

# **USE OF THE WORD “UNIVERSITY”**

## **CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES**

**FOR  
ALL PRIVATE POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS  
AND  
OUT-OF-PROVINCE PUBLIC  
POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS**

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### **A. Background**

#### **Use of the word “university”**

Under the *Degree Authorization Act*, the use of the word “university” or any derivation or abbreviation of the word “university” to indicate that an educational program is available is restricted unless authorized by the minister. The minister will provide consent to private and out-of-province public post-secondary institutions to use the word “university” if satisfied that the applicant has undergone a quality assessment process and found to meet the criteria established for use of the word “university.”

The outcomes of the quality assessment process will be posted on the Degree Granting Authorization web site. This will include the final application (if changes were made), a summary outlining the board’s recommendation and rationale for the recommendation and the minister’s decisions (to grant consent or not grant consent).

Institutions with consent under the *Degree Authorization Act* are required to submit to the Ministry an annual reporting template outlining the progress of the institution. The annual reporting template is a term and condition of consent that must be provided on an annual basis to ensure that institutions continue to meet the terms and conditions of consent.

The report includes information such as enrolments, faculty information and a program review summary. The report also requires information from the institution in relation to any special conditions required by the Minister.

Ministry staff will monitor the collection of the annual reporting template and will liaise with the institution should information need to be clarified. The Ministry will inform the Board as to the results of the report and if any issues were identified.

#### **Organization Review**

For applications by all private post-secondary institutions and out-of-province public post-secondary institutions, the board will assess whether an organization review should be required, and if so, whether any prior accreditations can be recognized as satisfying all or part of British Columbia’s organization review criteria. With respect to an application to make use of the word “university,” any organization review will address criteria listed in the document “Organization Review Criteria,” as well as the submission criteria listed below.

**De Novo Organizations**

The board recognizes that for de novo organizations, it may be difficult to provide information required to satisfy the criteria for the use of the word “university.” In this situation, the board will look for a thorough planning process and evidence that the organization will have in place the policies, resources, facilities and personnel to meet the standards and criteria of the review.

In the case of de novo organizations, the board may recommend that specific terms and conditions be attached to ministerial consent to ensure that the organization develops appropriately.

**B. Submission Format**

**Post Secondary Institution Proposal System**

Once a Post Secondary Institution Proposal System User ID and password have been obtained and the institution’s organizational information (data fields) have been verified on the Post Secondary Institution Proposal System, please provide the required submission for consent to use the word “university” in Adobe PDF format as a Post Secondary Institution Proposal System attachment.

When creating Adobe PDF files, navigation tools such as “**bookmarks**” must be incorporated into the document(s) to allow the reader to navigate quickly to a particular page or section within the document. Information on navigation tools can be found in your Adobe Acrobat documentation.

**Public Posting – Degree Granting Authorization web site**

**\* \* NEW FOR 2006 \* \***

**THE FULL APPLICATION WILL BE POSTED PUBLICLY ON THE  
DEGREE GRANTING AUTHORIZATION WEB SITE**

via the Post Secondary Institution Proposal System while the submission is under review and will be open to public comment for 30 days from the date of posting.

**<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/degree-authorization/>**

This is intended to provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the application and to meet the board’s commitment to an open and accountable process. The web site will indicate the closing date for public comment and will also indicate that comments from the public are to be directed to the submitting institution, and copied to the board secretariat.

**IMPORTANT**

**Information that the submitting institution considers to be proprietary in nature must be submitted in separate documents in the form of appendices.**

**Appendices will not be posted on the public web site.**

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### **Submission Guidelines – Application for use of the word “university”**

A submission for the use of the word “university” must provide information and discussion in a format that adheres to the order and headings below. The submission will be assessed in the following categories against criteria described in this document:

1. Executive Summary
2. Mission and Policies
3. Governance, Faculty, Services and Facilities
4. Accountability and Financial Capacity
5. Range of Programming
6. Commitment to Research and Scholarly Activity
7. Other

#### Length of submission

The length of the submission may vary, but should be approximately 5,000 words. When the applicant is required to provide information on institutional policies, the submission should include only a summary of the policies. Full policies should be attached as appendices or provided directly to external experts if the board requires a review.

#### Proprietary information

Information that the submitting institution considers to be proprietary in nature must be submitted in separate documents in the form of appendices. Examples of proprietary information may include referee letters, letters of support (which contain personal information such as names and addresses) and financial information.

Appendice(s) should be attached to the submission on the Post Secondary Institution Proposal System as separate documents. **Appendices will not be posted on the public web site.** Appendices should indicate an appendix name and number and also reference the applicable criterion/submission guideline.

### Collection and Use of Personal Information

The *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA) applies to private and out of province public institutions. The purpose of PIPA is to govern the collection, use and disclosure of personal information by organizations in a manner that recognizes both the right of individuals to protect their personal information and the need for organizations to collect, use or disclose personal information.

In addition to other obligations, PIPA requires that organizations develop and follow policies and practices that are necessary for an organization to meet its obligations under PIPA. Good privacy practice often depends on the context in which personal information is handled and the expectations of the individuals interacting with an organization. As well, where student records are stored in a location outside of the province, the institution must demonstrate that they have policies in place to inform students that legislation from that out-of-province jurisdiction may apply. For more information regarding PIPA, please refer to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for British Columbia at: <http://www.oipcbc.org/>.

**C. SUBMISSION CRITERIA**

**1. Executive Summary**

The Executive Summary must present, in a succinct manner, the purpose of the application and an explanation of how the institution meets the criteria to use the word “university.” The Executive Summary must be no longer than 1,000 words and **must include the name, title, phone number and e-mail address of the institutional contact person.**

**2. Mission and Policies**

The institution has in place:

- An approved, clearly articulated and publicly stated mission statement reflecting goals that are appropriate to an academic institution of high standard;
- Appropriate policies concerning academic integrity and standards;
- Policies to ensure that the institution conforms to principles of academic freedom and responsibility; and,
- When students or staff are asked to sign or adhere to a statement of faith and/or a code of conduct that might constitute a constraint upon academic freedom, a policy in which the applicant:
  - notifies staff and students as an initial step in the employment or admission process; and,
  - has adequate procedures in place to ensure the principles of natural justice are followed, in the event of alleged violations of any contractual arrangement concerning such required statement of faith and/or code of conduct.

Furthermore, the institution publishes the policies noted above and makes these available to students in an academic calendar or other publication.

**3. Governance, Faculty, Services and Facilities**

- The institution has a governance structure and administrative capacity appropriate to that of an academic institution of high standard, with an acceptable level of faculty involvement in governance.
- The institution has appropriate faculty, library and other services, and facilities to support degree programs for which it has consent.



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- The institution’s policies and practices on the type of academic appointment of faculty are appropriate to sustain its degree programs.
- Faculty teaching graduate courses normally have the terminal academic degree credential in the field in which they are teaching.

### **4. Accountability**

- The institution has demonstrated rigorous, ongoing program and institutional quality assessment processes, both internal and external.
- The institution can demonstrate that it has an established and ongoing institutional and program planning cycle and process.

### **5. Range of Programming**

- 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.
- The institution offers programs at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

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

- The institution’s mission and practice include the creation and extension of knowledge through research and scholarly activity, and the dissemination of knowledge through teaching, publication and presentation.
- The institution demonstrates active faculty involvement in research activity, and provides the time, facilities and resources necessary to support such research activity.

### **7. Other**

- The institution has in place programs that can be appropriately integrated with the provincial post-secondary system in program transfer and articulation.
- The institution provides adequate information to the board to determine that the organizational capacity of the institution merits university status.