%	biannual reporting	

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

More employers will provide strategic direction to the system, hire more apprentices and engage more purposefully in their training.

MEASURE	2019-2020 RESULT	2020-2025 TARGET	STATUS
Net number of new employers in the apprenticeship system	224	1000	
Compliance rate	96%	95%	

INCLUSIVENESS

The system will successfully attract and retain more individuals from diverse groups.

MEASURE	2019-2020 RESULT	2020-2025 TARGET	STATUS
Percentage of apprentices who represent diverse populations	15.3%	25%	
Percentage of women in the apprenticeship system	7.3%	25%	
Percentage of certifications issued to diverse persons	8.5%	15%	
Percentage of certifications issued to women	5%	15%	

How We Will Measure Success

Key Indicators *continued*

LABOUR MARKET RESPONSIVENESS

The system will optimize and grow the resources it needs to meet labour market needs.

MEASURE	2019-2020 RESULT	TARGET	STATUS
Progress on labour market demand - Motive Power Sector	Certifications issued since 2018: 502 (20%)	Certifications required 2026: 2469	
Progress on labour market demand - Construction Sector	Certifications issued since 2018: 851 (16%)	Certifications required 2026: 5283	
Progress on labour market demand - Service Sector	Certifications issued since 2018: 69 (3%)	Certifications required 2026: 2405	
Progress on labour market demand - Industrial/ Manufacturing Sector	Certifications issued since 2018: 237 (15%)	Certifications required 2026: 1544	
Percentage of total programs reviewed	28%	100%	
Percentage of apprentices who apply and are enrolled in technical training	97%	95%	

SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION

The system will support apprentices to complete their training in a timely manner, gaining the depth and breadth of the skills employers need.

MEASURE	2019-2020 RESULT	2020-2025 TARGET	STATUS
Average time to complete	3.8 years	4 years	
Current number of active apprentices in the system	7254	10,000	
Percentage of individuals who successfully pass certification examinations	74%	75%	

“Nova Scotia’s apprenticeship system has continued to play a unique and critical role in building a well-educated and highly skilled workforce – the workforce we need for our business and communities to prosper.”



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