



University Consultation: What We Heard

Presented by the Nova Scotia
Department of Labour and Advanced
Education

Why did we consult?

- Universities – and Nova Scotia – are facing demographic and financial challenges
 - All universities are experiencing a plateau in enrolment
 - Some universities and programs are experiencing declines
- We needed input to help develop a strategic, long-term direction for Nova Scotia's universities

Who did we consult?

- Students, student organizations
- Parents
- University presidents, faculty, staff, board chairs
- Taxpayers
- Business / industry

How did we consult?

- In person focus groups
 - 29 focus groups with 240 stakeholders
- Online survey
 - 600 Nova Scotians participated
- Online focus groups
 - 61 students and parents

What did we hear?

Main themes:

- Sustainability
- Accountability
- Accessibility
- Quality and innovation
- Student services
- Connecting students with jobs

Sustainability

- Universities get their funding from two main sources – taxpayers and students.
- Neither are willing to pay more.
- Universities need predictable, stable funding to operate and plan.

Accountability

- Participants want to know how tax dollars and tuition are being spent.
- They believe universities should be cost-effective and that funding must be linked to clear outcomes.

Accessibility

- Universities need to be accessible and the right supports need to be in place for qualified students.
- Under-represented groups need supports.
- Participants want more efficient credit transfer and mobility between institutions.
- They also want to see closer partnerships between universities and the Nova Scotia Community College.

Quality & Innovation

- Participants want to see a broader range of programs and recommend reducing duplication.
- Innovation and entrepreneurship are important and should be included in all programs.
- Meaningful connections between universities and business/industry should be encouraged.

Student Services

- Many participants identified the need to improve supports and services to students, especially in health and mental health services.
- Francophone participants felt that supports and services should be available in the primary language spoken on campus.

Connecting Students to Jobs

- Participants want more hands-on learning opportunities (co-op placements, internships, job shadowing, etc.) in all programs.
- They want more programs to connect graduates to jobs.

Thank you