

Ministry of Advanced Education

MANDATE

It is the role of the Ministry of Advanced Education to ensure that B.C.'s post-secondary system delivers value while providing educational and training opportunities for young people entering the workforce and existing workers who need to upgrade their skills. We champion inclusive communities and an integrated post-secondary education system to maximize benefits to all British Columbians.



EXECUTIVE COMMITMENT TO MULTICULTURALISM

We welcome and value diversity in the workplace and we are committed to ensuring a respectful environment, free from discrimination and harassment. Executive works to ensure a diverse perspective is embedded into our workplace culture and approach to our programs, policies, and services. All of our employees are supported as active participants in this work.

EMBRACING MULTICULTURALISM IN THE WORKPLACE

We acknowledge the strength gained in our workplace and in our province through embracing diversity and we understand the role our organization has to play in that regard.

Our approach to multiculturalism is guided through our diversity plan. This plan outlines steps we are taking to develop our workplace culture, and embed principles of cultural diversity within programs and services in response to the diverse needs of our students. Our commitment to supporting multiculturalism through post-secondary partnerships is demonstrated in our approach to international and Aboriginal education and English as a Second Language (ESL) training. Complementary to this work, we have undertaken several workplace activities to support and embrace diversity as an employer.

HIGHLIGHTS OF INITIATIVES

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

- » The ministry released the International Education Strategy in May 2012. This Strategy supports greater inward mobility of international students, outward mobility of British Columbians and a more internationalized education system here at home.
- » Our students and faculty are taking opportunities to study and participate in education systems abroad which provide British Columbians with culturally diverse experiences and perspectives, and contribute to a more globalized citizenry and economy in British Columbia. Residents can obtain StudentAid BC funding to study internationally provided they enrol in an eligible program at an eligible institution. www.aved.gov.bc.ca/studentaidbc/apply/eligibility
- » The BC Council for International Education has received funding to help promote British Columbia as a preferred study destination for international students.

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

- » The Aboriginal Training Employment Program funds Aboriginal service providers to deliver culturally relevant employment training to Aboriginal people.

- » An Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and Action Plan was developed in partnership with the First Nations Education Steering Committee, the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association, the Métis Nation BC, the First Nations Public Service, BC Colleges, BC Association of Universities and Institutes, the Research Universities' Council of BC and government representatives. Its goals, objectives, actions and targets will enable the implementation of a 2020 Vision for Aboriginal learners to succeed in an integrated, relevant, and effective post-secondary education system that enhances their participation in the social, cultural and economic life of their communities, the province, and global society.
- » Funding for the implementation of Aboriginal Service Plans is provided to 11 public post-secondary institutions in support of initiatives for Aboriginal learners, to strengthen partnerships and collaboration in Aboriginal post-secondary education; and increase the receptivity and relevance of post-secondary institutions and programs for Aboriginal learners, including providing support for initiatives that address systemic barriers.
- » The Aboriginal Community-Based Delivery Partnerships Program enables an increased access to employment-related training and education in Aboriginal communities and provides post-secondary education and training opportunities to a broad range of Aboriginal participants, in order to position Aboriginal people and communities to take advantage of economic opportunities.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

- » Through 17 public post-secondary institutions, ESL training is offered to permanent residents and Canadian citizens to provide individuals whose first language is not English with a vital access route to further education, training, and employment.

- » We continue to provide financial assistance to ESL students with a demonstrated financial need under the Adult Basic Education Student Assistance Program to help with associated fees, books, transportation, child care and other costs.
- » 2014/15 is a year of transition for ESL in the public post-secondary system, as Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) resumes administration of the majority of immigrant settlement and language programs in B.C.
- » The ministry is working with CIC and public post-secondary institutions to ensure immigrants continue to have easy access to the language instruction they need to transition to further post-secondary training and meaningful employment.

DEVELOPING MINISTRY CULTURE

- » To assist a business unit adjust to disruptive staff changes that had happened over the past year, the unit attended a Coast Salish Aboriginal Healing Circle and cultural awareness session as a means of assisting the group to work together more cohesively as well as furthering understanding and incorporating Aboriginal perspectives into our programs, policies and services.
- » We continue to promote and provide access for staff to participate in cultural awareness and diversity activities and training like the TELTIN TE WILNEW (Understanding Indigenous People) that taught staff the reasons for and practices of acknowledging Indigenous territory. Learners took away new knowledge and practical skills to support improved relationships with Aboriginal people.
- » We have established a partnership with the BC Public Service Agency Hiring Centre to create and provide informal training for hiring managers to assist in promoting diversity and removing barriers throughout the recruitment and selection process.
- » We continue to offer support and employment opportunities through the Aboriginal Youth Internship Program.