

Program and Funding Approval Policy for Apprenticeship Classroom Instruction and Apprenticeship-related Education

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Legal Authority

This policy derives its legal authority from the following legislation and regulations:

- *Apprenticeship & Industry Training Act, Apprenticeship and Industry Training Administration Regulation*
- *Post-secondary Learning Act, Programs of Study Regulation*
- *Government Organization Act, Advanced Education Grants Regulation*
- *Private Vocational Training Act and Regulations*

Definitions

“Apprenticeship Education” means both formal instruction and on the job learning provided to registered apprentices.

“Classroom Instruction” means the academic and technical instruction provided in classrooms or labs at post-secondary institutions or alternative providers to registered apprentices as part of an apprenticeship education program.

“Pre-Apprenticeship Programs” means foundational and preparatory programs that provide pathways to apprenticeship education programs designated under the *Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act* for individuals who are not registered apprentices, but which may be recognized for credit towards an apprenticeship program.

“Certificate & Diploma Programs” means credit programs delivered by post-secondary institutions that may include some or all of apprenticeship classroom instruction or experiential learning, but which may be recognized for credit towards an apprenticeship education program

“Post-Certification Education” means classroom or lab education related to an individual’s trade certification.

“Seat Allocation” means determining classroom instructional seats at post-secondary institutions by institution, apprenticeship program, and period for registered apprentices.

Scope of Policy

This policy governs the delivery and funding of classroom instruction for registered apprentices in an apprenticeship education program designated under the *Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act*. This includes determining seat allocations to ensure consistent and transparent access to apprenticeship education. This policy also establishes guidelines for program approval and funding pre-apprenticeship programming.

This policy does not apply to:

- certificate or diploma credit programming delivered by public or private institutions;
- post-certification programs provided to individuals certified under the *Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act*;
- “Occupations” designated under the *Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act*; or
- the Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) and Career and Technology Studies (CTS) programming delivered by Alberta high schools.

Background/Context

Apprenticeship education is a multi-pathway, post-secondary program that intersperses classroom instruction with on-the-job learning through mentorship. Unlike post-secondary institutional programs, Advanced Education acts as the Registrar and administers apprenticeship programs designated under the *Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act*, including working with industry to establish and maintain program standards, determining delivery and funding of classroom instruction, and issuing credentials and certification upon completion.

As part of Alberta’s adult learning system, program approval and the provision of public funding for apprenticeship education aligns with the Adult Learning System Vision and Principles: accessibility, affordability, quality, accountability, and coordination. This policy ensures that apprenticeship classroom instruction capacity in the public system is maintained so that apprentices can progress and complete their program. This policy also clarifies program approvals and funding for pre-apprenticeship programs delivered by public post-secondary institutions and alternative providers.

Public post-secondary institutions have unique attributes that influence delivery of apprentice classroom instruction such as size and location of the institution, participating apprentices in the region, availability of facilities and equipment, population and demographic profile of the region, and availability of pre-apprenticeship programs that provide pathways into apprenticeship education. The Government of Alberta provides substantial investments in public post-secondary institutions to ensure affordable access to quality programming for all Albertans. Priority for funding and delivery of apprenticeship classroom instruction and pre-apprenticeship programs will first be given to public institutions before consideration is given to alternative providers. Alternative providers may be awarded contracts or grants to provide classroom instruction or pre-apprenticeship programming when demand exceeds the capacity of public institutions, or in cases where alternative providers demonstrate expertise in delivering specific programs of priority importance to the Alberta government, including to targeted populations.

Public Post-secondary Institutions

Public post-secondary institutions deliver apprenticeship classroom instruction on behalf of the Alberta government under the authority of the *Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act*. Institutions also offer apprenticeship-related programs in accordance with the *Post-secondary Learning Act*

Programs of Study Regulation, and/or the *Income and Employment Supports Act*, Training Provider Regulations. As a result, post-secondary institutions may receive public funding that subsidizes apprenticeship and apprenticeship-related programming through the Campus Alberta Grant, the Apprenticeship Technical Training Grant, or a formal agreement under the *Government Organization Act*, Advanced Education Grants Regulation. Under the authority of the *Post-secondary Learning Act*, Tuition Fee Regulation, public post-secondary institutions may also receive instructional fees paid by registered apprentices and tuition fees paid by post-secondary students.

1. Apprenticeship Classroom Instruction

The following section of this policy outlines requirements for the provision of public funding and classroom instruction seat allocations at public post-secondary institutions.

Program approval and funding decisions are influenced by many factors, including government budget allocations, number of registered apprentices requiring access to classroom instruction, labour market demand, and institutional and/or organizational capacity. Seats may not be available for every program, in every period, every session, or in every location in an academic year. Seat allocations have impacts on institutions such as hiring instructors or planning classroom and lab space utilization. Funding for seat allocation at public post-secondary institutions will be established before the academic year begins and issued regardless of actual enrollment to provide a level of certainty to educational providers' budgets. Delivery of apprenticeship classroom instruction and provision of funding must be approved by the Director, Apprenticeship Technical Training branch.

Formal Agreements

In accordance with Government of Alberta accountability measures, provision of funding for classroom instruction will occur through a grant agreement that complies with all government requirements. Grant agreements will also include requirements related to reporting on funds used.

Eligible Expenditures

Through the formal grant agreement between Advanced Education and the public institution, funding may be used to pay for expenditures such as program delivery, instructor salaries, student seats, leases, equipment, and implementation of course outline changes, or other apprenticeship education purposes upon request. Funding amounts must be used for the purpose for which they were issued.

Seat Allocation

Advanced Education, in consultation with institution staff, will allocate classroom instruction seats by institution, apprenticeship program, and period prior to the start of each academic year. Seat allocations will be based on attendance estimates prepared and provided by Advanced Education. Funding will be provided for all seats allocated.

Minimum Filled Seat Requirement

The allocation of classroom instructional seats for a specific apprenticeship program at an institution requires a minimum attendance of 36 learners per academic year. If attendance falls below that threshold, classroom instruction in that apprenticeship program will be considered for suspension at the institution. Allocation and suspension decisions may take into consideration a number of factors including, but not limited to: future program sustainability, delivery model, impact on apprentice completion rates, and instructor recruitment and retention. Program suspension may begin in the academic year following the year in which attendance requirements were not met.

Seat Adjustments

Classroom instruction seats may require adjustment throughout the academic year to accommodate unforeseen changes in demand in a specific region, apprenticeship program, or period. Advanced Education, in consultation with institution staff, will add, reassign, or cancel seats on a case-by-case basis.

Funding for Added Seats

Funding will be provided for each additional apprentice that attends classroom instruction. Funding will not be provided for seats that are unfilled.

Upfront, guaranteed funding may be given in order to offer additional seats, when existing capacity is maximized. Approval of upfront funding is at the discretion of the Director of the Apprenticeship Technical Training branch.

Funding for Reassigned Seats

No additional funding will be provided when seats are reassigned.

Funding for Cancelled Seats

Institutions will be required to refund money to Advanced Education for cancelled seats when the institution requests the cancellation due to inability to deliver the program. Institutions will not be required to refund money to Advanced Education for cancelled seats when Advanced Education agrees to cancellation due to low demand.

2. Pre-Apprenticeship Programming

The following section of this policy outlines requirements for the provision of public funding for pre-apprenticeship programs delivered by public post-secondary institutions.

Public post-secondary institutions may receive public funding for delivery of pre-apprenticeship programming approved by Advanced Education under the *Post-secondary Learning Act*, *Income and Employment Supports Act*, or the *Government Organization Act*, Advanced Education Grant Regulation. Institutions may also receive tuition and fees from students to cover a portion of program costs. Program approval and public funding for pre-apprenticeship programs must be approved by the assigned Statutory Director (Executive Director of Policy and Standards) under the *Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act*.

Formal Agreements

In accordance with Government of Alberta accountability measures, provision of funding for pre-apprenticeship programming will occur through a formal grant agreement that complies with all government requirements. Grant agreements will include requirements related to reporting on funds used.

Eligible Expenditures

Through formal agreement between Advanced Education and the institution, funding may be used to pay for expenditures such as program delivery, instructor salaries, spaces, leases, equipment, or other purposes upon request. Funding amounts must be used for the purpose for which they were issued.

Public funding may not be provided for programs that have not received approval under the legislation and regulations governing this policy. Programs may be subject to evaluation to determine effectiveness as pathways to apprenticeship or other post-secondary education and other measures of successful learner outcomes, and which may impact future program approval and public funding allocations.

Alternative Providers

Program approval and public funding may be provided for alternative providers of apprenticeship education and pre-apprenticeship programming, as required.

- Private Career Colleges are independent businesses that offer educational programming for students that must be licensed by government in accordance with the *Private Vocational Training Act* and Regulation. For the purposes of this policy, Private Career Colleges are those that provide apprenticeship classroom instruction for programs designated under the *Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act*.
- Labour organizations represent employees and engage with employers on behalf of their members. In some cases, labour organizations establish training facilities that may deliver pre-apprenticeship programming or training that is recognized for credit towards an apprenticeship program. For the purposes of this policy, labour organizations must represent employees engaged in work or training in professions for which there are apprenticeship education programs designated under the *Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act*.
- Private enterprises are for-profit businesses that employ people to provide products or services. For the purposes of this policy, the business must employ people engaged in work or training in professions for which there are apprenticeship education programs designated under the *Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act*.
- Community learning organizations are non-profit organizations that offer learning opportunities, and/or programs and services aimed at improving social conditions for specific populations or communities. For the purposes of this policy, community learning organizations are those that deliver programs related to apprenticeship education programs designated under the *Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act*.

1. Apprenticeship Classroom Instruction

The following section of this policy outlines requirements for the provision of public funding and classroom instruction seat allocations at alternative providers.

Apprenticeship classroom instruction may be approved for delivery and funding by alternative providers when demand exceeds capacity at public post-secondary institutions, as determined by Advanced Education. Program approval and provision of funding will occur through a formal agreement established through a competitive bid process that complies with the Government of Alberta accountability requirements. Funding will not be provided to Private Career Colleges, Private Enterprises, or Labour Organizations and associated training facilities that impose enrollment restrictions based on membership or employment status. Funding may be provided for approved classroom instruction delivered to specific populations, i.e. women, newcomers, or Indigenous Albertans, that face barriers to apprenticeship programming as requested by Advanced Education. Delivery of apprenticeship classroom instruction and provision of funding must be approved by the Director, Apprenticeship Technical Training branch.

Formal Agreements

In accordance with Government of Alberta accountability measures, provision of funding will occur through a formal agreement upon completion of a successful competitive bid process that complies with all Government of Alberta accountability requirements. Grant agreements will include requirements related to reporting on funds used.

Eligible Expenditures

Through formal agreement between Advanced Education and the alternative learning provider, funding may be used to pay for expenditures such as program delivery, instructor salaries, seats for students, leases, equipment, and other apprenticeship education purposes upon request. Funding amounts must be used for the purpose they were issued for.

Seat Allocation

Seats will be determined according to contract requirements. Contract terms will include provisions related to minimum filled seat requirements and unfilled seats.

2. Pre-Apprenticeship Programming

The following section of this policy governs funding for delivery of pre-apprenticeship programs provided by alternative providers.

Approved Programs

Programs and funding may be approved where demand exceeds capacity at public post-secondary institutions, as determined by Advanced Education. Programs and funding may also be approved in cases where alternative providers are deemed to have specific expertise in designing and delivering programs targeted to specific populations. Program approval and provision of funding will occur through a formal agreement and may be established through a competitive bid process. Funding will not be provided to Private Career Colleges, Private Enterprises, or Labour Organizations and associated training facilities that impose enrollment restrictions based on membership or employment status. Program approval and public funding for pre-apprenticeship programs delivered must be approved by the assigned Statutory Director (Executive Director of Policy and Standards) under the *Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act*.

Formal Agreements

In accordance with Government of Alberta accountability measures, provision of funding will occur through a formal agreement that complies with all government requirements. Grant agreements will include requirements related to reporting on funds used.

Eligible Expenditures

Through formal agreement between Advanced Education and the alternative learning provider, funding may be used to pay for expenditures such as program delivery, instructor salaries, seats for students, leases, equipment, and other purposes upon request. Funding amounts must be used for the purpose they were issued for.

Seat Allocation

Seats will be determined according to contract requirements. Contract terms will include provisions related to minimum filled seat requirements and unfilled seats.