

## Update

Ministry

**Describe: Basic Job Details****Position**

Position ID

Position Name (30 characters)

Current Class

Job Focus

Supervisory Level

Agency (ministry) code

Cost Centre

Program Code: (enter if required)

**Employee**

Employee Name (or Vacant)

**Organizational Structure**

Division, Branch/Unit

 Current organizational chart attached?

Supervisor's Position ID

Supervisor's Position Name (30 characters)

Supervisor's Current Class

**Design: Identify Job Duties and Value****Changes Since Last Reviewed**

Date yyyy-mm-dd

Responsibilities Added:

Responsibilities Removed:

**Job Purpose and Organizational Context**

Why the job exists:

unit ensures there is alignment and consistency in Advanced Education decision documents, supports collaboration across the department, and fosters capacity building and understanding related to the government decision-making process and priorities.

Members of the unit lead and participate in cross-ministry policy development and coordination discussions, providing capacity for a broad range of work in the department offering project leadership, strategic advice, and issues management. This includes leading and directing development of Advanced Education's materials for government and senior leadership transitions.

The Policy Advisor reports to the Manager of the Policy and Strategy Coordination unit. The Policy Advisor directly supports the development of policy options, as well as tools and processes to bolster horizontal and vertical coordination within the ministry; supports the development of packages for Cabinet and its policy and legislation committees; provides analysis and information to the department regarding discussions in the Legislative Assembly (using Hansard); contributes to ministry planning processes and development of strategic agenda setting documents; supports preparation for Executive Team and Minister/Deputy Minister meetings, as well as dedicated strategic planning sessions. The Policy Advisor participates in cross-functional teams, provides inputs to initiative tracking and reporting, and conducts research and analysis to support policy coordination and the implementation of ministry mandate and strategies (e.g., Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs), and drafts a wide variety of materials such as action request responses, briefing notes, Cabinet reports, presentations, and speaking notes; and supports the unit's work in advancing priority initiatives.

This position functions within the parameters of applicable government and department legislation, regulations, policies, directives, and procedures.

## **Responsibilities**

Job outcomes (4-6 core results), and for each outcome, 4-6 corresponding activities:

### **1. Conduct policy analysis and other research to inform decision-making**

- Researches and analyzes policy matters to inform working group discussions, leadership decisions, and minister-deputy minister meetings.
- Completes jurisdictional scanning of policy, legislation, programs, and other matters.
- Drafts analysis, decision tables, briefings notes, slide decks, and speaking notes regarding policy options.
- Summarizes and analyzes discussion of the Legislative Assembly and its committees for leadership and to inform work of the department.

### **2. Maintain and enhance vertical and horizontal policy coordination**

- Supports regular coordination meetings with Policy Coordination Office, the Minister's Office, and the Deputy Minister's Office
- Provides strategic advice to teams navigating policy decision making processes
- Facilitates discussions across policy and program areas in the ministry to enhance options development, decision making, and integration
- Contributes to facilitating the development of a culture of collaboration with teams across Advanced Education and with stakeholders across government
- Builds strong relationships across policy areas, program areas, and with senior leaders to support agenda alignment, clear communications, and trusted advice

### **3. Coordinate strategic policy and initiatives to ensure mandate, goals, and directions are met**

- Identifies opportunities to integrate implementation priorities into policy initiatives
- Supports common approaches to advancing and tracking implementation initiatives
- Supports internal working groups tasked with implementing strategic direction set out in ministry strategies
- Identifies issues, trends, opportunities and challenges that may affect the ministry's ability to implement initiatives and recommends options to address

### **4. Develop and coordinate Cabinet decision-making and initiative tracking products**

- Supports the completion, review, and submission of Cabinet packages

- Provides data and information for the development and maintenance of ministry planning and agenda setting documents
- Drafts updates and regular reporting on all Cabinet policy decisions
- Assists in maintaining the Initiative Tracking System
- Disseminates information regarding key upcoming decisions to relevant internal stakeholders

#### **5. Leadership team discussions are supported and issues are identified and managed**

- Provide the Minister, senior decision makers and officials within the department with timely, relevant and accurate updates related to ministry priorities
- Lead and support in the development of briefing notes, presentations, and speaking notes to support leadership discussions and decision making
- Anticipates issues that may arise and suggests strategies to mitigate
- Responds to issues that arise through the decision making process using appropriate mechanisms
- Contributes to the management of complex issues as they are identified
- Drafts correspondence to external stakeholders

### **Problem Solving**

Typical problems solved:

The Policy Advisor is called upon to solve a number of problems in the process of supporting policy coordination for the department.

There are often few established precedents available to guide efforts, with this position continually providing support to the manager for the development and enhancement of the province's adult learning system. This includes providing the manager and senior department and government officials with advice and support relating to strategies, policies, legislation and approaches that affect the system. To accomplish this, a wide variety of skills are required including strong strategic problem solving, consultation, collaboration and prioritization skills.

The position requires the ability to identify the fundamental connections between various policy initiatives and to the broader strategic intent expressed by government. The position must have the ability to draw on and analyze information from a variety of sources and perspectives to ensure comprehensive updates are available to the department.

Challenging situations typically handled by Policy Advisor include:

- Analyzing a policy question to determine pros and cons
- Working with colleagues from all divisions in the department, and colleagues from other departments to ensure accurate and complete information is available and synthesized to enhance policy coordination and policy development
- Cultivating and maintaining high trust relationships to ensure timely and effective information sharing
- Managing development of research and analysis activities to support decision options
- Translating discussion outcomes such as the identification of milestones, committee dates, and corresponding activities into tracking documents (including synthesizing visual representations)
- Helping to ensure strategic initiatives consider and integrate stakeholder input, department direction, political and fiscal realities, and operational feasibility
- Identifying opportunities for improved outcomes in the department

Types of guidance available for problem solving:

The Policy Advisor functions within the context of established statutes, policies, directives, and guidelines developed by Cabinet and Alberta Treasury Board and Finance, as well as the Minister and Deputy Minister. Key statutes and policies that set parameters and expectations for the work of the Policy Advisor include the Post-secondary Learning Act, Professional and Occupational Associations Registration Act, Financial Administration Act, Provincial Priorities Act, Government Organization Act, Public Service Act, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and various departmental statutes and regulations. These acts, policies and directives provide the mandate for the major outcomes expected of the Policy Coordination Unit. The director and manager determine work unit goals, objectives, and priorities and the manager assigns all responsibilities and projects to the Policy Advisor and is available for consultation and guidance.

The Policy Advisor draws on decision making processes as outlined by Executive Council, an internal decision making guide, the Advanced Education Style Guide, and the Action Request Process Manual. Direct guidance from the manager on maintenance of the Initiative Tracking System, other reporting tools and other general guidance is provided.

It is necessary for the position to take into consideration impacts on Advanced Education's initiatives, key priorities, and stakeholders, and ensure alignment with government priorities, established policies and legislation, and environmental factors.

Direct or indirect impacts of decisions:

The result of this work contributes to advancing policy coordination in Advanced Education and the Government of Alberta. Ongoing policy coordination and tracking identifies potential policy conflicts and opportunities and highlights key policy decision priorities. Participation in cross-ministry initiatives also impacts enhanced integration and consistency across broad policy issues at the GoA level. Development of resources impacts capacity for policy coordination.

Research and analysis provide evidence and rigor to the development of responses, briefings, presentations, reports and recommendations provided by the unit.

### Key Relationships

Major stakeholders and purpose of interactions:

The Policy Advisor requires excellent interpersonal skills to establish and maintain effective relationships with a wide variety of department and government representatives. Cooperation, collaboration, and teamwork are emphasized when achieving results.

#### Minister's Office

- Supports the Senior Policy Advisor and Manager in reporting on key ministry initiatives and providing updates directly to the Minister's Office, as well as providing policy advice and decision points for Minister's consideration.

#### Deputy Minister's Office

- Ongoing collaboration on agenda setting and briefing

#### Key Advanced Education staff

- Regular and ongoing relationship building with key ministry staff including the Policy Development branch and various program and policy areas as required to support Cabinet decisions, provide and exchange information, collaborate on projects and initiatives, and address cross-ministry issues and concerns  
- Direct correspondence with the Assistant Deputy Ministers' offices is required to maintain and report on key ministry initiatives

### Required Education, Experience and Technical Competencies

Education Level	Focus/Major	2nd Major/Minor if applicable	Designation
Bachelor's Degree (4 year)	Arts	Public Administration	

If other, specify:

Job-specific experience, technical competencies, certification and/or training:

At least two years of relevant experience.

The Policy Advisor requires comprehensive knowledge of the following:

- Government strategic priorities and policy directions as they relate to the department's mandate and initiatives;
- Government and department business plan goals, and strategic priorities and issues;

- Department programs, policies, legislation and regulations, and business functions;
- The policy development cycle and techniques for analyzing policy issues;
- Government decision-making processes related to policy approvals;
- Project planning and management techniques and principles;
- The adult learning system, including providers' roles and mandates, interests, accountability structures, and funding mechanisms;
- Current issues related to the advanced education system in Alberta;
- The client and stakeholder community impacted by the department's mandate and operations, including industry groups, relevant committees, advisory groups, and senior representatives; and
- Software tools used to carry out job responsibilities.

The Policy Advisor requires strong and demonstrated:

- Written communication skills, including the ability to communicate clearly and precisely as appropriate for the audience
- Systems thinking, analytical and research skills, and the ability to synthesize and interpret information from disparate sources;
- Conceptual, strategic, and critical thinking skills;
- The ability to recognize implications of emerging issues and creatively solve problems/develop options and recommendations for a response that is in support of business priorities and goals;
- Consultation/engagement and interpersonal skills and the ability to build collaborative environments;
- Organizational skills, including the ability to be agile, multi-task and prioritize multiple responsibilities to meet deadlines;
- Political sensitivity and professional judgment;
- Verbal communications skills, including the ability to present to groups and participate meaningfully in group discussions; and
- Commitment to developing networks, client service, confidentiality, discretion, tact, and innovation.

The Policy Advisor must be able to:

- Support and provide leadership when necessary on a wide array of tasks and projects related to policy coordination;
- Identify and assess related implications of trends and policy changes, and provide perspective, advice, and recommendations pertaining to sensitive issues;
- Develop and maintain collaborative working relationships with internal and external stakeholders based on strong interpersonal and communication skills;
- Maintain a strategic department and government focus while delivering results at the operational level;
- Function independently as well as contribute effectively within a team environment; and
- Demonstrate initiative, professional judgment, and flexibility.

A strong understanding of the policy cycle, culminating in a robust understanding of Cabinet decision making and machinery of government is required.

## Behavioral Competencies

Pick 4-5 representative behavioral competencies and their level.

Competency	Level					Level Definition	Examples of how this level best represents the job
	A	B	C	D	E		
Systems Thinking	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<p>Considers inter-relationships and emerging trends to attain goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeks insight on implications of different options</li> <li>• Analyzes long-term outcomes, focus on goals and values</li> <li>• Identifies unintended consequences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provides strategic advice that links together GOA priorities, platform commitments, priority initiatives, and the department's agenda</li> <li>- Applies a variety of strategic lenses to decision support materials, including a corporate perspective, a challenge function, with political acuity, and analyzing issues from different perspective</li> </ul>
Develop Networks	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<p>Works on maintaining close relations with all stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies key stakeholder relationships</li> <li>• Has contact with range of interested parties</li> <li>• Actively incorporates needs of a broader group</li> <li>• Influences others through communication techniques</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintains high-trust relationships with a number of internal stakeholders, understanding their needs while also providing relevant strategic advice</li> <li>- Understands and advances policy coordination as a corporate services that supports all ministry staff</li> </ul>
Agility	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<p>Works in a changing environment and takes initiative to change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes opportunities to improve work processes</li> <li>• Anticipates and adjusts behaviour to change</li> <li>• Remains optimistic, calm and composed in stressful situations</li> <li>• Seeks advice and support to change appropriately</li> <li>• Works creatively within guidelines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Adjusts to rapid and frequent changes in direction</li> <li>-Completes high quality policy products in short time-frames based on changing expectations</li> <li>-Adapts quickly to new priorities</li> </ul>
Drive for Results	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<p>Works to exceed goals and partner with others to achieve objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans based on past experience</li> <li>• Holds self and others responsible for results</li> <li>• Partners with groups to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Proactively keeps up-to-date on ministry activities related to initiative advancement and brings forward ideas for materials to support ongoing work as needs evolve</li> </ul>

		achieve outcomes • Aims to exceed expectations	- Identifies ways to continuously improve the Policy Coordination function as a corporate service that delivers on expectations of leadership and service requirements for policy staff
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**Benchmarks**

List 1-2 potential comparable Government of Alberta: [Benchmark](#)

**Assign**

The signatures below indicate that all parties have read and agree that the job description accurately reflects the work assigned and required in the organization.

Employee Name	Date yyyy-mm-dd	Employee Signature
Supervisor / Manager Name	Date yyyy-mm-dd	Supervisor / Manager Signature
Director / Executive Director Name	Date yyyy-mm-dd	Director / Executive Director Signature
ADM Name	Date yyyy-mm-dd	ADM Signature