From: Minister, AEST AEST:EX

Sent: September 13, 2021 9:30 AM

To: 'dupindersaran@gmail.com'

Cc: AEST ADM Post-Secondary Policy and Programs AEST:EX

**Subject:** 122558 - Response to One Voice Canada

Attachments: 122558 - Response to One Voice Canada.pdf; AMSSA International Students Info Sheet.pdf

Attached is a signed letter from the Honourable Anne Kang, Minister.

\_\_\_\_\_

Office of the Minister Honourable Anne Kang

Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training

Ph: (250) 356-0179



September 13, 2021 Our Ref. #122558

Dupinder Saran One Voice Canada dupindersaran@gmail.com 604-218-3976

#### Dear Dupinder Saran:

Thank you for meeting with me and ministry staff on July 7, 2021, to discuss the challenges of the international students that your organization works with. I deeply appreciate the dedication you bring to your work, and the essential support you provide to the community.

As promised during our meeting, ministry staff have prepared a response to the issues you raised and are offering to collaborate on developing a Fact Sheet (similar to the one attached) that focuses on the needs of Indian international students.

Thank you again for meeting with me to discuss these important issues.

Sincerely,

Honourable Anne Kang

Minister

pc: Nicola Lemmer

Assistant Deputy Minister

Post-Secondary Policy and Programs

#### Ministry response to concerns raised by One Voice Canada, July 7, 2021

#### 1. International Student Tuition Fees

- One Voice representatives raised concerns about the increasing cost of tuition at B.C. public
  institutions, and the financial, personal and emotional impact on students of unexpected, potentially
  unaffordable, increases during the course of the student's studies.
- Institutions often increase international tuition above the 2% cap for domestic student tuition, creating the appearance of a two-tier system that depends on international revenue. Institutions also increase tuition unexpectedly, and sometimes significantly, making it difficult for international students to plan for future financial needs.
- Financial pressures from tuition increases may lead international students to work beyond the 20-hour limit of their study permit, risking potential exploitation by employers due to the student's concerns over their immigration status and possible deportation.

#### Ministry response:

- The concerns raised are consistent with the Ministry's findings from other engagements with community organizations. The Ministry is working to address many of the concerns identified through a renewed international education framework.
- With respect to international student tuition fees at public post-secondary institutions, institution boards have autonomy under legislation to set tuition and fees for international students.
- International students are not subsidized by British Columbia taxpayers, and they are expected to pay the full cost of their education, including program delivery and support services.
- International student tuition rates at B.C. universities are competitive when compared to Alberta or Ontario, as well as other internationally ranked research universities.
- As part of the Ministry's student-centered approach to international education, the Ministry is
  considering ways to provide greater cost assurance through tuition fee transparency guidelines that
  prevent unexpected tuition fee increases for international students at public post-secondary
  institutions.
- The Ministry will continue to engage with students, institutions and other partners as this important work moves forward.
- With respect to international students and working hours, the federal government's regulations on study permits limit eligible international students to a maximum of 20 hours of work per week during regular school terms/semesters while taking a full-time studies.
  - O An international student can work more than 20 hours a week if they are on an institution's scheduled break (e.g. summer break), however the individual must be a full-time student both before and after the break to work full-time. A student may also work full-time if the student is on co-op work experience that is part of the education program.
  - Working more than 20 hours per week during regular school terms/semesters or working while studying part-time is a violation of study permit conditions. An individual can lose their student status for doing this and may not be approved for a study or work permit in the future. They may also have to leave the country.
  - The Ministry recognizes the vulnerability this creates for international students. We will continue to work with the federal government, institutions and community organizations to improve and target information available to international students on their rights, and the assistance and supports available to them.

#### 2. Regulation and Oversight of Private Colleges enrolling international students

 One Voice representatives expressed concerns that additional regulation and oversight of private training institutions (PTIs), and responsiveness by regulators, could better protect vulnerable international students. Examples included PTIs failing to develop adequate student protection policies, failing to disclose policies to students, and failing to follow policies. Representatives called for annual audits of institutions and provincial oversight of the institutions designated to receive international students.

#### Ministry response:

- The protection of international students is important to the Ministry.
- The Private Training Institutions Branch (PTIB) of the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training administers the Private Training Act and associated regulations.
- PTIB has authority under the Act to inspect institutions and issue financial and other penalties, up to
  and including removing an institution's designation and closure. Complaints about a regulated
  institution can be submitted to PTI.StudentSupport@gov.bc.ca.
- Information about institutions and complaints is available on the PTIB website at <a href="https://www.privatetraininginstitutions.gov.bc.ca/">https://www.privatetraininginstitutions.gov.bc.ca/</a>.
- Recent <u>amendments to the Private Training Regulations</u> require more transparency on the part of PTIB certified institutions and will offer further protection for students. <u>Highlights about these</u> changes can be found on the PTIB website.
- One of the new requirements is that a Student Statement of Rights must be provided to students when
  they sign a contract with a PTIB certified institution. PTIB is in the process of developing samples
  for institutions, translated into a number of different languages in order to support international
  students and those who may have English as a second language.
- All institutions in B.C. that host international students on study permits, including PTIB institutions, must hold the Education Quality Assurance (EQA) designation. The EQA office is separate from PTIB within the Ministry.
- EQA Policy sets expectations for institutions and their representatives, including agents, to provide current and accurate information about the institution. Institutions must comply with EQA Policy or risk losing their designation. If an international student does not believe their institution is complying with EQA Policy, they are encouraged to contact the EQA office (EQA@gov.bc.ca).
- The EQA office reviews EQA designated institutions annually to determine whether they are in compliance with EQA Policy and suitable to host international students.
- The EQA office is committed to protecting the privacy of students and, on receipt of a complaint, can engage with the EQA designated institution to address concerns with policy violations.
- International students may change post-secondary institutions at any time without obtaining another study permit. However, they may only register at another Designated Learning Institutions (DLI) and must update the new DLI information in their MY CIC account.

#### 3. International Student Mental Health Supports and Information Resources

- One Voice representatives described the mental health pressures international students face and
  identified concerns with insufficient support services at public and private sector PSIs. Pressures
  include financial, food and housing security; perception of risk when making complaints;
  vulnerability to agents and employer exploitation. Recommendations included:
  - Systemic changes to support international student mental health, such as language-appropriate and culturally specific support services
  - Substantive collaboration by PSIs with community support agencies and services
  - Information for students on rights—including as a student, worker, tenant, and immigration applicant—and how to access support services, complaint redress, and protection from exploitation.

#### **Ministry Response:**

• Mental health is a B.C. government priority.

- The Province of B.C. is ensuring international students have access to key mental health supports while studying in B.C., including Here2Talk, the Province's mental health counselling and referral service for post-secondary students. The service offers confidential, free single-session services by app, phone or online chat, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Government is providing \$1.5 million per year for the service.
- The British Columbia Council for International Education (BCCIE), a provincial Crown Corporation, is working with institutions to help improve support systems for students, including mental health, and training for frontline staff at institutions to better understand and respond to the cultural challenges students face.
- Many post-secondary institutions also provide mental health and substance use information and support directly to their students. The cost of care is often covered by student fees for registered students.
- For more information about the services and resources available students can visit the health services section of the institution's website or make an appointment directly with the institution's medical clinic.

#### With respect to the concerns regarding education agents,

- We share concerns over the vulnerability of students to agents. Regulation of immigration agents is federal jurisdiction, and our Ministry is working to coordinate with the new federal regulator.
- The B.C. government's <u>Education Quality Assurance Policy</u> requires institutions and their representatives, including agents, to provide current and accurate information about the institution.
- Institutions that fail to meet and maintain the requirements of EQA designation as set out in the policy manual may have their EQA designation revoked.
- We encourage international students who believe they have been misled to contact the EQA office (EQA@gov.bc.ca) with their concerns.
- The EQA office can engage with the institution to address concerns with policy violations, including issues relating to education agents. This process is confidential for the student.

#### With respect to information resources:

- One Voice and other community groups to help ensure international students are informed of their rights, and to improve students' access to this information.
- Attached is a copy of an International Student Fact Sheet that was developed by the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies (AMSSA) of B.C., with support from the Government of B.C., that includes information and resources for front-line settlement workers in support of service delivery for international students and former international students eligible for the Post-Graduation Work Permit program.
- The Ministry would welcome an opportunity to work with One Voice Canada to prepare a similar culturally appropriate document for use by their network.

#### 4. Medical Services Plan

 One Voice representatives identified concerns regarding the requirement for students to obtain suitable private health care coverage during the 3-month wait period for MSP. PSIs need to do more to ensure their students obtain suitable health care coverage before they arrive in Canada.

#### **Ministry Response:**

 During the COVID-19 pandemic, government has ensured international students already in B.C. have access to key supports, including temporary policy changes for MSP coverage for eligible students

- with expired temporary work or study permits. This temporary coverage will be valid until October 31, 2021.
- o New (and returning) residents are required to complete a wait period consisting of the balance of the month in which residence in B.C. is established, plus two months before MSP benefits can begin.
- The wait period protects the province's health care plans by reducing the likelihood of individuals coming to B.C. for the purpose of receiving health care services at public expense.
- Due to the 3-month wait period for MSP benefits, new or returning residents arriving from outside Canada, including international students, should contact a private insurance company for coverage during this period.
- The Ministry will explore the concerns raised by One Voice Canada regarding the lack of awareness among international students of the need for health care coverage during wait period for MSP coverage with post-secondary institutions.

To follow-up on any of these matters and to discuss further steps the ministry could take, One Voice Canada is encouraged to contact Jamie Edwardson, Director, International Education and Intergovernmental Relations at (778) 698.1942 or <a href="mailto:jamie.edwardson@gov.bc.ca">jamie.edwardson@gov.bc.ca</a>.

# INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: SETTLEMENT, HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT



### **Settlement Supports**

#### **■ SETTLEMENT**

- <u>Learn Live BC</u>: Information about learning, living and working in BC
- <u>BC Newcomer's Guide</u>: Comprehensive information guide includes information on prearrival, legal, housing, banking, medical and more – 15 <u>languages</u> available

#### HOUSING SUPPORT - WHERE TO GO FOR HELP:

- Residential Tenancy Branch Metro Vancouver: 604-660-1020 Toll-free: 1-800 665-8779
   E-mail: HSRTO@gov.bc.ca
- Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre (TRAC):
  Lower Mainland Tenants' Rights Information Line /
  Tenant Hotline Metro Vancouver:
  604-255-0546 Toll-free: 1-800-665-1185

#### **LEGAL - LOW COST LEGAL SUPPORT**

- <u>ClickLaw:</u> Provides legal information, education and help for British Columbians from trusted organizations
- BC Human Rights Clinic: Metro Vancouver: 604-622-1100 Toll-free: 1-855-685-6222
   E-mail: infobchrc@clasbc.net
- BC Human Rights Tribunal: Metro Vancouver: 604-775-2000 Toll-free: 1-888-440-8844 / E-mail: BCHumanRightsTribunal@gov.bc.ca
- <u>Canadian Human Rights Commission:</u>
   Toll-free: 1-888-214-1090

#### FINANCIAL AID AND SUPPORTS

- International students may qualify for <u>international</u> <u>student funding or special programs</u>. There are many scholarships and bursaries available depending on the student's home country.
- Many post-secondary institutions in BC also offer scholarships, bursaries and other financial awards for international students. To find out more about these awards, contact the <u>international education</u> <u>office</u> at the institution where you are seeking to study.

#### **Work Permit**

- Work Off-Campus Tool: Find out if you can work off campus as an international student still completing studies
- Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP):
   International students who graduate from a program of study in Canada may be eligible for open work permits allowing for an opportunity to gain experience in the Canadian labour market
- Processing times: check processing wait times for work permit applications

### Career Planning and Job Search

- Explore Careers in BC: Explore 500 career profiles and get all the details you need, from job duties and wages to projected demand in your region, based on National Occupational Classification (NOC) occupation classifications
- <u>Career Toolkit:</u> Designed to help newcomers find the right career and assist in their career path
- Power Up Your Job Search: Resources on writing a compelling resume, preparing for interview, developing networking skills and using social media in searching for a job
- Job Bank: Electronic listing of jobs provided by employers from everywhere across Canada, broken down by province and city
- WorkBC Job Board: BC's most comprehensive job postings database

## **Employment Safety, Rights and Responsibilities**

- BC Employment Standards: The Employment Standards Branch administers the Employment Standards Act and Regulation, which set minimum standards for wages and working conditions in most workplaces. Learn more about who this applies to, answers to common questions and general information and forms
- Complaint Process: Steps to take when you have an Employment Standards problem
- Workplace Rights: Employees in Canada are protected by laws and regulations. Employers have obligations to their employees on topics such as pay, hours of work and safety.



# OVERVIEW OF IMMIGRATION PATHWAYS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS



# Permanent Resident (PR) Application and Requirements

- Application Process: The basics of applying, such as your account, application status, finding forms, our offices, fees, and medical exams or police checks
- <u>Processing Times:</u> Economic immigration applications processing times here under "economic immigration"
- National Occupational Classification (NOC): To determine the skill level of a job, search the NOC for the job title with "main duties" that most closely match the job's duties. You can then determine the job's skill level (e.g. A, B, C, D, or 0) within the NOC Matrix. The NOC can be challenging to navigate; if you are unsure, consider seeking professional advice.
- PR Terms and Definitions: List of terms and definitions related to permanent residence
- <u>Language Tests:</u> Required with specified minimum Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) levels

# Common Permanent Residency Pathways for TFWs

Many International Students become PRs through Canada's Economic Immigration Programs. The following are the key immigration pathways to permanent residency for International Students:

#### ASSESSED VIA EXPRESS ENTRY (EE) APPLICATION SYSTEM

- Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP)
- Federal Skilled Trades Program (FSTP)
- Canadian Experience Class (CEC)

#### SKILLS ASSESSED THROUGH BC PROVINCIAL NOMINEE PROGRAM (BC PNP) ONLINE APPLICATION SYSTEM

- Skilled Worker
- International Graduate
- International Post Graduate

#### ASSESSED VIA EXPRESS ENTRY (EEBC) APPLICATION SYSTEM AND BC PNP APPLICATION SYSTEM

- International Graduate (via CEC, FSWP or FSTP)
- International Post-Graduate (via CEC, FSWP or FSTP)



What is Express Entry? Learn more here



COMPLETE STUDIES

Job Offer



EE REGISTRATION WITH IRCC

Receive EE profile info



BC PNP REGISTRATION

Invitation



Decision



RECEIVE
600 POINTS
IN EE PROFILE

**EE Invitation** 



IRCC APPLICATION FOR PR

Permanent Resident



Page 09 of 36 to/à Page 11 of 36

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.13

From: AEST Corp Planning, International and Quality Assurance AEST:EX

**Sent:** August 24, 2020 4:16 PM

To: Williams, Doris AEST:EX; Mason, Laura AEST:EX; Nichols, Alisha AEST:EX

Cc: Brucker, Laurie AEST:EX; Beaulac, Kathryn AEST:EX; AEST Corp Planning, International and Quality

Assurance AEST:EX

Subject: FW: FOLLOW UP: RE: Incoming call to DMO: ISIN Canada education agency

**Categories:** Complete - to be filed

Hello,

Please see below a Call Outcomes Summary Report for s.22 created by Kathryn Beaulac today as part of the IE Team in CPIQAB in response to s.22 phone call from last week.

Thank you,

Charles

From: Brucker, Laurie AEST:EX <Laurie.Brucker@gov.bc.ca>

Sent: August 24, 2020 3:50 PM

**To:** AEST Corp Planning, International and Quality Assurance AEST:EX <AEST.CorporatePlanningInternationalandQualityAssurance@gov.bc.ca> **Subject:** FOLLOW UP: RE: Incoming call to DMO: ISIN Canada education agency

Charles,

Kathryn followed up with this individual today. Below is a call outcomes report. **Kindly connect with the DMO to pass** along the outcomes report.

Thanks, Laurie

#### Outcome Report:

- I contacted s.22 on Monday August 24, 2020, as a follow up to s.22 phone call to the Ministry on August 18, 2020.
- s.22 who are trying to get student visas. They are going through an education agency: ISIN Canada global education agency.
- s.22 was wondering if the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training can verify the legitimacy of an education agency.
- I explained the Government of Canada, and the Government of B.C. do not qualify, accredit, guarantee or endorse any particular agent.
- I also explained that each student should research the background, experience and expertise of the agent; determine which Canadian institutions are authorizing their services; and seek references before engaging with an agent. I recommended they confirm directly with an institution of interest to determine authorization for agent representation.
- \$.22 was grateful for the help. I do not anticipate any further action will be required.

**From:** AEST Corp Planning, International and Quality Assurance AEST:EX <AEST.CorporatePlanningInternationalandQualityAssurance@gov.bc.ca>

Sent: August 24, 2020 8:23 AM

To: Brucker, Laurie AEST:EX <Laurie.Brucker@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: FW: Incoming call to DMO: ISIN Canada education agency

Hi Laurie,

This came in last week from the DMO while<sup>s.22</sup> and I asked Jolie to respond if possible. I didn't receive a response so not sure if she saw my email. At any rate, this does not seem urgent but was forwarded to us by Doris to see if the IE unit could call them back and provide a brief outcomes summary (email or call) to be sent back to Doris/the DMO once completed, if we can answer it.

Thank you,

Charles

From: Williams, Doris AEST:EX < Doris. Williams@gov.bc.ca >

Sent: August 19, 2020 2:19 PM

**To:** AEST Corp Planning, International and Quality Assurance AEST:EX <a href="mailto:AEST.CorporatePlanningInternationalandQualityAssurance@gov.bc.ca">AEST.CorporatePlanningInternationalandQualityAssurance@gov.bc.ca</a>

Cc: Mason, Laura AEST:EX < Laura. Mason@gov.bc.ca >

Subject: FW: Incoming call to DMO: ISIN Canada education agency

Hello,

Forwarding as per below. Please include the ADMO when forwarding your outcomes summary to DMO.

Let us know how to assist.

**Thanks Doris** 

From: Nichols, Alisha AEST:EX < Alisha. Nichols@gov.bc.ca >

Sent: August 18, 2020 4:20 PM

To: Mason, Laura AEST:EX <Laura.Mason@gov.bc.ca>; Williams, Doris AEST:EX <Doris.Williams@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: Incoming call to DMO: ISIN Canada education agency

Hi ladies,

Could your IE team can assist with this question, or at least points.22 in the right direction? An outcomes summary would be appreciated. Thanks!

Caller Name:	s.22
Contact Info: (phone or email)	s.22
Reason for Call:	<ul> <li>s.22 who are trying to get student visas.</li> <li>They are going through an education agency: ISIN Canada – global education agency</li> </ul>

	<ul> <li>s.22 contacted AEST as the company is located in BC. She is not sure in which province \$.22 plans to study.</li> <li>Is this a legitimate company?</li> </ul>
Misc Details:	https://isincanada.ca/

From: Beaulac, Kathryn AEST:EX
Sent: September 7, 2021 2:13 PM
To: 'anna.bird@gov.mb.ca'

Subject: Manitoba's International Education Act

Hello Anna,

My name is Kathryn Beaulac. I am a Sr. Policy Advisor, International Education, in the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training in the Government of British Columbia.

I am reaching out to you because I am hoping to have a discussion regarding Manitoba's <u>International Education Act</u>. More specifically, the content in the IE Act that pertains to recruiters (i.e., education agents).

The topic of education agents, and the regulation of agents, has been brought to our attention a few times in recent months. I am hoping to connect with you to discuss this topic, as well as the ways in which the IE Act has helped the Government of Manitoba protect international students attending educational institutions from potential fraud and negligence.

Please let me know if you are free for a discussion this week and I can set something up.

I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

#### Kathryn Beaulac

Senior Policy Advisor, International Education
Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training

Tel: (778) 698-9752

Email: Kathryn.Beaulac@gov.bc.ca

http://www.learnlivebc.ca/

From: AEST Corp Planning, International and Quality Assurance AEST:EX

**Sent:** September 18, 2020 1:26 PM

**To:** \$.22

Cc: Minister, EDUC EDUC:EX; Minister, AEST AEST:EX

**Subject:** Our Ref. 119707 – Re: Tuition Refund - Vancouver Community College

Categories: Complete - to be filed

September 18, 2020 Our Ref. 119707

s.22

E-mail Address: s.22

Dear Is.22

Thank you for your correspondence of August 25, 2020, sent to the Honourable Rob Fleming, Minister of Education, regarding a tuition refund from Vancouver Community College (VCC). As post-secondary education is within the responsibility of the Honourable Melanie Mark, Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training, your correspondence has been forwarded to me as the Executive Director of the Corporate Planning, International and Quality Assurance Branch, with responsibility for international education. I have been asked to respond on behalf of Minister Mark and Minister Fleming.

While the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training provides funding for public post-secondary institutions in British Columbia, under the *College and Institute Act*, institutions such as VCC are responsible for the management of their institutions, including decisions regarding tuition fees and refunds. Government does not intervene in these matters.

You indicate that you have already reached out to VCC to request a refund. If you have not done so already, you may wish to contact the VCC International Education Office for further assistance at: <a href="mailto:ieservices@vcc.ca">ieservices@vcc.ca</a> or at: 1 (604) 433-8600. You may also wish to contact Jennifer Gossen, Director of International Education at: <a href="mailto:jgossen@vcc.ca">jgossen@vcc.ca</a> or at: 1 (604) 871-7000 Ext. 8766.

I trust this information is helpful to you.

Sincerely,

Jamie Edwardson
Executive Director
Corporate Planning, International and Quality Assurance Branch
Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training

pc: Honourable Rob Fleming Minister of Education

Honourable Melanie Mark
Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training

From: S.22

Sent: August 25, 2020 7:35 PM

To: Minister, EDUC EDUC:EX <EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Sub-INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FEES REFUND

#### Honourable Minister

My name is s.22 I applied for Canadian student visa. My student visa got refused, after which I applied for fees refund in Vancouver community college. I contacted the VCC through my immigration agent several times and got no response from the college. After many attempts, we got a answer that the delay is due to COVID-19. I totally understand that there could be a lockdown and nobody was able to process my refund for 2 months or so. I have tried to contact the VCC through different sources since then but they keep saying "We are processing your refund". After 6 months still I haven't received any refund and now situation is this that I am tired and depressed. Initially there was no response from the college side but now they keep saying that they are processing it. I have never thought that Institute like VCC can do this to me.

Sir you are my last hope and I humbly request you to look into this matter and help me. I have all the emails saved, in case any proof is required. Please help me Sir, so that I can continue in my life.

Following are my details= Vancouver community college s.22

Kind Regards

s.22

From: AEST Corp Planning, International and Quality Assurance AEST:EX

**Sent:** December 11, 2020 5:34 PM

**To:** s.22

**Cc:** AEST Corp Planning, International and Quality Assurance AEST:EX **Subject:** RE: CLIFF 120158 - Ethical Inquiry Regarding Douglas College

Categories: CLIFF To Be Closed, Complete - to be filed

Dear<sup>s.22</sup>

Thank you for your correspondence of November 14, 2020, sent to Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training, regarding admission processes at Douglas College, including the use of education agents. I apologize for the delay in responding.

Although the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training provides funding for post-secondary institutions in British Columbia, under the *College and Institute Act*, institutions such as Douglas College are responsible for the management of their institutions, including decisions regarding the establishment of its policies and procedures for admissions. Government does not intervene in these matters.

In British Columbia, the <u>Education Quality Assurance (EQA) designation</u> is the standard for institutions to be included in Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's Designated Learning Institutions <u>list</u> to host international students with study permits.

The <u>EQA Policy and Procedures manual</u> includes a section on Representation Requirements, which states any person or entity engaged in advertising, admissions or recruitment activities on behalf of the institution must make available and communicate current and accurate information regarding the institution's quality assurance requirements, admissions policies, language proficiency requirements, credential assessment, programs of instruction and courses, services, tuition, refund policies, terms, grading and academic standing policies, and operating policies. Institutions must comply with the EQA Policy and Procedures to retain the EQA designation.

You indicated that you already reached out to Douglas College on behalf of <sup>s.22</sup> to discuss the application process for a student<sup>s.22</sup>

You may wish to contact Mr. Gareth Jones, Interim Director, International Marketing and Enrolment at Douglas College to further discuss your concerns regarding the application process and the inclusion of agents.

The contact information for Mr. Jones is as follows:

Mr. Gareth Jones, BSc, MBA
Interim Director, International Marketing & Enrolment
Douglas College
604.369.7644
jonesg1@douglascollege.ca

For up-to-date information regarding current study/work permit accommodations and travel restrictions, please visit the Government of Canada Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): Visitors, temporary workers and students website.

I trust this information is helpful to you.

Sincerely,

Jamie Edwardson
Executive Director
Corporate Planning, International and Quality Assurance
Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training

From: s.22

Sent: November 14, 2020 6:54 PM

To: AEST General Inquiries AEST:EX <AEST.GeneralInquiries@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: Ethical Inquiry Regarding Douglas College

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Hello,

I recently made an inquiry with Douglas College about transcripts, <sup>s.22</sup> and study here. They replied and added on that they only accept applications through <sup>s.22</sup> relationships with'.

hoping to come they have

Now having spent a fair amount of time living and working in multiple regions immediately raises some red flags for me around ethics and corruption.

this

Beyond the added cost for using a consultant which will unfairly burden lower income individuals, I know well that agents in these positions are not immune to the draw of personal gain. Whether it be financial or personal relationships, allowing gatekeepers who may have a bias to equally assisting all applicants is, in my opinion, wrong and a cause for concern.

I am curious what your office's view on this is. If it hasn't already been considered as an item of concern and oversight, I suggest it become one.

Warm Regards,

s.22

From: Mark Herringer < Mark.Herringer@nic.bc.ca>

Sent: December 10, 2020 12:50 PM
To: Beaulac, Kathryn AEST:EX

Cc: Markella Gionet; Junko Leclair; Jennifer Barth

**Subject:** Re: Question RE Agents and Refunds

### [EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Hi Kathryn. Of course they can contact us or the agent - though I have a feeling they have exhausted those avenues... let me know if you need anything further.

Mark

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 10, 2020, at 12:40 PM, Beaulac, Kathryn AEST:EX <Kathryn.Beaulac@gov.bc.ca> wrote:

This email comes from a sender outside of North Island College. Please use caution when opening attachments or clicking links.

Hello Mark,

Thank you very much for following up with me to address my question. The information you provided is very helpful.

As I mentioned in my email to Jennifer, in our response we will confirm the Government of B.C. does not intervene in these matters and we will direct the student to follow up with NIC to discuss the refund further if necessary. I just wanted to confirm if it would be appropriate to direct the student to follow up with NIC, or the agent, to discuss their concerns with the agent.

Thank you again for all your help.

Sincerely,

Kathryn

From: Mark Herringer < Mark. Herringer@nic.bc.ca>

Sent: December 10, 2020 12:24 PM

To: Beaulac, Kathryn AEST:EX <Kathryn.Beaulac@gov.bc.ca>

Cc: Markella Gionet <Markella.Gionet@nic.bc.ca>; Junko Leclair <Junko.Leclair@nic.bc.ca>; Jennifer

Barth < Jennifer. Barth@nic.bc.ca>

Subject: FW: Question RE Agents and Refunds

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Hi Kathryn –s.22 I have included Junko Leclair who is our Manager of International Enrolment and recruitment, but I'll respond to your query.

I'm not familiar with this student's particular situation but we generally do not get involved in disputes that applicants may have with their agents unless there is evidence of misrepresentation of NIC's programs by the agent and/or clear evidence of poor or abusive behavior by the agent.

Happy to discuss any detail you may need. You can contact me at the office (250)334-5036 or I can put you in touch with Junko if needed.

Thanks, Mark

From: Markella Gionet < Markella.Gionet@nic.bc.ca > Sent: Thursday, December 10, 2020 11:28 AM

To: Mark Herringer < Mark.Herringer@nic.bc.ca > Subject: FW: Question RE Agents and Refunds

From: Beaulac, Kathryn AEST:EX < Kathryn.Beaulac@gov.bc.ca >

Sent: Thursday, December 10, 2020 10:59 AM

To: Markella Gionet < Markella.Gionet@nic.bc.ca >

Cc: Jennifer Barth < Jennifer.Barth@nic.bc.ca >

Subject: FW: Question RE Agents and Refunds

This email comes from a sender outside of North Island College. Please use caution when opening attachments or clicking links.

Hello Markella,

Included below is an email I just sent Jennifer Barth. I received Jennifer's out of office and you were included as an alternative contact.

Are you available for a brief discussion on this issue today?

Thank you in advance for any help you can provide.

I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Beaulac

**From:** Beaulac, Kathryn AEST:EX **Sent:** December 10, 2020 10:37 AM

To: 'jennifer.barth@nic.bc.ca' <jennifer.barth@nic.bc.ca>

Subject: Question RE Agents and Refunds

Hello Jennifer,

My name is Kathryn Beaulac. I am a Sr. Policy Advisor, International Education in the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training.

I left you a voicemail message yesterday. I know a significant number of people are working from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic so I thought it may be easier to reach you via email.

As I stated in my voicemail, the Government of B.C. recently received two emails from an international student who was accepted at NIC but was not successful in obtaining a study permit. This individual is claiming they were misled by their agent and now they cannot obtain a refund from NIC.

The Ministry is required to respond to all inquiries. In our response to this type of inquiry, we typically clarify government does not intervene in these situations due to legislation and we provide an appropriate contact at the institution for follow up.

Although we do not intervene, it is helpful for the Ministry to have clear understanding of the situation to ensure we provide the correct response to the student.

The agent this student worked with is on the "Find an Agent" section on NIC's website:

https://www.nic.bc.ca/international/become-an-nic-student/find-an-agent/.

**Question:** If a student has an issue with an agent, and the agent is listed on NIC's website, is the student responsible for resolving the issue or does NIC play a role in the situation?

Please let me know if you are available today for a brief discussion.

Thank you in advance for any additional information you can provide.

I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

#### Kathryn Beaulac

Senior Policy Advisor, International Education Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training Tel: (778) 698-9752

Email: Kathryn.Beaulac@gov.bc.ca http://www.learnlivebc.ca/

From: AEST Corp Planning, International and Quality Assurance AEST:EX

**Sent:** July 8, 2021 3:14 PM

**To:** s.22

Cc: AEST Corp Planning, International and Quality Assurance AEST:EX; AEST Deputy Minister AEST:EX

**Subject:** RE: urgent matter of concern NIC § S.22

July 8, 2021 Our Ref. 120305

s.22

E-mail Address s.22

Dear<sup>s.22</sup>

Thank you for your follow-up correspondence of June 23, 2021, sent to Shannon Baskerville, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training, regarding your request for a tuition refund from North Island College (NIC) following the refusal of your visa application. As the Director responsible for international post-secondary education, I have been asked to respond.

As mentioned in previous correspondence of November 3, 2020, and November 29, 2020, although the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training provides funding for public post-secondary institutions in British Columbia, under the *College and Institute Act*, institutions such as NIC are responsible for the management of their institutions, including decisions about tuition fees and refunds. Government does not intervene in these matters.

In your situation, NIC is following its <u>international student tuition refund policy</u>. When a study permit is denied by the Canadian government, a new international student may request a refund of tuition deposit and fees within 90 days of the date the visa denial letter is issued. A copy of the visa denial letter must be supplied with the request. NIC will not provide a refund if a study permit is denied because documentation is not authentic or is labelled as fraud.

I understand that NIC has told you to ask the federal Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada to reconsider the decision to deny your visa application. NIC has also asked you to send them the evidence of this appeal to the Office of Global Engagement at NIC. NIC must have this information before it can make a final decision on your request for a refund.

As mentioned in our previous correspondence, if you are unable to resolve your concerns about your request for a tuition refund with the <u>Office of Global Engagement</u> at NIC, you can also ask whether the NIC Student Appeals process applies to your situation. More information on this process is available at: <u>Student Appeals</u>.

I recognize this is not the response you hoped to receive. As complete detailed information has been provided to you, the Ministry will not respond to further correspondence on this matter.

Sincerely,

Jamie Edwardson
Director, International Education & Intergovernmental Relations
Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training

From: s.22

Sent: June 23, 2021 5:30 PM

To: Baskerville, Shannon AEST:EX < Shannon.Baskerville@gov.bc.ca >

Subject: Fwd: urgent matter of concern NIC s.22

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

To
Shannon Baskerville
hon'ble minister
Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training

Respected sir/ madam

I applied for a study visa s.22 Due to misrepresentation from My Agents.22 My visa was refused and the college could not give me my fee back, they said that we have a policy not to return the fee.

I emailed all board members and requested, but nobody came up, after so many emails, they said, `Let's see your visa notes and then we will issue you LOA or refund fee.

But now I receive my visa notes, everything is clear. But now they said to go through a lawyer but me and my family cannot afford that.

Could you please talk to college, they are providing the education not running their business. Colleges have to help students. But they are listening to their Agent. Agent keeps threatening me not to email the college.

I am really helpless. Due to covid-19, my family didn't have any work for the last year and half. It would be very helpful if we got our fee back.

I really apologize for anything that happened. Please don't give me punishment like that. I trust fake agents. They are not punishing him, keep calling that agent and say that do not receive any call email from your student. I attached both my passport copies and visa notes, some email shots. Please help me.

Thanks Regards s.22

From: Murray, Lise EDUC:EX
Sent: January 28, 2021 2:06 PM

**To:** s.22

Cc: AEST General Inquiries AEST:EX; AEST Corp Planning, International and Quality Assurance AEST:EX

**Subject:** Regarding admission to BC K-12 school <sup>s.22</sup>

thank you for your email regarding your son attending school in British Columbia at the Grade 9

level.

British Columbia offers a world-class education system and currently welcomes over 21,000 international students to study in B.C. public school districts and independent schools.

Application for study at a school in British Columbia is made directly with the public school district or independent school. The school district or independent school will make a determination on student placement and can provide more information on the process you must follow to apply for study and to submit your documents.

A useful resource for you may be the <u>BC for High School</u> website which provides information for international students to help orient them to B.C. and B.C. schools. The site also provides a <u>list of public school districts and independents schools</u> and a <u>map</u> of public school districts by region, along with a list of independent schools in B.C.

#### **Funding**

Information on eligibility for publicly funded education for students in B.C. can be found through the following link: Ministry of Education's Eligibility of Students for Operating Grant Funding. Each board of education/school authority makes its own decisions around what evidence is required to determine a student's residency status in B.C. for the purposes of being recognized as "ordinarily resident" for funding. It is the individual boards of education/school authorities that make the final decisions based on their policies and/or procedures for verifying residency and eligibility for publicly funded education in their areas.

#### **Study Permits**

The issuing of study permits falls under the jurisdiction of the federal government (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada). You may find information on their <u>Study Permits</u> web page.

#### Visas

The issuing of visas falls under the jurisdiction of the federal government. You may find more information on the Immigration and Citizenship webpage.

#### **Travel Restrictions**

Decisions around travel restrictions fall under the jurisdiction of the federal government (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada). I recommend you check the <u>Immigration</u>, <u>Refugees and Citizenship Canada website</u> for the most up to date information.

As you aware no doubt aware, the COVID-19 pandemic has presented challenges for the international education sector, and may cause delays for international students who wish to study in BC. If this is the case, you may want to ask school districts or independent school authorities about a temporary option for online learning for international students outside B.C.

Thank you again for your inquiry.

#### Kind Regards, Lise

Lise Murray, Advisor Independent Schools and International Education Branch Ministry of Education, Victoria, BC Phone: 250 882-5097

Phone: 250 882-5097 Lise.Murray@gov.bc.ca

From: s.22

Sent: January 22, 2021 8:56 AM

**To:** AEST Corp Planning, International and Quality Assurance AEST:EX <AEST.CorporatePlanningInternationalandQualityAssurance@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: Regarding admission

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Dear sir,

I want admission for my son in class 9th in British Columbia. Can you please guide me about available schools and admission process ? I want to know that can my wife get visa as a caregiver to my son. If you can please provide me registered agent list for further process

With regards, s.22

#### Chariton, Kathy AEST:EX

From:

AEST Corp Planning, International and Quality Assurance AEST:EX

Sent:

November 3, 2020 10:22 AM

To:

s 22

Cc:

Minister, EDUC EDUC:EX; Minister, AEST AEST:EX

Subject:

Our Ref. 120077 - Re: Tuition refund from North Island College

Categories:

Complete - to be filed

November 3, 2020 Our Ref. 120077

s.22

E-mail Address: s.22

Dear s.22

Thank you for your correspondence of October 22, 2020, sent to the Minister of Education, regarding a tuition refund from North Island College (NIC). As post-secondary education is within the responsibility of the Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training, your correspondence has been forwarded to me as the Executive Director of Corporate Planning, International and Quality Assurance Branch, with responsibility for post-secondary international education. Due to the recent provincial election, and a new cabinet that has not been named, I am responding on behalf of the Ministers.

While the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training provides funding for public post-secondary institutions in British Columbia, under the *College and Institute Act*, institutions such as NIC are responsible for the management of their institutions, including decisions regarding tuition fees and refunds. Government does not intervene in these matters. NIC has policies with regard to international tuition, fees and refunds that can be reviewed here.

You indicate that you have already reached out to NIC to request a refund. If you have not done so already, you may wish to contact Jennifer Barth, Manager Operations, International Education, at NIC's <u>Office of Global</u> Engagement for further information. She can be reached at: <u>jennifer.barth@nic.bc.ca</u> or at: (250) 334-5021.

If you are unable to resolve your concerns with the Office of Global Engagement, you may wish to investigate whether the NIC Student Appeals process is applicable to your situation. Further information can be found here.

Finally, I can advise that the <u>Office of the Ombudsperson</u> British Columbia receives inquiries and complaints about the practices and services provided by public agencies. While not an advocate, the Ombudsperson can conduct impartial and confidential investigations to determine if a public agency is being fair to the people it serves. Contact information for the Ombudsperson is:

Office of the Ombudsperson PO Box 9039 Stn Prov Govt Victoria BC V8W 9A5

Toll-free: 1-800-567-3247

Fax: (250) 387-0198

Website: www.bcombudsperson.ca/

I trust this information is helpful to you.

Sincerely,

Jamie Edwardson Executive Director Corporate Planning, International and Quality Assurance Branch Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training

pc: Office of the Minister Ministry of Education

Office of the Minister Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training

From: s.22

Sent: October 22, 2020 10:25 PM

To: Minister, EDUC EDUC:EX <EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca>; Service BC CITZ:EX <ServiceBC@gov.bc.ca>; bog@nic.bc.ca; Junko Leclair@nic.bc.ca>

Subject: Humble request to get refund from NIc

To

### Honourable Rob Fleming

Minister of Education PO Box 9045 Stn Prov Govt Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Subject: Get tuition fee refund from NIC

Respected Sir

s.22

and apply for student visa to Canada. But I get refusal from IRCC and apply for fee refund from college from last eight month, I am requesting to my agent and college and

I write so many emails to them. They are not giving my fee back,

Now they are going to said that its only 90 days time to get refund. But I was request to my agant from day one to get my fee back. I also try to contect with Nic board, then I start getting hurrah (use bad languages) calls from my agent. I do not know the mistake. But it's my father's hard earned money that he saves for my higher studies.

s.22

I did work hard to make my

father's dream come true. But I do not know what Educated people are doing with me.

Respected sir, Could you please talk to college about that to solve my problem. My family could not forget you in all life.

Hoping you understand my concern and solve my problem

I would be really thankful to you for this

Regards

s.22

#### Charlton, Kathy AEST:EX

From:

AEST Corp Planning, International and Quality Assurance AEST:EX

Sent:

December 14. 2020 10:22 AM s.22

To:

Cc:

Minister, AEST AEST:EX

Subject:

Our Ref 120305 - Re: Tuition refund from North Island College

December 14, 2020 Our Ref. 120305 X Ref. 120077

s.22

E-mail Address: s.22

Dear<sup>s.22</sup>

Thank you for your follow-up correspondence of November 29, 2020, sent to the Honourable Anne Kang. Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training, regarding your request for a tuition refund from North Island College (NIC). As Executive Director of the Corporate Planning, International and Quality Assurance Branch, international post-secondary education is within my responsibility and I have been asked to respond on behalf of Minister Kang.

As mentioned in previous correspondence of November 3, 2020, although the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training provides funding for public post-secondary institutions in British Columbia, under the College and Institute Act, institutions such as NIC are responsible for the management of their institutions. including decisions about tuition fees and refunds. Government does not intervene in these matters, NIC policies on international tuition, fees and refunds are available for review at: International Tuition, Fees and Refunds.

As mentioned in previous correspondence, if you are unable to resolve your concerns regarding your request for a tuition refund with the Office of Global Engagement at NIC, you can also investigate whether the NIC Student Appeals process applies to your situation. More information on this process is available at: Student Appeals.

I understand you have concerns about the actions of BitTRACK Consultants Pvt Ltd. in India. You may wish to share your concerns with the Office of Global Engagement at NIC if you believe NIC's programs were misrepresented by the agent and/or the agent acted inappropriately in any way.

I recognize this is not the response you hoped to receive. As complete detailed information has been provided to you, the Ministry will not respond to further correspondence on this matter.

Sincerely,

Jamie Edwardson Executive Director Corporate Planning, International and Quality Assurance Branch Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training

#### pc: Honourable Anne Kang Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training

From:S.22

Sent: November 29, 2020 11:34 PM

To: Minister, AEST AEST:EX

Subject: Fwd: Our Ref. 120077 - Re: Tuition refund from North Island College

To

#### Honourable Anne Kang

Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training
Bruruah columbia

Respected Mam s.22

I applied for my study visa for my future study in Canada. Due to some reason or I say that misguided by my agent<sup>s.22</sup> (Bittrack consultants pvt limited), my visa was refused in the month of February but till now I could not get my fee refund yet. I have so many requests to college about that but they could not listen to me. All the visa processes were done by my agent and I don't know if he applied or not to college. But my whole one year fee in college account. it's near about \$16000. And it all saved my family for my future study.

We all are in a lot of tension and <sup>s.22</sup>

So we put the whole family in a lot of

stress.

Could you please help us to get back my fee. We all the family really thankful to you With kind Regard

s.22

----- Forwarded message ------

From: AEST Corp Planning, International and Quality Assurance AEST:EX < AEST.Corporate Planning International and Quality Assurance @gov.bc.ca >

Date: Tue, Nov 3, 2020 at 11:52 PM

Subject: Our Ref. 120077 - Re: Tuition refund from North Island College

To: s.22

Cc: Minister, EDUC EDUC:EX < EDUC. Minister@gov.bc.ca>, Minister, AEST AEST:EX < AEST. Minister@gov.bc.ca>

November 3, 2020

Our Ref. 120077

s.22

E-mail Address: s.22

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You indicate that you have already reached out to NIC to request a refund. If you have not done so already, you may wish to contact Jennifer Barth, Manager Operations, International Education, at NIC's Office of Global Engagement for further information. She can be reached at: <a href="mailto:iennifer.barth@nic.bc.ca">iennifer.barth@nic.bc.ca</a> or at: (250) 334-5021.

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Victoria BC V8W 9A5

Toll-free: 1-800-567-3247

Fax: (250) 387-0198

Website: www.bcombudsperson.ca/

I trust this information is helpful to you.
Sincerely,
Jamie Edwardson
Executive Director
Corporate Planning, International and Quality Assurance Branch
Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training
pc: Office of the Minister
Ministry of Education
Office of the Minister
Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training
From: S22 Sent: October 22, 2020 10:25 PM To: Minister, EDUC EDUC:EX < EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca>; Service BC CITZ:EX < ServiceBC@gov.bc.ca>; bog@nic.bc.ca; Junko Leclair < Junko.Leclair@nic.bc.ca> Subject: Humble request to get refund from NIc
То
Hanaurahia Dah Flamina

### Honourable Rob Fleming

Minister of Education PO Box 9045 Stn Prov Govt Victoria, BC V8W 9E2 Subject: Get tuition fee refund from NIC

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Hoping you understand my concern and solve my problem

I would be really thankful to you for this

Regards

s.22