

# **Campus Alberta Quality Council Mandate and Roles Document**

## **1. Mandate and Accountability**

### **Agency Mandate**

Established under section 108 of the *Post-secondary Learning Act (Act)*, the Campus Alberta Quality Council is an arms-length quality assurance agency that has been established to advance the quality of the post-secondary system in Alberta and is accountable to the Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education (Minister). The Council is an advisory body whose primary responsibility is to provide advice and recommendations to the Minister on applications from post-secondary institutions seeking to offer new degree programs in Alberta under the terms of the *Act* and the Programs of Study Regulation (91/2009). The Council also has a responsibility to review and monitor degree programs to ensure that they meet its expectations of quality.

### **Agency Accountability**

The Council is accountable to the Minister and reports to the Minister through its chair.

### **Minister's Accountability**

The Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education is accountable to the Legislature for the operation of the Council.

## **2. Duties and Responsibilities**

### **The Council:**

- has the powers and duties set out in section 109 of the *Act*. Among the most important responsibilities are its considerations of
  - the capacity of the post-secondary institution to deliver and sustain a high-quality program; and
  - the ability of specific degree programs to meet the standards and conditions that the Council has established under the provisions of the Programs of Study Regulation (91/2009).
- has the duties ascribed to it in the Regulation. Among the most important duties is
  - the obligation to establish minimum standards and conditions for institutions and degree programs.

In addition to fulfilling the responsibilities and duties specifically described in the *Act* and Regulation, the Council is responsible for

- making all reasonable efforts to ensure that the advice provided to the Minister is evidence-based.

- establishing subcommittees, task forces and working groups that support the mandate of, and that are accountable to, the Council. Currently, the following standing subcommittees have been established:
  - Proposal Review Standing Committee, and
  - Monitoring Standing Committee.
- actively engaging in discussions with a variety of stakeholders (e.g., the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer) to advance the quality of the post-secondary system in Alberta.
- through a process led by the chair, conducting a regular evaluation and review of the performance of the Council and its subcommittees with a view to improving effectiveness.
- providing an Annual Report to the Minister indicating the Council's major activities and accomplishments and the extent to which its planned activities and goals have been achieved.

With regard to internal communications, the Council's chair

- will meet regularly with the Minister and Ministry officials, such as the Deputy Minister and the Assistant Deputy Minister, Advanced Learning and Community Partnerships, to provide information on the work of the Council and to maintain open lines of communication. By the same token, the Ministry is committed to sharing relevant government policy with the Council.

With regard to external communications, the Council

- publishes a *Handbook on Quality Assessment and Assurance* (available on its website), designed primarily for post-secondary institutions as they seek to understand the work and expectations of the Council.
- maintains a public website (<http://www.caqc.gov.ab.ca>) as a tool to enhance its communication with stakeholders and members of the public.
- distributes its Annual Report widely to institutions within Alberta and to quality assurance agencies throughout Canada and the world.
- uses a policy regarding the release of information about its review processes that describes its responsibilities and those of its reviewers and of institutions.
- works closely, through its Secretariat, with Ministry communications personnel to determine how best to respond to media requests.

In terms of its corporate identity, the Council

- uses its logo on its written communications, website and publications.
- also uses the Ministry and/or Government of Alberta logo on its letterhead, as well as the phrase "Established by the *Post-secondary Learning Act*".

#### **The Minister:**

- is responsible for fulfilling the responsibilities specifically described in the *Act* and *Regulation*.
- appoints the members of the Council (including its chair).
- communicates to the Council any government policies, plans and directions affecting its work.
- reviews the operations and performance of the Council to ensure fulfillment of its mandate.
- provides the services of a Secretariat to provide professional and administrative support to the Council.

### **3. Recruitment, Appointment, Orientation, Remuneration and Evaluation of Council Members**

#### **Recruitment and Appointment**

The Council consists of 11 persons who are appointed by the Minister on the recommendation of a subcommittee of Council and whose normal term of office is three years. Members may be reappointed to a second term, should their performance be satisfactory. Senior administrators from an Alberta institution at the Dean level and above are normally not eligible to serve as Council members.

The Council's member and chair position descriptions enumerate desired competencies. The Council has developed a competency matrix that outlines the skills, experience and knowledge it requires as a collective. When a vacancy is identified, the matrix is used to identify competencies required of the new member.

When a vacancy for a member or for the chair is anticipated, the Deputy Minister invites presidents of post-secondary institutions, current Council members, and Innovation and Advanced Education division heads to encourage potential candidates to submit an application to the ADM, Advanced Learning and Community Partnerships division.

In the case of a vacancy for the chair, the Minister also invites MLAs to submit applications from potential candidates.

A subcommittee of Council, expressly established for the purpose, prepares its recommendation for the consideration of the Minister, who carries the sole responsibility for the selection of candidates.

Appointments to Council are made by Ministerial Order. In the case of the chair, the Minister will recommend the name of the successful candidate to Cabinet.

#### **Orientation and Ongoing Professional Development**

Newly appointed members of the Council participate in an orientation session that addresses their roles and responsibilities.

The Council's Code of Conduct, posted on its website, establishes the professional and ethical responsibilities of its members. This Code also applies to all members of the Council's committees, whether they are Council members or not.

In addition to the orientation and to the obligation to sign off on their agreement to the Code of Conduct, all members benefit from ongoing Council development initiatives throughout the year, and especially during the Council's annual retreat in September. In particular, the Council's SharePoint site is used to keep members aware of information relating to quality assurance.

## Remuneration

The Council chair and members are paid an honorarium in accordance with Schedule 1, Part A of the *Part-Time Committee Remuneration Order* (O.C. 466/2007), as amended, or any order made in substitution thereof. No further remuneration is paid to members. The Council chair and members are also entitled to be paid travel and living expenses in accordance with the Public Service Subsistence, Travel and Moving Expenses Regulation made by Ministerial Order, as amended, or any order made in substitution thereof, as though they were employees of the government.

## Member Evaluation

Prior to their reappointment, members are informally evaluated by the chair, and this informal evaluation is the basis for the chair's decision regarding whether to recommend to the Minister that the member be reappointed. The Council will work towards developing a more formal evaluation process in the future.

## 4. Administration

### Review of the Mandate and Roles Document

Subject to dissolution of the Council, this document is in effect for not more than three years from the time when it was last signed. It must be renewed or revised by the expiry date.

This document must be affirmed annually by the Minister and the Council chair, or on a change in either the Minister or the Council chair.

### Transparency

Copies of this document will be filed with the Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education and the Agency Governance Secretariat. In support of the principle of transparency, this document will also be available to the public on the Council's website.

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY  
PETER MAHAFFY

Interim Co-Chair  
Campus Alberta Quality Council

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY  
ART QUINNEY

Interim Co-Chair  
Campus Alberta Quality Council

Date

Oct. 10, 2014

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY  
DON SCOTT, Q.C.

Minister  
Innovation and Advanced Education

Date

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