



June 28, 2024

Our Ref. 134270

File No. 66200-01/Budget Letter-2024-25

Emily Huner
CFO and Vice-President, Administration
Vancouver Island University
900 Fifth St
Nanaimo, BC V9R 5S5

Email Address: Emily.huner@viu.ca

Dear Emily Huner:

I am writing on behalf of the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (the Ministry) to provide you with information regarding your institution's operating grant and student full-time equivalent (FTE) target for 2024/25, and the associated accountabilities, roles and expectations.

2024/25 Operating Grant and FTEs

Attachment 1 provides details pertaining to your institution's operating grant and student FTE targets for fiscal 2024/25.

As applicable, institution operating grants have been adjusted to reflect:

- funding for collective agreements ratified under the Shared Recovery Mandate; and
- any previously communicated decisions for program expansions.

.../2

Developmental Program FTEs: Adult Basic Education (ABE), English Language Learning (ELL) and Accessible Education and Training (AET)

ABE, ELL and AET (formerly referred to as Adult Special Education) activity remain components of institutions' FTE reports, and the Ministry expects delivery of these programs to be maintained or increased. Access to ABE, ELL and AET programs in the public post-secondary system is essential for British Columbians who want to pursue further education and training to obtain the skills they need to succeed in the jobs of tomorrow.

Financial Oversight and Accountabilities

Financial accountabilities of institutions are outlined in legislation (the *College and Institute Act*, the *University Act*, the *Royal Roads University Act*, the *Thompson Rivers University Act* and the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act [BTAA]*), and are grounded in prudent, transparent fiscal management.

Post-secondary institutions are responsible for the effective and efficient use of taxpayer investments to ensure a high quality, accessible post-secondary education system in British Columbia. Institutions are to continue to prioritize their mandates in the context of the health, safety and well-being of their students, faculty, staff and broader communities. Good financial management helps ensure that fiscal objectives continue to garner the respect and confidence of funding agencies and other stakeholders, through reasonable and appropriate expenditures that support the core mandate of the institution. The following information is provided to guide and inform institutional financial planning.

Fiscal Year Forecasts and Financial Reporting

The *BTAA* sets out that all government reporting entities will provide quarterly financial reports of actual results, including year-to-date actuals and four-year forecasts. These reports are consolidated and publicized by specified dates. To support these timeframes, the Ministry of Finance establishes quarterly reporting dates, and institutions are expected to provide all reports on time.

Forecasts reflect best-available estimates of year-end operating and capital results. As such, the accuracy of forecasting is of primary importance to institutional financial health and sectoral sustainability. Institutions' third-quarter projections for the following fiscal year are used to establish the Budget and Fiscal Plan targets. Financial outcomes are monitored against these figures throughout the following year, and institutional reporting on variances from these projections are essential to informing sectoral results.

Material changes to operating results or to capital project schedules and/or provincial cash flows from forecasts should be brought to the Ministry's attention immediately. Where changes may involve an exception to the balanced budget requirement, institutions are expected to adhere to the protocols and timelines outlined in the Deficits section.

Deficits

Under extraordinary circumstances, institutions may seek an exception to the annual balanced budget requirement and request approval from the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills to operate in a deficit position.

Requests for deficit approval **must** be provided to the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills **by the end of the second quarter** and include an explanation of key deficit drivers, actions taken to mitigate the deficit, a plan to return to a balanced position with the associated timeframe, and an outline of any extraordinary implications for students. Please note that a request to operate in a periodic deficit does not necessarily predicate approval of the same, as this determination is made by the Minister of Finance.

Tuition Limit

Institutions are expected to comply with Government's [tuition limit policy](#) and [annual tuition and fee reporting requirements](#). For 2024/25, the 2 percent limit on tuition and mandatory fee increases continues to apply. Existing programs and services must not increase more than this amount.

Institutions are required to consult with the Ministry and students before implementing any new mandatory fees.

Substantially revised non-degree programs may be submitted to the Ministry for determination as to whether the program is considered new for the purposes of the tuition limit policy. If not determined new, the tuition limit policy continues to apply.

Substantially revised degree programs must be submitted to the Degree Quality Assessment Board to determine whether the changes are of sufficient magnitude to be classed as a new degree. If not determined new, the tuition limit policy continues to apply.

International Students

International education makes an important contribution to the British Columbia education system and the educational experiences of all students. With the ongoing input of institutions, the Ministry is reviewing international education to ensure government policies, standards, guidelines and regulations align with government's values, priorities and interests, and that all support British Columbia's global reputation as a high-quality education destination.

The Government of Canada has mandated a provincial cap on the number of study permit applications to be issued to designated learning institutions for undergraduate, diploma and certificate-level programs in 2024 and 2025, which is managed through the issuance of provincial attestation letters. The Ministry moved quickly to respond to these changes to mitigate negative impacts on British Columbia's education system. The Ministry's allocations of provincial attestation letters are intended to support public post-secondary institutions with sustainable international student enrolment to maintain their international student programs, while managing growth for this year and future years.

The Ministry is also taking action to eliminate exploitive practices and improve the quality of post-secondary education by strengthening quality standards and bringing in new safeguards for international students in British Columbia.

New rules for public post-secondary institutions will set expectations for a maximum of 30 percent international student enrolment¹ levels, tuition transparency and elevated student supports. Public institutions will also develop and implement international education strategic plans that guide the institution's activities, manage its international student enrolment level within the maximum, and plan support services to meet the needs of students.

These measures will help ensure international students receive high-quality education in the province and protect British Columbia's reputation for high quality education and skills training.

.../5

¹ International student headcount enrolment by academic year from *Student Transitions Project* data.

Executive and Management Compensation

British Columbia's public sector employers are making compensation decisions based on a common compensation philosophy with shared core principles and benchmarking criteria that ensures greater consistency for excluded and executive employees. This approach refocuses compensation decisions on employee performance and merit rather than an entitlement to a salary increase.

Board Expenses

As the institution's oversight body, the Board of Governors plays an integral role in ensuring that the institution operates within its mandate in an effective and efficient manner, and that the taxpayer funds that are invested in the institution are managed appropriately. The Ministry has developed an [*Orientation for B.C. Public Post-Secondary Institution Board Members*](#) to provide guidance to members in this regard.

[*Treasury Board Directive 2/24*](#), section 7, provides guidance on business travel and expense reimbursements for appointed board members.

Administrative Services Collaborative (ASC)

The ASC involves all British Columbia's public post-secondary institutions, BCNET, and the Ministry. Working through its 2023/24-2025/26 Strategic Plan, the ASC priorities for continued collaboration are: procurement, cybersecurity, financial services, business continuity readiness, enterprise resource planning, accessibility, campus safety and security, and continued work with FeedBC. While not mandatory to participate in every initiative, institutions have benefited from collaborative efforts thus far.

Institutions are encouraged to continue and expand their efforts within the ASC. Working with BCNET as it implements joint collaborative agreements, can provide the potential to benefit from economy of scale and reduce duplication of effort across multiple initiatives within the strategic plan. Leveraging existing strengths and partnerships between institutions is expected to be a continued feature of the ASC as both institutions and the Ministry adapt to evolving circumstances, challenges, and opportunities.

Central Deposit Program (CDP)

The CDP was launched in 2013 as a key initiative to address concerns raised by the Auditor General regarding excess liquidity and idle working capital balances in schools, universities, colleges and hospitals.

Today, the CDP continues to deliver lower deposit risk and competitive, if not superior, deposit rates, while reducing debt costs for taxpayers. The Ministry continues to encourage institutions to participate in the CDP.

A letter containing Capital information will be sent under separate cover.

Thank you for your cooperation in working with the Ministry and other system partners to provide students with an accessible, affordable, high quality and relevant post-secondary education. If you have any questions, or would like to discuss contents of this letter, please contact Kashi Tanaka, Executive Director, Post-Secondary Operating and Emergency Support Branch by email at Kashi.Tanaka@gov.bc.ca or phone at 250 415-9706.

Sincerely,



Jason Butler
Assistant Deputy Minister
Finance, Technology and Management Services Division
Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills

Attachment

pc: Distribution List follows

pc: Dr. Deborah Saucier, President & Vice-Chancellor
Vancouver Island University
deborah.saucier@viu.ca

Bobbi Plecas, Deputy Minister
Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills
PSFS.DeputyMinister@gov.bc.ca

Chris Rathbone, Assistant Deputy Minister
Post-Secondary Policy and Programs Division
Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills
PSFS.ADMPost-SecondaryPolicyandPrgms@gov.bc.ca

Tony Loughran, Assistant Deputy Minister
Governance, Legislation and Engagement Division
Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills
PSFS.ADMGovernanceLegislationandCorporatePlanning@gov.bc.ca

Kashi Tanaka, Executive Director
Post-Secondary Operating and Emergency Support Branch
Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills
Kashi.Tanaka@gov.bc.ca

Wendy Grondzil, Director
Post-Secondary Operating and Emergency Support Branch
Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills
Wendy.Grondzil@gov.bc.ca

Financial Reporting
Ministry of Post-Secondary and Future Skills
PSFS.FinancialReporting@gov.bc.ca

Vancouver Island University

2024/25 Operating Grant and Student FTE Targets

	FTE	Operating Grant
2023/24 Restated	6,688	\$ 78,119,515
<u>2024/25 Adjustments</u>		
Shared Recovery Mandate (as at April 2, 2024, Our Ref. 132501)		2,620,441
Shared Recovery Mandate (New, Our Ref. 134765)		1,793,783
Health Programs Remove Prior Year One-time	- 97	-
Health Programs One-time	215	-
Health Programs Base	8	130,000
Technology Expansion	10	175,000
ECE Expansion Remove Prior Year One-time	- 52	-
ECE Expansion One-time	23	-
ECE Expansion Base	63	884,105
2024/25	6,858	\$ 83,722,844
<i>Year over Year Change</i>	<i>170</i>	<i>\$ 5,603,329</i>

2024/25 Targeted Program FTE Details

	FUNS Code	CIP Code	Change	Total FTE Target
Health				
RNs, PNs and HCAs				
Bachelor of Science in Nursing	NURS	51.3801	8	312
Licensed Practical Nurse to BSN Bridge-in Program	NURS	51.3801		23
Licensed Practical Nurse	NLPN	51.3901		75
Access to Practical Nursing	NLPN	51.3901		24
Ongoing Base - Health Care Assistant / Health Care	NHCA	51.3902		93
Assistant - Partnership Pathway				
One-time - Health Care Assistant - Partnership Pathway	HLOT	51.3902	30	127
Licensed Practical Nursing to Bachelor of Science in	HLOT	51.3901	8	8
Nursing Access program - Powell River (one-time)				
Allied Health				
Rehabilitation Assistant	HLOT	51.0817	20	20
Activity Assistant	HLTH	51.0899		2
Dental Assisting	HLTH	51.0601		34
Dental Hygiene	HLTH	51.0602		36
Medical Device Reprocessing	HLTH	51.1012		16
Pharmacy Technician	HLTH	51.0805		15
Health Career Access Program - Mental Health and	HLOT	51.1501	60	60
Substance Use (one-time)				
Allied Health	HLTH	Multiple		46
Total Health			126	891

	FUNS Code	CIP Code	Change	Total FTE Target
Technology-Related Program Expansion*				
Integrated Engineering Technologist (Diploma)	AVED	14.01		25
Information Technology and Applied Systems - Web and Mobile Development (Diploma)	AVED	11.01		15
Computer Science (Degree)	AVED	11.01	10	26
Total Technology-Related Program Expansion			10	66
Early Childhood Education Program Expansion*				
One-time				
Online ECE Certificate	AVED	19.07	-23	-
ECEC Prior Learning Assessment	AVED	19.07	10	10
Online WIL Basic Certificate	AVED	19.07	-10	7
Infant Toddler and Special Needs Educator Online Course Delivery	AVED	19.07	-	6
Learning in Community ECE-WIL Program	AVED	19.07	-6	-
Base				
Online Diploma	AVED	19.07	26	34
VIU Blended Basic Certificate	AVED	19.07	23	31
ECE-WIL Certificate	AVED	19.07	14	14
Total Early Childhood Education Program Expansion			34	102
Developmental				
Developmental	DEV	Multiple		568
Total Developmental			-	568
AVED all other programs	AVED	Multiple		5,231
Total FTE Targets			170	6,858

*Where applicable PSFS will be monitoring enrolment growth over previous activity supported through base funding.