

Update

Ministry

Advanced Education

Describe: Basic Job Details

Position

Position ID

[Redacted]

Position Name (30 characters)

Senior Policy Advisor

Current Class

Program Services 4

Job Focus

Policy

Supervisory Level

00 - No Supervision

Agency (ministry) code

[Redacted]

Cost Centre

[Redacted]

Program Code: (enter if required)

[Redacted]

Employee

Employee Name (or Vacant)

[Redacted]

Organizational Structure

Division, Branch/Unit

PCCSA/SFS/OPF

☒ Current organizational chart attached?

Supervisor's Position ID

[Redacted]

Supervisor's Position Name (30 characters)

[Redacted]

Supervisor's Current Class

Manager (Zone 2)

Design: Identify Job Duties and Value

Changes Since Last Reviewed

Date yyyy-mm-dd

2024-10-29

Responsibilities Added:

None.

Responsibilities Removed:

None.

Job Purpose and Organizational Context

Why the job exists:

This position provides a leadership role and advanced operational policy work that span the core functions across the full provincial operational policy development, review, evaluation, and implementation cycle: from issues identification, data and policy analyses, internal and external stakeholder consultations to development of options for government consideration. This position guides team staff across Student

Financial Services through research, analysis, and options development. The advisor participates in assessing the potential impact from policy and program changes on post secondary learners, IT systems, budget allocations, and the legal framework governing Student Financial Services. The advisor provides policy development expertise and guidance to Student Financial Services in the development of operational policy to sustain alignment with strategic program policy and broader corporate strategic and operation and participates in the development and implementation of their resolution as well as the evaluation of post implementation. This position serves as acting Manager when required.

The Advisor is a key liaison with corporate and ministry policy business units, other ministries (e.g. Community and Social Services, Education, Labour, Service Alberta, Indigenous Relations etc.) and external stakeholder's groups (i.e. post secondary institutions, student organizations, other provinces, and Canada Student Finance Assistance Program etc.)

This position functions within the parameters of applicable Government and Ministry legislation, regulations, policies, directives and guidelines.

Responsibilities

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

Plan, lead, and report on projects related to development of policy options and/or strategy frameworks to support the achievement of Branch and ministry goals and priorities.

- Develop project Terms of Reference, associated project work plan, and staff and budget resources requirements.
- Coordinate the engagement of consultants/contracted resources as needed.
- Supervises, coaches and mentors project members and/or consultants to ensure accurate and timely project completion, as required by each assigned project, to accomplish expected outcomes.
- Engage the participation of other ministry units and/or other ministries, other provinces and the Canada Student Financial Assistance Program)
- Review project deliverables and make recommendations for approval.
- Evaluate projects and apply lessons learned to future projects or process improvements.
- Identify information/data gaps or inconsistencies, and work with specific units in the branch, division, ministry and the Canada Student Financial Assistance Program to establish baseline performance data for existing policies under review and performance measures for changes to policies in order to measure impacts of policy changes over time.
- Delegates responsibilities to unit staff as needed and develops recommendations for Student Financial Services senior leadership team related to policies.
- Establishes and maintains effective working relationships with branch, division and department staff and to gather materials for policy development and interpretation and to ensure Student Financial Services Senior leadership team have appropriate information to make strategic and policy decisions.

Lead the development of future program policy options for student aid programing, including loans, grants, scholarships, other awards, and school and program designation.

- Guide collaborative policy activities with the Student Financial Services Branch, other ministry units and branches, other relevant GOA ministries, and federal-provincial-territorial working groups and committees as required
- Lead environment scanning activities to develop and maintain a comprehensive base of program and policy information, track activities in other jurisdictions, and identify new and emerging issues.
- Interpret and evaluate courses of actions assessing impacts on government, stakeholders and clients,
- Develop options and recommendation for consideration by senior leadership teams, including supporting the identification of financial impacts, service delivery impact, regulatory impacts and IT system impacts that could result from implementing policy changes.
- Bring forward operational policy issues and consideration for inclusion into strategic policy directions.
- Participate in the development of required policy documents, including briefing notes, presentations, Cabinet Reports and all policy related communications materials.
- Participate and provides expert advice and guidance when responding to complex policy questions from external stakeholders.
- Provides direction to branch staff in the preparation of correspondence and ministerial documents.

Lead internal and external engagement and consultation activities related to program and policy development for Student Financial Services.

- Establish and maintain relationships with staff in other ministries where program policies related to post-secondary student funding (i.e. Assisted Living and Social Services, Education and Childcare, Indigenous Relations, etc.) .
- Represent Student Financial Services policy perspectives to cross-ministry initiatives (e.g. Financial Literacy Initiatives) and reflect other ministry's perspectives and input to inform Student Financial Services policy option development.
- Collaborate with other areas of the ministry to plan and execute ministry engagement and stakeholder consultation activities to ensure alignment and coordination.
- Lead stakeholder dialogue sessions to gain input on policy options and to reflect the ministry's policy perspectives in relation to Student Financial Services programing.
- Liaise with corporate and divisional (e.g. Foundational Learning) policy units to align Student Financial Services strategic policy with broader ministry and government policy.

Provide expertise and guidance to operational policy development for Student Financial Services programing to foster alignment with strategic policy

- Chair and co-lead Operational Policy Committee and provide necessary supports to co-chairs acting as co-chair when required, following up on meeting outcomes, and participating on any subgroups or working committees as required.
- Plays a leading role in leading and supporting the development of annual Operational Policy Manual, including gathering data and information, analyzing legislative and regulatory impact, writing and editing draft documents, as well as supporting processes to obtain necessary approvals.
- Support Student Financial Services in the development of operational communication and training materials to ensure alignment with approved operational policies.
- Provide perspectives and advice to operational policy committee to ensure alignment with strategic policy directions.
- Mentor and coach operational policy committee members to draft and present Decision Requests for approval to the Student Financial Services Senior Leadership team.

Provide policy information, recommendations, and advice to senior leaders to support informed planning and decision-making.

- Ensure the manager, director and other senior leaders are informed of relevant activities, and best practices in other ministries levels of government or other jurisdictions.
- Develop briefing notes, policy position papers, presentations or other documents that disseminate key information and support decision-making processes with internal staff and senior leaders delivery of presentations to GOA and other stakeholder groups is also included.
- Provide ministry representatives with consolidated information on emerging trends and issues with potential to impact Student Financial Services programs and ensure managers are informed of activities in other divisions, ministries and governments that affect program policies.
- Develop policy position statements and responses to internal and external requests for information, such as Action Requests, session briefings, student and post secondary institutions inquiries.
- Support development of key messages, policy position statements, and program communications in collaboration with communications, staff within division other divisions, ministries and authorities (i.e. development of session Briefing Notes, Q&A documents, speaking notes, etc.)

Support the manager and Operational Policy and Finance director in policy and research projects and working groups at the federal-provincial-territorial, cross-divisional and cross-ministry levels to ensure Student Financial Services position is represented.

- Participate on intergovernmental policy working groups-committees as required, by phone or face to face.
- Review work plans, policy documents, research reports, briefing notes, or other documents and provide feedback.
- Assist the manager and director on research project in which Alberta is participating/leading.
- Maintain awareness of national and provincial activities related to Student Financial Services activities,

including program or policy changes or emerging trends and issues.

Support the manager and director in achieving the mandate and goals of the sector, ministry and GOA.

- Collaborate with Foresight, Analytics and Research Team on surveys and other data collection projects that inform policy decisions, and provide input into annual research agenda and a longer-term evaluation framework.
- Serve as acting manger as needed.
- Develop and present project status updates to management and senior ministry staff, raising awareness to key decision makers-points and emerging priorities.
- Participate in units and branch activities, including units' development processes, and provide support to units' colleagues to ensure completion of priorities as required.
- Participate in ministry committees, teams, and working groups as required, providing branch program perspectives and expertise to support thoroughness and consistency in policy and program development.
- Collaborate with branch staff to ensure coordination and integration of activities and promote collaboration within the division and ministry.
- Develop recommendations to support continual improvement of branch functions and maintain awareness of associated processes, tools and best practices.
- Remain current and informed of ministry's issues, proactively recommending review and evaluation of policies and programs, and develop related recommendation in consultation with Post-Secondary Policy and Strategy, Regulatory Support Services, other ministry, divisional representatives etc.

Problem Solving

Typical problems solved:

- Provides comprehensive services relating to development of policy recommendation for a wide array of Student Financial Services programs (project management, consultation and stakeholder engagement, policy analysis, policy recommendations) to ensure effective policy and program delivery outcomes. Delivery of program must be supported by high quality, evidence-based policy decisions. The impact of recommendations made by the advisor can be significant, influencing the direction, design and implementation of current and future student aid programs. Policy and program changes impact both public and private post-secondary institutions, post-secondary students and potentially other programs and strategies (i.e. Canada Student Financial Assistance Program, Alberta 2030 etc.) There is an expectation that all policy recommendations provided by the Advisor are substantiated, comprehensible, and reliable.
- Lead policy projects (i.e. develops and monitors project plans and reports on their status) based on general direction and guidance provided by the manager. Projects have specific priorities that must be addressed within established timelines and processes.
- Maintain awareness of multiple input and issues that might impact project progress. Issues to examine can come from a variety of sources (i.e. Minister request, emerging trend identified by Advisor or others, recommendations by Ombudsman office, gap in service provision, or expressed stakeholder/client need)
- Maintain a broad view of the ministry's strategic priorities, short- and long-term impacts to funding programs, stakeholder considerations, and the evidence gained through research.
- Remain apprised of trends, issues, and valid recommendations to present to branch, division and ministry staff.
- Maintain a positive, strong and sound relationships with a variety of internal Ministry staff and external stakeholders and delivery partners.
- Expert guidance is provided to inform operational policy development.
- Represent Student Financial Services policy perspectives to the development of corporate policy and policy development lead by other ministries.
- Provide analysis to support engagement in Federal Provincial and Territorial initiatives.
- Must be tactful, discreet and has sound judgement in a variety of situations, confidentiality of government and client information must be maintained at all times.
- Apply effective and creative communication skills in order to articulate key issues, explain critical analysis, and recommend potential policy options.
- Advisor is delegated considerable independence in working within the ministry, across ministries ad with other stakeholders in according with division and ministry's plans, key messages and priorities.

Types of guidance available for problem solving:

Problem-solving is guided by the existing GoA policy and legislation, department priorities and the Branch operational plan. Federal and provincial student funding program requirements also shape problem-solving. Within this framework, the incumbent assesses root issues, integrates information on multiple factors and assesses solutions to prepare a response or recommendation to the management team; this draws application of subject-matter knowledge, analytical and critical thinking skills, and creativity to develop a solution that considers near and longer-term impacts.

The incumbent consults internal and/or external stakeholder groups to resolve emerging policy issues across a variety of topics. Issues with potential to significantly impact the branch or department are discussed with Branch Directors and ED. There is independence to determine the path forward to solve problems. The incumbent applies a high level of political acumen to problem-solving and in the execution of all position responsibilities.

Direct or indirect impacts of decisions:

The Advisor exercises significant independent decision-making and problem-solving authority on behalf of the manager and Director to resolve issues related to the branch's responsibilities. This position supports the coordination of a broad range of responsibilities, working with minimal supervision in a high-paced, demanding and diverse environment and interacting significantly with senior branch and division representatives.

Must be able to solve problems, think critically and make decisions under the pressure of tight time constraints. Advisor must justify decisions and ensure alignment with government direction, protocols and precedents. Matters with potential for significant impact on business area operations, resource allocation, planning documents, or branch functions are reviewed with the manager and Operational Policy and Finance Director, who are available for guidance with dealing with particularly sensitive issues or situations.

Key Relationships

Major stakeholders and purpose of interactions:

- Student Financial Services staff: provide functional leadership and coaching, collaborate on projects, resolve issues as needed prior to involvement of the manager, lead specific policy initiatives.
- Staff across ministry: share information, gather input and provide advise and guidance as needed on program, operational or strategic policy, provide policy interpretations and advice etc.
- Manager, director and Executive Director: daily contact to receive overall direction, provide reports, briefings, options and recommendations related to policy, program delivery and legislation, as well as notify of issues, decisions and recommendations as well as to facilitate information flow among branch Directors and ED.
- Assistant Deputy Minister's Office: weekly/monthly to manage updates, briefings and present findings and recommendations as well as receive approvals for Operational Policy Manual.
- Post-Secondary Policy and Strategy Staff: works as a liaison among Student Financial Services Branch and Post-Secondary Policy and Strategy team.
- Canada Student Financial Assistance Program, other provincial/Territories representatives, staff from other departments/other levels of government: weekly contact to exchange information about programs, policies or procedures.
- External Stakeholders - As needed contact with post-secondary institution staff and student organization representatives, to share information and gather input.

Required Education, Experience and Technical Competencies

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

If other, specify:

Education and Experience • Undergraduate degree in related field plus • Minimum four years of related ex

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

The Senior Policy Advisor requires greater breadth of knowledge and understanding of:

- Theoretical and practical knowledge of the policy development process.
- The Government of Alberta and ministry policy development and approval frameworks.
- The Government of Alberta policy priorities and perspective related to Student Financial Services.
- Comprehensive and complex student funding program, including AE's student aid programming areas, as well as funding provided by Assisted Living and Social Services, Jobs, Economy, Trade and Immigration, etc.) and the Canada Student Financial Assistance Program.
- Theoretical and applied knowledge of research methodologies, data analysis, and public policy analysis.
- Ministry, division and branch goals, objectives and strategies.
- Alberta Post-secondary system, policies and issues.
- FOIP and how it applies to various policy research methods and communications.
- Practical and demonstrated knowledge and understanding of berried, vulnerable, marginalized, and diverse populations.
- Federal/provincial and provincial/provincial relations experience, and contract development.
- Branch and division organizational structure, mandate, and programs, including familiarity with student aid programs.
- Relevant Ministry, division and branch business plan goals, objectives and strategies including alignments to the branch and how and when to apply this knowledge.
- Applicable acts and related legislation and regulations, including *Student Financial Assistance Act*, *Alberta Heritage Scholarship Act*, *Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Recognition Act*, *Canada Student Loans Act*, *Private Vocational Schools Act*, and *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
- Applicable Ministry and government policies, procedures and guidelines.
- Automated systems and software tools used to carry out responsibilities (i.e. Microsoft Outlook, Work, Excel, Power Point, ARTS, the Internet, and web-based programs).

Technical Competencies, certification and/or training

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- The Government of Alberta and ministry policy development and approval frameworks.
- The Government of Alberta policy priorities and perspective related to Student Financial Services.
- Comprehensive and complex student funding program, including AE's student aid programming areas, as well as funding provided by Alberta Labour, related Community and Social Services funding and the Canada Student Financial Assistance Program.
- Theoretical and applied knowledge of research methodologies, data analysis, and public policy analysis.
- Ministry, division and branch goals, objectives and strategies.
- Alberta Post-secondary system, policies and issues.
- FOIP and how it applies to various policy research methods and communications.
- Practical and demonstrated knowledge and understanding of berried, vulnerable, marginalized, and diverse populations.
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- Applicable Ministry and government policies, procedures and guidelines.
- Automated systems and software tools used to carry out responsibilities (i.e. Microsoft Outlook, Work, Excel, Power Point, ARTS, the Internet, and web-based programs).
- Organizational and time management skills to constantly prioritize activities and function effectively in a busy and high volume deadline driven environment.

- Advanced analytical skills to assess accuracy and reliability of data and information.
- Ability to analyze and synthesize complex information drawn from disparate sources, to make recommendations based on finding, and present the information in a variety of formats to various audiences in succinct and effective manner.
- Interpersonal skills to develop, maintain and utilize important relationships to delegate responsibilities and accomplish tasks.
- Consultative and conflict resolution skills, including ability to handle and address sensitive and/or controversial situations and negotiate agreements and commitment to action for varied processes.
- Leadership skills to manage issues and resources and provide direction and guidance to staff throughout the branch.
- Research and problem-solving skills to gather required information, make decisions and develop recommendations.
- Project planning and management skills to adapt to changing priorities and complex information and issues.
- Commitment to confidentiality, tact, diplomacy and collaborative teamwork.

The Senior Policy Advisor must be able to:

- Manage complex information and assignments within short time frames.
- Consult and persuade to bring opinions together for consensus.
- Make decisions on sensitive, confidential issues requiring immediate attention independently and in support of the Student Services Director.
- Adapt to changing priorities and demands of high-volume workload.
- Demonstrate sensitivity to the political environment; proactively identify trends, concerns, and issues; and develop associated solutions and recommendations.
- Function independently as well as lead and contribute within a team environment.
- Demonstrate initiative, sound judgment and creativity.

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 type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<p>Takes a long-term view towards organization's objectives and how to achieve them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes holistic long-term view of challenges and opportunities • Anticipates outcomes and potential impacts, seeks stakeholder perspectives • Works towards actions and plans aligned with APS values • Works with others to identify areas for collaboration 	<p>Considers multiple inter-relationships; seeks opportunities to collaborate with subject-matter-experts across the branch to integrate complete and accurate information to address issues; anticipates outcomes and potential impacts of different paths; considers longer-term opportunities and risks prior to presenting recommendations.</p>

Creative Problem Solving	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<p>Engages the community and resources at hand to address issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages perspective to seek root causes • Finds ways to improve complex systems • Employs resources from other areas to solve problems • Engages others and encourages debate and idea generation to solve problems while addressing risks 	Proactively engages relevant stakeholders to scope and solve issues and find the best solutions; collects information from multiple areas and uses it to assess issues and determine solutions.
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"> • Takes opportunities to improve work processes • Anticipates and adjusts behaviour to change • Remains optimistic, calm and composed in stressful situations • Seeks advice and support to change appropriately • Works creatively within guidelines 	Adapts communication to meet the needs of specific stakeholder groups; challenges the norm when necessary; proactively anticipates and adapts to shifting priorities and tight timelines and adjusts plans accordingly.
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"> • Identifies key stakeholder relationships • Has contact with range of interested parties • Actively incorporates needs of a broader group • Influences others through communication techniques 	Identifies key contacts specific to each project; builds trust by being open to different perspectives; considers how change will impact outreach, awareness and marketing materials and content and engages program content experts in determining the path forward; communicates regularly with stakeholders and sustain working relationships.

Benchmarks

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

024PS10 - Policy Advisor

024PS60 - Senior Planning Officer

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