Update

Ministry

Education

Describe: Basic Job Details

Position

Position ID

Position Name (200 character maximum)

Online Assessment Specialist

Current Class

Education 1

Job Focus

Operations/Program

Supervisory Level

01 - Yes Supervisory

Agency (ministry) code

Cost Centre

Program Code: (enter if required)

Employee

Employee Name (or Vacant)

Organizational Structure

Division, Branch/Unit

System Excellence, Exam Administration

☑ Current organizational chart attached?

Supervisor's Position ID

Supervisor's Position Name (30 characters)

Supervisor's Current Class

Manager (Zone 2)

Design: Identify Job Duties and Value

Changes Since Last Reviewed

Date yyyy-mm-dd

Responsibilities Added:

Since the last update, additional responsibilities have been introduced. With the licensing of the Digital Assessment Platform (DAP) complete and optional implementation nearing completion, the focus has shifted from initial setup to optimization and ongoing enhancements. Moving forward, most provincial assessments will be delivered through this platform, requiring continuous updates and providing support to school authorities as they administer provincial assessments using the platform.

Responsibilities Removed:

Quest A+, the SLA Application, and related tools such as Exam Builder have been decommissioned and are no longer part of this role. Responsibilities related to licensing a new assessment platform have also been removed.

Job Purpose and Organizational Context

Why the job exists:

Reporting to the Manager, Online Assessment, the Online Assessment Specialist plays a vital role in delivering and continuously improving Alberta's provincial assessment programs in an increasingly digital environment. This position ensures operational excellence and protects the integrity of large-scale assessments while driving the transition to innovative, technology-based solutions. By combining technical expertise with pedagogical insight, the role supports the modernization of assessment practices aligned with Alberta Education and Childcare's commitment to fairness, accessibility, and quality in student evaluation.

As part of the Provincial Assessment Sector, this role operates within a complex organizational context that involves collaboration across multiple internal teams and external partners. The position works closely with technology providers, such as Vretta, and engages with school authorities, educators, and other stakeholders to ensure the DAP is reliable, secure, and user-friendly. Core responsibilities include managing quality assurance processes, troubleshooting technical issues, and providing timely support to ensure smooth exam administration across diverse educational settings, including international schools.

The scale of operations is substantial given that the Assessment Sector administers over 1.4 million exams annually, with as many as 60,000 students writing simultaneously. The position must be available on call to assist schools during exam administration and possess expert-level knowledge to provide accurate and rapid responses.

This position also plays a strategic role in driving business transformation initiatives. As Alberta Education and Childcare advances toward a digital-first approach, the role provides leadership in designing workflows, systems, and practices that improve efficiency and enhance the user experience. Responsibilities include analyzing existing processes, recommending improvements, and championing change while ensuring business continuity.

The role requires a forward-thinking mindset to explore emerging technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), and evaluate their potential to enrich assessment design, delivery, and data analysis. Building capacity among staff and stakeholders to effectively use these tools is a key part of this mandate.

Beyond technical and operational duties, the position emphasizes relationship-building and stakeholder engagement. By fostering trust and collaboration, the role ensures school authorities, teachers, parents, and students receive clear guidance and support in using the DAP. Through presentations, training sessions, and responsive client service, the position promotes best practices and confidence in Alberta's assessment programs. Ultimately, this role supports Alberta Education and Childcare's vision of delivering high-quality, equitable, and innovative assessments that meet the needs of learners and the expectations of a modern education system.

Responsibilities

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

Operational excellence is required to maintain the quality and integrity of existing provincial assessment programs, including digital assessment.

• Develop and maintain user guides, help documentation, and standardized email templates to support use of the DAP.
• Collaborate with Provincial Assessment Sector teams to ensure the DAP is fully operational before each large-scale administration, including reviewing critical assessment settings and conducting user acceptance testing (UAT).
• Coordinate timely structural reviews of digital exams with the Vretta team to uphold quality standards.
• Perform quality assurance checks and provide sign-offs on the DAP.

- Assist Exam Leads and Desktop Publishers with exam authoring tasks, including templates, parameters, and reporting requirements.
- Act as liaison between the Vretta support team and Assessment Sector program areas to ensure digital exam production remains on schedule.

Problem Solving

Typical problems solved:

- **System Readiness and Quality Assurance:** Diagnose and resolve configuration issues (e.g., exam settings, access controls, item authoring) identified during UAT or pre-administration checks.
- **Operational Incident Management:** Identify, reproduce, and triage platform malfunctions (e.g., login failures, latency, device/browser compatibility, response submission errors), implement workarounds, and escalate to the Vretta support team or leadership as required.
- **Authoring & Publishing:** Support exam authoring workflows (framework setup, item bank parameters, metadata alignment, sign-offs), resolve content formatting and accessibility issues, and ensure accurate deployment of practice, field test, and operational exams.
- **Client Support:** Provide timely guidance to school authorities on administration procedures, deliver demos and webinars, assist with accommodations, and troubleshoot during live administrations.
- **AI Innovation:** Explore opportunities for AI integration (e.g., prompt engineering, item generation assistance, workflow automation, support tools), assess risks (bias, privacy, quality), and prototype solutions with internal teams and external vendors.

Types of guidance available for problem solving:

- **Policies and Guidelines:** Develop and maintain provincial assessment administration manuals and online assessment procedures.
- **Technical Documentation:** Prepare and update platform user guides, vendor release notes, configuration checklists, UAT scripts, and QA sign-off criteria.
- **Training and Communities of Practice:** Engage with schools and authorities to address both immediate and recurring issues; deliver internal training (including AI and prompt engineering); maintain knowledge bases; and capture lessons learned from marking sessions and exam administrations.

Direct or indirect impacts of decisions:

- **Exam Integrity and Fairness (Direct):** Decisions on settings, quality assurance sign-offs, and incident response directly influence validity, reliability, accessibility, and equitable student experiences.
- **Operational Continuity (Direct):** Choices around prioritizing fixes, scheduling releases, and coordinating with partners affect readiness for large-scale exam administrations.
- **Stakeholder Confidence (Indirect):** The quality of guidance and client support shapes trust among school authorities, teachers, parents, and students, influencing adoption and cooperation.
- **Resource Efficiency and Cost (Indirect):** Streamlined processes and effective issue resolution reduce rework, support demands, and operational expenditures.
- **Compliance and Risk (Direct/Indirect):** Decisions related to data handling, accessibility, and AI use impact compliance with policies and privacy requirements while mitigating risk.
- **Continuous Improvement (Indirect):** Recommendations for platform enhancements and business transformation accelerate modernization and improve user experience over time.

Key Relationships

Major stakeholders and purpose of interactions:

- Director, Exam Administration: To collaboratively ensure operational needs are met and to address emergent issues (internal or external).
- Manager, Online Assessment: Provides strategic direction, prioritizes initiatives, and approves key decisions related to digital assessment workflows and platform enhancements.
- Exam Leads and Desktop Publishers: Collaborate on exam authoring, framework setup, and sign-offs to ensure content accuracy, accessibility, and readiness for deployment.
- Vretta Team (Vendor) Coordinate technical reviews, resolve platform issues, and implement system updates or enhancements to maintain operational integrity.
- Technology & Innovation (T&I): Partner on system integrations, incident resolution, and AI development

initiatives to support modernization and innovation.

- **Provincial Assessment Sector Directors:** To coordinate and provide support before, during, and after exam marking sessions.
- **School Authorities and Administrators:** Provide guidance on administration procedures, troubleshoot technical issues, and build capacity for digital assessment adoption.
- **Teachers and Classroom Staff:** Support understanding of platform functionality, best practices, and integration of digital assessments into classroom instruction.
- **Parents and Students:** Respond to inquiries regarding device requirements, practice tests, and accommodations to ensure equitable access and confidence in the system.
- **External Partners and AI Developers:** Explore and implement AI-driven solutions to enhance assessment design, delivery, and support tools.

Required Education, Experience and Technical Competencies

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

If other, specify:

Bachelor's degree required. Education degree an asset.

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

Training or Experience:
- Experience with web technologies, digital content standards, digital publishing tools, user interface design principles, and accessibility considerations for students with accommodations.

Key Knowledge and Skills:
- Advanced communication skills, verbal, non-verbal and written, with a variety of audiences.
- Effective interpersonal skills including problem-solving, decision-making, conflict resolution and mediation.
- Ability to manage multiple projects and priorities.
- Ability to work with cross-functional teams building linkages with diverse stakeholders.
- Ability to liaise with sector staff, as well as form strong and cooperative working relationships with staff in other Department areas.
- Organization and time management skills.
- Advanced facilitation skills.
- Knowledge of applicable department policies and standards, guidelines and processes.
- Knowledge of best practices, research and delivery options for online assessment services.
- Detailed knowledge of online assessment design, strategic directions and priorities.
- Knowledge of related legislation and frameworks (e.g., Education Act, Provincial Assessment Directive; Guide to Education; POPA).
- Broad knowledge of information technology trends, emerging technology and best practices.
- Knowledge of related structures and policies of school authorities.
- Ability to work innovatively and creatively to leverage technology.
- Broad understanding of infrastructure, communication protocols, standards, Department technology tools.
- Strong knowledge of Microsoft Office and other M365 tools such as Teams and SharePoint for use in analytics, communication, and enhancement of workplace processes.
- Knowledge and experience with change management processes.
- Awareness and understanding of current and emerging test administration related environmental factors that threaten test security and test score validity and reliability, and the ability to use that information to propose and develop processes and procedures to mitigate those threats.
- Working knowledge of existing methods of developing paper and online assessments.
- Expertise in developing online assessments in a variety of platforms.
- Working knowledge of administrative structures of school authorities, schools, and the Ministry.
- Working knowledge of assistive technologies during standardized assessments.
- Working knowledge of mainstream computing platforms including Windows, MacOS and Google Admin Console/Classroom ecosystems.

Additional Desireable Knowledge and Skills:
- Working knowledge of Provincial Assessment Sector and other Department information systems and databases and awareness of their relationship to and impact on test administration practices and processes.
- Working knowledge of Provincial Assessment Sector test design, development, scoring, reporting, and test

administration business rules, processes, and systems.
- Broad knowledge of Department and GoA policies, procedures and business plans.

Behavioral Competencies

Pick 4-5 representative behavioral competencies and their level.

Competency	Level A B C D E	Level Definition	Examples of how this level best represents the job
Creative Problem Solving	○ ○ ◉ ○ ○	Engages the community and resources at hand to address issues: • 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	• Collaborates with internal teams and external partners (e.g., Vretta, Technology & Innovation) to identify root causes of digital platform issues and implement sustainable solutions. • Uses insights from educators, school authorities, and technical experts to improve workflows for online assessment administration. • Leverages resources from other units (Vretta staff, Field Testing) to resolve complex operational challenges during large-scale exam administrations. • Encourages open discussion and idea-sharing when exploring AI integration opportunities, balancing innovation with risk management and compliance. • Applies lessons learned from previous administrations to refine processes and enhance system reliability and user experience.

Build Collaborative Environments	○ ○ ◉ ○ ○	Collaborates across functional areas and proactively addresses conflict: • Encourages broad thinking on projects, and works to eliminate barriers to progress • Facilitates communication and collaboration • Anticipates and reduces conflict at the outset • Credits others and gets talent recognized • Promotes collaboration and commitment	• Works closely with multiple teams (Vretta staff, Exam Leads, Desktop Publishers, Field Testing) to align workflows and ensure seamless exam administration. • Proactively identifies potential conflicts between technical requirements and classroom realities, addressing them early through consultation and clear communication. • Encourages open dialogue among internal staff and external partners (e.g., Vretta, Technology & Innovation) to share ideas and remove barriers to implementing digital assessment solutions. • Recognizes contributions from team members and vendors during successful deployments, fostering a culture of shared achievement. • Promotes collaboration by organizing joint planning sessions and knowledge-sharing opportunities to build capacity across the Provincial Assessment Sector.

Systems Thinking	○ ○ ◉ ○ ○	Takes a long-term view towards organization's objectives and how to achieve them: • 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	• Considers the long-term implications of transitioning from paper-based to digital assessments, ensuring strategies align with Alberta Education and Childcare's vision for modernization and equity. • Anticipates potential impacts of platform changes on school authorities, teachers, and students, and incorporates stakeholder feedback into planning and decision-making. • Aligns workflows and guidelines with APS values such as fairness, accessibility, and continuous improvement while implementing new technologies. • Identifies opportunities for collaboration across internal units and external partners to streamline processes and share expertise during large-scale assessment administrations. • Evaluates emerging technologies like AI not only for immediate benefits but for their potential to enhance assessment practices and operational efficiency over time.

Agility	○ ○ ◉ ○ ○	Identifies and manages required change and the associated risks: • Identifies alternative approaches and supports others to do the same • Proactively explains impact of changes • Anticipates and mitigates emotions of others • Anticipates obstacles and stays focused on goals • Makes decisions and takes action in uncertain situations and creates a backup plan	• Adapts workflows and timelines when unexpected technical issues arise during large-scale exam administrations, ensuring continuity through contingency plans. • Communicates the impact of platform updates or policy changes to school authorities and internal teams, reducing uncertainty and building confidence. • Anticipates resistance to new digital assessment processes and provides training and support to ease the transition for educators and administrators. • Identifies alternative solutions when vendor timelines shift or system enhancements are delayed, maintaining focus on operational goals. • Makes informed decisions in uncertain situations, such as implementing temporary workarounds during system outages, while planning for long-term fixes.

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