

## USE OF THE WORD “UNIVERSITY” – Private Institutions

### Preamble

A university is an institution of higher education and research, which grants degrees in a variety of subjects. The word *university* is derived from the Latin *universitas magistrorum et scholarium*, roughly meaning “community of teachers and scholars.”

A university’s primary commitment is to:

**Teaching - the intellectual development and academic success of its students:**

- A university offers programs primarily at the baccalaureate level or above, usually including graduate degrees (masters or doctoral).
- Undergraduate programs include a significant liberal arts/science component that provides students with broad exposure to multiple disciplines.

**Research/Scholarship - the creation of knowledge and its dissemination through teaching, publication or presentation.**

- Research and/or scholarly activity is a core function of its faculty and is built into the workload of continuing faculty.
- Research and/or scholarly activity can be foundational or applied.
- Faculty have the academic freedom to teach and conduct research within an academic environment.

**Community engagement – service to the community within and outside of the university.**

- A governance structure with an acceptable level of faculty and student involvement in decision making.
- A commitment to public accountability and local community involvement and functions in an open and transparent manner.
- Undergraduate programs are integrated into the BC post-secondary system with opportunities for students to ladder across institutions.

### New Organizations

The criteria for Use of “University” outlined below is indicative of a mature institution. It is not intended to exclude new institutions, but it may be difficult to provide all information required to satisfy the criteria for the use of the word “university.” The board recommends that prior to applying, an institution should be in operation and authorized to deliver a number degree programs for a minimum of two years.

## **Mission, Policies, and Practice**

### **Standard**

*The institution's mission, policies and practice include the creation of knowledge through research and/or scholarly activity, and dissemination of knowledge through teaching, publication and presentation. The core teaching mission and the primary educational activity of the institution is degree-level programming.*

### **Criteria:**

- An approved, clearly articulated and publicly-stated mission statement reflecting goals that are appropriate to an institution providing high quality, degree level education;
- Appropriate policies concerning academic integrity and standards;
- **A commitment to the creation and extension of knowledge through research and scholarly activity, and the dissemination of knowledge through teaching, publication and presentation.**  
Policies to ensure that the institution conforms to principles of academic freedom and responsibility;
- **The institution has policies in place to equitably support graduate and undergraduate students and alumni;**
- The institution publishes the policies noted above and makes these **accessible and available to faculty, staff and students in** an academic calendar or other publication; and
- **The institution affirms its commitment to equal treatment of all persons without discrimination, on the basis of race/ethnicity, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical or mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, family status, sex, sexual orientation, or other grounds identified in applicable human rights law.**

#### **Proposed revisions include:**

- Added commitment to research and scholarly activity.
- Added statement on equal treatment of all persons.

## **Governance**

### **Standard**

***The institution has a stable administrative structure, and a governance system in which faculty members participate in decisions determining academic standards and which provide for appropriate student involvement, and which is committed to principles and practices of quality education and academic freedom and responsibility.***

#### **Criteria:**

- The institution has a governance structure **with a fully constituted board and academic council or senate with sufficient autonomy**, and administrative capacity **appropriate to that of a university in order to make decisions in the best interests of the institution and assure its integrity**. The governance structure must have an acceptable level of faculty and student involvement in decision making concerning academic matters and related policies and procedures.
- The institution has a qualified president and senior administrative staff with clear lines of responsibility, decision-making authority and accountability necessary to conduct the affairs of a university;
- The institution has an academically qualified Vice President Academic or equivalent whose full-time or major responsibility is to provide academic leadership within the institution;
- The addition of other vice presidents and/or senior officers is appropriate to the size of the institution and the range of its program and research activities ; and
- The institution is committed to public accountability and community involvement and functions in an open, transparent and accessible manner.

#### **Proposed revisions include:**

- Added specific reference to an academic council or senate in the governance model and areas of responsibility.
- Added a statement on transparency and public and community involvement.

## **Faculty**

### **Standard**

*The institution has appropriately qualified faculty and instructional staff led by a contingent of core and continuing\* faculty committed to achieving the mission and academic goals of the university.*

#### ***Criteria that will be used in assessing Faculty:***

- The institution must demonstrate that it has a core group of **continuing**, full-time faculty that provide academic leadership within the university to **ensure instructional and academic continuity and program sustainability**. **The number of core faculty should be directly related to the size of enrolment and number of programs offered;**
- **The institution has policies in place on faculty qualifications, hiring, employment equity and diversity, retention, promotion, professional development, reward and termination appropriate to the degree programs offered and to the mission of creating and disseminating knowledge;**
- **Core faculty teaching in research-oriented graduate degrees must have a terminal academic degree credential in the field in which they are teaching and be active in original or applied research to fulfill the research mission of creating and disseminating knowledge;**
- **The institution's policies and practices support faculty in their pursuit of original or applied research by providing sufficient time, facilities and resources. The institution conducts periodic evaluation of the performance of faculty including a student assessment component;**
- **The institution has core faculty committed to the graduate program(s) and to the intellectual life of graduate students through sustained participation in activities involving graduate students (seminars, colloquia, conferences, journal clubs, etc.); and**
- **Faculty participate in the larger post-secondary system in British Columbia to build relationships, foster collaboration, create trust and goodwill, and broaden understanding of all institutions and programs and regularly attend articulation committee meetings through the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT).**

*\* Continuing faculty have no fixed term of employment.*

#### **Proposed revisions include:**

- Added the requirement for core faculty who have a role in the continuity of the degree programs.
- Added clarity on faculty policies including support for research.
- Added requirement that faculty have time to contribute to the system through BCCAT.

## **Financial Capacity, Services and Facilities**

### **Standard**

*The institution demonstrates it has adequate long- term financial resources to ensure its mission and the lasting viability of the institution. The institution possesses or provides access to the learning resources (library, laboratories, equipment, research tools, etc.) appropriate to the range and level of programs offered and necessary for students to achieve the learning outcomes for the programs.*

### **Criteria:**

- The institution must provide a credible short and long term business plan that addresses the applicant's future educational, enrolment, physical and fiscal growth in British Columbia. The business plan should include the institution's academic (including plans for range of programming), financial, facilities, marketing, human resource and research support plans. The plan should demonstrate that the institution has a financial base adequate to support activities consistent with its mission and educational objectives as a university;
- The institution provides evidence that the physical location, equipment, laboratories and technology adequately support the institution's educational and student activities appropriate to the institution's mission, goals and programs;
- The institution has the appropriate faculty and student resources, library and other services, and facilities to support degree programs for which it has consent;
- The institution provides appropriate and accessible library and information resources to support graduate student work according to the number and level of students enrolled;
- The institution has accessible laboratory, computer, studio, and/or creative facilities, as well as essential resources, to support the faculty and students adequately in their research; and
- Evidence of commitment to provide and maintain necessary facilities, learning and other resources specific to the range of programming offered and to supplement them as necessary based on the size of enrolment.

#### **Proposed revisions include:**

- Financial Capacity added.
- Appropriate facilities based on the size of enrolment added.

## **Accountability**

### **Standard**

*The institution constitutes a self-critical, cohesive academic community with a proven commitment to high academic quality, as evidenced by systems for internal and/or external quality assessment reviews of academic programs and operations.*

#### **Criteria:**

- The institution has demonstrated rigorous, ongoing program and institutional quality assessment processes, both internal and external. **The institution regularly seeks external judgment, advice, and benchmarks in their assessments by peers external to the institution;**
- The institution can demonstrate that it has an established and ongoing institutional and program planning cycle and process;
- **The institution has a provision for conducting periodic monitoring of graduate outcomes; and,**
- **The proposed university name is not similar to another educational institution established in British Columbia or deemed misleading in any other way that may cause confusion to the public.**

#### **Notes:**

- Added the regular pursuit of advice from external peers.
- Added tracking of graduate outcomes.
- Added stipulation that university names not be similar to existing educational institutions in the province.

## **Range of Programming**

### ***Standard***

***The institution's primary activity is offering a comprehensive range of degree programs, normally including, but not limited to arts and science at both undergraduate and graduate levels.***

### ***Criteria:***

- **The institution is legally authorized to offer and grant degrees in British Columbia.**
- The institution offers degree programs that are characterized by breadth and depth in the traditional areas of the liberal arts and/or sciences or are of a professional nature (such as business/management, engineering, law, medicine, teacher education).
- Undergraduate programs include a significant liberal arts and/or science component **including general education curriculum that provides broad exposure to multiple disciplines.**
- **The institution has in place programs that can be appropriately integrated with the provincial post-secondary system in program transfer and articulation.**

**Note: Each proposed program will be required to undergo a degree program quality review.**

#### **Proposed revisions include:**

- Added programs must be integrated into the transfer and articulation system.
- Clarified that the institution must have consent to offer each degree program.

## **Commitment to Research and Scholarly Activity**

### **Standard**

*The institution demonstrates a clear **history and commitment to the practice of active scholarship**, and the creation and extension of knowledge through research and scholarly activity of an applied or original nature, and the dissemination of knowledge through teaching, publication and presentation.*

### **Criteria:**

- The institution must have policies, procedures and practices that demonstrate a commitment to research and scholarly activity including:
  - applied research and scholarly activities to support the programs of the institution, or
  - original disciplinary research subject to external peer review;
- The institution demonstrates a history of active faculty involvement in research activity, and provides the time, facilities and resources necessary to support such research activity. **The evidence of accomplishment must be demonstrated through peer review and critical analysis, as the predominant way of assessing scholarly achievement;**
- The institution has policies, structure and mechanisms in place appropriate to graduate students and research (e.g. policies concerning supervisory responsibilities, appeal systems, satisfactory standing, etc.); and
- Research to maintain currency in a given program area or to remain current in one's field of instruction, i.e., preparation for teaching practice, does not normally constitute applied or disciplinary research and scholarly activity.

#### **Proposed revisions include:**

- Added evidence of peer review and critical analysis of research activities.

## **Branch Campus Operations in British Columbia**

### **Standard**

***The institution will directly control all aspects of the administration, academic standards, faculty hiring, qualifications and employment conditions, and financial oversight of the branch operations to ensure equivalency to the main campus.***

### **Criteria:**

- The institution provides evidence that it maintains direct responsibility and oversight of all aspects of its branch campus;
- The institution provides evidence that the academic standards of all degree programs and research expectations provided at the branch campus are comparable to what is provided by the institution's main campus;
- The institution commits to understanding and participating in the British Columbia community and post-secondary system. Expectations in British Columbia may be different compared to an institution's home jurisdiction and programming should be reflective of these expectations.

#### **Proposed revisions include:**

- Added accountability and oversight of branch operations by main campus.
- Added equivalency of branch campus operations and human resources.
- Added the need to understand and participate in the B.C. system and that degrees in British Columbia may have different expectations.

### **Notes**

- Any other information or condition the board deems necessary to determine the organizational capacity of the institution merits university status.
- The board may use its discretion in applying these criteria.