

New

Ministry

Advanced Education

Describe: Basic Job Details

Position

Position ID

Position Name (30 characters)

Senior Client Rel. Specialist

Requested Class

Program Services 3

Job Focus

Supervisory Level

Operations/Program

00 - No Supervision

Agency (ministry) code

Cost Centre

Program Code: (enter if required)

Employee

Employee Name (or Vacant)

Vacant

Organizational Structure

Division, Branch/Unit

Operations and Client Service Delivery / Student Fin

☒ 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

Job Purpose and Organizational Context

Why the job exists:

The Senior Client Relations Specialist, Student Services plays a critical role in achieving the business requirements for Alberta Student Aid (ASA) to deliver communication and operational policy services to multiple clients, partners and stakeholders. This position has specific roles and a combination of roles that support post-secondary counseling, ensuring compliance with legislation by external clients, communication and public relations. They support the position in dissemination of information, providing education and problem resolution, and create additional sources of information to support Provincial Government staff, Federal Government, Albertans, post-secondary educational institutions, students and programs.

The position proactively identifies issues within the Alberta Student Aid program and proposes resolutions and advice to stakeholders to address these issues. The position works with a large degree of independence and is responsible for increasing awareness and facilitating communication among key stakeholders outside and within the ministry and other ministries. This position is responsible to stand up key teams to table issues quickly and effectively to support emergency issues that impact Advanced Education, Alberta post-secondary institutions and students. The position provides advice to the Managers and Directors of Alberta Student Aid and Executive Director, and consults and collaborates with colleagues and stakeholders to address any current and evolving needs of schools and students. Communications support and counsel take on a departmental wide scope as well as a federal and provincial territorial

(cross Canada) scope.

The Senior Client Relations Specialist provides advice and recommendations to the Manager of Program Operations with External Relations, and leaders of other program areas on how to effectively leverage communications and stakeholder relations to reach sector and ministry goals. This role manages the operations of External Communications and Relations for Alberta Student Aid and is the lead liaison for post-secondary educational institution in Alberta, Canada and other countries where Alberta students attend studies.

Responsibilities

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

The Student Aid Communication Strategy is developed, implemented and supported through the management of multiple ongoing projects.

- Lead the planning and development of Communication Strategy initiatives and associated projects focused on client communications, and public awareness, ensuring projects are aligned with Ministry and Government direction - and priorities are managed effectively and efficiently in accordance with applicable standards and guidelines.
- Tracks and monitors the progress of a suite of ongoing projects, resolving barriers to progress in a collaborative way with project participants - providing regular updates to project stakeholders.
- Manages processes to test usability and client satisfaction that will inform on-going innovation and approval of projects.
- Ensures comprehensive and high quality services (i.e. graphics, writing, design, production) are provided to a variety of digital initiatives as a means to exchange information, including responsibility for information management planning and decision-making.
- Reports on the advancements of the Student Aid Communication Strategy and identifies recommendations for the future evolution of the Strategy.
- Develops Student Aid program guides and resources for Advanced Education, post-secondary educational institutions and students that are posted on the Alberta student Aid website.

Leads the Intergovernmental Consultative Committee on Student Financial Assistance (ICCSFA) for Alberta Student Aid to ensure high-level perspectives from federal and provincial officials are implemented for improvements to Student Financial Assistance.

- Coordinates the ICCSFA Policy Development Committee, Students with Disabilities Committee, Repayment Committee, Special Project - Financial Literacy Committee, Special Project - Designation Committee, and the Special Project - Communications Committee for approved or proposed operational and policy direction.
- This position facilitates the consultation process with staff and Management to ensure their needs are met by the recommendations of the committees.
- Establishes a Branch work plan and tracks progress to ensure recommendations are completed when required.
- Develops the content and provides information sessions on the program for the public, external stakeholders, delivery partners and department staff for new or major initiatives where the field is required to significantly change existing practices.
- Provides more in-depth support to: identify the nature of the change, determine the implementation steps, ensure that all involved components are informed of and contribute their perspective to the implementation plan.
- Contributes to development of information-sharing agreements with other jurisdictions or other government departments to share client data in order to improve client service or achieve program goals.

Training strategies and operations evolve toward enhanced digital utilization through evaluation and enhancement where necessary.

- Formally and informally evaluate how well digital information and services meet internal and external stakeholder's needs (e.g., are they using digital content and services on websites, apps, social media on an ongoing basis, Is the content comprehensive, intuitively easy to use and useful).
- Consult with other branch units to determine what digital resources are needed to enhance their services.

- Approve and implement operational changes to content or product development that results from evaluations.
- Engage senior leadership and executive leaders to gain commitment for recommendations related to new or revised strategies and present associated business cases to senior and executive leaders for approval
- Manage the development and updating of digital content (e.g. graphics, guides, content writing, audio and/or video production coordination).

This position is responsible to stand up key teams to table issues quickly and effectively to support emergency issues that impact Alberta post-secondary institutions and students:

- Provides advice to the Directors of Alberta Student Aid and Executive Director and consults and collaborates with colleagues and stakeholders to address any current and evolving needs of schools and students.
- Communications support and counsel take on a departmental wide scope as well as a federal and provincial territorial (cross Canada) scope.
- Establish and oversee content development workflow process and procedures to ensure support of all strategies, efficiency of operations, and service excellence results.
- Rigid project management is required to document and follow up with team members and the federal government to ensure all goals and work is met.
- This position was responsible to write progress reports for the Assistant Deputy Minister.

The position is responsible for leading and coordinating major projects and is responsible for facilitating communication among key stakeholders. The position requires the skills to consult, influence and persuade to bring opinions together for consensus when consulting with clients, the public and Communications and Public Engagement (CPE) on contentious issues:

- This position must deescalate politically sensitive issues with post-secondary institution staff that pose operational or funding issues with them, which includes consultation with CPE for consistent and politically sensitive responses to the public.
- The position provides consultation with Senior Leadership team to raise awareness of concerns that may lead to schools escalating to the Minister. Briefing is done to prepare messages for Advice to the Minister.
- This position writes key messages for Alberta Student Aid Staff, the Service Centre staff in Mississauga Ontario to respond to Alberta students and post-secondary institutions on high level issues within the Ministry that require precise and consistent communications. Staff in Student Aid use these key messages to respond to Action Requests sent in by MLAs and the Ministers office.
- Creativity is required within this position to effectively analyze operational and strategic issues with respect to Alberta Student Aid. This position is responsible for developing new procedures, and identifying and analyzing alternative courses of actions within a broadly defined environment. The position must use specialized knowledge to appropriately address issues of a political nature.
- This position develops process and procedures for areas in Student Aid and the Ministry. Responsible for bringing areas together, writing the processes and ensuring areas are aware of their responsibilities to ensure processes are followed and implemented. Consultation with the Manager of POWER and Director of Student Services to create document with various units in the Ministry and create a de-designation process for Private Career Colleges.

The Manager and Director are supported in leadership of the Unit:

- Work with the Manager of POWER to develop and sustain positive relationships with division executive, staff and stakeholders.
- Participate in branch planning and reporting, working collaboratively with other managers and staff.
- Represent the branch, division, ministry on cross-ministry, Government, and external committees.
- Maintain open communication and collaboration channels with all other branch to facilitate effective information sharing and communication.
- Champion change management strategies to enable the adoption of new communication and external relations approaches for training, engagement and communications.
- Serve as Acting Manager as required.

Problem Solving

Typical problems solved:

Work is performed within CPE communication standards, policies and procedures, but the position has the authority to identify alternative courses of action. Develops and implements communications for the public and educational institutions, provincially, cross Canada and Out of Country.

Demonstrated experience in program management, which includes design, development, implementation and evaluation. A high level of analytical skill is required to provide advice and create training or program design, with demonstrated ability to lead projects with a all-inclusive scope, including risk identification and mitigation. Strong relationship-building, facilitation, conflict-resolution and project management skills are required to support program integrity.

Creativity is required within this position to effectively analyze operational and strategic issues with respect to Alberta Student Aid. This position is responsible for developing new procedures, and identifying and analyzing alternative courses of actions within a broadly defined environment. The position must use specialized knowledge to appropriately address issues of a political nature.

This position plays a key role in quality assurance reviews with students and schools. This position is part of a compliance and program integrity review Tiger Team to respond to policy and communications. Writes and provides key messages to the Ministry, post-secondary educational institutions and Service Provider in Mississauga, Ontario. Key messages provided to CPE for approval, which they use key messages to respond to media. Messages are complex and require a vast knowledge of policy, legislation and processes. They are political in nature and have media attention; therefore, they must be communicated to CPE for awareness. Provides Key Messages for Advice to the Minister.

This position must have a vast depth and breadth knowledge of the Alberta Student Aid Program, acts, regulations, Private Vocational Training acts and regulations, and the Student Aid Operational Policy Manual. It requires a deep functional knowledge of all areas within Student Aid, Canada Student Loan policies, acts and regulations and the provincial service provider DH in order to write operational guides for post-secondary institutions in Alberta, in Canada and out of country. These guides replace in-person and on-line training in order to support digital transformation and mitigate risk of errors by pointing to the source of truth and support digital transformation.

This position develops process and procedures for areas in Student Aid and the Ministry. Responsible for bringing areas together, writing the processes and ensuring areas are aware of their responsibilities to ensure processes are followed and implemented. Consultation with the Director of Student Services to create documents with various units in the Ministry and create a de-designation process for Private Career Colleges.

Solutions to problems involve assessing multiple inputs and internal and external stakeholder considerations to determine the best way forward in alignment with existing strategies, policies, and standards. Ongoing collaboration and strong working relationships with other sector units, other ministry divisions, department communications protocols, and client groups assists problem solving. The Director is available to provide assistance as needed; however, the Senior Client Relations Specialist takes a lead role in identifying options, recommending solutions, and implementing the solution.

Types of guidance available for problem solving:

- Cross-unit innovation and solution teams within Alberta Student Aid, Advanced Education, service providers and schools to address issues, provide collaborative resolution and implement solutions.
- ICCSFA - High level perspectives from federal and provincial officials on improvements to Student Financial Assistance. Analyze and implement the various approaches to addressing low and middle-income students, and the significance of inter-governmental cooperation from a policy and program integration and delivery perspective.
- Operational Policy Committee - identifies and presents information on emerging trends that may have policy implications.
- Creation of Decision Request documents that outline the issue, background and recommendations

relating to options, taking into account risks and benefits.

- Change Management Plan to outline existing tools, resources or processes to capture what currently exists, what needs to change and how to implement the change(s).
- Operational Policy Manual to ensure consistent and transparency of acts, regulations, operations and policies within Alberta Student Aid.
- Propose issue resolution, project plans, and policy changes etc. to Directors and Executive Director.
- Consultation with executive leadership of ASAPA and AACC for resolution of issues, scanning, surveys, and resolution of any changes that may impact schools or students.
- External consultation with National Student Loan Service Centre and D+H service providers to identify complex issues. Collaborates with other provincial Student Aid jurisdictions across Canada to resolve issues and then provide key messaging for unit staff and stakeholders.

Direct or indirect impacts of decisions:

The position proactively identifies issues within the Alberta Student Aid program and proposes resolutions and advice to stakeholders to address these issues. The position works with a large degree of independence and is responsible for increasing awareness and facilitating communication among key stakeholders outside and within the ministry and other ministries. This position is responsible to stand up key teams to table issues quickly and effectively to support emergency issues that impact Alberta post-secondary institutions and students. The position provides advice to the Directors of Alberta Student Aid and Executive Director, and consults and collaborates with colleagues and stakeholders to address any current and evolving needs of schools and students. Communications support and counsel take on a departmental wide scope as well as a federal and provincial territorial (cross Canada) scope.

The work of this position has a direct impact on the implementation of the Student Aid Communications Strategy, which includes communication and training to students (high school and post-secondary), clients (student loan borrowers), stakeholders, and staff. This results in Albertans receiving the right student aid information at the right time through a variety of online platforms and being able to use that information to communicate about student funding programs. Improved sector internal communications also result from the work of the Senior Client Relations Specialist, which leads to more consistent, current and comprehensive information being shared across the sector. This position also impacts the sector's awareness of what is possible in terms of reaching more audiences in innovative ways by leveraging digital technology information strategies. The scope of work encompasses all student funding programs and systems.

Within the context of applicable legislation, standards and guidelines, as well as business plans and strategies, the Senior Client Relations Specialist has authority to make operational decisions to move projects forward and to approve guides and resources for the Alberta Student Aid website. The Senior Client Relations Specialist also determines which of several options are best suited to be put forward as recommendations for consideration by senior leadership and executive department leaders.

Key Relationships

Major stakeholders and purpose of interactions:

The Stakeholders are:

- Director of Student Services to provide consultation, advice and direction of communications and stakeholder issue resolution.
- Deputy Minister of Advanced Education to provide advice in the form of PowerPoint on departmental statistics and sector information to prepare him for meetings with post-secondary educational institutions
- Student Aid Staff and Alberta Student Aid Service Centre staff in Mississauga, Ontario to provide consultation and advice; determine impacts of new or revised policies and programs; identify issues and concerns; exchange information; provide direction to development of solutions associated with new or revised policies and programs through communications and key messaging.
- Representatives of other ministries (i.e. Communications and Public Engagement, Legislative Services and Service Alberta Red Tape Reduction) and other federal / provincial jurisdictions to collaborate on student aid initiatives and projects; participate in working groups and committees; exchange information; develop partnerships; develop solutions for out-of-province/out-of-Country issues.

- Public and private post-secondary educational institutions (i.e. executive, presidents, deans, owners, registrars, student funding officers) in province, in Canada and out of Country to identify and respond to communication requirements, resolve emerging and complex issues, respond to inquiries, exchange information, provide advice and consultation, determine impacts of new or revised policies and programs on operations, develop responsive communication strategies and collaborate on student funding initiatives and projects.
- Executive membership (i.e. Alberta Student Award Personnel Association (ASAPA), Alberta Association of Career Colleges (AACC) to develop partnerships and enhance ongoing liaison; issue resolution and presentation of information at conferences and monthly meetings.
- ALCP Branch to review and write content information and create presentation materials to the Learning Clicks Program and to review ALCP guides and resources for Student Aid content.
- Private Careers Colleges Branch for private school policy and act clarification, coordination of presentations to AACC and recommendations for school tuition remit processes.
- Foundational Learning Supports Branch for coordination of presentation to AACC and ASAPA and connecting schools for clarification of operational issues.
- Consults with service providers and contractors (i.e. D+H, NSLSC, CGI) to coordinate activities; exchange information; confirmation of processes, provide direction for projects; determine solutions for service and contract concerns.
- Managers, Directors, and Executive Director throughout the Branch and Division to provide recommendations and issue awareness for direction relating to Client and External Relations.

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:

Related years of job experience plus education combined is considered for Education Level

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

The Senior Client Relations Specialist requires knowledge of:

- Ministry business plan, organizational structure, operational plans and strategic priorities;
- Government strategic and policy directions and priorities as they relate to the Ministry mandates and initiatives;
- Ministry, Division, and Student Services mandates, organizational structure, and business/operational plans;
- Client, service delivery, and stakeholder community impacted by the Student Services mandate and operations, including relevant organizations, committees, advisory groups, and representatives;
- Political environment within which the Ministry operates and policy development and decision-making processes;
- Principles and practices of adult learning, particularly in relation to coaching and consulting with service providers;
- Relevant legislation, regulations, and policies pertaining to student aid available to post-secondary students (i.e. Canada Student Loans Act; Students Finance Act and Regulations, Students Finance Board/ Ministerial Rulings, Student Loan Guarantee Act, Canada Student Loan Policy and Procedures Manual and the Alberta Student Aid Operational Policy Manual;
- Applicable student aid programs administered on behalf of the federal and provincial governments, including related policies, criteria, guidelines, processes, and procedures; and
- Relevant information systems (i.e. Alberta Student Aid System and databases) software tools (i.e. Microsoft Word; and Excel, PowerPoint, Skype, WebEx, Outlook, Umbraco, Adobe Acrobat, Internet, InDesign and Captivate).

The Senior Client Relations Specialist must have strong and demonstrated:

- Interpersonal, consultation, and facilitation skills, including ability to interact effectively with diverse stakeholders, clients, and partners and to develop solutions for issues involving a variety of perspectives;
- Abilities to promote new concepts and influence others to adopt innovative ideas;
- Research and analytical skills, including ability to synthesize and analyze information obtained from broad and varied sources and develop solutions and recommendations for consideration;
- Professional judgment and expert problem-solving skills;

- Project planning and management skills;
- Leadership skills, including ability to coach and mentor;
- Advanced verbal and written communication skills to present information to meet requirements of diverse audiences;
- Presentation and facilitation skills;
- Organizational skills, including ability to multi-task and prioritize multiple responsibilities;
- Change management skills;
- Commitment to client service, confidentiality, discretion, diplomacy and tact; and
- Commitment to continuous improvement and innovation.

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 type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<p>Integrates broader context into planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for how current situation is affected by broader trends • Integrates issues, political environment and risks when considering possible actions • Supports organization vision and goals through strategy • Addresses behaviours that challenge progress 	<p>Required to synthesize and analyze information obtained from broad and varied sources and develop solutions and recommendations for consideration.</p> <p>This position understands the potential ramifications of decisions and recommendations, and that results achieved can have a substantial and significant impact on Student Aid's political position political environment and risks when considering possible actions.</p> <p>This position attends conferences and may also create presentations to deliver at conferences and meetings as a representative from Alberta Student Aid within the province of Alberta and sometimes in other provinces within Canada to discuss innovation, mandate, or strategic direction.</p> <p>Influence positive relationships and challenge perspectives of Ministry representatives, educational institutions, and stakeholders.</p>

			<p>Canada to discuss innovation, mandate, or strategic direction.</p> <p>Influence positive relationships and challenge perspectives of Ministry representatives, educational institutions, and stakeholders.</p>
Agility	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<p>Proactively incorporates change into processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates opportunities for improvement • Is aware of and adapts to changing priorities • Remains objective under pressure and supports others to manage their emotions • Proactively explains impact of change on roles, and integrates change in existing work • Readily adapts plans and practices 	<p>Develop and maintain collaborative working relationships and partnerships with educational institutions, clients, and stakeholders to gather relevant information for program and system changes.</p> <p>Propose issue resolution, project plans, and policy changes.</p> <p>Presents controversial changes to post-secondary educational institutions, must handle controversial issues and emotionally charged audiences and deescalate issues.</p> <p>Communicates process improvements and innovative information delivery initiatives that affect the organization's objectives and is required to keep broad impacts and connections in mind.</p> <p>Consultation with executive leadership of ASAPA and AACC for resolution of issues, scanning, surveys, and resolution of any changes that may impact schools or students.</p>

Creative Problem Solving	○ ○ ○ ● ○	<p>Works in open teams to share ideas and process issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses wide range of techniques to break down problems • Allows others to think creatively and voice ideas • Brings the right people together to solve issues • Identifies new solutions for the organization 	<p>Coordinate liaison with key stakeholders, ASAPA, AACC, and individual educational institutions to identify issues and solicit input relating to student aid policies, programs, and processes; ensures perspectives and impacts are identified, addressed, and incorporated during development and implementation of new and revised policies, programs, and processes; ensures perspectives and impacts are identified, addressed, and incorporated during development and implementation of new and revised programs and processes.</p> <p>Assesses and evaluates information requirements of educational institutions, in collaboration with Ministry coordinators as appropriate; accomplished through regular issue resolution meetings and discussions.</p> <p>Collaborates with other units and branches to align communications with elements of student aid program delivery, and develops appropriate strategies.</p>
Build Collaborative Environments	○ ○ ○ ● ○	<p>Involves a wide group of stakeholders when working on outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves stakeholders and shares resources • Positively resolves conflict through coaching and facilitated discussion • Uses enthusiasm to motivate and guide others • Acknowledges and works with diverse 	<p>Collaborative environments and partnerships are continually developed and maintained with representatives of the Ministry, other Ministries and jurisdictions, educational institutions, and stakeholder organizations to identify and collaborate on</p>

		<p>perspectives for achieving outcomes</p>	<p>innovative approaches to support continuous improvement of the post-secondary student aid program operations and the adult learning system.</p> <p>Coordinates resolution of complex problems pertaining to unprecedented, contradictory, or unique student funding issues through provision of expert communications.</p> <p>Provides feedback received from stakeholders to inform website content. After identifying potential improvements based on stakeholder feedback, collaborates with internal Subject Matter Experts to refine enhancements.</p>
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Benchmarks

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

024PS58 and 024PS60

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