

Interventions Defined for the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS)

Objective:

The purpose of this document is to improve data integrity by ensuring that there is consistent interpretation and use of intervention types. The examples provided in this document include many, but not all, labour market programs activities that could occur within each intervention type. Under the ASETS, Aboriginal Agreement Holders (AAHs) are encouraged to continue to design and deliver labour market programs that best meet the needs of their communities.

Background:

During the month of July 2010, the *Defining Meaningful Interventions* Working Group was launched to develop and achieve consensus on a list of interventions that are to be used within the new ASETS, as well as their definitions. Members of the Working Group consist of AAHs from across the country, as well as members from the National Aboriginal Organizations (NAOs). On September 8-9, 2010, the Working Group had its first in-person meeting in Gatineau (QC), and agreed that the definition of an intervention should be:

*“**The definition of an Intervention:** An action plan activity, within a specific timeframe, developed by a client and a case-manager/counsellor intended to assist a client to improve employability in order to prepare for, obtain, and/or maintain employment.”*

Once consensus of the above definition was achieved, the Working Group then sought to classify the wide range of interventions into practical categories. To do this, the Working Group agreed that an initial client assessment is normally completed before an Action Plan is opened. Therefore, this initial client assessment cannot be considered an intervention since it occurs before any Action Plan is opened. The Working Group then adopted a client assessment model that uses the four Employability Dimensions to make an initial determination of client needs (e.g. does the client need assistance with Career Decision Making?; with Skills Enhancement?; with Job Search?; and/or with Job Maintenance?) . The range of possible interventions under each Employability Dimension was then examined and categorized into types. This resulted in nineteen intervention types.

Employability Dimension - Career Decision: Is an assessment by the employment counsellor of the skills demonstrated by the client to make an **informed** career choice. Informed choice means the client understands the physical and mental challenges associated with different occupations and is knowledgeable of labour market conditions (labour market supply and demand for the occupation, wage scale, competencies required by the occupation, etc). In making the assessment, the employment counsellor is required to review if the client has a realistic goal and the ability to research alternative occupational choices.

1. **Career Research and Exploration:** An activity or activities engaged in by the client at the direction of the counsellor intended to provide the client with background information and data on career opportunities, employment prospects, qualifications, requirements and benefits for different jobs and/or local and regional employers and employment opportunities in order to assist the client make informed career decisions. This can be done individually or through group sessions.

This intervention could include teaching a client how to find labour market information, the programs and services clients are eligible for, conducting self-discovery exercises to identify the values and interests of the client, taking non-diagnostic tests (ex: choices program), etc.

2. **Diagnostic Assessment:** Client is to take a specific test to assist in the determination of a career choice, such as: language, literacy, workplace essential skills (e.g. TOWES), Myers Briggs personality test, learning disability assessments, etc.
3. **Employment Counselling:** Providing the client, within the context of an Action Plan, with the advice and support of a designated employment counsellor to assist the client to arrive at a suitable career choice.

Note: Employment Counselling will not have a direct cost associated with it as it is paid through employee wages/salaries.

Employability Dimension - Skills Enhancement: Provides clients with the necessary skills and qualifications that are needed to enter and perform in a chosen occupation by enrolling them in the appropriate training or education program.

4. **Skills Development- Essential Skills:** A program of instruction designed to enhance one or more Essential Skills to a level required by the specific job or occupation that the client is seeking. Essential Skills provide the foundation for learning all other skills and enable people to evolve with their jobs and adapt to workplace change. HRSDC has identified nine essential skills and has established essential skill levels required for each NOC occupation. HRSDC's nine essential skills are:
 1. *Reading Text:* Refers to reading material that is in the form of sentences or paragraphs and generally involves reading notes, letters, memos, manuals, specifications, regulations, books, reports or journals.
 2. *Document Use:* Refers to tasks that involve a variety of information displays in which words, numbers, icons and other visual characteristics (e.g. line, colour, shape) are given meaning by their spatial arrangement. For example, graphs, lists, tables, blueprints, schematics, drawings, signs and labels are documents used in the world of work.
 3. *Numeracy:* refers to the clients' use of numbers and their being required to think in quantitative terms.
 4. *Writing:* Includes writing texts and writing in documents (for example, filling in forms) and non-paper-based writing (for example, typing on a computer).

5. *Oral Communication*: Pertains primarily to the use of speech to give and exchange thoughts and information by workers in an occupational group.
6. *Working with Others*: Examines the extent to which employees work with others to carry out their tasks. Do they have to work co-operatively with others or do they have to have the self-discipline to meet work targets while working alone.
7. *Continuous Learning*: Examines the requirement for workers in an occupational group to participate in an ongoing process of acquiring skills and knowledge. Continuous learning tests the hypothesis that more and more jobs require continuous upgrading, and that all workers must continue learning in order to keep or to grow with their jobs. If this is true, then the following will become essential skills: knowing how to learn; understanding one's own learning style; and knowing how to gain access to a variety of materials, resources and learning opportunities.
8. *Thinking Skills*: Differentiates between five different types of cognitive functions. However, these functions are interconnected.
9. *Computer Use*: Indicates the variety and complexity of computer use within the occupational group.

An Essential Skills program need not address all nine essential skills to be considered an Essential Skills program. Normally, such programs seek to enhance a client's abilities on a set of essential skills (e.g. literacy, numeracy and document use) to levels required by the job or occupation that the client is seeking to enter or for which he/she wishes to be trained. For more information on the nine essential skills, please visit the HRSDC website.

5. **Skills Development – Academic Upgrading**: A program of instruction designed to enable the client to obtain high school credits or academic qualifications required to pursue further post-secondary instruction or training. Could be referred to as adult education, either to acquire a high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED), or to acquire secondary school pre-requisites needed to enroll in vocational training and/or post secondary training programs.

6. ***Occupational Skills Training – Degree**: Interventions related to a program of study leading directly to an undergraduate or graduate degree from a recognized degree-granting institution. The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) has a searchable database of over 10,000 records that capture the range of academic programs offered by this sector at http://oraweb.aucc.ca/dcu_e.html.

* **Occupational Skills Training Investments**: Investments in occupational skills for clients through formal training are categorized according to the level and/or type of certification earned by the client. It is the responsibility of the counselor/case manager to be able to distinguish between the various types of training interventions in order to categorize any particular intervention. Generally, formal training is delivered by public and private universities, colleges, institutes and schools that are created and/or recognized by their respective province or territory. It is the combination of academic credentials and occupational preparation that allow for the use of five different types of interventions.

7. ***Occupational Skills Training – Diploma:** Interventions related to a program of study leading to a diploma from a provincially recognized university, college, institute or school, either public or private. A diploma program, in addition to be non-degree in nature, is distinguished from a certificate program primarily by the amount of time the client takes to earn the diploma. A diploma program is typically greater than one academic year in length. The Association of Canadian Community Colleges has a searchable program database that describes programs delivered by its member institutions which can be located at http://www.accc.ca/english/colleges/programs_database.htm . Some universities award non-degree recognition in the form of certificates that recognize learning outcomes from programs that are greater than one year in length.
8. ***Occupational Skills Training – Certificate:** Interventions related to a program of study leading to a certificate from a provincially recognized university, college, institute or school, either public or private. A certificate program is distinguished from a diploma program primarily by the amount of time the client takes to earn the certificate. A certificate program is typically one academic year in length and, in cases where it is less than an academic year; there are typically minimum length requirements that vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. The Association of Canadian Community Colleges has a searchable program database that describes programs delivered by its member institutions which can be located at http://www.accc.ca/english/colleges/programs_database.htm . Please note that the program listing may not be current at any given time and that many colleges do not indicate the level of certification in the program title. Workshops and short courses that are recognized by a certificate of attendance or some similar document are not included in this category.
9. ***Occupational Skills Training – Apprenticeship:** Interventions related to pre-apprenticeship training or apprenticeship technical training in a designated trade. This intervention does not cover the practical training of an indentured apprentice that occurs on the job. It also does not cover a pre-employment training intervention that is not recognized as credit towards a designated trade. A listing of all designated trades in Canada is available at <http://www.ellischart.ca/> . Also a list of definitions relating to apprenticeship can be found in Annex A of this document.
10. **Occupational Skills Training – Industry Recognized:** Interventions related to formal skills instruction that may provide certificates of completion, tickets and/or licenses which may be professionally recognized, but are not normally recognized by post secondary institutions or counted as academic credits in post-secondary programs or apprenticeship programs. Examples include: driver’s training, First Aid/CPR training, safety training, customized pre-employment training (e.g. Mining Essentials) and some professional accreditation programs offered by the private sector (e.g. Microsoft, Canadian Securities Institute).
11. **Work Experience – Student Employment:** Interventions designed to provide employment to students during school breaks or while still in school, such as the Student Summer Employment Program or the Internship Program. An individual student is provided with an opportunity to develop and enhance employability and occupational skills with practical, on-the-job experience. Employers are generally provided with a wage subsidy to encourage the hiring of these students. Students can be working during the school year or during the summer months and must be enrolled in full-time studies.

12. Work Experience - Wage Subsidy: Is a financial assistance program that has as its objective encouraging employers to hire individuals in order to provide them with direct work experience and/or on-the-job training. The employer receives a wage subsidy to hire the client for a specific length of time, with the object of providing the client with sufficient skills to find employment at the end of this time either with the same employer or another.

13. Work Experience - Job Creation Partnerships: Is a financial assistance program that seeks to enable unemployed persons to gain work experience by creating temporary jobs. Project activities should benefit both the participant and the community and must therefore be limited to partnerships with public sector and non-profit employers; no private companies. This will also improve the client's long-term employment prospects.

14. Self-Employment: An intervention that provides direct financial assistance, business training or professional support to enable a client start his/her own business or continue in a career of self-employment. Assistance may include providing support for training in business start-up and development from accredited business school, assistance with business plan development, for professional advise for marketing, accounting and financial management and for office location (e.g. ****incubators**).

****Incubators** are designed to accelerate the development of a small start-up business by partnering the start-up business within a bigger business, thus leading to reduced start up costs, access to expert opinions and lateral contributions (ex: office supplies, furniture, phones, etc).

Employability Dimension - Job Search: This employability dimensions seeks to help clients who want to find a job by providing them with the tools, skills, information, etc they need to attain employment. In essence the job search employability dimension seeks to facilitate the match between the client and the employer and entails the client to be actively engaged in a planned job search.

15. Job Search Preparation Strategies: This intervention is to be utilized when a client is preparing to seek and attain employment and requires support from an employment counsellor or a job finding club. Activities within this intervention can include: resume and cover letter writing, labour market research, interview skills, etc.

Note: This may or may not include clients who utilize the minimal levels of service: (i.e. independent use of job search resources such as computers, phones, fax machines, and printers).

16. Job Starts Supports: In order to seek and attain employment, clients may receive assistance to purchase work equipment, work clothing, bus tickets to look for work, etc.

17. Employer Referral: A client is referred to an employer to seek information on the company, the occupation of interest and/or an employment opportunity within the company.

Employability Dimension - Employment Maintenance: This employment dimension asks whether the client has issues with keeping a job. As such, it is relevant both to clients who are currently employed and who need assistance keeping that employment and to clients who are currently unemployed and who clearly have problems keeping a job (e.g. have a history of failing to keep employment for any reasonable length of time).

18. Employment Retention Supports: An intervention that provides some sort of funded assistance to enable a client with a job to continue working in that job. Assistance should be extraordinary and temporary in nature and not lead to continuing dependence on the ASETS program. Examples include: paying for work boots and equipment; purchasing a driver's license, providing bus fare or paying daycare on a limited/emergency basis, or providing re-location expenses if that is necessary to keep a job. Note that interventions relating to skills development for persons with a job should be identified under the appropriate skills development intervention type and not as an employment retention support.

19. Referral to Agencies: An intervention that refers a client to a responsible agency or agencies, as part of the client's Action Plan, to address one or more employment barriers (e.g. referral to social housing authority, drug treatment program, and subsidized daycare center, transportation for persons with disabilities, household finances and budgeting program). Depending on the circumstances, the ASETS holder may have to fund this intervention, but normally program costs would be borne by referral agency, employer, or not lead to any costs at all.

NOTE: Please remember these rules:

- *The "Intervention Start Date" must not be before the "Action Plan Start Date"*
- *When the "Action Plan Childcare Need" is "Yes" the "Action Plan Child Care Funded" must not be "Not Applicable"*
- *Under the Dimension "Skills Enhancement" when the "Intervention Code" is 4 or 6 to 13 the "Intervention Related NOC" is required. NOC Codes can be found under the Intervention/Activity Development tab under the Training or Work Experience drop down arrow.*
- *When the "Action Plan Result Date" is provided the "Intervention Cost" is required*
- *When the "Intervention End Date" is provided the "Intervention Cost" is require*

ANNEX A

Definitions Relating to Apprenticeship

The following definitions have been taken from the National Apprenticeship Survey - Canada Overview Report (2007):

Apprenticeship: A period of training/instruction provided to apprentices in a classroom **Technical Training** setting away from the job site. The emphasis is on teaching the theory component of the trade or occupation, reinforced where appropriate, with shop/lab training. This training is intended to supplement the on-the-job training

Apprenticeship: A structured system of supervised training leading to certification in a designated trade, occupation or craft. It is systematic program of on-the-job training supplemented by technical instruction in which an apprentice gains experiential learning and develop skills.

Accreditation: A process by which a government department, agency or association grants public recognition to training program that meets a predetermined set of standards.

Block Release Training: A method by which apprentices are released by their employers to attend technical training for a specified period (block) each year, usually five to eight weeks.

Credentialing: Pertaining to the recognition of qualifications through the issuance of formal documentation.

Designated Apprenticeable Trade: A trade that has been formally recognized through provincial or territorial legislation for apprenticeship training and certification. The requirements for in-school and on-the-job training as well as level and certification examinations are outlined in the trade regulations.

In-School Training: A period of training/instruction usually provided to apprentices in a classroom setting. The emphasis is on teaching the theory component of the trade, and is intended to supplement on-the-job training.

Practical Training: The part of apprenticeship training in which an apprentice works on a job site learning the skills of a designated trade under the supervision of a certified journeyman.

Pre-Apprenticeship Training: A program mainly of technical and general education, including a portion of trade practice, offered in high schools, vocational schools, community colleges and technical institutes and linked to an apprenticeship program through the credit system.

Pre-Employment Training: Courses providing intensive instruction for entrance into employment in a specific occupation. Depending on the jurisdiction, these courses may not necessarily be linked to apprenticeship training. In some jurisdictions, however, this term refers to all training leading to employment, including pre-apprenticeship training courses.

Technical Training: The part of an apprenticeship training program that is delivered in school, and includes theoretical aspects of the trade designed to supplement the skills acquired during on-the-job training. It makes up approximately 15 percent of the total apprenticeship training program.

Trade: An occupation for which a provincial or territorial apprenticeship program is available. Trade skills can best be learned through an apprenticeship.