

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Implementation of Leadership and
Indigenous Relations Competencies for Leadership Competitions at the BC
Office of the Auditor General**

by

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B.A. (Honours) University of Calgary, 2020

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of

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Abstract

The BC Public Service is working towards improving diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The BC Office of the Auditor General (BC OAG) is also making commitments to improve DEI in the organization. The purpose of this thesis is to assist with these improvements, focusing on how DEI can be better incorporated into hiring practices for leaders at the BC OAG. Specifically, this thesis is seeking to determine how the BC OAG implements competencies in leadership competitions in a way that aligns with these DEI commitments. To assess this, the researcher undertook a qualitative mixed methods research approach, consisting of a cross-jurisdictional scan of Canadian audit offices, structured interviews with BC OAG staff members who had been panelists on leadership competitions, and a document review of leadership competition files. From the cross-jurisdictional scan, the key finding is that Canadian audit offices value and plan around DEI quite differently from one another. The key finding from the structured interviews is that DEI is not a requirement in competency implementation at the BC OAG, nor is it a requirement for panelists to utilize a DEI lens in their role on leadership panels. The key finding from the document review is that the competencies the BC OAG utilizes in leadership competitions have the potential to incorporate DEI, but this incorporation is inconsistent. From these findings, an option was presented to the BC OAG to develop its own explicit DEI competency that is tested for in every leadership competition.

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Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Implementation of Leadership and Indigenous Relations Competencies for Leadership Competitions at the BC Office of the Auditor General

Executive Summary

The BC Office of the Auditor General (BC OAG), an independent Office of the Legislature, has committed to ensuring diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the organization. This is a reflection of the overall direction of the BC Public Service (BCPS), as DEI is becoming more of a focus. Separate from the broader BCPS strategy, the BC OAG is in the process of developing and implementing a full DEI strategy, but as of the writing of this thesis, the strategy is not in place. This thesis's client is the BC OAG, which, in conjunction with the researcher, developed the topic of examining how the BC OAG may implement competencies in leadership competitions to align with its commitments to DEI. This topic was identified as important to the BC OAG, as it could inform and become a component of the broader BC OAG DEI strategy.

Methodology and Methods

To research, identify, and make recommendations to the BC OAG, the research undertook a mixed methods approach. This involved a cross jurisdictional scan, structured interviews with OAG staff members who had been panelists on leadership competitions, and a document review of competition files from leadership competitions that had taken place at the BC OAG in the past year. The purpose of the cross-jurisdictional scan was to compare what other Canadian audit offices are doing in terms of DEI in order to provide context as to where the BC OAG was situated. The purpose of the interviews was to gain a broader working knowledge on how competencies are used by panelists in leadership competitions at the BC OAG. A secondary purpose was to gain insight into the extent of knowledge that panelists have around DEI concepts, and whether DEI is a component of the interview process. The purpose of the document review of leadership competition files was to demonstrate the alignment of competencies used in leadership competitions with DEI commitments.

Principal Findings: Discussion and Analysis

1. Cross-jurisdictional Scan.

The purpose of the CJS was to compare what other Canadian audit offices were doing in terms of DEI in order to provide context as to where the BC OAG was at. The cross-jurisdictional scan revealed three key findings. The first finding revealed that the extent to which Canadian audit offices value DEI differs across jurisdictions. Each office had a values statement, highlighting what the values of the office are. Of the 10 documents examined (11 including BC), only four had diversity, equity, or inclusion listed as values. The second principal finding was similar to the first, but in relation to goals and strategies. Three offices (four including BC) had strategies and goals that were explicit about DEI. These offices specifically mentioned diversity, equity or inclusion in their strategies and goals. The other seven offices made references to culture and work environment, which could support a DEI culture, but were not explicit. Overall, the first two findings indicated that the majority of Canadian audit offices at best lack formalization, or at worst appear uninterested in DEI. The third finding related to how BC fared in terms of DEI, by virtue of its Service Plan. When comparing BC to the other jurisdictions, the BC OAG had values relating to DEI, goals and strategies relating to DEI, and an established DEI lead. None of the other jurisdictions had this more complete strategy plan (i.e. explicit value statements and a

DEI lead staff person). The BC OAG's Service Plan demonstrated a more established commitment to DEI, as read in the Service Plan.

2. Interviews.

The purpose of the interviews was to gain a broader working knowledge on how competencies are used by panelists in leadership competitions at the BC OAG. A secondary purpose was to gain insight into the extent of knowledge that panelists have around DEI concepts, and whether DEI is a component of the interview process. Interviews with seven BC OAG staff members who were panelists on previous leadership competitions highlighted three key findings. The first finding was that the only competency that was implemented to specifically test for DEI was the Indigenous Relations competency of cultural agility. This is not an explicit DEI competency, but the BC OAG uses it as such. The second principal finding was that there were competencies—specifically, leadership, teamwork, communication, and coaching—that participants believed could provide some insight into DEI. The third key finding was that there is no formal requirement or policy to ensure that competencies are implemented in a way that aligns with DEI goals and strategies when conducting leadership competitions at the BC OAG. Each theme generated from the interviews highlighted that there is no requirement for a DEI lens during leadership competitions, and if that lens is used, it is the discretion of the hiring manager and panelists, not because it is a requirement of the BC OAG.

3. Document Review.

The purpose of the document review was to determine the alignment of competencies used in leadership competitions with DEI commitments. The document review section revealed several important findings. This data was derived from a comparison of the job description competencies, found in the job descriptions, and the interview competencies, found in the interview guides. Both the job descriptions and interview guides were a part of the competition file packages that the researcher received from Strategic HR at the BC OAG. The findings aligned with the OAG staff interview findings in that at the BC OAG, Indigenous Relations competencies function to test for DEI. From this review and demonstrated in Table 3, cultural agility appeared as a competency in every job description but was only tested for in three of the five interviews. Neither the CASS AG nor PARA ED tested for cultural agility in the interview process.

The review of the job competition files revealed three principal findings. The first was that testing for DEI across positions is inconsistent. While four of the five interviews had a question that directly tested for DEI, one did not. The second key finding was that cultural agility, when tested, is used primarily to test for DEI. The final key finding was that the BC OAG has the building blocks to better incorporate DEI in its use of competencies in leadership competitions, it just does not have the formalization.

4. Summary

To summarize, the researcher undertook three different research methods to answer the research questions of this thesis. The first method – the cross-jurisdictional scan – was not intended to answer any of the research questions directly, but to provide context to how the BC OAG is committing to and aligning with DEI in comparison with other Canadian audit offices. The main takeaway from this method is that Canadian audit offices value and create plans and goals around

DEI very differently from one another, and in comparison, the BC OAG seems to have a stronger commitment to DEI. The second method – the interviews with BC OAG staff members who had sat on leadership panels—served the purpose of highlighting how competencies are actually used at the BC OAG, and whether this aligns with DEI. These interviews also served to uncover whether the BC OAG required leadership panelists to understand or incorporate DEI in their role as panelists. The main takeaway here was that DEI really isn't a requirement in terms of competency use and selection at the BC OAG. It is also not a requirement for panelists to utilize a DEI lens in their roles. The third method—the document review—was twofold, but the overall purpose was to determine the alignment of competencies used in leadership competitions with DEI commitments. The key takeaway from this method was that the competencies that the BC OAG utilizes in leadership competitions have the potential to incorporate DEI, but this incorporation is very inconsistent.

Options and Recommendation

Three options to better align competency use with DEI in leadership competitions are presented to the BC OAG. The options are:

1. Continue on the path that the BC OAG has already established and require that the competency of Cultural Agility is in each job description and tested for in every interview.
2. Formally incorporate DEI into either a leadership, teamwork, communications, or empowerment/development competency and require this competency be tested for in each interview.
3. Develop a new specific and explicit DEI competency that is required to be tested for in each interview.

The options were compared using three criteria: organizational acceptability, implementation feasibility, and utility for the office. Each option fared quite well in relation to these criteria; however, Option 3 was recommended because it performed well against each criterion, and it also allows the BC OAG to create its own unique DEI competencies and protocols that align with its goals, values, and nature of work.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The BC Public Service (BCPS) has made commitments to upholding and instituting diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), with the advent of the *Where We All Belong Strategy*, that ensures “the BC Public Service is reflective of our province and inclusive of Indigenous peoples, minority communities, immigrants, persons with disabilities and the LGBTQ2S+ community.” (BC Public Service Agency, 2023, Mandate section). The broader realm of the BC Government is also committed to ensuring diversity, equity and inclusion, with different ministries and organizations establishing their own strategies and resources.

The BC Office of the Auditor General (BC OAG), an independent Office of the Legislature, has stated its own commitment to ensuring diversity, equity and inclusion in the organization. The office’s Service Plan outlines how the BC OAG is aiming to institute an ongoing internal framework to embed principles of diversity, equity and inclusion into all corporate policies and processes by the start of 2023/24. (Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia, 2022). The BC OAG is also in the process of developing a full EDI strategy, with the advent of the EDI Project that commenced in July 2023. As of the writing of this report, the BC OAG, while still in the process of developing its EDI strategy, does not yet have a fully defined strategy.

The BC OAG has tasked the researcher with assisting in the development of a DEI strategy. Developing an entire strategy is a large amount of work, so the researcher is focusing on one aspect to support the BC OAG project. A topic that was identified by the BC OAG was examining the use of competencies in leadership competitions from a DEI lens. Like the rest of the BCPS, the BC OAG utilizes a competency framework for its hiring process. These competencies come from the Public Service Agency (PSA) and the BC OAG uses the competencies to develop interview questions that align with the organization. The BC OAG also has its own competency framework that was created in 2012; however, from preliminary conversations with Strategic HR at the BC OAG, the researcher discovered informally and anecdotally that this framework is not used often, as it is quite old and out of date. For this project, the researcher was tasked to determine whether the way that the BC OAG utilizes competencies aligns with its current commitments to DEI and make recommendations for better alignment. The research questions are:

- 1) How does the BC OAG implement competencies in leadership competitions in a way that aligns with its DEI commitments?
- 2) What are the DEI benchmarks that the BC OAG has in place currently?
- 3) How are interview questions developed from competencies aligning with DEI?
- 4) How are competencies selected?

To answer these questions, the researcher utilized a mixed-methods approach consisting of a cross-jurisdictional scan, interviews with leadership interview panelists in the past year, and a document review of leadership competition files in the past year. To summarize, the purpose of this thesis is to determine whether the way that the BC OAG utilizes competencies in leadership competitions aligns with its commitments to DEI and make recommendations for better alignment.

This report is organized into eight chapters. Following this chapter, Chapter 2 will provide background information about the client, the layout of DEI in the BCPS, and background on

competency frameworks. Chapter 3 reviews the current literature on leadership practices, organizational DEI, recruitment bias, and competency-based hiring. Chapter 4 outlines the project's methodology, methods, limitations and delimitations, and how the data will be analyzed. Chapter 5 presents the findings of each research methodology, and Chapter 6 presents the discussion and analysis of these findings. Chapter 7 outlines some options and a recommendation for the BC OAG informed by the findings and analysis, and Chapter 8 concludes the report.

1.1 Positionality Statement

I come to this study as both an insider and outsider. I am an insider due to being a current employee of the BC Office of the Auditor General. In this sense, it is important to note that while I conduct this work, I will be getting paid, and therefore will need to ensure that my research findings are un-biased. I am an outsider, as I am not a leader in the organization, so I do not have first-hand experience in this area. I also recognize that my position as a white, female, Canadian-born researcher currently working on my Master's degree, provides me with certain privileges and biases. As the focus of my project is on diversity, equity and inclusion, it is important for me to recognize that my positionality impacts my perspectives, so I must make a conscious effort to self-reflect and clearly delineate what DEI entails in my study based on facts, not personal views.

Chapter 2: Background and Context

This chapter familiarizes the readers with the project client, what they do, and what they were looking for from the researcher. This chapter also outlines the current state of DEI in the context of the BCPS to provide an understanding of the broader utility of a project like this. Finally, this chapter delineates the competency frameworks that the PSA has developed, which is a necessary component to the rest of the project.

2.1 The Client and what they were seeking

The BC OAG is a non-partisan, independent of government organization that reports directly to the Legislative Assembly. Under the *Auditor General Act*, the BC OAG conducts audits, reports on how well the government is managing its responsibilities and resources and makes recommendations for continuous improvement. (Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia, 2023). It is important to highlight the independent nature of the BC OAG for this project, as though it is a part of the BCPS and utilizes resources such as competency frameworks, it is not required to. It is also important to note that the researcher was an employee of the BC OAG for the duration of this project.

When developing the topic for this thesis, the researcher worked in consultation with the BC OAG to develop a topic that was both of interest to the researcher and useful for the organization. The fit was good, since diversity, equity and inclusion is something that the researcher has a vested interest in, and the organization is committed to making strides in. The BC OAG is currently undertaking a comprehensive policy refresh to ensure that policies are current, consistent and accessible, and align with the mandate, objectives, legislation and the broader public sector policy framework. (Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia, 2022). The first phase of this refresh is around HR policy. The BC OAG is also currently in the early stages of the development of a fulsome EDI strategy. From all of this, the topic of DEI in leadership competitions emerged, which would provide information and recommendations that will assist with the HR component of the policy refresh and provide important steps for the DEI strategy.

2.2 DEI in the BC OAG and the BCPS

The BC OAG has stated commitments to DEI in its 2023/24-2025/26 Service Plan. According to this, one of the guiding values of the BC OAG is a commitment to “creating and reinforcing diversity, inclusion and safety.” (Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia, 2023, p. 7). To act on these commitments, the organization recently established an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Project Team, whose purpose is to develop and implement the EDI strategy.

The BC OAG is not alone in its commitments to DEI in the BCPS. DEI is a significant goal across the BC Government, and many organizations have or are working to create and implement their own strategies. The most significant DEI strategy comes out of the Public Service Agency (PSA). The *Where we all Belong Diversity and Inclusion Strategy* is a 3-year strategy for the BCPS to “ensure we are reflective of the province and inclusive of Indigenous peoples, minority communities, immigrants, persons with disabilities and the LGBTQ2S+ community.” (BC Public Service Agency, 2023, Mandate Section). The strategy has four main goals: 1) to support an increasingly diverse workforce; 2) to enhance inclusion in the workplace; 3) to build a strong foundation for lasting and meaningful reconciliation; and, 4) to remove all barriers to accessibility in the workplace. (BC Public Service Agency, 2023). It also has four areas of focus: leadership and education, structure and alignment, recruitment and retention, and flexibility. (BC

Public Service Agency, 2023). This overarching strategy is significant, as it gives direction to the entire BC Public Service. As such, many other ministries and organizations have developed their own strategies and have stated their own commitments to DEI.

For example, the Ministry of Finance (FIN) houses the Gender Equity Office, as well as has a Parliamentary Secretary for Gender Equity. The Gender Equity Office ensures that government's commitment to gender equity is reflected in budgets, policies and programs, as well as acts as the government's liaison with feminist and women's organizations. (Ministry of Finance, 2023). The Parliamentary Secretary for Gender Equity works with the Minister of Finance and other ministers on all matters relating to gender equity such as closing the gender pay gap, working to end gender-based violence, preventing sexual assault on university campuses, addressing non-consensual disclosure of intimate images, and addressing gaps in health care services. (Ministry of Finance, 2023).

The Attorney General (AG) is the province's leading source on anti-racism. Under the AG, there is a Parliamentary Secretary for Anti-Racism, whose job is to support the AG's anti-racism work. There is also the newly established Anti-Racism Data Committee, which was created to collaborate with the province on a number of initiatives to help identify and eliminate systemic racism in the public sector. (Ministry of Attorney General, 2023). The AG, along with the Ministry of Citizens' Services (CITZ) has also been working on the *Anti-Racism Data Act*, which was introduced in May 2022, and became law in June 2022. The AG has also collaborated with the Ministry of Education and Childcare to create *the Racial Equity Together: K-12 Anti-Racism Action Plan*. (Ministry of Education and Childcare, 2023).

As well, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR) has done much work in the DEI realm. It houses the Parliamentary Secretary for Accessibility, whose mandate is to work with the Minister and other ministries to ensure that the voices of people living with disabilities are heard in all policy development. (Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, 2023). It also houses the Employee Advisory Network (EAN), which was formed as a part of the ministry's commitment to create an inclusive, diverse and culturally safe workplace. (Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, 2023). EAN assists with implementing SDPR's own DEI Strategy, the *Inclusion, Diversity and Cultural Safety Strategy*. The committee identifies barriers, opportunities and solutions, reviews and improves plans, processes, initiatives and programs, and collaborates with partners. (Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, 2023). SDPR's *Inclusion, Diversity and Cultural Safety Strategy* was developed in 2022 and is a 3-year strategy. It has three areas of focus: 1) cultural safety; 2) equity and anti-racism; and 3) inclusion and diversity. (Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, 2022). The strategy outlines plans for each of these three areas, as well as lists what has been done. So far, SDPR has launched training modules, run group mentoring sessions, formed the Indigenous Employees Advisory Circle (IEAC), posted blogs, and hired interns through the Indigenous Youth Internship program and WorkAble program. (Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, 2023).). Other ministries such as CITZ, Children and Family Development (MCFD), Education and Childcare (ECC) Environment and Climate Change Strategy (ECCS), Mental Health and Addiction (MMHA), and Public Safety and Solicitor General (PSSG) all have strategies or other DEI initiatives in place. In sum, while the PSA strategy is the overarching strategy, other ministries have taken initiative to incorporate DEI in different facets.

2.3 Competency Frameworks

As opposed to traditional hiring practices that focus on job responsibilities, educational requirements, experience levels, and technical skills, competency-based hiring focuses on the candidate and whether they demonstrate competencies that will allow them to do the job, regardless of whether they have in the past or not. (Katz, 2021). The core tenant of a competency-based hiring approach is to shift the focus away from experience, education and training to demonstrating that an applicant has the competencies that can be applied to a job. (Katz, 2021). The BC Public Service utilizes a competency-based hiring model, specifically a behavioural competency model, when hiring employees. According to the BCPS, behavioural competencies describe the behaviours, attributes, traits and motives that candidates demonstrate when doing a job. (BC Public Service Agency, 2023). Stemming from this, the BC OAG also utilizes a competency framework in hiring practices and borrows competencies from the PSA to then create its own interview questions. In the BCPS, there are three types of competencies: Behavioural competencies, Competencies for Strategic Leaders, and Indigenous Relations Behavioural Competencies. The BC OAG utilizes each of these competency frameworks when hiring leaders for the organization.

Behavioural competencies apply to all employees, including executive, managers, supervisors and other staff. They describe the essential skills and attributes expected of a BCPS employee. Behavioural competencies are organized into four categories: leading people, achieving business results, personal effectiveness, and interpersonal relationships. (BC Public Service Agency, 2023). There are a number of competencies in each category, with six competencies in the leadership category, nine in the achieving business results category, 15 in the personal effectiveness category, and 12 in the interpersonal relationships category. (BC Public Service Agency, 2023). In a hiring competition, a candidate will be tested on a number of these competencies, subject to discretion of the hiring manager and/or panel.

Competencies for Strategic Leaders are specifically designed for executives and senior leadership. There are the same four categories as Behavioural Competencies, however, there are also two additional competencies that are included: core competencies and role specific competencies. Core competencies include: building strategic alliances, vision and goal setting, creating and managing change, solving problems creatively, promoting empowerment, and executive presence. (BC Public Service Agency, 2021). These core competencies are those that are common to strategic leadership positions and critical in most roles. Role specific competencies are those that apply to specific job profiles for strategic leaders. These competencies are: service delivery: motivating for peak performance, project management: building team orientation, strategy and structure, governance: design strategy and structure, negotiations: negotiating/conflict management, and stakeholder relations: communicating effectively. (BC Public Service Agency, 2021). Like behavioural competencies, choosing which of these to test for during a competition is up to the discretion of the hiring manager and/or panel.

Indigenous Relations (IR) behavioural competencies were designed by the PSA in conjunction with Indigenous partners to help the BC Public Service improve its ability to work effectively with Indigenous peoples of BC. Organizations are not required to ask IR questions during a competition; however, it is recommended by the PSA that they do. The IR includes 17 competencies, though only four IR competencies apply to all BC Public Service employees. These IR competencies are: self-discovery and awareness; sustained learning and development;

cultural agility; and, change leadership. (BC Public Service Agency, 2021). This means that these four IR competencies are to be considered for Strategic Leaders (though we will see in this research this is not necessarily the case). Indigenous relations competencies were designed to enhance behavioural competencies and give direction to both potential employees and employers to consider cultural differences.

The ways in which competency-based hiring is assessed differs from that of traditional hiring. In the context of the BCPS, interviews for behavioural competencies and competencies for strategic leaders are scored utilizing interpretive guides. So, during a competition, the hiring manager and panel will determine what competencies they are looking for and at what level that competency needs to be for that position. Each competency has several behaviours that need to be demonstrated, and the interpretive guide highlights these behaviours and delineates what the hiring panel should be looking for in relation to each behaviour. (Personal Communication, 2023). Competency-based hiring also utilizes the STAR method during interviews. This means that candidates are expected to answer question by describing the situation (S), task (T), action (A), and result (R) of the example they are using to demonstrate the competency. (BC Public Service Agency, 2022). The interpretive guides relate to this STAR method. Indigenous relations competencies also utilize interpretive guides for scoring; however, these differ from behavioural competencies and competencies for strategic leaders. The interpretive guides for IR competencies focuses on READY behaviours and thinking versus NOT READY behaviours and thinking. (BC Public Service Agency, 2021). These are scored on a four-category wheel ranging from role model, ready, shows potential, and not ready. Each of these categories have points attached to them to determine a score for a candidate. (BC Public Service Agency, 2021).

Table 1: Different Types of Competencies

	Behavioural Competencies	Competencies for Strategic Leaders	Indigenous Relations Competencies
Description	Describe the essential skills and attributes expected of BCPS employees.	Behavioural competencies designed for executive and senior leadership.	Designed to help improve our individual and collective abilities to work effectively with Indigenous peoples of BC.
Categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading People • Achieving Business Results • Personal Effectiveness • Interpersonal Relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading People • Achieving Business Results • Personal Effectiveness • Interpersonal Relationships • Core Competencies • Role Specific Competencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific categories for IR competencies • There are 17 competencies altogether, and 4 of them apply to all BCPS employees
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change leadership (leading people) • Analytical thinking (achieving business results) • Reflecting on difficulties (personal effectiveness) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting empowerment (leading people) • Design strategy and structure (achieving business results) • Fostering trust (personal effectiveness) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-discovery and awareness • Sustained learning and development • Cultural agility • Change leadership

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information seeking (interpersonal relationships) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building strategic alliances (interpersonal relationships) Solving problems creatively (core competency) Negotiations (role specific competencies) 	
Scoring Method	Interpretive Guide	Interpretive Guide	Interpretive Wheel

The BC OAG also has its own competency framework, which was developed in 2012. This framework includes 3 categories of competencies: 1) foundation competencies; 2) leadership competencies; and 3) technical competencies. (Personal Communication, 2012). According to the framework, each competency is described by a definition to indicate the overall intent of the competency, as well as further described by a number of key behaviours. (Personal Communication, 2012). The framework also outlines the different levels of proficiency for each competency, as well as how to use the competencies. Despite the BC OAG having this competency framework, in preliminary discussions the researcher had with Strategic HR at the office, it was identified that this competency framework is no longer widely used. Strategic HR revealed that they typically choose to utilize the PSA competency frameworks for leadership competitions now, as the BC OAG one is too out of date.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter provided relevant background information and context to the thesis. From this, readers should know:

- more about the BC OAG, their function, and where they are situated in the BC Public Service;
- the purpose of this thesis, and how the topic was developed;
- the state of DEI practices in the BC OAG and the broader BC Public Service; and,
- the competency frameworks that the BC Public Service and BC OAG use in competitions

Chapter 3: Literature Review on DEI in Organizations and Recruitment Biases and Competency-Based Hiring

This chapter presents the literature review findings on organizational DEI and recruitment bias. Notions of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) are at the forefront of organizational change. Organizations are increasingly stating commitments to DEI which inevitably impacts organizational leadership. This thesis is seeking to examine the state of DEI and leadership at the BC OAG in terms of hiring practices, specifically the implementation of DEI-related competencies in hiring practices. Reviewing the research questions this thesis seeks to answer: How does the BC OAG implement competencies in leadership competitions in a way that aligns with DEI commitments? What are the DEI benchmarks that the BC OAG has in place currently? How are the interview questions developed from competencies aligning with DEI? How are competencies selected?

To inform the topic of this thesis, this literature review will have two parts. In the first section, a review of the DEI literature will be conducted to inform strategies of organizational implementation and set the focus of the research questions. Secondly, critical literature surrounding competency-based hiring practices will be reviewed to understand the pros and cons of this hiring model, particularly in relation to DEI. Taken together, the following sections will provide insight into the literature on this topic, as well as set the stage to inform the research questions that this thesis is seeking to answer.

3.1 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Organizations

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is becoming an increasingly important topic in organizational discourse. Authors are arguing that organizations that establish DEI practices are more successful. (Raimi & Kah, 2022). According to a study by these authors, many other studies have revealed positive results that diversity, equity and inclusion policies improve work performance. (Raimi & Kah, 2020). This is primarily measured in terms of employees—when employees feel as though they have a work environment that is open and inclusive they perform better. (Raimi and Kah, 2022). However, a common theme in the literature is that oftentimes organizational DEI is mere lip service, which does not actually accomplish anything, and can even set DEI policies back and make them ineffectual. In this section I will explore how concepts of DEI are integrating into organizational discourse and practice in order to demonstrate an understanding of different ways that these concepts are impacting organizations.

Much of the literature on organizational DEI outlines strategies that are being used or should be used to institute DEI. A study by Sangeeta Lamba, M.Bishr Omary and Brian Strom (2022) outlines three DEI strategies that could help organizations achieve their DEI goals. The first of these is to make culturally relevant and inclusive decisions, and to ensure early messaging of these decisions to and from top leaders. Strategy two is building and supporting diverse digital communities. This paper was written post-COVID, where digital workplaces are more common than ever, and highlights the necessity that such workplaces also ensure DEI. Strategy three is to communicate and connect thoughtfully and inclusively. (Lamba et al, 2022). While these strategies are quite broad and could be interpreted in many different ways, they provide some basis as to what organizations can do to ensure DEI. Another article by Michael Kraus, Brittany Torrez and LaStarr Hollie (2022), contends with the basis of these strategies and gives some further insight as to what organizations need to do to implement and ensure DEI. The authors highlight a need for policies to mitigate discriminatory recruitment and ensure training and development in DEI, particularly amongst top leaders. (Kraus et al, 2022). Building on this, the

authors also highlight the need for effective management of a diverse workforce. (Kraus et al, 2022). This is the key of this article: how to effectively manage and adopt DEI. Both articles highlight strategies and requirements for ensuring and implementing DEI in organizations effectively, such as making culturally relevant and inclusive decisions, building and supporting diverse digital communities, policy action, and training, but are these strategies being used? Is DEI actually being implemented in organizations?

A common thread between all the articles reviewed in this section is that organizations often give indications and voice commitments to DEI, but do not implement effective policies to support and achieve these goals. In other words, DEI commitments often just become lip service. Lamba et al (2022) contends with this, stating that if organizations perceive DEI as aspirational rather than core to their mission it may be relegated to the sidelines. Kraus et al (2022) delves deep into this issue, and argues that in the American context, despite statements in support of racial justice, many organizations fail to make good on their DEI commitments. In these authors' view, a huge barrier to effective implementation of DEI is a narrative of racial progress which serves to minimize the many discriminatory and systemic barriers still at play in organizations. This is because as organizations seek to enact DEI goals, they make choices about the necessity for such goals, and a narrative of racial progress makes it seem like DEI is not as necessary as it is. (Kraus et al, 2022). In essence, despite organizations claiming a commitment to DEI, there is a risk that DEI can get pushed aside. This is a problem that needs to be addressed - DEI is only useful if it is actionable, so organizations must ensure that DEI is core to their mission as well as be operationalized.

Like many organizations, the BC OAG has stated care for and commitment to implementing and ensuring DEI in their organization. However, also like many organizations, other matters have taken prevalence, pushing full DEI action aside. The organization is currently re-focusing on DEI and developing a fulsome strategy, of which this thesis will be a part of. In this sense, while adding to the DEI literature, this project also has a very practical application in being a part of an operational organizational DEI strategy.

3.2 Recruitment Biases and Competency-Based Hiring

Bias creates major barriers to recruitment. According to an article by the online recruitment company, Harver (2022), there are many types of biases that recruiters must watch out for when selecting employees for their organization, many of which are more intrinsic and less overt. Some of these are confirmation bias, which is when recruiters will already have an assumption about a candidate and ask questions to confirm that assumption, or similarity attraction bias, in which a recruiter will be more inclined to hire a candidate who they view as similar to themselves. (Harver, 2022). While some forms of bias are very obvious and recruiters may be actively trying to screen out certain candidates, a big issue in recruitment is unconscious bias. According to the Harver article (2022), unconscious bias comes from how we are brought up, how we are socialized, our social groups, our exposure to diversity and the media, and many other factors. One major problem that unconscious bias creates is preventing organizations from hiring diverse employees. (Harver, 2022).

According to the literature, organizations have different strategies to address the issue of unconscious bias, and the use of competency-based hiring practices have become more common and cited as being able to address unconscious bias and increase organizational diversity, equity and inclusion. Competency-based hiring differs from traditional hiring practices as it focuses

more on the behaviors of prospective candidates and their ability to draw on anecdotes from their experiences that demonstrate that they possess a given trait. (Cusick, 2020).

A common theme emerging from the literature is that competency-based hiring favours diversity and is a means to overcome unconscious bias. According to an article by Lee Michael Katz (2015), because competency-based selection focuses on behaviour, it can ensure that people of all ages and backgrounds have equal opportunity regardless of length of formal experience and other factors. A 2015 pilot program from Minneapolis College contended with this. This study found that switching to a competency-based process removed many barriers that are inherent in traditional hiring practices and not only improved the quality of hires, but also led to a significant increase in hiring diverse candidates. (Cusick, 2020). The author argues that traditional hiring systems place too much emphasis on the level of education attained and similar work experience, which points to unconscious structural bias in the system that can create barriers to inclusive hiring and perpetuates underrepresented group equity. (Cusick, 2020). By introducing a competency-based hiring pilot program, it was found that Minneapolis College saw a statistically significant increase in the diversity of employees, contending with the findings of Katz's article that competency-based hiring favours diversity. (Katz, 2015). While these articles are great for pointing out that competency-based hiring can help diversity, they reference obvious forms of diversity such as race and gender, and not the more hidden features such as mental health or neurodivergence. Moreover, in terms of the topic of this thesis specifically, these pieces of literature, and the literature on diversity, equity and inclusion in general focus on diversity primarily, or refer to the terms interchangeably, when in reality they are each very different. These are gaps in the literature that this thesis will seek to provide some insight into.

While much of the literature on competency-based hiring practices cites its usefulness in terms of DEI, some of the literature argues that it can sometimes be disadvantageous in certain circumstances. An article by Magnus Kraus (n/d), highlights that competency-based hiring is a technique developed by North Americans for North Americans, which can overlook different cultural traditions and make it disadvantageous for people of different cultures. For example, in some cultures it is not common to speak about your own achievements and candidates may be more comfortable speaking about collective or corporate achievements, which could impact their performance in this type of competition. (Bucht, n/d). Bucht (n/d) also highlights that words have different meanings in different cultures, such as 'problem' or 'conflict', which are common words in these types of interviews, and can again serve as a barrier to people of different cultures. An article by Daniela Lup and Esther Canonico (2020) also highlights how competency-based selection doesn't necessarily help diversity, as it discriminates against autistic individuals. Autistic individuals think and approach situations differently, so they will tend to answer competency-based hiring questions differently. Lup and Canonico (2020) argue that individuals on the neurodivergence spectrum tend to answer questions by narrating in detail what they did, as opposed to how they did it and the rationale for the behaviours, which is what recruiters tend to look for in competency-based interviews. This literature highlights that competency-based hiring doesn't necessarily lead to DEI, and many factors need to be considered, something that this thesis seeks to examine, since competency-based hiring is a key tool used in the BC Public Service and the BC OAG

From reviewing this literature, it can be gleaned that competency-based hiring has both advantages and disadvantages when it comes to DEI. The BC OAG, along with the rest of the BC Public Service, utilizes a competency-based hiring approach and the focus of this thesis is to

examine whether that approach leads to DEI in the organization. In this sense, this thesis will serve to add to the literature and test whether competency-based hiring leads to DEI in one specific organization.

3.4 Conclusion

The research reviewed in this chapter provides some insight into the existing literature on leadership history, DEI in action, and unconscious bias and competency-based hiring. From this review, it can be gleaned that leadership approaches are historically and culturally situated and thus ever evolving. Inclusive leadership is a topic that is fairly new but is reflective of the cultural shift towards notions of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Because inclusive leadership is new to the leadership scholarship, there is not a vast array of literature on it. In this sense, this thesis can serve to add to the inclusive leadership literature, albeit in a very small way. Understanding the history of leadership gives insight into how leadership is culturally shaped and keeps our minds open and reflective about the qualities we are looking for in leaders at the BC OAG. Reviewing the existing literature on organizational DEI informs the questions the researcher will be asking in this thesis to determine how DEI has been implemented in leadership competitions at the BC OAG. Finally, reviewing and understanding the literature on unconscious bias and competency-based hiring serves as a grounding point to the entire thesis.

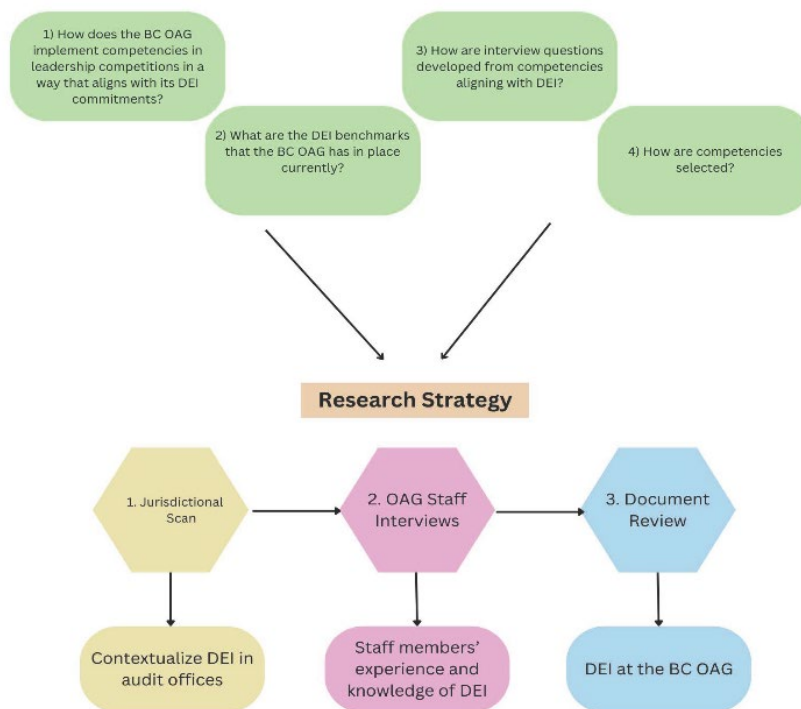
Chapter 4: Methods and Methodology

This chapter describes the methods and methodology that the researcher undertook to conduct the research for this thesis. The chapter begins with the conceptual framework, which was developed from the background, context, and literature review. This framework also highlights the research strategy and the key purpose of each method. From here, the chapter describes the mixed methods methodology of this project, as well as the three methods that the researcher undertook: a cross-jurisdictional scan, structured interviews with OAG staff members, and a document review. To conclude, the chapter discusses the limitations and delimitations of the research strategy.

4.1 Conceptual Framework

From the background, context, and literature review, the conceptual framework for this thesis can be developed. The conceptual framework is built around the four research questions.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



4.2 Methodology

For this thesis, a qualitative, mixed-methods approach was the most suitable. It was imperative for the researcher to gain insights and compare information from numerous sources in order to form a proper conclusion. By using a mixed-methods approach, the researcher was able to create some context and focus to inquire about the research problem and develop well-rounded recommendations for the organization, something that may not have been achieved with one single method.

4.3 Methods

The researcher utilized three primary research methods for this thesis, each to gain different insights into the research problem and questions. The three methods were: a cross jurisdictional scan, document review, and structured interviews with OAG staff members. Although not listed as a method, the literature review also informed each of these methods. Each method served a specific purpose, which are explored in the sub-sections below, but also were necessary to inform each other. The cross jurisdictional scan was necessary to situate the BC OAG in terms of its DEI progress, the interviews were necessary to gain first-hand knowledge of how DEI is incorporated realistically in leadership competitions, and the document review was necessary to determine what the hiring practices at the BC OAG dictate in terms of DEI. Taken together, these three methods serve to situate the BC OAG in the DEI landscape, as well as provide findings to the research questions. The sub-sections below describe each method in greater detail and the tasks that were involved.

Method 1: Cross-jurisdictional scan

The cross-jurisdictional scan's objective was to identify what other jurisdictions have accomplished or are working towards in terms of organizational DEI. To keep the scope small and specific and make direct comparisons, the scan focused on other public sector audit offices across Canada. The findings from this scan will help form comparators to the BC OAG, to evaluate where the BC OAG is at in terms of DEI and where it can go. To complete this scan, the first task that the researcher undertook was determining where and what to look for at the other Canadian audit offices. The researcher determined that looking at each office's current Strategic Plan, or similar documents that included the organizations' mission, values, and goals was what would yield the best results. All these documents are publicly available, so the researcher had no trouble finding this information. The strategies, goals, and values that these other audit offices had were compared with that of the BC OAG to gain a better understanding of the state of DEI in the broader Canadian audit world.

Method 2: Structured Interviews

Interviews were conducted with OAG staff members to learn how DEI was assessed in competitions. For the purposes of this thesis, the researcher was not looking at whether leaders were selected based on their DEI characteristics (race, gender, etc.), but whether the questions asked in leadership competitions and the way competencies function would test to see if candidates had knowledge of DEI and would be able to work with teams in a diverse, equitable, and inclusive way. In total seven people were interviewed, at different leadership levels, and from performance audit, human resources, and IT audit. The interviews were open to all members of the BC OAG who had sat on a panel for a leadership competition in the past year. To determine this sample, the researcher worked with the Strategic HR team at the BC OAG. The researcher was provided a list of all staff members who had been panelists on leadership

competitions in the 2022 calendar year. This year was chosen as it would yield the most recent results. From this list of panelists, the researcher sent invitation emails, and the sample was simply those staff members who agreed to participate.

The first task of this method was to submit an ethics review. After ethics were approved, the next task was to determine the sample. The researcher contacted the BC OAG's human resources team to get a list of all staff members who had sat on a leadership competition panel (manager and above) within the past year. From this list, the researcher sent out an invitation to participate, and seven people agreed. The researcher then sent consent forms to each participant and once those were signed scheduled the interviews. The interviews took place late April to early May of 2023, and lasted about 20-60 minutes. Inductive coding was used to thematically group participants' responses (described more in section 5.2), the results of which are presented in the findings and discussion section. The interview questions can be found in Appendix A.

Method 3: Document Review

The document review was two-fold in terms of objective. The first objective was to gain a better understanding of the BC OAG's hiring practices to determine how/if DEI fit into these practices and how/if it could fit better. The task here was to review HR document, specifically job descriptions and interview guides for leadership competitions that took place in the past year that were provided by the office, as well as competencies. The second objective from the document review was to sort questions that were previously asked in BC OAG leadership competitions in terms of how likely they were to elicit responses from a DEI lens. The task here was to go through each leadership interview and sort the competency questions into "unlikely", "could" and "definitely will" categories. The results of sorting these interview questions for likelihood of eliciting DEI responses are presented in section 5.3.3.

4.4 Limitations and Delimitations

One major limitation was encountered in terms of methodology and methods. This is that as it stands currently, there is no framework or strategy in place for DEI at the BC OAG. There are pieces throughout the Service Plan that indicate a desire and commitment to ensure DEI in the workplace, but there is currently no actual strategy. This lack of framework made it difficult for the researcher to understand where exactly the office was at in terms of DEI. It is important to note that while the researcher was working on this thesis, the BC OAG established a DEI committee with the explicit purpose of creating a DEI strategy. So, while it wasn't in place for the purposes of this thesis, a fulsome DEI strategy is coming at the BC OAG.

Another key limitation for this thesis is what exactly the researcher will be examining in relation to DEI. It is important to note that the researcher will not be looking at the makeup of staff at the BC OAG in terms of DEI. The researcher is not looking at the breakdown of characteristics of leaders at the BC OAG. For the purposes of this thesis, the researcher is examining if and how the BC OAG, by virtue of its stated commitments, is ensuring that the leaders it hires are knowledgeable of DEI, and are able to work with diverse teams in an equitable and inclusive way.

Also of importance in terms of limitations is that there is no theory on DEI and competencies. This is a very evolving field of study, and because of this there is uneven application of competencies in terms of leadership theory. The purpose of this thesis was not to create a

leadership theory that involved DEI and competencies—it was simply to look at one specific organization and determine what is going on.

4.5 Conclusion

This section explained the research methodology, methods used, and the tasks involved in this research. Three research methods were used: a cross-jurisdictional scan, structured interviews, and a document review. The use of three research methods made it possible for the researcher to get as much understanding of the problem as possible and was made possible by the support of the BC OAG and availability of public resources.

Chapter 5: Findings

This chapter reviews the findings of the: 1) cross-jurisdictional scan, 2) staff interview with leadership competition panelists, and 3) document review of recent leadership competition files. The research questions that this chapter is seeking to answer are:

Primary research question:

1. How does the BC OAG implement leadership and Indigenous relations competencies in leadership competitions that aligns with its DEI commitments?

Secondary research questions:

2. What are the DEI benchmarks that the BC OAG has in place currently?
3. How are the interview questions developed from competencies aligning with DEI?
4. How are competencies selected?

Each method serves a different purpose in answering the research questions. The cross-jurisdictional scan's primary function is to situate where the BC OAG is at in terms of DEI in comparison to other Canadian audit offices. The findings here are broader, and while they don't directly address a particular research question, they provide the context for the other findings. The interviews with BC OAG staff members who have sat on interview panels serves to focus the thesis, and provide findings for questions #3, and 4. These interviews also formulate criteria for the sorting system used in the document review section. The document review section has two main purposes. The comparison between job description competencies and competencies tested for in interviews contextualizes how competencies are used at the BC OAG in leadership competitions. The review and rating of interview questions in leadership competitions provides practical insight into how the BC OAG implements leadership and Indigenous relations competencies, and how they align with DEI. Taken together, these three methodologies serve to answer each research question listed above.

5.1 Cross-Jurisdictional Scan

This section presents the findings from the review of 11 Strategic and Business plans of independent, public sector audit offices in Canada. These documents were chosen because they are the primary planning documents of Canadian audit offices, which outline values, mission, goals, and plans. These 11 were chosen specifically because they represent each audit office that is in Canada. Included in the sample are all 10 provinces, as well as the federal office. The territories were not included, as they do not have their own audit offices, and report to the federal office. The researcher chose not to expand the scan outside of Canada to keep the scope contained. The objective is to compare what these other jurisdictions have in place regarding DEI with that of the BC OAG in order to provide context as to where the BC OAG is at in terms of DEI implementation. This section begins with a high-level explanation of these documents and how they were found, followed by a detailed chart documenting values, goals, whether there is a DEI lead, and other DEI initiatives for each office. This section then presents the common and overlapping themes and concludes with how these compare to the BC OAG.

5.1.1 Types of documents and why they were chosen

All Canadian audit offices have some sort of plan that lays out the values, goals, finances, and other important information about the office for a specific time frame. For the purposes of this jurisdictional scan, the documents examined were Business Plans, Strategic Plans, one Service

Plan, and one Operational Report. Eleven documents were reviewed in total, with dates ranging beginning in 2020 and ending in 2027. These documents were chosen because they are the primary planning documents of each audit office and would be most likely to have DEI information. They are also all publicly available and were found on each audit office's website. These documents were chosen for this review because the purpose of them is to outline values, goals, and initiatives in their respective offices. In relation to this thesis, these documents are where any DEI initiatives or goals would be mentioned, as they are the primary planning documents of the organizations. The metrics included in this scan are values, goals/strategies, DEI lead, and other DEI initiatives. These metrics were chosen based on the information that was available in the documents. The inclusion of the DEI lead metric arose from conversations that the researcher had with the BC OAG, where it was identified that the organization has a designated person serving as DEI lead. The researcher included this metric due to its potential to reveal insight about the degree of DEI formalization. The purpose of this scan was to examine what other audit offices have stated and/or are doing in terms of DEI, for the purpose of situating the BC OAG in the broader Canadian context of DEI in audit offices, and these documents were the clearest way to ascertain this information. This scan will inform the research questions by providing context as to the overall landscape of DEI in Canadian audit offices, and how the BC OAG fares in comparison. Table 2 below lists the goals, values, and DEI initiatives of each office, as well as indicates whether the office has an identified DEI lead.

Table 2: Cross-Jurisdictional Scan of Canadian Audit Offices

1. Jurisdiction	2. Title, Reference, and Year of Plan	3. Values	4. Goals/Strategies	5. DEI Lead	6. Other DEI Initiatives
1. Office of the Auditor General of Ontario	Strategic Plan April 2020-March 2024 (Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, 2020).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Serving the public interest -Independence and objectivity -Integrity and professionalism -Quality and excellence -Teamwork and collaboration -Trust and mutual respect -Innovation, continuous improvement and best practices -Strong work ethic with a balanced lifestyle -Diversity and inclusion -Leadership and mentorship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provide accurate and objective information through timely and relevant reports and audit opinions -Provide a high-performing, diverse and inclusive team environment with ongoing professional training and development -Allocate resources efficiently and effectively and measure results -Engage members of Provincial Parliament and the public in our work. Establish and maintain relationships with professional organizations, private-sector accounting firms, academic institutions and other independent Officers of the Legislature 	No DEI lead identified	None documented
2. Office of the Auditor	Business Plan for the Year Ending March 31, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Trust: We earn it with everything we say and do. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Engage and support our people 	No DEI lead identified	None documented

General of Alberta	(Office of the Auditor General of Alberta, 2022).	<p>We are accountable for our actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Respect: Everyone deserves the right to be heard and deserves to be treated with dignity and courtesy. -Diversity of Thought: We encourage open minds, innovative thinking and constructive challenge. -Teamwork: With integrity, we work together to generate better solutions. -Growth: We view individual success as professional growth together with a fulfilling personal life. We value both. 	-Maximize the value of our audit reports		
3. Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan	2021/2024 Strategic Plan (Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan, 2021).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Independence: maintain objectivity -Trust and integrity: professional, honest, courteous, and fair -Accountability: take responsibility for our work and performance -Leadership: lead by example, motivate others to act, and promote teamwork -Flexibility: support a flexible and healthy work environment -Learning: promote on-going development and improvement -Diversity of thought: respect strength gained from varies experiences, knowledge, and backgrounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Focus on the most relevant audit areas -Sustain an engaged workforce -Deliver quality audits at a reasonable cost -Increase awareness of the office 	No DEI lead identified	None identified
4. Office of the Auditor General Manitoba	Operations of the Office for the Year Ended March 31, 2023 (Office of the Auditor General of Manitoba, 2023).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Independence: independent from government and work is objective and unbiased -Integrity: act with honest and uphold high ethical standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Select and complete audits and other work that deliver values to the Legislative Assembly and Manitobans -Maximize impact of advice, findings, recommendations, 	No DEI lead identified	None identified

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Innovation: promote innovation and creativity in what we do and how we do it -Teamwork: work as a team by sharing each other's knowledge and skills to reach our goals 	<p>and reports to promote excellent public administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sustain a high performing, diverse and engaged team -Nurturing a thriving office culture that reflects our values 		
5. Auditor General of Quebec	Overview of Strategic Plan 2023-2027 (Auditor General of Quebec, 2023).	A team that is professional, and inclusive recognized for being objective and independent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Value-added work -An inclusive culture and engaged people are at the heart of our mission -An organization combining quality, agility and innovation 	No DEI lead identified	None identified
6. Auditor General of New Brunswick	Strategic Plan 2023-2028 (Auditor General of New Brunswick, 2023).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Team: strength comes from the knowledge, experience, and professionalism of our team -Impact: select audits for relevance, significance, and risk with the goal of making a positive difference for the Province of New Brunswick 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Focus on relevant audit areas -Sustain an engaged workforce -Deliver quality audits in a timely basis 	No DEI lead identified	None identified
7. Auditor General of Newfoundland and Labrador	Business Plan 2020-2023 (Office of the Auditor General Newfoundland and Labrador, 2020).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Credibility: complied with professional and office standards to produce relevant and reliable audit reports -Independence: The Office of the Auditor General's independence of Government, in fact and in appearance, provides objective conclusions, opinions and recommendations on the operations of Government and Crown agencies -Integrity: Our staff work in a professional and ethical manner, ensuring respect, objectivity, trust, honest and fairness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Strengthen employee orientation and onboarding experience -Learning and development plans -Key performance indicators 	No DEI lead identified	None identified
8. Auditor General of Nova Scotia	Business Plan 2023-2024 (Office of the Auditor General of Nova Scotia, 2023).	-Independence: remain independent of the entities that we audit and are objective in our work	-Conduct an office-wide engagement survey to foster a culture of continuous improvement, facilitate collaborative and data-driven	No DEI lead identified	None identified

		<p>-Integrity: work together with others in an open, honest and trustworthy manner while respecting the confidentiality of the information we obtain</p> <p>-Impact: focus on significant issues to make a positive difference for the benefit of Nova Scotians</p>	<p>decision making, and promote the well-being and overall success of both employees and the Office.</p> <p>-Review and refine the performance management model ensuring it will maximize individual and organizational performance, boost employee engagement, and drive business success.</p> <p>-Amplify visibility and accessibility of our reports by leveraging our social media platforms.</p> <p>-Revise the Internal Communications Plan to align communication strategies with Office objectives, empower employees, and ensure effective and meaningful communication across the organization.</p> <p>-Develop a three-year performance audit plan.</p> <p>-Streamline and standardize the process for audit selection, related scope and reporting to increase the number of audits, ensure they are delivered on time and budget, and are impactful with practical recommendations for improvement.</p> <p>-Collaborate with the Public Accounts Committee to advance its effectiveness in holding Government accountable.</p>		
9. Auditor General of Prince Edward Island	Strategic Plan 2021-2025 (Office of the Auditor General Prince Edward Island, 2021).	<p>-Independence: fair, objective, non-partisan</p> <p>-Reliability: work together in open, honest, and trustworthy manner; strive everyday to meet the highest standards of professional conduct and to produce</p>	<p>-Increase support and communication to our external stakeholders</p> <p>-Provide a more rewarding and professional work environment</p> <p>-Improve our audit and administrative work processes</p>	No DEI lead identified	None identified

		<p>work of consistent high quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Progressive: seek opportunities for positive change and innovation in operations; promote improvements in public sector management through work and recommendations -Relevance: seek audits on the basis of significance and risk with the goal of making a positive difference for islanders 			
10. Office of the Auditor General of Canada	2023-2024 Departmental Plan (Office of the Auditor General of Canada, 2023).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Democracy and independence -Respect for people -Integrity and professionalism -Stewardship and serving the public interest -Commitment to excellence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Complete the review of the Audit Working Paper Software Project -Advisory services on the performance audit selection process -Audit review of the budget and financial process -Review of advisory services on the larger digital transformation initiative -Audit and evaluation of the resource planning and management processes 	<p>DEI lead identified</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Principal, HR serves as DEI champion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Employment Equity annual report -Diversity and Inclusion Committee -IT Accessibility Team -Blind hiring practices
11. Office of the Auditor General of BC	Service Plan 2023/24 -2025/26 (Office of the Auditor General of BC, 2022).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -We believe in supporting each other to learn and develop -We believe in supporting everyone to do their best work -We believe in working together as a high-performing team -We believe in acting with integrity -We believe in being visionary -We are committed to creating and reinforcing diversity, inclusion, and safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Support each other to do our best work within an inclusive and engaged workplace culture -Live our values and work through difficult issues while treating people respectfully -Deliver audits and trusted information that demonstrate value from the resources that are entrusted to us -Establish an employment market competition plan -Conduct a comprehensive corporate policy refresh -Implement critical improvements to how we manage audit resources and products 	<p>DEI lead identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sheila Dodds, Deputy Auditor General 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -EDI Project to develop fulsome EDI strategy (launched in July 2023) -EDI core committee (to develop strategy) -EDI consultation group (to assist with strategy development)

			-Redesign out office intranet and digital workflows		
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5.1.2 Identified Findings

In terms of DEI, a few findings emerged from this jurisdictional scan. The yellow highlight in Table 2 refers to any mention of DEI in each document. By “mention” the actual word of diversity, equity, or inclusion would need to be used. Here, this is called a “direct” or “explicit” reference to DEI. The first noted finding is that DEI appears specifically in four audit office’s values: Ontario, Alberta, Quebec, and Saskatchewan. (as noted in the third column of Table 2). The Office of the Auditor General of Ontario has “diversity and inclusion” explicitly stated as a value (Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, 2020), while the Office of the Auditor General of Alberta (2022) and the Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan (2021) both list “diversity of thought” as a value. The Auditor General of Quebec also states “inclusivity” explicitly in its values statement. (Auditor General of Quebec, 2023). The other offices examined in this scan do not explicitly mention DEI, but some have values listed that could relate to DEI. These will be called “indirect” references to DEI. Ontario (2020), Alberta (2022), Manitoba (2022), and New Brunswick (2023) all have “teamwork” listed as a core value, broadly stating the importance of teamwork and different voices, which could allude to DEI. “Respect” is another value that several offices list that could relate to DEI. Ontario (2020), Alberta (2022), and the Federal office (2023) all list “respect” as a value. Ontario (2020) and Saskatchewan (2021) also list “leadership”, which also has DEI undertones, and Prince Edward Island states “progressive” as a value, which could relate to DEI. (Office of the Auditor General of Prince Edward Island, 2021). From the examination of the values of each audit office, some offices specifically mention DEI, while others list values that could allude to DEI, but are too broad to definitively say they are DEI values. In essence, the findings indicate that the extent to which Canadian audit offices state DEI directly or indirectly as a value differs. While the offices that do not specifically list DEI in their values could be getting at DEI through other less explicit values, there is a lack of formalization, which serves to demonstrate that DEI may not be as important in these offices.

Another theme that emerged from this scan is in terms of goals and strategies (columns 4 and 5 of Table 2). Goals and strategies can tell us if or how audit offices are operationalizing DEI into their practices. While listing DEI as a value is important, having DEI goals and strategies shows that offices are aiming to implement the DEI values. Interestingly, each of the documents reviewed in this scan mentioned work life/people/culture in some way, indicating a potential DEI relationship. These documents reference goals of ensuring diverse teams, support of people, an office culture that reflects values, an inclusive culture, learning and development opportunities, and other similar goals. Some jurisdictions are more direct than others, explicitly stating goals that refer to DEI. For example, Ontario has a goal to “Provide a high-performing, diverse and inclusive team environment with ongoing professional training and development.” (Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, 2020, p. 4). Manitoba has a similar goal to “sustain a high-performing, diverse and engaged team.” (Office of the Auditor General of Manitoba, p. 30). Other offices do not directly reference DEI in their goals and strategies but could relate. For example, PEI has a goal to “provide a more rewarding and professional work environment” (Auditor General of Prince Edward Island, 2021, p. 8), which could include DEI, but is not explicit. Similarly to the values, the extent to which DEI is incorporated into Canadian audit office’s goals and strategies differs. Some offices are very explicit and clearly have strategies and

goals to incorporate DEI, while others have strategies and goals that could lead to DEI, but are not definitive.

5.1.3 Comparison with BC OAG

The purpose of this cross-jurisdictional scan was to glean insight into the state of DEI in Canadian audit offices and compare that to what is happening at the BC OAG, to inform the findings and recommendations of this research. A number of findings emerged.

As mentioned above, one of the key findings from this scan is that in terms of values, the extent to which Canadian audit offices mention DEI differs. Only four offices mentioned DEI directly in their values statements. When examining the BC OAG Service Plan, DEI is directly mentioned as a value. The BC OAG has a value stating a “commitment to creating and reinforcing diversity, inclusion, and safety” (Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia, 2022, p. 7), which in this research is categorized as an explicit DEI value. In this sense, the BC OAG appears to be a more developed office in terms of DEI, along with Ontario, Alberta, Quebec, and Saskatchewan.

When examining goals/strategies of other audit offices, some comparisons can be drawn with the BC OAG. As mentioned above, the other audit offices commonly have indirect goals and strategies that reference work life, people, or culture in some form. In this respect, the BC OAG is similar, but the BC OAG’s goals and objectives have explicit references to DEI. One of the goals is to “support each other to do our best work within an inclusive and engaged workplace culture” (Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia, 2022, p. 8), which is very clearly related to DEI. Again, not all offices make direct reference to DEI in their goals and strategies, only Ontario, Manitoba, and Quebec. In this sense, the BC OAG again appears to be more developed in terms of DEI, as seven of the 11 offices do not mention DEI in their strategies and goals.

From this scan, the BC OAG’s Service Plan is most aligned with the federal Office of the Auditor General of Canada. While Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, Alberta, and Saskatchewan also reference DEI in their values, strategies/goals, or both, BC and Canada are the only two offices that have an identified DEI lead. At the BC OAG, the Deputy Auditor General is the DEI lead who oversees all DEI-related activity. At the federal office, the Principal of HR serves as the DEI champion. In the context of this research, a DEI lead is considered significant, as having this designation establishes responsibility for continuous and sustained implementation of DEI. Another key similarity, that was unexpectedly observed from the analysis, is that both offices have DEI committees that serve to promote awareness, provide training, and implement a DEI strategy. None of the other offices have these committees, which again points to a higher level of commitment, responsibility, and formalization.

5.1.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings from a cross-jurisdictional scan of Canadian audit offices. The scan found three important findings that will help construct the DEI landscape for the overall purpose of this thesis. The first finding is that the extent to which offices value DEI differs. Four audit offices (five including BC) specifically highlighted DEI as office values. The other offices had values that could instill DEI, however, they are not formalized, so the extent to which DEI is actually valued in these offices is indeterminate. The second finding is similar to

the first, but in relation to goals and strategies. Three offices (four including BC) had strategies and goals that were explicit about DEI. The other offices made references to culture and work environment, which could aid in instilling DEI, but again were not explicit. Overall, the first two findings indicate that the majority of Canadian audit offices lack formalization at the best, or at the worst are not interested in DEI. The third finding relates to how BC fares, by virtue of its Service Plan, in terms of DEI. When comparing BC to the other jurisdictions, it comes out looking quite established in terms of DEI. The BC OAG has values relating to DEI, goals and strategies relating to DEI, and an established DEI lead. Its service plan has all the right things.

5.2 Structured Interviews with OAG Staff

This section presents the findings from structured interviews conducted with OAG staff members who sat on leadership competition panels in 2022. The purpose of these interviews was to gain a broader working knowledge as to how competencies are used by panelists in leadership competitions at the BC OAG. A secondary purpose was to gain insight into the extent of knowledge that panelists have around DEI concepts, and whether DEI is a component of the interview process. These interviews tie into research questions #1, 3, and 4. Throughout this section, the term “participants” will be used to refer to the staff members who participated in the interviews. The questions that the participants were asked can be found in Appendix A. Each interview had a timeslot of one hour, but ranged from 20-30 minutes. In total, seven staff members were interviewed, from different positions and from different OAG portfolios (performance audit, human resources, professional practices, and IT audit). The researcher asked eight questions in total (Appendix A).

Participants’ responses were grouped into five themes that reflect general areas of findings: training and learning, competency selection, competency use, office culture, and competition panels. The researcher utilized information on thematic analysis from Delve (2022) and an article by Maguire and Delahunt (2017) to develop these themes. According to Delve (2022), there are six steps for a thematic analysis: 1) familiarizing oneself with the data; 2) creating initial codes; 3) collecting codes with supporting data; 4) grouping codes into themes; 5) reviewing and revising themes; and 6) writing the narrative. Maguire and Delahunt also pointed to six steps for a thematic analysis, utilizing a framework developed by Braun and Clarke in 2006. These steps are: 1) Become familiar with the data; 2) generate initial codes; 3) search for themes; 4) review themes; 5) define themes; and 6) write-up. (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Both sources essentially list the same steps, which are the steps that the researcher used in developing the five themes identified here. The researcher interviewed each participant, and recorded and transcribed the interviews utilizing Microsoft Teams. From here, the researcher went through each transcript, highlighted, and colour-coded statements, pulling out initial codes. Once all the transcripts were highlighted and coded, the researcher grouped similar statements together and attempted to theme them. The themes went through several iterations, until each theme made sense with the associated coded data. In the end, five themes were identified. Training and learning encompassed any statements made around knowledge or training that participants had done on DEI. Competency selection referred to how competencies were selected for job descriptions and/or testing, and competency use how participants and hiring managers viewed and used competencies in their job as panelists. Office culture is a theme that served to encompass all statements made around DEI at the OAG more broadly, and competition panels encompassed statements around the functioning of competition panels.

5.2.1 Training and Learning

The researcher was curious about participants' general knowledge and understanding of DEI concepts, and whether they had done any training around these concepts prior to being on a panel. The researcher developed this theme to provide more context to the extent that OAG staff members, particularly those who sit on panels are aware of and understand DEI. This theme is important because if panelists do not understand or acknowledge DEI, they are less likely to recognize or appreciate candidates who are demonstrating DEI. In terms of training, the BC OAG has offered the eCornell Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training course to executive leadership. This is an online certificate offered by Cornell University, that teaches about DEI concepts and how they function in the workplace. (eCornell, 2023). Five of the seven participants mentioned that they completed the eCornell Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training program. There were also several in-office training sessions mentioned by three participants, such as Indigenous relations training, and other training around diversity through the PSA. However, one participant noted that this was "spotty training here and there over the last five years, just a couple hours and what not." From this statement, it appears that the training offered by the BC OAG is inconsistent.

Participants also mentioned that they had gained understanding and experience with DEI through audit work. Three participants noted this, with one stating that the "most significant experience in relation to at least diversity and inclusion comes from a recent audit that I worked on as the engagement leader, so I was involved in the audit of the diversity and inclusion." There was one participant who admitted to not having have done any formal training on DEI. A common response that participants gave in terms of training and learning was that they just had general knowledge of these concepts from different experiences in their own lives. Some had read books on the topics, some had discussions with friends, and some were members of different cultures themselves, so they had experience with these concepts from another angle that they brought into their duty as panelist.

Interviews revealed that participants had gained knowledge around DEI in many ways. However, it is important to note that the only formal training, put on by the office specifically, was the eCornell DEI course. This training was not required but encouraged for executive leadership. It is also important to note that this was only offered to executive leadership. Five out of the seven participants had taken this course, which is a good majority, however, the fact this wasn't an option for all panelists or required to be a panelist indicates that DEI may not be a focus when it comes to leadership panels. Overall, it appears that the BC OAG does not require panelists on leadership competitions to be trained in DEI.

5.2.2 Competency Selection

To answer the research questions, the researcher was looking at how competencies are selected for interviews and whether DEI is considered in this selection. The researcher was also curious whether panelists were involved in the selection of competencies. Many participants mentioned that they were not directly involved in the selection of competencies, and that competencies came from job profiles and job requirements. Moreover, when probed about which competencies are selected for testing from these job profiles and whether DEI is a consideration, it was found that DEI is not often one of the main focuses. Five participants noted that DEI is not being tested for formally, with one stating "I wouldn't say explicitly we've ever been explicit about looking for diversity in the people we hire."

All seven participants mentioned that technical competencies are perceived as more important. One participant mentioned that when they are developing interview questions, they are primarily thinking “what are those technical skills? What knowledge and experience do they have? As opposed to putting a DEI lens on it.” Moreover, auditing requires a very specific set of skills, so interviews are more focused on testing for whether candidates have those skills. One participant stated that:

One of the reasons why we narrow the field is because we’re trying to find people who have the competency to do the job right away as opposed to bringing someone in and training them so they can do the job.

Another participant mentioned that in terms of leadership positions, “it gets kind of harder as it goes up the ladder because it is more narrow and you are looking for more specific technical skills.”

DEI is not explicitly a focus in leadership competitions, and the way that competencies are selected reflects this. Some panelists did mention that some competencies, particularly around developing people or creating a team are selected for testing because they get at DEI in a more covert way. One participant mentioned that they “felt the teamwork one generated information for us about their style as it relates to diversity and inclusion” and another mentioned that “from the DEI perspective the competency around teamwork and the competency around coaching employees, we wanted those to have space for the DEI lens.”

The researcher inquired about the cultural agility competency, which does explicitly test for DEI, and found that though there is an “Indigenous Relations competency” in all job profiles, it does not always get selected for testing. One participant mentioned that there is really no knowledge or understanding of how to operationalize the Indigenous Relations competencies, or even how necessary they are. So, while they are in job profiles, they are not always tested for due to a lack of understanding. They stated that “we’re not sure how important it is to our job. We have it in the job description, but you know it’s not necessarily regularly part of the conversation.” Moreover, when an Indigenous Relations competency is selected, it is almost always cultural agility. Participants generally agreed that the Indigenous Relations competencies need to be used more—with one suggesting that the BC OAG require that an Indigenous Relations competency be tested for in every interview. However, as mentioned above, another problem here is that the BC OAG is uncertain how to test for these competencies, as well as don’t necessarily see the value in them.

Overall, the findings indicate that DEI does not tend to be a focus when selecting competencies to be tested in interviews. From the interviews, participants stated that because auditing is quite technically focused, there seems to be much more focus on technical competencies rather than DEI. This technical focus does make sense, however because the OAG has made so many commitments to DEI, it should be expected that when hiring leaders for the organization DEI is a consideration. Moreover, when competencies were selected that could give way to DEI, such as developing people or creating a team, they were not explicitly chosen for DEI purposes. The only competencies selected for testing DEI specifically are Indigenous Relations competencies, specifically cultural agility, and while those appear in all job descriptions, they are not always chosen for testing.

5.2.3 Competency Use

Building on competency selection, the researcher also examined how competencies were used and if they were used in a way that aligns with DEI. Six participants noted that there are competencies in interviews that can indirectly get at DEI, such as those around supervision or coaching or mentoring, but their primary use isn't to get at DEI. This can be seen in this participant's answer: "you know, some around supervision and coaching and mentoring sort of thing which kind of touches on it. And if we were smart, we could probably glean some information about a person and their insights into DEI." Another quotation from a different participant also shows this:

It's not explicit like we're not screening to see how individuals in a previous job or previous experience have been inclusive. It's more, it's less so about that. Like you may hit on that in a in a response, but it's not the thing that we're screening for explicitly.

Further, five participants noted that some of the competencies, such as teamwork and leadership, create space for DEI, but having no guidance in the area doesn't allow them to reach that full DEI capacity. For example, one participant noted: "Umm, you know, I feel that the competencies create the space for it, but that's in a very broad way. I feel that we can breathe a lot more into those standard leadership competencies."

All participants pointed to the need for formalization in terms of how competencies are used. Many noted that assessing for DEI is optional at this point and up to the discretion of the hiring manager. This can be seen in this quote from one participant: "Umm, I wouldn't even say expectation. It's the discretion of the hiring manager and the panel members to decide whether or not they want to test for DEI." Another example of this optional use can be seen in this quotation from another participant: "It's almost given an optional use at this point in time. So that's something maybe we want to think about here." Along with this, a common response from participants was that there is little to no guidance surrounding DEI in their role as a panelist. One stated that when assessing competencies:

It is a little unclear in terms of what you're actually screening for and what kind of questions you want to ask and what criteria you want to use. But there's a lot of different ways for diversity inclusion to come through, and they don't always necessarily lend themselves to be identified through our interview system.

In response to research question # 1, the researcher was looking at whether Indigenous Relations competencies were used (when used) for their stated purpose, or if they were used more as an overall test for DEI. All participants stated that when Indigenous Competencies were used, it was only cultural agility, and it was used as more of an overall DEI test. This can be seen in a quote by one participant: "and it seems like it was used in the sense kind of to test for diversity more generally than like specifically Indigenous indigeneity."

The findings indicate that there is an overall lack of direction on how competencies should be used. The BC OAG makes commitments to DEI, however the lack of a framework, especially in the context of hiring makes it difficult to put into practice. At this point, it appears as though the use of DEI in leadership competitions is discretionary, and not required. The answers from participants revealed that there is an overall interest and desire to better incorporate DEI into hiring practices, but the lack of guidance and direction throughout the hiring process contributes to a challenge in implementation.

5.2.4 Office Culture

The researcher was curious about whether participants felt that DEI was important in the context of leadership competitions, and more broadly, what the office culture around DEI was like at the BC OAG. Several participants mentioned that while being a panelist in a leadership competition, they themselves thought about DEI when assessing candidates. However, this was often more of a personal decision than a panel decision, and there weren't often DEI discussions with the entire panel. For example, one participant stated that "Hmm. Yes, from a personal standpoint, I definitely think about DEI and I think of it in terms of how we've scored and thought about the candidates on other competencies." There were also several participants who did not think about DEI at all as a panelist, again pointing to the problem of a lack of formality. One panelist stated that "no, DEI wasn't something I was personally considering when assessing competencies." This shows a range of awareness about DEI with panelists on leadership competitions.

Something that was mentioned by multiple participants was that when the new Auditor General (AG) came into the role in July 2020, DEI really came to the forefront. One participant noted that DEI is very important to the current AG, so in that sense DEI has become much more of a focus of the office. They stated that "Well, when Michael came in, he brought in that DEI lens." Contending with this, another participant stated that in terms of DEI, "Yeah, I think because it's part of our values as an office. It's also a really important direction from the Auditor General."

However, some participants who have been in the office for a number of years brought up that the new DEI focus of the office was definitely not always the case. In previous years, DEI was at best ignored and at worst discouraged, so it was nice to have a leader who is supportive of DEI. One participant stated that:

It wasn't always like that though, so if you want me to go back, I'll say no. It was totally it was ignored at best and at worst it was like almost discouraged. I've been on the opposite end as well in this office, so it's great to see how it's progressed.

Despite this new support and focus on DEI, many participants still felt that DEI in practice was limited in the office because of the nature of audit work. Several participants noted that auditing is highly rule-bound and must adhere to very specific standards, which makes incorporating DEI difficult. This is evidenced by a statement from one participant:

We really do appreciate diversity. We're auditors, we're highly rule bound, we like methodology. We think ABC, there's no other way and that doesn't really lend itself to a rich DEI environment. So I think that's something we gotta think through as well.

Moreover, according to one participant, "time pressures are always a killer of innovation." Participants felt that while they were passionate about DEI and really wanted to make the office better in that regard, other work tends to take precedent.

From the interviews it was found that all participants were supportive and enthusiastic about the DEI-focused direction of the new AG. However, it was also found that there was a disconnect between the office culture and support around DEI and how DEI actually operates at the BC OAG, particularly due to the nature of audit work.

5.2.5 Competition Panels

A significant question for this thesis is: how do competition panels in leadership competitions approach DEI? This is important, as it serves to provide insight into research question #1. Moreover, it allows for suggestions about how to improve panels to come through, which serves to inform recommendations. Three participants said that the panel they were on had proper conversations about DEI and what they would be looking for in answers. For example, one participant said that “In the planning and design of the questions, and then also in conversations about the responses from candidates, we definitely had conversations related to diversity, equity and inclusion, yes.” The other four panelists said that there were no DEI discussions with the panel. This can be seen in a quotation from another participant, who stated that in reference to DEI discussions with the panel “there is an opportunity for us to do it, but it’s not currently happening.” This once again points to the finding that DEI considerations in leadership competitions is discretionary and inconsistent. Similarly, some participants said that their panels had important conversations around unconscious bias and came up with plans to quell this, while others said their panels did not talk about this at all.

Some participants spoke to the utility of panels, and many gave suggestions as to how to improve the DEI lens of panels. For example, training was brought up as a suggestion by all participants, with one stating that “I think it would be helpful for us to get training and build awareness on interview questions and the language that is used in questions themselves.” Two participants felt that panels allowed more diverse thought and opinions to come through. This can be exemplified in a quotation by one participant, who said that “I think it’s also good to have a panel. You know, when thinking about making the panels diverse as well, it allows for more diverse conversation.”

Despite the utility of panels, many participants agreed that the way panels operate in leadership competitions needs to be improved to better facilitate DEI. Several participants put forth the idea of panel member training on concepts such as unconscious bias and DEI more broadly. Training on competencies specifically and how to understand and score them from a DEI lens was also a suggestion that was mentioned frequently. Participants also felt that it was important to look at the makeup of panels and ensure that diverse perspectives are being incorporated.

From these interviews, the utility of competition panels was something that participants generally agreed on. However, the findings contend with those of the rest of this chapter, in that there is an overall lack of direction and formalization for panels on incorporating a DEI lens.

5.2.6 Key Findings and Conclusion

Interviews with staff members highlighted three key findings. The first finding is that in terms of how the BC OAG implements competencies to align with DEI, the only competency that is implemented specifically to address DEI is the Indigenous Relations competency of cultural agility. From the interviews, it was found that the cultural agility competency is used at the BC OAG as an overall DEI competency. The second key finding, also highlighting how the BC OAG implements competencies to align with DEI was that aside from cultural agility, no other competencies are used to directly address DEI. However, it was found that there are competencies, particularly leadership, teamwork, communication, and coaching that participants believe to provide some insight into DEI. The third key finding is that there is no formal requirement or strategy to ensure that competencies are implemented in a way that aligns with DEI when conducting leadership competitions at the BC OAG. Each theme highlighted that there is no requirement for a DEI lens during leadership competitions, and if that lens is used, it is up

to the discretion of the hiring manager and panelists, not because it is a requirement of the BC OAG.

5.3 Document Review

5.3.1. Introduction

This section presents the findings of leadership competition files from five of the most recent leadership competitions at the BC OAG. The objective here is to determine the alignment of competencies used in leadership competitions with DEI commitments, serving to answer research question #1. Specifically, this section examines the competencies that are listed in job descriptions and tested for in leadership competition interviews and determines whether DEI is a consideration when implementing these competencies. The chapter begins with a comparison between competencies listed in job descriptions for the past five leadership competitions at the BC OAG and competencies that were tested for in actual interviews. This chapter concludes with a presentation of interview questions asked in leadership competitions and a discussion of the likelihood that these questions would elicit information on the candidate's understanding and viewing of DEI.

5.3.2 Leadership Competition Files: Comparison Between Job Description Competencies and Interview Competencies

To explore how the BC OAG implements leadership and Indigenous relations competencies in leadership competitions, the author examined leadership competition files from five BC OAG leadership competitions that took place within the last year (Sept. 2022- Feb. 2023). The leadership and Indigenous relations competencies came from the PSA competency frameworks, as well as the BC OAG's own competency framework. For the purposes of this thesis, "leadership" refers to the level of Manager up to Assistant Auditor General. This sample of leadership competition files came from Strategic HR. The sample was compiled based on several considerations: time frame (2022-2023), different levels (manager or higher), and different portfolios. Given these considerations, Strategic HR worked to compile the sample. The researcher was not involved in the file selection. The sample that was received contained positions of a range of ranks and in different portfolios, providing a well-rounded picture of the organization. The files included are: 1) Assistant Auditor General of Critical Audit Support Services (CASS AAG), 2) Chief Information Officer (CIO), 3) Executive Director of Performance Audit (PARA ED), 4) Performance Audit Manager (PARA Manager), and 5) Executive Director of Strategic Human Resources (SHR ED).

The researcher received files from strategic HR that contained the job descriptions and the interview guides for each position. In the job descriptions, there are competencies listed that are required for the job. From the job descriptions, competencies are pulled to be tested for in interviews. The competencies fall into four categories: Competencies for Strategic Leaders, Behavioural Competencies, Indigenous Relations Competencies, and Technical Competencies. These competencies are all listed in Table 3 for each of the 5 leadership competitions. To determine whether the competencies that were tested for in interviews aligned with those in the job descriptions, the researcher looked first at the job description and made a list of each competency. The researcher then compared this to the associated interview guide, which lists what competency(s) each question is testing for. The researcher then highlighted instances of overlap, as well as instances where there was no overlap. This table includes all competencies,

not just those related to DEI, to show what competencies seem to have the most value in each position.

Table 3: Job Description Competencies vs. Interview Competencies

Competencies				
Legend: Job Description Only; Interview Only; Included in Job Description and Tested in Interview				
	Competencies for Strategic Leaders	Behavioural Competencies	Indigenous Relations Competencies	Technical Competencies
CASS AAG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Building Strategic Alliances -Vision and Goal Setting -Creating and Managing Change -Solving Problems Creatively -Promoting Empowerment -Building Executive Presence -Motivating for Peak Performance -Building Team Orientation -Designing Strategy and Structure -Negotiating/Conflict Management -Communicating Effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Business Acumen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cultural Agility 	
CIO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Designing Strategy and Structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Personal Accountability -Business Acumen -Continuous Improvement -Leadership -Engage and Inspire -Developing People -Leading Change -Managing Organizational Resources -Strategic Orientation -Relationship Building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cultural Agility 	
PARA ED		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Personal Accountability -Business Acumen -Continuous Improvement -Corporate Planning -Engage and Inspire -Developing People -Leading Change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cultural Agility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Planning -Conducting -Reporting -Service Focus -Project Management
PARA Manager		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Personal Accountability -Business Acumen -Continuous Improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cultural Agility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Planning -Conducting -Reporting

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Corporate Planning -Engage and Inspire -Developing People -Leading Change 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Service Focus -Project Management
SHR ED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Motivating for Peak Performance -Promoting Empowerment -Building Team Orientation -Vision and Goal Setting -Designing Strategy and Structure -Creating and Managing Change -Negotiating/ Conflict Management -Communicating Effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Developing People -Corporate Intrapreneurship -Seeking and Using Feedback -Fostering Trust -Solving Problems Creatively -Building Strategic Alliances -Handling Crises -Promoting Empowerment -Business Acumen 	-Cultural Agility	

Table 3 depicts the competencies that are required for each of the five leadership positions that were sampled for this thesis. Competencies are utilized at the BC OAG in two ways: in job descriptions for positions and in interviews. For each of these five positions, there are competencies that are listed in the job descriptions, as well as those that are tested in interviews. In the table, the blue highlight refers to competencies that are listed in job descriptions and subsequently tested for in interviews. The yellow highlight refers to questions that only appeared in the job descriptions and were not tested, and the pink highlight were the competencies that were only tested in the interviews and were not listed in the job descriptions. These categories were deduced from an examination of the job files that the researcher received from strategic HR, in which the job descriptions listed certain competencies, and the interview guides listed certain competencies. Table 3 also lists the category of each competency (i.e., strategic leader, behavioural, Indigenous relations, technical). These categories are also listed in both the job descriptions and interview guides that the researcher received from Strategic HR. Noticeably, there are some gaps in the table. These gaps mean that there were no competencies from a certain category in some files. For example, there were no technical competencies listed in either the job description or the interview guide for the CASS AAG file.

From this table, a few findings emerge. As was expected, not all the competencies identified in the job descriptions were tested in interviews. There were more instances in which competencies were identified in job descriptions but not tested in interviews (24 in total); however, there were also three instances in which competencies were tested in interviews that were not identified in job descriptions. Overall, job description competencies and interview competencies overlapped frequently (41 times). This finding is of note, as it shows that while most of the time competencies that are listed in job descriptions are tested for, this is not always the case. This will be explored below in relation to DEI.

In terms of DEI, Table 3 demonstrates a few findings. At the BC OAG, Indigenous Relations Competencies function to serve as DEI competencies. This was demonstrated in section 5.2, where panelists indicated that when the BC OAG utilizes Indigenous relations competencies, they only utilize cultural agility as an overall DEI test. From Table 3, cultural agility appeared as

a competency in every job description but was only tested for in three of the five interviews. Neither CASS AG nor PARA ED tested for cultural agility in the interview process. This is interesting, as these jobs are in different portfolios, and are both quite high-level, pointing to a potential lack of DEI focus, or perhaps more of a focus on other aspects of the job. This finding begs the question: is it enough to put DEI-focused competencies in job descriptions? If the competencies are stated as being required but not actually tested for consistently, are prospective leaders being properly assessed in terms of DEI? This examination of job description competencies versus interview competencies demonstrates that there is DEI in writing at the BC OAG, but in practice it is less consistent.

5.3.3 Leadership Competition Files: Interview Questions and DEI

A key source of data for this thesis are the interview questions that were asked in five recent leadership competitions. These interview questions are important for understanding whether competencies are used in a way that aligns with the BC OAG's commitments to DEI, in relation to research question #1. This section will present the interview questions that were asked in the five most recent leadership competitions at the BC OAG, as well as what panel members were supposed to be looking for in candidate's answers. For each competition file, questions will be sorted based on the likelihood that they are to elicit insight into DEI. The yellow highlight will refer to questions that are "unlikely" to elicit DEI response, pink highlight will be for questions that "could", and blue for questions that "definitely will". The ideal answer section will also be highlighted according in the same way. The sorting structure described here is based on several factors. For the questions in the "unlikely" category, the researcher examined each question and answer, and found that there was no mention of DEI in any form. Moreover, these questions are the ones that are focused on the technical aspects of the job, not the interpersonal aspects. The questions and answers in the "could category" are based on the finding from section 5.2 that at the BC OAG, some competencies such as teamwork, leadership, communication, and coaching have the ability to bring forth DEI insights. This sorting is also based on the Service Plan, which indicates that DEI are important values of the office. To determine the "definitely will" category, the researcher again examined each question and answer to see if diversity, equity, and inclusion are mentioned explicitly. These are the questions that are very clearly testing for DEI.

Below the findings of an examination of the five job files will be presented. To generate these findings, the researcher looked at the interview documents for each of the five job files. In each interview, there were 5-12 questions asked, each corresponding with one or more competencies, which were outlined in Table 3 above. The term "DEI response" refers to a response given by a candidate that would demonstrate that they understand and place importance on DEI. This does not refer to whether the candidates themselves had DEI qualities (race, gender, etc.) While the researcher did not have access to the candidates' answers, they did have access to the scoring guides and ideal answers that the BC OAG uses, which was used as a proxy for candidate answers and likelihood of eliciting a DEI response.

File 1. Assistant Auditor General, Critical Audit Support Services (CASS AAG) Interview.

The interview for the Assistant Auditor General, Critical Support Services (CASS AAG) took place in September 2022, and had 7 interview questions altogether. Table 4 in Appendix B outlines each question, what the ideal response would entail, the points for each question, and

which competency(s) were being tested. All of this information was gathered from the competition file.

Using the sorting guide described above, the researcher sorted each question and ideal answer into the categories “unlikely” (yellow highlight), “could” (pink highlight), and “definitely will” (blue highlight) in relation to the likelihood of eliciting DEI insights. Table 4 shows that out of the seven interview questions, five were sorted into the “could” category, one into the “unlikely” category, and one into the “definitely will” category. The researcher will discuss why each question was sorted as such below.

“Could” Category

Question 1 was sorted into the “could” category because of the ideal response. In the ideal response, there is a point made about the candidate referencing the service plan, specifically the values of the office. As was explored in section 5.1, the BC OAG’s values statement very clearly states DEI as a value, so a candidate could reference this when answering this first question. Question 2 was sorted into the “could category” because of its reference to communication. As was found in section 5.2, questions on communication can sometimes lead to DEI insights at the BC OAG. In terms of this question specifically, the references to working with others and removing barriers could give way to DEI insights. Question 3 was sorted into this category because of its references to leadership, another competency that can lend itself to DEI according to BC OAG staff members. Moreover, the ideal response really speaks to communication and coaching, two other competencies that provide DEI insight at the BC OAG. Question 4 was sorted into this category because of its mention of managing diverse views. The ideal answer also mentions the importance of valuing diverse viewpoints. This question is rated as a “could” and not “definitely will” because the primary focus isn’t on the ability to manage diverse viewpoints, it is a part of the overarching competency of conflict management. Question 5 is rated as a “could” because of the ideal answer. One component of the ideal answer is taking an inclusive approach when working with diverse stakeholders, which very obviously relates to DEI. However, similarly to Question 4, this inclusive approach component is not the primary focus of this question, leading to a “could” rather than a “definitely will”.

“Unlikely” Category

Question 5 is sorted into the “unlikely category because of the more technical, job-focused nature of the question. While the word “diverse” is mentioned in the question, this is in relation to multiple ongoing projects/teams, not diverse in relation to DEI. Moreover, while both the ideal response and question make reference to teamwork and communication, the real focus of the question and response is the technical work required for the job.

“Likely” Category

Question 7 is sorted into the “definitely will” category because it specifically mentions many components of DEI: office culture, marginalization, safety, etc. This question is very clearly testing for the candidate’s ability to foster a diverse and inclusive team. Interestingly, this question is not based around the competency of cultural diversity, but on building team orientation and empowerment.

Concluding Remarks

From this table, a few findings emerge that are of significance. The first is that the CASS AAG interview seemed to really focus on communication and leadership, both competencies that have the potential to bring forth DEI. However, as was explored in section 5.2 the DEI potential of these “could” category questions is really up to the discretion of the hiring manager and panelists. There was only one question that seemed to be more technically focused, however it is important to note that the nature of the job of CASS AAG is that of communications, so the technical nature is not as overtly technical, and the position itself is more in line with DEI than others. A key finding here is that the question sorted as “definitely will” was not a cultural agility question, as is usually the case. This is important, as it demonstrates that the BC OAG is capable of using other competencies besides cultural agility to explicitly assess DEI in leadership competitions.

File 2: Chief Information Officer (CIO) Interview.

The interview for the Chief Information Officer (CIO) took place in January 2023, and had the most questions of all the interviews, requiring two rounds of interviewing. There were 12 questions altogether, which are outlined in Table 5 in Appendix C.

Table 5 shows that out of the 12 questions, five were sorted into the “could category”, six into the “unlikely” category, and one into the “definitely will” category.

“Could” Category

Similarly to Question 1 in the CASS AAG interview, Question 1 here was sorted as a “could” because of the ideal response’s reference to the Service Plan and values, which specifically speak to DEI. Question 8 is sorted into this category because of its testing of relationship building and teamwork. It asks about creating and maintaining positive relationships, which could be an opportunity for DEI to be considered. Question 9 was a question specifically on leadership, which is one of the competencies that was identified by staff members as sometimes leading to DEI testing, placing it into the “could” category. Question 10 was sorted as a “could” because of its reference to teamwork and inspiring staff. These again are both competencies that have been identified as having the ability to elicit DEI insights. Finally, Question 11 was sorted into this category because of its focus on communication and coaching, again competencies that the BC OAG has found can bring for the DEI.

“Unlikely” Category

Because this interview was for the Chief Information Officer, there were a number of more technical-focused questions. As opposed to the CASS AAG interview where the technical components were around communication, the technical components of the CIO position revolve around IT strategy. This is important, as IT and DEI don’t compliment each other as well as DEI and communications. For this section, the researcher will not describe why each and every question in this category was sorted as such. The reasoning behind each sort is the same: these questions are focused on the technical IT skills and strategic vision of the candidate, and as such, do not leave space for DEI insights. The questions in this category are Questions # 2, 3,4,5,6, and 7.

“Definitely Will” Category

In this interview, the cultural agility competency was used. It was used to test specifically for what the candidate has done in their career to create space for cultural diversity on teams. This is very clearly a question that is testing for the candidate's ability to identify and create space for DEI.

Concluding Remarks

From this interview, several findings emerge. The first is that the nature of the job is important when examining DEI in this context. The CIO position is quite a technically focused position, so it is not surprising that there were more technical questions. Another key finding is the use of the cultural agility competency as an overall DEI test. This finding is in line with the findings of section 5.2 that cultural agility is used as an overall DEI test at the BC OAG.

File 3. Executive Director, Performance Audit (PARA ED) Interview.

Compared to the CIO interview, the PARA ED interview was much less vigorous. This interview took place in February 2023. This interview only had five questions in total, and the questions and the ideal answers were much less detailed. The questions are outlined in Table 6 in Appendix D.

Table 6 shows that of the five questions, four fell into the “unlikely” category, one into the “could” category, and zero into the “definitely will” category. This is the first file we have seen where there are zero questions that fall into the “definitely will” category, with no cultural agility question or question that asks about DEI specifically.

“Unlikely” Category

Of the five questions, four of them were sorted into this category. Question 1, similar to Question 1 in the CASS AAG and CIO interviews, make no reference to the service plan or values in the ideal answer. In this sense, there is no inclination that the BC OAG was looking for the candidate to speak to DEI when answering this question, unlike in the CASS AAG and CIO interviews. Questions 2, 3, and 5 are all technical questions. Each of these questions is only really looking for the experience that the candidate has in relation to the technical skills of the job, with no room for DEI.

“Could” Category

Question 4 is the only question in this interview that has the potential to elicit some insight on DEI. This question is around developing relationships with auditees. While still technical, the ideal answer does mention demonstrating effective communication, which is a competency that was highlighted by the office as a potential DEI instigator.

Concluding Remarks

The PARA ED interview was quite interesting. The findings from Table 6 revealed that there was no question that was testing for DEI. This shows that for whatever reason, DEI knowledge and ability was not considered an important trait for the PARA ED. The interview was primarily focused on the technical skills and experience of the candidates, indicating that in this instance, technical ability far outweighed DEI.

File 4: Manager, Performance Audit (PARA Manager) Interview.

The PARA Manager competition also took place in February 2023. Similarly to the PARA ED interview, the PARA Manager interview also only had five questions. Also similarly, the questions and ideal answers appear to be very focused and not super detailed. The questions are outlined in Table 7 below in Appendix E.

Table 7 shows that of the five questions, three were sorted into the “could” category, one into the “unlikely” category, and one into the “definitely will” category.

“Could” Category

Question 2 is sorted into the “could” category because of its focus on coaching. The ideal answer references coaching and mentoring, as well as the ability to understand different perspectives, which could allow for DEI insights to come forth. Question 3 is sorted into this category because of the ideal answer, which highlights teamwork, empowerment, and working with diverse teams. While the word “diverse” is used, the reason this question is not sorted into the “definitely will” category is because the diversity aspect is not the primary focus and could be overlooked. Question 4 is sorted into the “could” category because of its focus on relationships. The ideal answer highlights the ability to manage perspectives of others, which could allude to DEI.

“Unlikely” Category

Question 1 is a technical question, which is why it is sorted into the “unlikely” category. This question is only focused on a specific aspect of audit work, and there is no space for DEI to be considered here.

“Definitely Will” Category

Question 5 specifically asks about a candidate’s ability to work with a person of a different culture. Again, this is a cultural agility question that is clearly only testing for DEI.

Concluding Remarks

This interview did not reveal any new findings. Again, the cultural agility competency was used to test for overall DEI and the “unlikely” category referred to a technical question.

File 5: Executive Director, Strategic Human Resources (SHR ED) Interview.

The SHR ED interview took place at an indeterminate date in 2023. This interview had seven questions altogether, which are explored along with their ideal answers in Table 8 in Appendix F. From this table, five of the questions were sorted into the “could” category, one into the “unlikely”, and one into the “definitely yes” category.

“Could” Category

Question 1 was sorted into the “could” category for the same reasons as the CASS AAG and CIO interviews. The ideal response for this question refers to the Service Plan and values, which directly speak to DEI. Question 2 is sorted into this category for a similar reason as Question 1. This question is about implementing goals that are in the Service Plan, one of which is about DEI. In this sense, the candidate could reference this goal in their answer. Question 4 is sorted as a “could” because it is asking about a positive change a candidate has made, which could be in relation to DEI. Question 6 is sorted into this category because it is a question about leadership and teamwork, both of which are competencies that have been identified by BC OAG staff members as being able to get at DEI. Question 7 is sorted as a “could” because it is focused on

communication and trust, which again are competencies identified as being able to provide DEI insight.

“Unlikely” Category

While at first glance Question 5 seems like it would fit best into the “could” category, upon further examination, this question appears to be a technical HR question. There is a lot of reference to technical HR terms, such as job design and role classification, and while the question on the surface appears to be about communication, that is not the primary focus. This is similar to the CASS AAG interview, where because of the nature of the job, the technical questions don’t appear as “technical”, although that is exactly what they are.

“Definitely Will” Category

Question 3 is yet another cultural agility question that is testing specifically for a candidate’s ability to support and work with people from cultures that are different from them. This question is only looking for DEI responses.

Concluding Remarks

This interview revealed that again, the nature of the job plays a role in the category of competencies that are used. Because the nature of the ED HR role is about communication, it is more open to DEI than say the CIO or other more technical focused jobs.

5.3.4 Key Findings and Conclusion

From the review of job competition files, three key findings emerge. The first is that testing for DEI across positions is inconsistent. While four of the five interviews had a question that directly tested for DEI, one did not. Moreover, some positions focused highly on the technical skills and abilities of candidates, while others looked at softer skills, such as communication. This can be explained in part by the nature of certain positions, but nevertheless, testing for DEI in leadership competitions is not a requirement at the BC OAG. The second key finding is that the cultural agility competency is used primarily to test for DEI, when it is tested for. Along with this, it is used as an overall DEI test. This was clear in three of the five interviews, indicating that when the BC OAG does choose to test for DEI, it does so by utilizing cultural agility. The final key finding is that the BC OAG has the building blocks to better incorporate DEI in its use of competencies in leadership competitions, it just does not have the formalization. Between the five interviews, there were 36 questions in total, with 19 of those being sorted into the “could” category. This shows that the majority of questions could be implemented in a way to get at DEI, there are just no guidelines to do so yet. Moreover, the CASS AAG interview demonstrated that there are other competencies besides cultural agility that are capable of testing explicitly for DEI, they just aren’t often implemented in that way. Overall, the results from the examination of actual leadership interviews at the BC OAG indicate that the organization has the capabilities to better implement DEI—it just needs formalization.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Analysis

This chapter discusses the research findings of the preceding chapter. The chapter begins with an identification of the principal findings of each research method. Following this, the chapter provides an overall analysis and description of the significance of the findings. The chapter then goes into a deeper analysis, examining each research question in relation to the findings. To conclude, the chapter identifies some cross-cutting themes and summarizes the findings.

6.1 Principal Findings

The principal findings from each research method are as follows.

- i. The cross-jurisdictional scan revealed three key findings. These findings are important as they help construct the DEI landscape in the realm of Canadian public sector audit offices, and thus inform the overall purpose of this thesis. The first finding is the number of Canadian audit offices that demonstrate DEI value statements in their service or strategic plans. Five of the 11 offices (including BC) explicitly stated DEI in their values statements. The other six offices had values that could potentially be related to DEI; however, they were not formalized, so the extent to which DEI is actually valued is indeterminate. The second principal finding is similar to the first, but in relation to goals and strategies. Four offices (including BC) had strategies and goals that were explicit about DEI. The other seven offices made references to culture and work environment, which could aid in instilling DEI, but again were not explicit. Overall, the first two findings indicate that the majority of Canadian audit offices at best lack formalization, or at worst are not interested in DEI. The third finding relates to how the BC OAG Service Plan fared in comparison in terms of DEI. Overall, when comparing BC to the other jurisdictions, it looks quite established in terms of DEI. The BC OAG has values relating to DEI, goals and strategies relating to DEI, and an established DEI lead. Compared to other jurisdictions across Canada, the BC OAG's Service Plan is the most complete: it has all of the right components to indicate commitment to DEI.
- ii. Interviews with BC OAG staff members who were panelists on leadership competitions highlighted three key findings. The first finding, in relation to how the BC OAG implements competencies to align with DEI, is that the only competency that is implemented specifically to address DEI is the Indigenous Relations competency of cultural agility. From the interviews, it was found that the cultural agility competency is used at the BC OAG as an overall DEI competency. The second principal finding, also highlighting how the BC OAG implements competencies to align with DEI is that aside from cultural agility, no other competencies are used to directly address DEI. However, it was found that there are competencies, particularly leadership, teamwork, communication, and coaching that participants believed to provide some insight into DEI. The third key finding is that there is no formal requirement or strategy to ensure that competencies are implemented in a way that aligns with DEI when conducting leadership competitions at the BC OAG. Each finding highlighted that there is no policy requirement for implementing a DEI lens during leadership competitions, and if that lens is used, it is due to the discretion of the hiring manager and panelists, not because it is a requirement of the BC OAG.

- iii. The document review section revealed a number of important findings. The review of the comparison between job description competencies and interview question competencies are consistent with the OAG staff interview findings (above), where, Indigenous Relations competencies were found to serve as DEI competencies. Specifically, cultural agility served as a competency in every job description even though it was only tested for in three of the five interviews. Neither the CASS AG nor PARA ED tested for cultural agility in the interview process.

The review of the job competition files revealed three principal findings. The first is that testing for DEI across positions is inconsistent. While four of the five interviews had a question that directly tested for DEI, one did not. Moreover, some positions focused highly on the technical skills and abilities of candidates, while others looked at softer skills, such as communication. This can be explained in part by the nature of certain positions, but nevertheless, it was made evident that testing for DEI in leadership competitions is not a requirement at the BC OAG. The second key finding is that cultural agility is used primarily to test for DEI, when it is tested for. Along with this, cultural agility is used as an overall DEI test, indicating that when the BC OAG does choose to test for DEI, it does so by utilizing cultural agility. The final key finding is that the BC OAG has the building blocks to better incorporate DEI in its use of competencies in leadership competitions, it just does not have the formalization. Between the five interviews, there were 36 questions in total, with 19 of these being sorted into the “could” category. This shows that the majority of questions could be implemented in a way to get at DEI, there are just no guidelines to ensure this. Moreover, the CASS AAG interview demonstrated that there are other competencies besides cultural agility that are capable of testing explicitly for DEI, they just aren’t often implemented in that way.

6.2 Significance and Analysis of Findings

From the jurisdictional scan, based on the values statements, goals, and strategies from the Service Plan, the BC OAG is most strongly poised to implement DEI compared to other Canadian public sector audit offices. That said, while the scan revealed that the BC OAG is articulating its commitment to DEI, particularly in terms of its Service Plan and recent commitment to the development of a full DEI strategy, both sections 5.2 and 5.3 revealed that these commitments have not yet reached the level of leadership competitions. The findings of the jurisdictional scan are significant in that they highlight that the BC OAG does have strong commitments to DEI, but the work to operationalize these commitments are ongoing and thus, inconsistent.

The findings of the interviews and document review are consistent and so they are presented together here. When analyzing the findings from the interviews with OAG staff members and the document review, several items are of note. Both methods demonstrate that implementation of competencies to align with DEI is very inconsistent. The interviews revealed that panelists were given no direction in terms of DEI, and that if they did choose to use the DEI lens it was up to their discretion, not a policy requirement of the office. The document review supports this finding, revealing missed opportunities where job competencies and interview competencies could align better, and this in turn “could” provide support to DEI. However, there are no guidelines around using them as such. Both methods found that the cultural agility competency

was the primary way that the BC OAG tested for DEI in leadership competitions, but again the use of this competency was inconsistent and not required for testing.

The analysis revealed one major discrepancy between the findings of the interviews with staff members and the document review. In the interviews, panelists stated that the only competency they knew to test specifically for DEI was cultural agility. It was found that panelists believed that some other competencies could get at DEI, but the only one that they used to specifically test for DEI was cultural agility. When examining the interview questions asked in leadership competitions, there was one instance that DEI was very clearly being tested for, but the competency that was used was not cultural agility. In the CASS AAG interview, there was a question that was very clearly testing for a candidate's ability to lead a diverse team, and the competencies being tested were building team orientation and promoting empowerment, both of which are in the Competencies for Strategic Leaders category. This finding is in direct contrast to that of the staff interviews, where cultural agility was the only competency that panelists had identified that directly tested for DEI.

While this discrepancy is interesting, it serves to further highlight the point that there is no formalization around DEI in leadership competitions, and the use of competencies to test for DEI is inconsistent. It also shows that the BC OAG has potential capabilities to incorporate DEI into leadership competitions in a more fulsome way, it just hasn't yet.

6.3 Research Questions Analysis

This thesis had four primary research questions:

1. How does the BC OAG implement leadership and Indigenous relations competencies in leadership competitions that aligns with its DEI commitments?
2. What are the DEI benchmarks that the BC OAG has in place currently?
3. How are the interview questions developed from competencies aligning with DEI?
4. How are competencies selected?

Through the use of each methodology, many findings relating to these questions have been revealed.

How does the BC OAG implement leadership and Indigenous relations competencies in leadership competitions that aligns with its DEI commitments?

The BC OAG has committed to ensuring DEI in the organization, as evidenced by its Service Plan that was examined in the jurisdictional scan. These commitments are currently taking shape with the EDI project and strategy development; however, these commitments have not yet reached the leadership competition level. The findings revealed that there are no explicit DEI competencies, but the Indigenous Relations competency of cultural agility is used as a DEI competency primarily. Moreover, other competencies, such as leadership, teamwork, communication, coaching, and empowerment that were referred to can provide insight into DEI but lack guidance and focus.

In terms of Indigenous Relations competencies, the BC OAG implements these in a way that tests for overall DEI knowledge and understanding. In this sense, the BC OAG is implementing IR competencies in a way that aligns with its DEI commitments. However, despite IR competencies being listed in every job profile and description, they are not tested for in every

interview. Moreover, the use of IR competencies at the BC OAG only extends to the cultural agility competency. No other IR competencies appear in either job descriptions or interviews. In this sense, the implementation of IR competencies is incomplete. Leadership competencies are used for their exact stated purpose—to test for leadership skills. While some of these competencies can get at DEI albeit more indirectly, there is no guidance or framework at the OAG to ensure that they do. Some panelists stated that they personally look for DEI in response to certain leadership competency questions, such as promoting empowerment or building trust, but there are no formal practices that require this. In this sense, the BC OAG really does not fully implement leadership competencies in a way that aligns with DEI. Certain OAG staff members may take it upon themselves to try to align these competencies with DEI, but the organization as a whole does not.

What are the DEI benchmarks that the BC OAG has in place currently?

From the jurisdictional scan, the BC OAG’s Service Plan demonstrates that the BC OAG has stated values and goals supporting DEI. (BC OAG, 2022). In the Service Plan, and as seen in Table 2, the BC OAG has a specific strategy, Strategy 4, that is dedicated to DEI. Also as demonstrated in Table 2, the BC OAG has a DEI lead and core committee tasked with the development of strategy 4. This is the EDI Project Team. The EDI Project was officially launched in July 2023 (mid stream of this current research), with the creation of a core committee, as well as a consultation committee. These committees have been tasked with acting on Strategy 4 and implementing an EDI strategy for the BC OAG. This project is still in early stages, so there have been no real benchmarks to come from it yet.

In terms of leadership competitions, the findings revealed that the only real DEI benchmark is the use of the IR cultural agility competency. This competency, and its subsequent marking scheme, provide certain measurable benchmarks for DEI when used. However, as was brought up in interviews with staff, a major issue with incorporating DEI into the competition process more successfully is the lack of policy guidelines/requirements and benchmarks. There is no formalization around DEI and the operationalization of competency use, nor any benchmarks to measure success. Overall, there currently aren’t any DEI benchmarks at the BC OAG in terms of competency use in leadership competitions. The office has statements and commitments, but no operationalized benchmarks yet.

How are the interview questions developed from competencies aligning with DEI?

The interviews with staff revealed that interview questions are generally developed by the hiring manager, who is a member of the BC OAG and the head of the panel (usually a member of the Strategic HR group), and the competencies for these interview questions derive from job descriptions. Many panelists revealed that they were not a part of the competency selection or the interview question writing process. The hiring manager will either choose existing questions from a bank of PSA questions or use PSA guidelines to create questions specifically for the BC OAG. In terms of how these questions are developed to align with DEI, the answer is that they generally are not. This is evidenced by the findings, which revealed that the use of DEI-related competencies is inconsistent and discretionary, and that it is not a requirement for interview questions to incorporate DEI-related competencies. In this sense, since competencies aren’t selected for DEI purposes, the questions that are developed from these competencies are not developed in a way that aligns with DEI. Panelists felt as though there was definite space in the competencies for DEI focus, but the way that they are used as of now is not from a DEI lens. The

staff who were interviewed were confident that questions can be developed from competencies in a way that aligns with DEI, particularly evidenced by question 7 in the CASS AAG interview. This can also be seen in the questions that are developed from the cultural agility competency. However, generally speaking, DEI is not a primary consideration when developing interview questions.

How are competencies selected?

Competency selection is two-fold: competencies that are selected for the job description and competencies from the job description that are incorporated into interview questions for testing. This is done by Strategic HR. The findings revealed that there are often more competencies in job descriptions than can be tested for in interviews, so while technically a candidate should be able to demonstrate all the competencies in a job description, there just isn't capacity to test for them all. In terms of competency selection for job descriptions, the findings showed that this is often out of the hands of OAG panelists—it is Strategic HR that creates these job descriptions and selects relevant competencies. When it comes to competency selection for testing, it is the discretion of the hiring manager, though sometimes with input of other panel members. However, in the interviews with panelists in this study, it was found that they had no role in competency selection.

In terms of competency selection and DEI, the findings indicated that DEI is not a primary focus of competency selection, aside from the use of cultural agility. It appeared competencies selected for testing were dependent on the nature of the position, but DEI was not the focus. Auditing often requires a specific set of skills, and the competencies that were selected for testing reflected the need for skills and experience more so than DEI. Because of the highly technical nature of audit work, it makes sense that the office primarily focuses on these competencies. However, this focus also serves to push other competencies aside, particularly DEI competencies. In this sense, competencies are selected primarily based on skill and ability, leaving DEI as an afterthought, or in some cases, not a thought at all.

6.4 Cross-Cutting Themes and Summary of Findings

Theme 1: Need for formalization

There were several cross-cutting themes that emerged from the findings of this thesis. The first is that there is a need for DEI formalization. This is perhaps the most significant finding. The review of the BC OAG's Service Plan indicated that there is DEI in the organization; however, there is not yet a formal, overarching strategy. This was again noted when examining the leadership competition files, as the use of the cultural agility competency was not used consistently. This lack of consistent use again shows that there is no formal requirement for DEI to be tested for in leadership competitions. Moreover, in the case of the CASS AAG file, DEI was tested for, utilizing different competencies, which again shows that the use of competencies for DEI testing is inconsistent. This theme was amplified even more in the interviews with BC OAG staff members, with many stating that there was no formalization or guidance when it came to testing for DEI.

Theme 2: Use of IR competencies

Another cross-cutting theme that emerged relates to the use of IR competencies—particularly cultural agility. The use and understanding of IR competencies is very inconsistent. When they

are used, they are used as overall DEI tests, but they are not always used. Moreover, only one competency is used—cultural agility—when there are many more IR competencies that could be of use. From interviews with staff members, there was a clear lack of understanding on cultural agility with some not knowing that it is in fact an IR competency. There was also a lack of understanding on the scoring of IR competencies, with panelists noting that they were unaware of the scoring guide. IR competencies were developed with the intention of better communicating with Indigenous people, but they have been co-opted into overall DEI tests, which is not their intended use.

Theme 3: Lack of DEI Focus

A significant cross-cutting theme from this research is that DEI does not appear to be a primary focus in the context of leadership competitions. While the review of the Strategic Plan and values and goals paints DEI as being a primary focus for the office, in practice, in the context of leadership competitions, it gets overlooked. There are competencies that could encourage DEI if used to do so, but this is not something that staff members are required, and therefore do not bring into their work as a panel member. Moreover, there is much more of a focus on skills and experience rather than DEI, which serves to relegate DEI to a less important consideration.

6.5 Concluding Remarks

This chapter discussed the principal findings, provided an overall description and analysis of the findings, analyzed the findings in relation to the research questions, and noted some cross-cutting themes. Overall, each research question was able to be answered, and key findings noted. Moreover, the findings and themes will serve to give way to some necessary options and recommendations to assist the BC OAG in its goal of better incorporating DEI into leadership competitions.

Chapter 7: Options and Recommendation

From the analysis of the findings, it became clear that the BC OAG has the ability to better implement competencies in a way that aligns with DEI in leadership competitions, it just needs structure. The researcher has developed three options to better align competencies with DEI, with one recommendation presented at the end of this chapter. From the research, it was found that incorporating DEI into competencies is inconsistent, and not required. Cultural agility was found to most often be used as a DEI competency, while others, such as leadership and empowerment also were used to test DEI in one instance. Moreover, there were other competencies such as communication and teamwork that could get at DEI but were not expected to be used as such. From these findings, the researcher has developed three options to formally ensure that DEI is incorporated into competency use in leadership competitions at the BC OAG:

4. Continue on the path that the BC OAG has already established, and require that the competency of Cultural Agility is not only in each job description but tested for in each interview.
5. Formally incorporate DEI into either a leadership, teamwork, communications, or empowerment/development competency and require this competency be tested for in each interview.
6. Develop a new specific and explicit DEI competency that is required to be tested for in each interview.

The sub-section below describes each option and how they would practically work at the BC OAG. The options are then compared in Table 9 against criteria of organizational acceptability, implementation feasibility, and utility for the office. Ultimately, one option will be recommended for consideration by the BC OAG.

7.1 Options to Consider

The three options are presented below. Each options' benefits and limitations, as well as how each fare in relation to three criteria: organizational acceptability, implementation feasibility, and utility for the office are explored. Organizational acceptability refers to the extent to which the BC OAG would be supportive of the option. This is something that the office wants done, however some options may be more acceptable than others in terms of organizational capacity, culture, and direction. Implementation feasibility refers to how easy or difficult it would be to implement a particular option. This criterion considers the cost and organizational capacity of each option, as well as if there is even space for the option. Utility for the office refers to the extent to which each option would be beneficial for the office. This criterion considers how useful each option would be for the BC OAG in terms of its overall direction.

Option 1: Requirement for cultural agility to be used as a DEI assessment in job descriptions and interviews

As evidenced by the findings, the Indigenous Relations competency of cultural agility is currently being used by the BC OAG as a DEI competency. However, the findings also noted that while cultural agility appears in each leadership competition job description, there is no requirement that it is tested for in interviews. In this sense, there are certain positions in which DEI is not tested for at all. This recommendation would make it a requirement that cultural agility continue to be used as a DEI competency, and that it not only be in leadership job

descriptions, but also tested for in interviews. This option is quite simple—as it would only require that the BC OAG formalize and ensure that cultural agility is testing for DEI in each leadership interview. In terms of organizational acceptability, this option would be highly acceptable. The BC OAG is already using cultural agility to test for DEI, the only difference is that it would be a requirement rather than discretionary of the hiring manager and/or panel. It would not require any more resource capacity, as it is not adding a noticeable amount of work. Moreover, this fits in with the organization’s culture and direction, as it is something that is already being done on an ad-hoc basis. Regarding implementation feasibility, this recommendation would also be highly feasible. The costs associated with this option would be very low, as again, this is something that the office already does, just with the added formalization element. There will be a few extra hours, likely for the Strategic HR team to ensure that this is formalized, but overall the costs would be very low. The utility for the office in terms of this option is also medium-high. While requiring that cultural agility be used in every leadership competition to test for DEI is useful for the office, using it in this way only takes away from the intended use of IR competencies, and doesn’t encourage the BC OAG to use other different IR competencies.

Option 2: Formally incorporate DEI into competencies that were found to have DEI potential

The findings revealed that there are competencies that the BC OAG utilizes that have potential to elicit DEI responses, but they are not often used in a way to do so. This was demonstrated by all of the interview files, but particularly the CASS AAG interview, in which the Promoting Empowerment and Building Team Orientation competencies were used to specifically test for DEI. Moreover, the interviews with OAG staff members revealed that panelists felt that there are competencies such as teamwork, leadership, communication, coaching, and empowerment that could assess for DEI, they just aren’t formally used in that way. This is where Option 2 comes in. This option would require that one of these competencies be adapted in a way that formally includes DEI as a component of the competency. Moreover, the competency that is adapted to include DEI would be required to be tested for in each leadership job competition, similarly to cultural agility in option 1. In terms of organizational acceptability, this option would be highly acceptable. Again, these competencies are already in circulation at the BC OAG, so adapting one to incorporate DEI would be acceptable. This option might require a little bit more organizational capacity than Option 1, as the competency, ideal answer, and scoring guide would need to be rewritten to include DEI, but overall, it would not require much more resource capacity. This option would also be very much in line with the BC OAG’s direction and culture. In terms of implementation feasibility, this option would be highly feasible. As mentioned, it would require a bit more capacity, which would mean the office would incur some costs, but the costs would not be high. In terms of utility to the office, this option would be highly useful. Adapting a competency that the office is already using for DEI purposes would be of great use to the office, as it would allow for formalization of DEI without incurring high costs.

Option 3: Development of a new, explicit DEI competency

Option 3 comes primarily from the suggestions of OAG staff members. In the interviews conducted with past leadership competition panelists, the researcher asked whether participants had any suggestions on how to better incorporate DEI into competencies for leadership competitions, and a common suggestion was to develop a specific DEI competency. This can be seen in a quote from one participant who stated that:

None of the competencies other than Indigenous Relations really assess DEI, but I think maybe having a competency that does assess that and you know, maybe we could make sort of a rule that we assess that competency in every single interview.

In terms of organizational acceptability, this option would be quite high. As demonstrated, this option is something that the office has expressed wanting to do, making it clearly acceptable. This option would likely require the most organizational capacity, as it would be developing a whole new competency and associated scoring guide, rather than simply adapting an already existing one. However, this option would fit extremely well with the BC OAG's culture and direction and could potentially be a part of the EDI Project. In terms of implementation feasibility, this option would be more medium-high. As mentioned, this option would require more resource capacity and would therefore incur higher costs. It would also take more time than the other two options, as it would be a brand-new competency. This option would be of very high utility to the office. As opposed to the other two options, this option would allow the BC OAG to create a competency that reflects the nature of the office and the work, and how that relates to DEI. It would give the BC OAG more of a say in how it assesses/tests for DEI and reflect better the office's values and commitments.

7.2 Options Comparison and Recommended Option

The options reflect a range of methods in which the BC OAG could ensure that competencies used in leadership competitions align with DEI. Table 9 provides a summary of how each option compares to the three criteria: organizational acceptability, implementation feasibility, and utility for the office.

Table 9: Comparison of Summary of Options

Criteria	Option 1: Requirement for cultural agility to be used as a DEI assessment in job descriptions and interviews	Option 2: Formally incorporate DEI into competencies that were found to have DEI potential	Option 3: Development of a new, explicit DEI competency
Organizational acceptability	High	High	Medium-High
Implementation feasibility	High	High	High
Utility for office	High	Medium-High	Very High

From this table, it can be said that each of the three options could be recommended to the BC OAG. However, the researcher recommends Option 3. Option 3 is recommended because while it may require a bit more time and work, overall it would be the most useful to the BC OAG. Instead of trying to make already existing competencies fit into DEI, Option 3 would allow for the BC OAG to create a DEI competency that aligns with its goals, values, and nature of work.

In terms of implementation, the researcher would suggest that this option be added as a component of the current EDI Project that the BC OAG is undertaking. This would make the most sense, as the purpose of the EDI Project is to better incorporate DEI into the BC OAG. In this sense, the researcher does not have a fully developed implementation strategy, as this would require discussion with the EDI Project team to determine.

Chapter 8: Report Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to assist the BC OAG in its desire to better implement DEI into the organization. The researcher was tasked with examining the use of competencies in leadership competitions from a DEI lens, as well as making recommendations for better DEI alignment. This was a topic that was identified as being of interest by both the BC OAG and the researcher. To complete this thesis, the researcher undertook a mixed methods research approach involving a cross-jurisdictional scan, structured interviews with OAG staff members, and a document review.

An analysis of the principal findings revealed three cross-cutting themes: 1) there is no formalization on how to incorporate DEI into competencies for leadership competitions at the BC OAG; 2) the cultural agility competency is the primary method that is used to test for DEI in leadership competitions, but is inconsistently used; and, 3) DEI is not a primary focus when selecting and testing competencies in leadership competitions. These themes, as well as the primary findings informed the options that were assessed for recommendation. These options are to: 1) continue on the path that the BC OAG has already established, and require that the IR competency of Cultural Agility is in each job description and tested for in each interview; 2) develop policy that will require formal incorporation of DEI into either a leadership, teamwork, communications, or empowerment/development competency and require this competency be tested for in each interview; and 3) develop a new specific and explicit DEI competency that is required to be tested for in each interview.

Option 3 is the option that will be recommended to the BC OAG because it performed well against the criteria, but more importantly because it aligns with the Service Plan and the overall DEI commitments and will allow the BC OAG to operationalize a DEI competency that works for the culture and direction of the office, as well as the nature of audit work. The researcher did not develop a full implementation strategy, as this recommendation will likely become a part of the BC OAG's larger EDI Project that is currently underway.

This thesis was one very small component of a much larger movement towards EDI at the BC OAG. In this sense, a major limitation of this project is that it focused on one specific component—leadership competitions. However, by focusing on this feature of the hiring process, the researcher was able spotlight how integral and critical all components of the organization are when developing large strategies.

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Appendices

Appendix A: BC OAG Leadership Panelist Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me about any training/learning you have done around DEI or any general knowledge around these concepts?
2. From your experience, is the ability of prospective leaders to understand and work within a DEI lens something that the office is testing for? If so, how?
3. Prior to the selection process interview, was there any sort of discussion on awareness and/or understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion with the panel? Can you tell me about any discussions, training, or awareness of DEI that took place?
4. Were you involved in the selection of competencies? If yes, how were the competencies selected? Was DEI considered?
5. How were Indigenous relations competencies used in the panel(s) you sat on? Were they used or considered as an overall test for DEI?
6. Did you personally consider DEI factors during the course of the interview? Do you feel as though the use of competencies allowed for these factors to be considered?
7. Do you feel as though the marking criteria for competencies addressed DEI? If so, how?
8. Do you have any final thoughts on the interview/competency process in terms of DEI ? Do you have any thoughts about how to improve these processes to ensure alignment with the DEI framework?

**Appendix B: Assistant Auditor General of Critical Audit Support Services (CASS AAG)
Interview Questions and Ideal Responses**

**Table 4: Assistant Auditor General of Critical Audit Support Services (CASS AAG)
Interview Questions and Ideal Responses**

	Question	Ideal Response	Score Value	Competency(s)
1.	Please tell us what you found most interesting about the role of Assistant Auditor General, Critical Audit Support Services, and what inspired you to apply for it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Mandate of AG as an independent officer of the legislature -Coordinating/transforming/modernizing of services -Breadth of services in CASS and the relationship with audit portfolios -An appreciation of the role of independent audit in government- transparency and accountability -Reference to the service plan- the values and guiding principles appealed, the focus on our accountability to the Legislative Assembly and the progress being made 	5	Business Acumen
2.	<p>In your written assignment you provided us with an example of a complex transformation and change initiative you led. Reflecting on that example, tell us about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The most significant change management challenge you experienced -The most significant communication challenge you experienced <p>How did you work through the challenges? What were your lessons learned?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Applies best practices in change management models to create employee buy-in and achieve sustained change -Works to build support, remove organizational barriers and get the necessary resources to implement the change -Works with others to identify creative ideas to manage the change -Adapts communication approach to the needs of the audience -Makes effective use of different techniques and technologies for communication -Listens carefully to others to understand their key points and concerns 	10	Creating and managing change, Communicating Effectively
3.	<p>As the new Assistant Auditor General of the Critical Audit Support Services portfolio, you will be supporting a team of senior leaders to collectively establish a modern, integrated shared-services approach- an approach that is aligned with the business goals and values of the Office of the Auditor General and effectively delivers required services.</p> <p>Can you tell us about a previous role you held where you were responsible for supporting senior leaders to achieve business success? Please describe the specific actions you took to lead and develop these leaders to achieve their individual and organizational goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Empowers subordinates to take risks, supports them when things go wrong and encourages them to learn from setbacks and failures -Gives subordinates the authority and resources to get the job done when assigning responsibility for task accomplishment -Holds subordinates responsible for the successful completion of tasks and assigned -Coaches subordinates to achieve their goals -Takes a coaching approach to performance conversations -Creates a work environment where employees are challenged and fulfilled -Recognizes and awards good performance 	10	Promoting empowerment, Motivating for peak performance
4.	As the Assistant Auditor General of the Critical Audit Support Services portfolio, you will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Manages conflict by focusing on participants underlying interests rather than their stated positions -Deals with issues rather than personalities 	10	Negotiating/conflict management,

	<p>frequently find yourself needing to understand and manage diverse views on which projects or strategies are the most critical or time sensitive, particularly when multiple work units need to assign resources to the priority.</p> <p>Tell us about a time where you encountered a particularly challenging situation where there were disagreements regarding priorities, or on how to proceed with the work. How did you navigate the challenge? What approach did you take with the individuals you were working with and what was the outcome?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Recognizes and manages difficult relationships by stressing the importance of valuing diverse viewpoints -Builds consensus and seeks the cooperation of others when working with other parties -Reframes or restructures problems in a different way, when necessary, to solve them -Uses collaborative approaches to increase creativity and innovation 		Solving problems creatively
5.	<p>As the Assistant Auditor General of the Critical Audit Support Services portfolio, you will be leading a portfolio that is responsible for leading delivery on a number of strategic priorities from the service plan including workforce plans, intranet and extranet replacement, and redesign of intranet digital workflows processes.</p> <p>Tell us about a time in which you lead a department to achieve a goal that aligned with the organization's strategic priorities. How did you determine the goal, design your strategy, communicate your vision and inspire your portfolio to action. Please describe how you presented your vision to executive to obtain their support and approval?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Develops a vision for the portfolio and translates this vision into action -Communicates corporate goals and objectives within the portfolio -Establishes clear targets and measures to track progress towards objectives -Builds multiple external collaborative relationships to support portfolio performance -Takes an inclusive approach when working with diverse stakeholders -Builds credibility, based on using expertise in an honest and consistent manner -Gets ideas heard and uses good judgement to achieve appropriate impact at an executive level -Takes constraints and opportunities into account when setting goals and making plans for the portfolio -Organizes people and resources in the portfolio to make the structure comparable with the portfolio's strategic plan -Ensures that the portfolio's goals, structures, strategy and work methods all fit well together 	10	Vision and goal setting, Building executive presence, Designing strategy and structure
6.	<p>As the Assistant Auditor General of the Critical Audit Support Services portfolio, you will be leading and managing multiple diverse corporate services teams, each with their own subject matter lead, to provide the best support possible to audit portfolios.</p> <p>a) Tell us about a situation where you have been responsible for managing multiple diverse functions and/or projects. What challenges did you face in that role and how did you address them? How did you ensure your team was invested in their work and the outcomes? How</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Builds credibility based on using expertise in an honest and consistent manner -Thinks before speaking and states own perspective confidently, even in the face of challenge by other who hold power or influence -Identifies and accommodates external political activities that could affect the work and success of the unit -Empowers employees to take risks, supports them when things go wrong and encourages them to learn from setbacks and failures -Holds subordinates responsible for the successful completion of work priorities 	15	Promoting empowerment, Building executive presence, Solving problems creatively, Motivating for peak performance

	<p>did you build support for yourself as the leader of these diverse functions and/or projects?</p> <p>b) As the new Assistant Auditor General of the Critical Audit Support Services portfolio, how will you approach building a team that understands the importance of actively contributing to portfolio and office goals while empowering your corporate services leads to do their best work within their own teams</p>			
7.	<p>A consultant's report from two year's ago identified a gap between the culture our staff were experiencing and the office culture they wanted. Although there were many positive aspects to our culture at the time, there were challenges including the marginalization of some roles and behaviours that were disrespectful, distrusting, and toxic.</p> <p>a) Tell us about a leadership role you held where you dealt with cultural challenges such as toxicity, strained working relationships, lack of cohesion, distrust, marginalization of positions, disrespectful communication and how you addressed those challenges. Please describe the steps you took to shift the culture to one that promoted cohesion, trust, respect and encouraged a supportive and safe working environment.</p> <p>b) As the newly appointed Assistant Auditor General of the Critical Audit Support Services portfolio, tell us about your leadership style, specifically with regards to how you will approach leading this diverse portfolio to build a safe, respectful and collaborative culture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Fosters cohesion by getting involved in the day-to-day events of the portfolio -Creates teams that have the right mix of people, values all team members, and recognizes each team member's unique contribution -Involves team members in decision making when their commitment is important for implementation -Provides opportunities for employees in the portfolio to express opinions and influence outcomes -Demonstrates understanding consideration for the needs and interests of people in the portfolio -Builds trust by treating people in a transparent and consistent way -Responds non-defensively to negative feedback -Has an awareness of demographic trends and generational differences when working with employees 	15	Building team orientation, Promoting empowerment

Appendix C: Chief Information Officer (CIO) Interview Questions and Ideal Responses

Table 5: Chief Information Officer (CIO) Interview Questions and Ideal Responses

	Question	Ideal Response	Score Value	Competency(s)
1.	<p>Please tell us what you find most interesting about the role of Chief Information Officer and what inspired you to apply for it</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Mandate of AG as independent officers of the legislature -Coordination/transforming/modernizing of services -Breadth of services in IT and the relationships with audit portfolios -An appreciation of the role of independent audit in government—transparency and accountability -Reference to the service plan—the values and guiding principles appealed, the focus on our accountability to the Legislative Assembly and the progress being made 	5	Business Acumen
2.	<p>We asked you to prepare a PowerPoint presentation in response to this question: Tell us about a complex systems project involving multiple client groups that you lead from concept, development through implementation. Describe the problem/opportunity that the system solution addressed? Describe the scope and nature of the complexity. Tell us about project milestones, challenges and outcomes. In your response, please touch on the following: -Existing system issues -Budget considerations -Staffing considerations -Timelines Please go ahead and walk us through your presentation. You will have 15 minutes to present.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Understands key resource issues affecting one's responsibilities and how these relate to the organization -Ensures that things are done using efficient and effective alternatives while maintaining or improving the quality of programs, processes or services -Promotes the need for and models the effective utilization of resources -Obtains ongoing information and feedback about resource utilization to make timely, effective decisions -May make resources available to other areas in the organization as needed -Makes decisions that improve effective utilization of resources for the organization even when own branch, division or team must "sacrifice" -This includes utilizing resources to meet current and future business goals, with a view and tie-in to the tactical and strategic aspects of the business 	10	Managing organization resources, Designing strategy and structure
3.	<p>Developing an implementing both short-term and long-term IT strategies is imperative to the role of a CIO. Please tell us about your experiences implementing a long-term IT strategy. Please describe the critical success factors, who you worked with, and what the impact was on the organization?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Able to analyze and comprehend organizational goals and strategies developed by others -Prioritizes work in alignment with business goals, acts in accordance with externally set strategies, objectives, or goals. -Develops long-term objectives, strategies, goals. -Orients to longer terms than day-to-day activities; determines long-term issues, problems or opportunities. -Develops and establishes broad scale, longer-term objectives, goals, or projects (e.g., affecting a business, department, several departments or entire organization). -Develops a business strategy. -Assesses and links short-term, day-to-day tasks in the context of long-term business strategies or a long-term 	10	Strategic orientation

		<p>perspective; considers whether short-term goals will meet long-term objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reviews own actions against the organization's strategic plan; considers the big picture (e.g., quality assurance initiative) when considering possible opportunities or projects or thinks about long-term applications of current activities. - Anticipates all possible responses to different initiatives. - Is aware of the projected directions of trends (e.g., social, technological, etc.) and how changes might impact the organization; considers how present policies, processes, and methods (not current actions, but ongoing issues) might be affected by future developments and trends. - Ensures contingency plans exist for problems and situations that might occur; redesigns the department and/or organization to better meet long-term objectives; establishes a course of action to accomplish a long-term goal or vision, and/or shares own view of the desirable future state of the business, department or organization. 		
4.	<p>The CIO is responsible for implementing, maintaining, and ensuring the organization has a successful information security program. Please tell us an information security program you developed and successfully implemented. Describe the key highlights and any challenges you addressed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Identifies the need for change by leading the change process -Understands and utilizes the actions and behaviours necessary to move organization change; creates a sense of urgency to achieve desired change e.g., rewarding/disciplining behaviour in accordance with the change effort -Takes action to align the organization with the change vision -Takes specific and sustained action to ensure the successful implementation of the change program -Reinforces the change message with own actions and attitudes -Publicly recognizes individuals who are demonstrating behaviours consistent with the "new organization" 	10	Leading change

5.	The CIO will be responsible for leading business transformation. Please give us an example of a time when a new technological advancement or development enabled you to lead a business transformation. What steps did you take to lead this transformation? What were the results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Shows curiosity or interest about new approaches, tools, methods and/or technologies in own field of expertise on the job -Seeks out new approaches, tools, methods, techniques and/or technologies in own field of expertise by reading, talking to others, attending industry seminars/conferences, courses and/or by experimentation on the job -Stays current in a demanding and changing business/organizational environment with new approaches, tools, methods and/or technologies that may impact the business -Quickly assimilates and understands a constant stream of new information -Acts for the long-term good of the organization, even when short-term personal or departmental sacrifices may be necessary 	10	Continuous improvement, Personal accountability
6.	The CIO will be responsible for implementing and leading change to achieve desired organizational outcomes by providing advice and recommendations to the executive group. Please give us an example of a time when you needed to resolve a significant IT problem that was central to the ongoing success of the organization/line of business. Tell us about how you determined what the business needs were and why you proposed the change recommendations you did. How did you engage your team and decision makers to support the proposed change? What steps did you take? What were the results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Identifies the need for change by leading the change process -Understands and utilizes the actions and behaviours necessary to move organizational change; creates a sense of urgency to achieve desired change e.g., rewarding/disciplining behaviour in accordance with the change effort -Takes action to align the organization with the change vision -Takes specific and sustained action to ensure the successful implementation of the change program -Reinforces the change message with own actions and attitudes 	10	Leading change
7.	This CIO must be able to balance strategy and vision with day to day operational effectiveness. Using an example from your past, tell us you experience with balancing vision with the operational day to day requirements of the organization. Which aspect is your strength: vision, or operations and what have you done to achieve a balance?	Looking for in response: Ability to link long-range visions and concepts to daily work, ranging from a simple understanding to a sophisticated awareness of the impact of the world at large on strategies and on choices.	10	Strategic orientation
8.	The person in the CIO role will need to establish relationships with portfolio leaders and understand their information and technology needs. Using a recent (within the last three years) experience, please tell us about how you went about creating and maintaining positive relationships with clients, counterparts or	Working to build or maintain ethical relationships or networks or contacts with people who are, or may be, potentially helpful in achieving work related goals and establishing advantages. These people may include customers, clients, counterparts, colleagues, etc.	10	Relationship Building

	colleagues/ Please also tell us about any issues you came up against and what you did to resolve those issues? What did you learn from that experience and what would you do differently next time?			
9.	Tell us about your leadership style and routines, specifically with regards to how you lead the people on your team. How has your style evolved over your leadership career? What has been your most profound challenge which prompted a change to your leadership style. Provide specific examples.	A desire to lead others, including diverse teams. Leadership is generally, but not always, demonstrated from a position of formal authority. The “team” here should be understood broadly a any group with which the person interacts regularly	10	Leadership
10.	As the CIO, you’re responsible for supporting and developing your team to achieve their individual goals as they relate to the organization’s goals. Please tell us about a time when you helped your team to understand and ultimately accept a substantial change in their work or work environment that would have significant impact on them. What tools and strategies did you use? Please describe what you did to get buy in from your staff who were unhappy and unsupportive of the change. Please describe how you dealt with conflicts that arose. What would you do differently next time?	Inspiring enthusiasm and commitment to individual and team goals, engaging effective and productive teams, and recognizing and celebrating successes across the office.	10	Engage and inspire
11.	Tell us about an example where you had an employee who was underperforming and lacked motivation. Please describe the challenges and tell us about the steps you took to address both issues. What was the outcome?	Developing talent, encouraging professional development, and actively supporting training, coaching, mentoring and performance management programs.	10	Developing people
12.	Thinking back over your recent (last three years) leadership career, what have you done to create space for cultural diversity on your team? Please provide specific examples of tangible changes you made to your leadership practice to facilitate cultural diversity.	Is the ability to work respectfully, knowledgeably and effectively with Indigenous people. It is noticing and readily adapting to cultural uniqueness in order to create a sense of safety for all. It is openness to unfamiliar experiences, transforming feelings of nervousness or anxiety into curiosity and appreciation. It is examining one's own culture and worldview and the culture of the Office of the Auditor General, and to notice their commonalities and distinctions with Indigenous cultures and worldviews. It is recognition of the ways that personal and professional values may conflict or align with those of Indigenous people. It is the capacity to relate to or allow for differing cultural perspectives and	10	Cultural agility

		being willing to experience a personal shift in perspective.		
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Appendix D: Executive Director, Performance Audit (PARA ED) Interview Questions and Ideal Responses

Table 6: Executive Director, Performance Audit (PARA ED) Interview Questions and Ideal Responses

	Question	Ideal Response	Score Value	Competency(s)
1.	Why are you interested in being an Executive Director of PARA? Tell us why you feel you are ready to take on the challenges of the position.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Links experience with the experience required in the role -Describes fit for the position -Understanding and sense of their ability to contribute to the portfolio -Describes ability to take on new challenges position presents 	5	Business acumen
2.	Tell us about a corporate audit planning project that you led successfully. Please include what your role was in the project, what steps you took to ensure its success and what was the result.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Look for a project and role similar to what is expected of the ED in para, consider whether it would be directly relevant to audit planning -Consider the candidates leadership role -Consider the process including, project mgt., technical approach to identifying topics, communications, writing of the plan, setting targets and resourcing the plan 	20	Corporate planning
3.	Tell us about a time when you worked on a developmental program for staff that resulted in a successful outcome for either the individual/team or the organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Look for a role that would be similar to what is expected in PARA -More points for developmental program that is relevant to more than 1 staff member -Look at the reasonableness of the process, and the outcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ->Considered formal/informal training, job assignments, career development path, lasting program, consultation with HR and others 	10	Developing people
4.	One of the key responsibilities of this position is developing relationships with auditees. Some of these relationships are very challenging. What strategies have you used in a performance audit in BC to ensure positive relationships with the auditee?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Demonstrates effective communication and active listening -Shows an understanding of auditees concerns -Demonstrates they are prepared for meetings, walking through findings -Professional and respectful disposition and response to concerns while maintaining the quality of the audit and our independence 	5	Service focus
5.	Tell us about your approach to scoping a performance audit at AG BC, how do you approach the challenge of developing a focused audit that can be accomplished with a small team?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Consider the type of information that they look at -Shows consideration to the team competency and capacity -Demonstrates understanding of value to the legislature 	5	Planning

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Considers the budget and timelines available to complete the work-Considers the timing of the audit given program changes, information available		
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Appendix E: Manager, Performance Audit (PARA Manager) Interview Questions and Ideal Responses

Table 7: Manager, Performance Audit (PARA Manager) Interview Questions and Ideal Responses

	Question	Ideal Response	Score Value	Competency(s)
1.	Describe your experience planning an audit. What factors did you consider when establishing (or helping to establish) the scope?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Assesses the significance and risk of audit topics -Develops suitable audit criteria from appropriate sources -Discusses audit options with the team and decision-makers -Develops the draft audit plan and persuasively presents to decision-makers -Clears the audit plan with the auditee -Identifies resourcing requirements for the audit including internal team and external subject matter experts (where appropriate) -Reviews the work tasks of others to ensure quality standards are applied 	10	Technical- Planning
2.	Tell us about a time when you needed to give feedback to an employee regarding some performance concerns. How did you approach it? What was the outcome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Formally coaches and mentors staff -Encourages staff to take ownership for their learning -Enables team members to take on more complex assignments -Handles situations of conflict by striving to understand the perspective of others to reach win/win solutions -Developing talent, encouraging professional development and actively supporting training, coaching, mentoring and performance management programs 	10	Developing people
3.	Describe a situation where a project you were leading was not going well. What did you do to motivate the team and ensure the project's success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Actively empowers team members -Promotes cooperation, collaboration and working together across diverse teams -Manages conflict and removes roadblocks for team members to achieve results -Inspiring enthusiasm and commitment to individual and team goals, engaging effective and productive teams, and recognizing and celebrating success across the office 	10	Engage and inspire
4.	As a Manager, you will be responsible for developing relationships with auditees, including communicating contentious findings/issues. Give us an example as to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Builds collaborative relationships -Models professional and respectful behaviours consistent with the Office values 	10	Service focus

	where you did this, what you did and what the outcome was.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Builds communication skills by leveraging own strengths and seeking opportunities to improve capabilities -Handles situations of conflict by striving to understand the perspective of others to reach win/win solutions 		
5.	Tell us about a time when you adopted your approach to working with someone from an Indigenous culture (or someone with a different background or culture from yours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ability to work respectfully, knowledgeably and effectively with Indigenous people, or someone with a different background/culture -Noticing and readily adapting to cultural uniqueness in order to create a sense of safety for all -Openness to unfamiliar experiences, transforming feelings of nervousness or anxiety into curiosity and appreciation -Recognition of the ways that personal and professional values may conflict or align with others -Capacity to relate to or allow for differing cultural perspectives and being willing to experience a personal shift in perspective 	10	Cultural agility

Appendix F: Executive Director, Strategic Human Resources (SHR ED) Interview Questions and Ideal Responses

Table 8: Executive Director, Strategic Human Resources (SHR ED) Interview Questions and Ideal Responses

	Question	Ideal Answer	Score Value	Competency(s)
1.	Please tell us what you find most interesting about the role of Executive Director, Strategic Human Resources at the Office of the Auditor General of BC and what inspired you to apply for it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Mandate of AG as an Independent officers of the legislature -Understands practical business functions in the organizational environment -Acts in accordance with established organizational objectives or goals -An appreciation of the role of independent audit in government—transparency, and accountability 	5	Business acumen
2.	You have been provided with the OAG's Service Plan. Please read the Service Plan in it's entirety. Then, imagine yourself as the new Executive Director, Strategic Human Resources at the OAG. After reading the service plan, you will prepare a 30-60-90-day plan to set your achievement objectives in your first 30, 60, and 90 days on the job. List the high-level priorities and actionable goals along with the metrics you'll use to measure your success in those first three months. You will be asked to present your 30-60-90-day plan via PowerPoint to your executive during your interview. You will be given 10 minutes to present your plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Established official and operative goals and a system of measuring effectiveness of goal attainment -Strategy demonstrates knowledge and skills to support in the organization through setting direction and urgency, building a coalition of support, communicating widely, handling resistance to change and facilitating implementation of successful actions -Involves good presentation skills (verbal and written), careful listening, problem framing and use of presentation technologies -Makes decisions that improve effective utilization of resources for the organization even when own branch, division or team must “sacrifice” 	10	Vision and goal setting, Designing strategy and structure, Creating and managing change, Communicating effectively
3.	OAG is focused on becoming a more diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace. Please provide an example of an SHR initiative you lead that contributed to creating and nurturing a more diverse, equitable and inclusive environment. Please describe any challenges you faced in an effort to create a space where diversity, equity and inclusion could thrive and how you addressed those challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The ability to work respectfully, knowledgeably, and effectively with diverse groups -Readily adapting to cultural uniqueness in order to create a sense of safety for all -Openness to unfamiliar experiences, transforming feelings of nervousness or anxiety into curiosity and appreciation -Capacity to relate to or allow for differing cultural perspectives and willingness to experience a personal shift in perspective -Recognition of the ways that personal and professional values may conflict or align with those of Indigenous people and/or other cultural groups 	10	Cultural agility
4.	Tell us about a strategic HR initiative you led in a previous position that made a significant positive difference to the organization and for which you believe will be remembered. How did you use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Response focuses on venture creating while considering corporate governance, and the impact of new ventures within the organization 	10	Corporate intrapreneurship

	your knowledge of the organization to support a successful outcome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Demonstrates the initiative made a significant positive contribution to the organization -Uses knowledge of the organization to support a successful outcome 		
5.	Please provide an example on a time where one of your employees was underperforming and how you addressed the situation. Please describe the steps you took to address the performance concerns and detail the outcome. Looking back on the situation, what, if anything, would you do differently today?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Demonstrates knowledge and skills in using motivational techniques such as job design, role classification, reward systems performance appraisal to motivate optimum subordinate performance -Gives specific feedback for developmental purposes on a regular basis -Gives negative feedback in behavioural rather than personal terms -Reviews performance against clear standards or expectations -States concern that performance expectations are made clear and are understood -Addressed performance problems in a timely way by assessing performance against standards and acting in a way to improve performance -Expresses expectations for future performance or gives individualized suggestions for improvement 	10	Motivating for peak performance, Developing people
6.	As a leader the goal is to create a high performing team where organizational objectives are achieved while individual team members feel empowered over their performance, as though they receive sufficient mentorship, and like they are a contributing member of the team. Please describe a high performing team you led. What steps did you take to ensure empowerment, employee development, and a strong team orientation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Expresses positive expectations of others, speaks of team members in positive terms -trusts team members judgement and that they know what they are doing: shows respect for others' intelligence -Publicly credits team members who have performed well -Encourages and empowers team members, makes them feel strong or important -Accepts and supports others' considered views, recommendations or actions -Delegates full authority and responsibility with the latitude to do a task in their own way, including the opportunity to make mistakes and learn from making mistakes in a non-critical setting -Acts to promote a friendly climate, good morale, and cooperation within the team -Protects and promotes group reputation with others 	10	Promoting empowerment, Developing people, Building team orientation
7.	Fostering trust is an incredibly important aspect to building relationships. Think of a situation during your HR career where there wasn't a trusting relationship with a colleague, co-worker, supervisor, or between the HR department and operations. What did you specifically do to try to build a more trusting relationship? What was the result? What did you learn from your experience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Identifies key stakeholder contacts in the organization with who a relationship must be established -Demonstrates knowledge and skills to build and sustain trust -Demonstrates integrity, concern for others and consistent behaviour -Follows through on commitments and engages in open communication 	10	Fostering Trust

		-Communicates regularly with stakeholders as appropriate, sustains the relationship		
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