



Nova Scotia Apprenticeship
Agency / Nova Scotia
Community College

2014-2015 Stewardship Report



Background

The creation of the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (NSAA) involved significant amendments to the Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act and the Community Colleges Act to pave the way for fuller, more coherent industry engagement across the trades training system.

In particular, it was recognized that to achieve success in this priority, the agency needed to build on its strong relationship with the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC). Apprenticeship technical training had to be extended to include the planning and delivery of those trades programs for which the agency maintains industry standards and issues certificates of qualification.

The amended Community Colleges Act now authorizes NSAA to have input into establishing and altering programs of study and guidelines that pertain to designated trades. It requires the Board of Governors of NSCC to collaborate with NSAA to develop guidelines for the evaluation of programs of study that pertain to designated trades. In addition, where NSCC would have established Program Advisory Committees for programs that pertain to designated trades, it will instead use the agency's Trade Advisory Committees (TACs) for this purpose. TACs are composed of industry representatives who are appointed by the Apprenticeship Board to enable a coherent industry voice across the trades training system. The Operating Charter of the agency provides additional detail regarding this requirement, stating that TACs shall provide advice and make recommendations to the Board of Governors of the college concerning pre-employment programs associated with designated trades, including appropriate prerequisites to entry.

As a measure to ensure that the relationship between NSCC and NSAA is beneficial to the objective of enabling consistent industry advice across the system, the amended Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act names the NSCC Vice-President, Academic as a member of the Apprenticeship Board. Also, the NSCC President and the NSAA Chief Executive Officer are required to jointly prepare an annual stewardship report concerning trades and related matters that are within the mandate of both the college and the agency.

This is the inaugural NSAA/NSCC stewardship report, presented to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education on behalf of both the agency and the college. The report provides a summary of activities undertaken since the creation of the agency in 2014 to develop processes and policies concerning the ongoing collaboration of both institutions. It also provides a foundation for future reports, which will be provided to the Minister in the fall of each year.

Structures to Support Effective Collaboration

Apprenticeship Board

The Operating Charter of the agency specifies that NSCC'S Vice-President, Academic is to be appointed to the Apprenticeship Board by virtue of the position. The rationale for this approach is the responsibility of the Vice-President for pre-employment programs in the areas of the designated trades. In order to achieve a coherent delivery of trades training in the Province, it is essential that the agency and NSCC work together at a strategic level.

The current Vice-President, Academic was appointed to the inaugural Apprenticeship Board, which was formed on July 1, 2014. She will also be a member of the Stakeholder Engagement Standing Committee of the board. The Vice-President has actively participated in all monthly board meetings, including providing an overview of NSCC at the October meeting, and participated in all board education sessions. Her advice has been instrumental in the development of board policies, board recruitment, TACs, and the agency's five-year strategic plan.

NSCC hosts the board meetings at its IT Campus in Halifax.

NSAA/NSCC—TAC Coordination Committee

The TAC Coordination Committee is responsible for determining the annual needs for program review, defining the processes for establishing TACs that need to carry out such reviews, and clarifying NSCC's role and participation in TACs in general. The committee is co-chaired by NSCC's Dean of Trades and Technology and NSAA's Director of Partnership and Innovation.

NSAA/NSCC—Apprenticeship Training Committee

NSAA and NSCC have established a joint training committee that meets bi-weekly. The committee collaboratively develops the annual training schedule, identifies and monitors special projects and initiatives, and facilitates curriculum development needs for both in-class and online technical training. The committee also works to align curriculum and credit transfer between NSCC pre-apprenticeship and NSAA apprenticeship programs. The committee membership includes those responsible for training coordination, administration, and curriculum development from both organizations. The committee is co-chaired by NSCC's Manager of Apprenticeship Training and NSAA's Manager of Programs.

NSAA/NSCC—Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Diversity and inclusion are core values of both NSAA and NSCC. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion at NSCC serves as a resource for students, faculty, and staff, and it works to facilitate an integrated vision and shared responsibility for diversity and inclusion advancement throughout NSCC. This work is grounded in the principles of equality, respect, inclusion, and understanding diversity. The college celebrates diversity and embraces the contributions that these differences offer. NSAA is mandated to improve access to and participation in the apprenticeship and trades certification system by members of diverse groups. The agency will work with NSCC to establish a committee to develop collaborative initiatives promoting careers in the skilled trades to diverse groups, encourage employers to take students on work placement, and hire from diverse groups, as well as to ensure that apprentices from diverse groups have access to the supports they need to participate successfully in technical training.

Provincial and Atlantic Trade Advisory Committees

Provincial

Trade Advisory Committees (TACs) are established by the NSAA Board to advise the Apprenticeship Board concerning policy, regulations, and other matters specific to a trade or trades or relating to the apprenticeship and trade qualifications system. TACs are mandated to analyze issues and make recommendations concerning them to the board, create multi-year human resource plans for the represented trade, and consult as needed with the trade and industry sector. In this regard, TACs provide a strong mechanism for industry input and feedback to the agency, as well as a network for the agency to share and solicit information in industry sectors.

TACs consist of at least 4 persons who possess the knowledge, skill, experience, and capacity to perform the mandate of the TAC as well as to represent employers, employees, and, to the extent possible, the geographic, gender, cultural, and economic diversity of the province.

The Operating Charter of the agency and amendments to the Community Colleges Act establish that, if there is a pre-employment apprenticeship training program at the college associated with a designated trade, the board will put in place a TAC where previously a program advisory committee (PAC) would have been established by NSCC. In addition to the pre-apprenticeship programs, expertise regarding apprenticeship technical training from the college is often required on these committees and, as a result, faculty usually form part of the TAC membership.

The TAC will provide advice and make recommendations to the NSAA Board and the NSCC Board of Governors. It has been determined that the best way to do this is to have the TAC first make its recommendations to the NSAA Board, which will then provide the recommendations regarding college programming to the Board of Governors. The college's Dean of Trades, who is responsible for the delivery of most pre-apprenticeship programming at NSCC, will be kept apprised of the work of the TAC at every stage.

It is anticipated that the primary issue for the college will be the need to review programs in a timely manner in order to make the required changes in advance of a given academic year. To this end, the agency and the college have developed a plan to work closely together regarding the work of TACs.

Review of NSCC Pre-Apprenticeship Programs

As described above, a primary task of TACs will be the review of NSCC pre-apprenticeship programs. The agency and the college have considered all current pre-employment programs that are trade-related and determined which ones will need TACs for future program reviews. The agency and the college have approved the following list, which includes scheduled reviews.

Trade	NSCC Program	NSAA TAC	Timeline (NSCC Program Review)
Automotive Service Technician	Automotive Service Repair	Automotive Service Technician	
Bricklayer	Bricklaying/Masonry	Bricklayer	
Carpenter	Carpentry (Certificate & Diploma),	Carpenter	
Construction Electrician	Electrical Construction,	Construction Electrician	
Cook	Cooking, Culinary Arts	Cook	
Gas Fitter	Gas Technician	Gas Fitter	
Heavy Duty Equipment Technician	Heavy Duty Equipment/ Truck & Transport (Certificate & Diploma)	Truck & Transport Mechanic/Heavy Duty Equipment Technician	2015–2016
Heavy Equipment Operator	Heavy Equipment Operator	Heavy Equipment Operator	
Industrial Electrician	Electrical Technician, Electrical (Diploma), Electrical/Mechanic Technician	Industrial Electrician	
Instrumentation and Control Technician	Industrial Instrumentation	Instrumentation and Control Technician	
Industrial Mechanic (Millwright)	Industrial Mechanic	Industrial Mechanic (Millwright)	
Landscape Horticulturist	Horticulture Landscape Technology	Landscape Horticulturist	
Machinist	Machining	Machinist	
Marine Service Technician	Diesel Repair—Industrial & Marine	MST/HDET/TTM	2015–2016
Metal Fabricator (Fitter)	Metal Fabrication/Welding	Metal Fabricator (Fitter)	
Motor Vehicle Body Repair	Auto Collision Repair & Refinish	Motor Vehicle Body Repair	2014–2015
Oil Heat System Technician	Oil Heat System Technician	Oil Heat System Technician	

Trade	NSCC Program	NSAA TAC	Timeline (NSCC Program Review)
Power Engineer	Power Engineering Technology Process Operations – 4 th Class	Power Engineer	2015–2016
Plumber	Plumbing, Pipe Trades	Plumber	
Power Line Technician	Utility Line Worker	Power Line Technician	
Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Mechanic	Building Systems Technology: HVAC-R Refrigeration & Air Conditioning, Refrigeration & Air Conditioning – Geothermal	Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Mechanic	
Sheet Metal Worker	Sheet Metal Worker	Sheet Metal Worker	
Steamfitter/Pipefitter	Steamfitting/Pipefitting Pipe Trades	Steamfitter/Pipefitter	2015–2016
Truck & Transport Mechanic	Heavy Duty Equipment/ Truck & Transport (Certificate & Diploma)	Truck & Transport Mechanic/Heavy Duty Equipment Technician	
Welder	Welding Certified, Welding Diploma, Metal Fabrication/ Welding	Welder	Welder

Currently, the college is undertaking a program review of the Automobile Collision Repair and Refinish pre-employment program. NSCC and NSAA have worked collaboratively in the formation of a Motor Vehicle Body Repair TAC for this purpose. This effort has provided an opportunity through the TAC mechanism for NSAA and NSCC to work out the processes for program review by industry.

Atlantic

Under the auspices of the Atlantic Apprenticeship Harmonization Project of the Atlantic Workforce Partnership, the board recruits and appoints members representing Nova Scotia to Atlantic Trade Advisory Committees (ATACs). Each ATAC will consist of one employer, one employee, and one training provider representative from each Atlantic jurisdiction. When an ATAC is to be established, the board policy is that NSCC will recommend the training provider representative to the ATAC if the college provides training in the trade for which the ATAC has been created. ATACs are currently in place for the Bricklayer, Cook, Metal Fabricator (Fitter), and Welder trades.

Apprenticeship Technical Training

Apprenticeship technical training is that portion of the certification requirement in a designated trade in which the apprentice receives formal instruction, including theoretical aspects of the designated trade, that is designed to supplement skills acquired through work experience. Typically, apprentices complete four levels of training, taken in blocks of 6 to 8 weeks once a year, over the course of the apprenticeship.

NSCC and NSAA make a significant effort to plan each year's training schedule to accommodate the needs of employers and apprentices. A Training Sales Agreement is signed between NSCC and NSAA, setting out the conditions under which NSCC is to provide the training and NSAA is to communicate its needs, and giving the associated cost structure. Apprenticeship technical training is offered through NSCC for the following trades:

Automotive Service Technician (AST)	Machinist
AST (Service Station Mechanic)	Metal Fabricator (Fitter)
Boilermaker	Motor Vehicle Body Repairer
Bricklayer	Oil Heat System Technician
Carpenter	Plumber
Construction Electrician	Power Engineer
Cook	Powerline Technician
Gas Fitter	Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic
Heavy Duty Equipment Technician	Roofer
Industrial Electrician	Sheet Metal Worker
Industrial Mechanic (Millwright)	Steamfitter/Pipefitter
Instrumentation and Control Technician	Truck and Transport Mechanic
Ironworker (Reinforcing)	Welder
Ironworker (Structural/Ornamental)	

Credit Transfer

In addition to providing for the delivery of apprenticeship technical training, NSAA awards credit towards apprenticeship to NSCC graduates who have completed a pre-employment program in a designated trade area. The agency can do this because NSCC has incorporated the industry training standard for the trade into its program. The following NSCC programs receive transfer credit toward one or more apprenticeship trades. Programs are reviewed annually for eligible credit.

Automotive Collision Repair & Refinish Diploma	Horticulture & Landscape Technology Diploma
Automotive Service and Repair Certificate	Industrial Instrumentation Diploma
Bricklaying Masonry Certificate of Accomplishment	Industrial Mechanical Certificate
Building Systems Technician (HVAC&R) Diploma	Machining Diploma
Carpentry Certificate	Metal Fabrication Diploma
Carpentry Diploma	Oil Heat Systems Technician Certificate of Accomplishment
Cooking Certificate	Pipe Trades Diploma
Culinary Arts Diploma	Plumbing Certificate
Diesel Repair—Industrial and Marine Certificate	Power Engineering Technology Diploma
Electrical—Construction & Industrial Certificate	Process Operator—4th Class Power Engineer Certificate
Electrical—Construction & Industrial Diploma	Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Certificate
Electrical Technician (ELTN) Program	Refrigeration and Air Conditioning—Geothermal Certificate
Electro Mechanical Technician Diploma	Sheet Metal Certificate of Accomplishment
Electronic Engineering Technology Diploma	Steamfitting and Pipefitting Certificate
Gas Technician Certificate	Utility Line Work—Construction and Maintenance Certificate
Heavy Duty Equipment/Truck and Transport Repair Certificate	Welding—Certificate of Accomplishment
Heavy Duty Equipment/Truck and Transport Repair Diploma	Welding Diploma
Heritage Carpentry Diploma	

Industry Standards, Harmonization, and Training Delivery

Nova Scotia is an active participant on the Atlantic Apprenticeship Harmonization Project (AAHP). The goal of the project is to develop consistent processes across all four systems, common training requirements in 10 trades, and a shared Information Technology (IT) system. The trades selected for harmonization are: Bricklayer, Cook, Welder, Metal Fabricator (Fitter), Carpenter, Instrumentation and Control Technician, Construction Electrician, Industrial Electrician, Plumber, and Steamfitter/Pipefitter.

NSAA and NSCC are working collaboratively to develop an implementation plan for harmonized curriculum standards and examinations as they are finalized.

Flexibility and Innovation

NSCC and NSAA have been working with industry partners to identify flexible learning options that will allow apprentices to participate in training that is “close to home.” In addition to adding sections of technical training in the Yarmouth and Cumberland areas, part-time evening and weekend block training was offered for Carpenter, Automotive Service Technician, and Welder.

NSAA and NSCC are currently creating an innovative and flexible offering for Cook apprenticeship that will maximize the much-needed hands-on learning in block training while leveraging NSCC's Online Learning tools to minimize the apprentice's time away from the employer. In addition to this blended offering (blend of hands-on and online), employers can take advantage of shorter Cook technical training blocks that are either full-time or part-time (2 days/week).

Future technical training can happen in essentially any location in the province with the use of NSCC's new Mobile Learning Centre (MLC). NSCC and NSAA are currently looking at Truro as an ideal location to utilize the MLC for a “close to home” electrical training offering.

Academic Accommodations for Apprentices

Academic accommodations are available for apprentices with disabilities under the same policy and services that support all students at NSCC, as described at www.disabilityservices.nsc.ca. This accommodation process serves approximately 5 per cent of apprentices in technical training.

These services, provided through shared communication and the partnership between NSCC and NSAA, include

- **Opportunity to self-identify.** Apprentices are invited to self-identify a disability upon registration to an apprenticeship program, upon registration for apprenticeship technical training, or at any time during their training. When students identify a “special consideration” to NSAA, this information is shared with NSCC at least two weeks in advance of the training start date. The Disability Resource Facilitator then contacts the student, informs them of the services available, and begins to identify relevant supports. Academic accommodations take time to plan and implement, so early identification is key.
- **Collecting information.** Once an apprentice has identified a disability, they work with the Disability Resource Facilitator to provide and collect information about the impact of their

disability in the context of technical training, including

- their own experience
- review of previous academic accommodations the apprentice has effectively used
- documentation (such as Psych-Ed Assessment) from educational or medical professionals

This information is used to identify individualized academic accommodations, supports, and strategies for the apprentice in his/her training. If this information is not available in time to implement services for an upcoming or current training section, the services may be arranged on a trial basis during training while the information is being collected.

- **Academic accommodations.** The Disability Resource Facilitator will facilitate planning and implementation of academic accommodations with the student and the faculty. Common academic accommodations include test accommodations (e.g., extra time, reader), accessible instructional materials (e.g., electronic versions of texts), and technological solutions (e.g., digital recorder or text-to-speech software). Some academic accommodations can be implemented quite quickly but others take more time to access. This makes it important for apprentices to identify a disability and begin working with the Disability Resource Facilitator in advance of their training.
- **Advocacy services.** Disability Resource Facilitators can also work with apprentices to develop self-advocacy skills, identify and apply technologies and tools to support learning, explore tutoring options, troubleshoot issues in the classroom, practice test-taking strategies, and make requests for test accommodations on Red Seal Exams.

NSCC and NSAA have identified two challenges as having the most impact on apprentices with disabilities. While these challenges exist for students with disabilities in any post-secondary training, the scheduling and pace of apprenticeship technical training present unique challenges.

1. Although there are many reasons why apprentices may be reluctant to identify as having a disability, early identification is critical for effective planning and implementation of academic accommodations. Early identification is especially critical for apprenticeship technical training, which is of short duration and content is presented and evaluated on a tight schedule. Providing apprentices with timely, detailed, and relevant information and overcoming obstacles to self-identification is challenging.
2. Documentation of a disability and its impact in a learning environment is a critical part of academic accommodation planning. The documentation process can be initiated when an apprentice who has never been assessed or diagnosed identifies as having a disability, but information to plan for immediate academic accommodations is missing. Given the fast pace and high stakes of apprenticeship technical training, a lack of appropriate academic accommodations from the beginning of technical training can limit the apprentice's ability to participate successfully in the program.

Opportunities for Joint Promotion of Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship

Prior to the establishment of NSAA, NSCC had worked in partnership with the Apprenticeship Training Division on many fronts, including as founding sponsors of Techsploration, presenting partners of Skills Canada Nova Scotia, and hosts of the Apprenticeship Celebration Events. We will continue to collaborate on these initiatives and share our ideas going forward on how to enhance employer engagement in these efforts. We will strengthen our collaboration on labour market information, employer engagement, and career awareness and exploration initiatives.

Labour Market Information

NSCC has created a new website, careeringear.nsc.ca, which helps prospective students explore and identify their interests, values, and skills as they relate to a future career and post-secondary choices. The site also serves as a front for careers.novascotia.ca, the province's one-stop website for anything labour market related, which provides information on more than 300 occupations in Nova Scotia—job prospects, wages, education and training paths, and demographic profiles of people employed in the occupation.

The agency is in the process of hiring a senior labour market analyst who will provide NSAA and NSCC with timely, accurate, and relevant labour market research, policy analysis, and information in relation to the trades training system, including NSCC pre-apprenticeship programs. The agency is also working with Canmac Economics Limited to lay the groundwork for the development of a capacity-planning tool that will assist the agency and the college in planning the distribution of funding across the trades training system, to better meet labour market demand over time.

Employer Engagement

In October 2014, the agency held eight update events across the province, hosted by NSCC at the Kingstec, Lunenburg, Burr ridge, Waterfront, Marconi, Strait Area, Pictou and Truro campuses. In most cases campus principals, academic chairs, and apprenticeship instructors attended the events held in their area. The events provided an update on the progress of the agency and engaged participants in discussions about how to better engage industry in the trades training and certification system. Key themes coming out of the sessions include a need for cultural change in how society regards the skilled trades; recruitment and retention of youth; technical training; communication; system flexibility; and journey person support and recognition. NSAA and NSCC will work towards planning a regular series of these types of events to assist with the facilitation and coordination of our engagement with industry.

Career Exploration and Awareness

The agency funds summer employment opportunities in partnership with industry, and NSCC is an important partner in this work. The two current initiatives include Building Futures for Youth (BFY) in the construction sector and Automotive Test Drive in the motive power sector. The programs provide a combination of industry-based classroom safety instruction and on-the-job paid work experience in the trades for eligible grade 10 and 11 students of the public school system. The classroom instructional time is delivered at NSCC campuses across the province. Between the in-class components and the on-the-job training, the students earn 300 hours of apprenticeship credit and three high school co-op credits that can be used towards graduation. The agency is currently working with its partners, including the college, to improve the current model and expand opportunities in the remaining two trades sectors.

NSAA Marketing—NSCC Open House

In 2014, NSCC launched its inaugural college-wide Open House. The day provided learning, discovery, and engagement opportunities for attendees and NSCC employees. The 2015 Open House will be held on October 27. NSCC has invited NSAA to participate in this year's event and help the organizing committee identify how apprenticeship faculty and apprentices can best be showcased. The joint efforts will allow the college and the agency to promote apprenticeship training and direct-entry options for those wishing to work in one of the many designated trades.



Future Reports

The traditional academic year at NSCC ends in June. Apprenticeship Technical Training takes place throughout the year, but minimally in July and August. With this training schedule in mind, the board has determined that early fall provides the best occasion to provide the NSAA/ NSCC Stewardship Report on an annual basis. In future, it is expected that the report will assess the success of the committee structure and collaborative processes outlined above, explain progress made, and provide details at the trade level concerning specific program offerings that are new or being modified according to industry advice. The report will also highlight recommendations made by Trade Advisory Committees through the NSAA Board to NSCC's Board of Governors during that year, and report on successful reallocation of public funds across the trades training system as a result of our collective work.

The focus of the NSAA/NSCC relationship this year has been to define how we will build on past success and work together to achieve the new requirements as laid out in legislation. In 2015–2016, the agency will work with the college to ensure that industry's strategic role has influence across the trades training system, and to support the development of a system for the reallocation of funding as appropriate, the timely implementation of trade harmonization, and improvement in training delivery in select trades, including alternate delivery formats.

Sincerely submitted,

Don Bureaux, President NSCC

Marjorie Davison, CEO NSAA



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