

Arborist

Designation: Discussion Paper

Background

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Board accepted an application in late 2020 to designate Arborist as a voluntary trade. The Board established a Trade Advisory Committee (TAC) to review the application, consult with the industry and make a recommendation to the Board. The TAC first met in late 2021 and have completed their discussions and drafted recommendations according to their mandate to:

- Review the application to designate Arborist as a trade;
- Review and verify trade-specific labour market information and outlooks;
- Review key components of the Arborist occupation regarding a training pathway that leads to provincial trade certification;
- Determine the level of industry support for trade designation, upon Board approval of the timing and method of consultation;
- Advise on other matters as assigned by the Board.

Current Situation

An Arborist transplants, maintains and removes trees and woody plants using ropes, climbing systems, pruning tools, diagnostic tools, and mechanized equipment. Arborists have knowledge in the science of arboriculture, the cultivation, management and study of individual trees, shrubs, vines, and woody plants. An Arborist carries out treatments for optimal tree health, managing pests, diseases, wounds, and defects that impact trees and woody plants.

Arborist is a designated voluntary trade in three Canadian jurisdictions: British Columbia, Ontario, and New Brunswick. Provincial trade designation and the development of an apprenticeship training pathway are interim steps and part of a longer-term industry plan to achieve interprovincial Red Seal status.

Currently, there is no formal training specific to Arborist in Nova Scotia. There are courses delivered by private companies across Canada as well as by Arboriculture Canada, North America Training Solutions, and Dalhousie University, however, training is mainly provided on the jobsite by employers. Employers have expressed a clear preference for employees who have access to/completed a training program on their job sites with the aim of keeping pace with technology, advancing quality and productivity, and enhancing career mobility and opportunities. The absence of standardized training provides challenges for the industry to easily recognize work experiences and skills gaps. Labour market information suggests that the demand for skilled workers is greater than the supply.

Arborist Trade Advisory Committee (TAC): Activities

The Arborist TAC has met 10 times with its first meeting on November 2, 2021.

Below are activities that have been completed:

- Reviewed the application in detail
- Reviewed and completed a draft set of skills that define the Arborist profession
- Discussed and gained understanding of the apprenticeship model for training
- Drafted the consultation survey questions
- Advised on how to best reach industry to get their feedback.

The TAC received approval from the Apprenticeship Board to conduct a consultation to gain broader industry input and validation of its proposed approach and way forward for the Arborist trade in Nova Scotia.

Purpose of Consultation

Arborist Consultation Main Objective

To determine the level of industry support for the designation of Arborist as a provincial trade under the Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act in Nova Scotia.

Additional Consultation Objectives

In addition to determining the level of industry support for the designation of Arborist trade and participation in an apprenticeship pathway, the survey will also gather information that will support implementation, if designation is supported. This includes:

- Validating the draft recommendations on proposed structure for an Arborist apprenticeship (definition, term of apprenticeship and ratio of journeyperson to apprentice)
 - Definition of Arborist: An Arborist transplants, maintains and removes trees and woody plants using ropes, climbing systems, pruning tools, diagnostic tools and mechanized equipment. Arborists have knowledge in the science of arboriculture, the cultivation, management and study of individual trees, shrubs, vines, and woody plants. An Arborist carries out treatments for optimal tree health, managing pests, diseases, wounds and defects that impact trees and woody plants.
Specifically, an Arborist:
 - transplants, prunes, maintains and removes trees and woody plants
 - climbs trees and works at heights
 - works safely around infrastructure
 - identifies and treats diseases and pests on trees and woody plants
 - improves the health and integrity of damaged trees and woody plants
 - enhances soils by fertilizing, irrigating, mulching and aerating
 - provides advice on trees and woody plants with others including residential, commercial, and government representatives.
 - Term of apprenticeship of 3 Levels, 5400 hours.
 - A minimum ratio of 1 qualified Arborist Journeyperson to 2 apprentices.
- Gathering information on labour market demand for Arborists
- Recording any concerns, ideas, or suggestions
- Creating a Questions and Answers document

What is Designation?

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency is responsible for the trades training and certification system in Nova Scotia. Once a trade is designated, the Agency works with industry to develop standards for the trade, a training pathway and certification. If designated, Arborist will be a voluntary trade, which means that certification will not be required to work legally in the trade.

What is Apprenticeship?

Apprenticeship is a post-secondary education and training system that leads to certification and provides for quality careers in the skilled trades. Apprentices receive paid, on-the-job training from a certified trade professional (Journey person). Most of the training is hands-on. It is the responsibility of the employer to ensure apprentices receive appropriate training in the full scope of the trade.

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (NSAA) partners with industry, community organizations and equity-deserving groups to promote apprenticeship opportunities, and to ensure that trades-specific training is responsive to the needs of industry and the Nova Scotia job market.

What would Arborist Apprenticeship Training involve?

When a trade becomes designated, the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency collaborates with trade industry experts to set a standard for training and certification and possibly develop apprenticeship training. This process typically includes developing an occupational standard, apprentice logbook of skills, a curriculum standard, and a certification examination.

What is the role of the employer?

The employer's role in the apprenticeship system is to register the apprentice with the NSAA, provide the opportunity for the apprentice to develop trade competencies under the supervision of a qualified tradesperson and release the apprentice to attend technical training. Financial incentives and supports are available to employers and apprentices during the apprenticeship.

Consultation Process

The Arborist consultation consists of an online survey (15 questions) with an additional option for respondents to be contacted by phone or mailed a paper version to complete the survey. Responses will remain **anonymous**, as names are not being collected. Any identifying information will not be shared with the Trade Advisory Committee or the public.

Link to Consultation Survey: [Arborist Consultation \(office.com\)](https://office.com/Arborist-Consultation)

Any questions or concerns regarding the consultation process or to setup a phone interview, please contact Christian Maguire, Senior Industry Consultant, at Christian.Maguire@novascotia.ca or through calling toll free at 1-800-424-5651.

We appreciate your involvement and participation in your industry consultation.