

## MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION DECISION NOTE

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable Amrik Virk  
Minister of Advanced Education

**ISSUE:** Vancouver Community College application to offer a Bachelor of Hospitality Management degree program.

### BACKGROUND:

Under the *College and Institute Act*, the Minister responsible for colleges and institutes may, by order, designate under section 5.1 (a) an applied baccalaureate degree that a college may grant and the name of that degree. Degree proposals from public colleges first undergo an applied degree review by the Ministry as the first step in a two-step review process before the proposal is reviewed by the Degree Quality Assessment Board (the Board).

Vancouver Community College (VCC) is proposing to offer a Bachelor of Hospitality Management (BHM) degree that represents substantive changes to its existing hospitality degree. As such, the proposal was not required to go through the Ministry's applied degree review but went directly to the Board for a quality assessment review.

VCC has been offering a Bachelor of Hospitality Management degree since 2004 and also offers a diploma in hospitality management. VCC states that the current degree program is being revised to address the "increasingly competitive global marketplace" and "better align and strengthen industry partnerships to ensure graduates have job-ready skills". Admission to the two-year, 60-credit BHM program is through an earned two-year diploma in hospitality management or business or a related field of study. An executive track may be completed in one year. VCC has suspended enrolment in its existing hospitality degree pending approval of the proposed degree.

### DISCUSSION:

In June 2013, the Board determined that VCC's proposed changes to its existing Bachelor of Hospitality Management degree would represent a new degree and require a quality assessment review. The BHM proposal was posted for the required 30-day review period and received no comments.

At its meeting on September 16, 2013 the Board determined that an expert panel should review the program. The panel submitted an interim report which highlighted four areas of concern where further consideration was required: degree level standard, curriculum/program content, faculty, and program consultation.

At its meeting on February 24, 2014, the Board reviewed the panel's interim report and tabled the proposal until VCC addressed the panel's advice, at which time a second expert panel review would be required. At its meeting on July 28, 2014 the Board reviewed the proposal, the second expert panel's report, and the institution's response and recommended approval of the proposed degree.

Ministry staff have reviewed the program and confirmed fit with VCC's mandate and have not identified any concerns.

## OPTIONS:

### **Option 1: Approve the VCC Bachelor of Hospitality Management degree program.**

#### *Implications:*

- The application has undergone two expert panel reviews with site visits to improve the program and the Board has recommended approval;
- The proposed program addresses current and emerging needs in the hospitality industry;
- Builds on VCC's success in offering a Bachelor of Hospitality Management since 2004; and
- Ministry staff have not identified any issues with the proposed program.

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## RECOMMENDATION:

### **Option 1: Approve the VCC Bachelor of Hospitality Management degree program.**

If the Minister agrees, a letter is attached for signature.

Approved / Not Approved        
Honourable Amrik Virk

Date: September 19, 2014

**Attachment: 1.** Letter to Vancouver Community College

<b>Program Area Contact:</b>	Rosalyn Kilpatrick, Education Officer
	Governance and Quality Assurance Branch
Phone #:	250-387-6176

## MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION MEETING NOTE

**PREPARED FOR:** Sandra Carroll, Deputy Minister

**DATE AND TIME OF MEETING:** March 23, 2015, 11am – 12pm

**ATTENDEES:** Dr. Peter Nunoda, President, Vancouver Community College  
Ms. Irene Young, Interim Vice-President of Administration and CFO,  
Vancouver Community College

**ISSUES:** Meeting with Vancouver Community College to discuss Adult Upgrading Programs and Deficit Mitigation

### BACKGROUND:

Adult Upgrading: In 2013/14, Developmental FTEs amounted to 40 percent of Vancouver Community College's (VCC) overall FTE delivery. Base funded ABE and ESL represented the biggest portion of this programming.

VCC 2013/14 FTEs	ABE	ESL	ASE	Total
Developmental FTEs	s.17			
Developmental FTEs as % of overall FTEs				

Deficit Mitigation: VCC has a history of balanced or surplus financial results. The operating grant for VCC was \$45.9 million in 2014/15. This is an overall increase of \$3.2 million since 2001/02, but a decrease of \$8.8 million since 2012/13. The decrease is due to ESL (\$7.9 million), Administrative Services Delivery Transformation (ASDT) (\$0.7 million) and minor changes to skills seats and health program funding (\$0.2 million).

### DISCUSSION:

#### Adult Upgrading

- Effective January 1, 2015, all ESL students at VCC pay tuition fees, as do ABE students who were not already registered in December. VCC has implemented the maximum amount permitted under ministry policy of \$1,600 in tuition fees for a full-time semester for both programs.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A full-time semester consists of four courses for ABE and two courses for ESL.

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**MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION  
DECISION NOTE**

Date:	June 20, 2015
Cliff#	99634
File#	280-20/BN 2015
Version #	

**PREPARED FOR:** Sandra Carroll, Deputy Minister

**ISSUE:** Dental Hygiene Diploma at Vancouver Community College

**BACKGROUND:**

Government policy limits tuition fee increases to two percent per year. Institutions are expected to keep existing programs current within the tuition limit; however, substantial changes may at times be necessary. An existing program that is substantially revised may qualify as a new program under the tuition limit policy.

Dental hygiene is a two-year diploma program that prepares graduates to register with the College of Dental Hygienists of British Columbia and provide safe, high-quality dental hygiene services to patients. Dental hygiene diploma programs are currently offered by four public institutions – Camosun College, College of New Caledonia, Vancouver Community College (VCC) and Vancouver Island University – as well as one private institution, Vancouver College of Dental Hygiene. Additionally, the University of British Columbia offers a dental hygiene degree program.

VCC indicates its dental hygiene program has undergone a major review and significant program changes have been made. VCC has asked the Ministry to review the revised program to determine if it qualifies as a new program under the tuition limit policy.

**DISCUSSION:**

VCC revised its dental hygiene program based on changes in national dental hygiene entry-to-practice competencies and standards. They indicate they have changed student learning outcomes for all courses, and have reduced program length from six terms to four.

Ministry staff have reviewed the program information provided by VCC and have concluded that the program is substantially revised. Camosun College recently revised its dental hygiene program in a similar manner.

Current tuition costs for dental hygiene programs vary considerably between institutions as illustrated in the table below.

VCC	College of New Caledonia	Camosun College	Vancouver Island University	Vancouver College of Dental Hygiene
\$6,605	\$9,914	\$14,259	\$17,838	31,100

VCC indicates it would set tuition fees for the revised dental hygiene program at \$17,120. VCC noted that the proposed tuition fees better reflects program costs, although it would not be a full cost recovery program.

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## OPTIONS:

**Option 1: The revised dental hygiene program at VCC qualifies as a new program under the tuition limit policy. The College may determine tuition and mandatory fees in the first year the new program is offered, after which time the tuition limit policy will apply.**

### *Implications:*

- Recognizes that substantive changes have been made to the program.
- Allows the College to establish tuition fees at a level that better reflects the costs of delivery.
- Is consistent with the decision made for similar changes to Camosun College's dental hygiene diploma program.
- Significant cost increase for students.

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## RECOMMENDATION:

**Option 1: The revised dental hygiene program at VCC qualifies as a new program under the tuition limit policy. The College may determine tuition and mandatory fees in the first year the new program is offered, after which time the tuition limit policy will apply.**

Approved



Sandra Carroll, Deputy Minister

Date: June 30, 2015

If the Deputy Minister concurs with the recommended option, the attached email will be sent to the College's Vice President, Administration and Chief Financial Officer.

**Attachments:** Appendix A: Draft Email to Vice President, Administration and Chief Financial Officer

<b>Program Area Contact:</b>	Sandra Cavallin, Senior Policy Analyst
	Strategic Policy and Planning Branch
<b>Phone #:</b>	250-387-6168
<b>In consultation with</b>	Research Universities and Health Programs Branch; Colleges and Skills Development Branch

(email: [iryoung@vcc.ca](mailto:iryoung@vcc.ca))

Irene Young  
Vice President, Administration  
and Chief Financial Officer  
Vancouver Community College

Dear Irene Young:

Thank you for your submission regarding Vancouver Community College's revised dental hygiene diploma program and your request that the Ministry review this information to determine if it qualifies as a new program under the tuition limit policy.

In reviewing the information submitted by the College, the Ministry has concluded that the program has been substantially revised and therefore qualifies as a new program under the tuition limit policy. Vancouver Community College may establish the tuition and mandatory fees in the first year the new program is offered, after which time it will be subject to the tuition limit policy.

If you have any questions regarding this decision, please contact Ms. Kate Cotie, Director, Strategic Policy and Initiatives, at (250) 387-6197.

Sincerely,

Claire Avison  
Assistant Deputy Minister

pc: Bobbi Plecas  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Institutions and Programs Division



## MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION BRIEFING NOTE

**PREPARED FOR:** Kevin Brewster, Assistant Deputy Minister

**ISSUE:** Concerns surrounding one of Vancouver Community College's President's expense claims.

### BACKGROUND:

On August 4, 2015, CUPE Local 4627 (the Vancouver Community College Employees Union) posted a picture of the President's (Mr. Peter Nunoda) March 31, 2015, expense claim online. One of the transactions on the claim was for a breakfast meeting totalling \$123.10 for two individuals.

The Ministry of Advanced Education (the Ministry) requested information on this claim from Vancouver Community College (VCC). VCC sent a system report that was identical, including the time and date information, to the picture posted online with the exception of the description for the \$123.10 meal. The description had been modified and now indicated the expense was for a lunch meeting for four individuals.

VCC has two policies related to business expenses that were considered in this review:

- 1) Travel Policy (last updated in 2000); and,
- 2) Reimbursement of Expenses Policy (last updated in 1997).

The Ministry met with VCC staff on August 12, 2015, to discuss the claim.

### DISCUSSION:

Based on discussions with VCC's Director of Finance, the understanding of what happened in this situation is as follows:

The transaction description for the \$123.10 meal at Chambar Restaurant was input into a free, online BMO Purchase Card system (the BMO system) by the President's assistant using his login information. Based on the President's outlook calendar, the assistant incorrectly entered in a breakfast meeting description (2 diners) from the same day, instead of the lunch meeting description (4 diners).

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requested a copy of all of the President's claims through a Freedom of Information request. At that time, the claim for the meal had not been approved in the BMO system and a hard copy of the claim (with receipt attached) had not been reviewed by the Director of Finance.

The BMO system only captures significant events in the "Audit information" section of the claim, such as the date the claim was created, the date it was approved and by whom. It doesn't display when or if a claim has been modified or who modified the claim. A claim can be modified up until the point it is approved. After a claim is approved, it cannot be changed. The Ministry confirmed this through on site testing.

VCC has two approval processes that happen independently of each other relating to purchase card transactions:

- 1) Approval of the claim in the online BMO system (approved by the cardholder's supervisor); and,
- 2) Formal approval and expense authorization of a hard copy of the claim with the receipts attached (by the Director of Finance). This is the key control for reviewing and approving purchase card transactions.

The Ministry's site visit to VCC was to review this specific scenario and it was confirmed that the description in the approved hard copy claim report matched the President's calendar and the receipt from the restaurant. It was noted that the claim was not approved in a timely manner.

Some of the other claims viewed by the Ministry were not yet approved in the BMO system, but hard copies of the claims with receipts had been approved. However, again the approvals did not occur in a timely manner. s.17

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The Ministry can take assurance from the work that VCC's financial statement auditors did in providing a clean audit opinion on their 2014/15 financial statements, which includes an assessment of their control framework and a review of expenses.

VCC's current policies for acceptable business expenses in the local area (e.g. business meals) are vague and have not been updated in a significant amount of time. Per discussions with the Director of Finance, VCC is currently in the process of improving their purchase card approval process and are in the very early stages of drafting a Hospitality Meal Policy with plans for implementation by the end of the fiscal year.

## **SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS:**

The scenario resulted from a data entry error made by the President's assistant that was subsequently updated prior to approval. Per inspection of the receipt, the total cost of the lunch meal didn't seem unreasonable for four individuals; however the cost per person was greater than the current travel policy per diem rates (which haven't been updated since 2000).

It is likely the data entry error would have been discovered before the information was released publically if VCC's approval process was completed in a timely manner. The Post-Secondary Finance unit will discuss follow up actions with the Director upon her return.

**Attachments:** Appendix A

<b>Program Area Contact:</b>	Phil Hancyk, Manager
	Post-Secondary Finance Branch
<b>Phone #:</b>	250-356-7742

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## Information Note Advice to Minister

Date: April 22, 2015

Cliff #: 99747

Issue: Update on status of VCC procurement and financial health.

### Proposed Next Steps :

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- The Ministry has directed VCC to provide a summary of key deficit drivers by April 24, 2015.
- Further Ministry actions will be determined upon receipt of this response.

### Analysis:

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- The Ministry has taken steps to ensure institutions' procurement policies and practices follow the framework established by government, as detailed in the Core Policy and Procedures Manual. Directions to comply with these policies were provided in the final 2014/15 budget letter to public post-secondary institutions, issued on February 5, 2015; and the Ministry will be monitoring compliance over the 2015/16 fiscal year.

#### Financial Health

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**Attachment(s):** N/A  
**Contact:** Kevin Brewster, ADM (250-952-7410)  
**Total length:** 2 pages