



February 3, 2017

Our Ref. 103891

Mr. Allan Wiekenkamp  
Chair, Board of Governors  
Vancouver Island University  
900 Fifth St  
Nanaimo BC V9R 5S5

Dear Mr. Wiekenkamp:

This Mandate Letter provides Government's annual strategic priorities and sets out key performance expectations for the 2017/18 fiscal year for your institution.

On behalf of the Province of British Columbia, thank you for your leadership and the contributions made by Vancouver Island University over the past year, including your support for the use of online resources and open textbooks, helping to save costs for students. We recognize the efforts made in supporting the strategic actions outlined in the 2016/17 Mandate Letter, which continue to be priorities this year.

The BC Corporate Governance Framework takes a principles-based approach to providing direction for effective governance of ministries and public sector organizations. Since June 2014, the Taxpayer Accountability Principles (TAP) have provided guidance to ensure that the actions taken and services provided strengthen accountability and promote cost control, while meeting the public policy objectives established by Government on behalf of the citizens of BC.

It is critical that institutions operate as efficiently as possible, in order to ensure that British Columbians are provided with effective services at the lowest cost possible. This requires constant focus on maintaining a cost conscious and principled culture through the efficient delivery of services that stand the test of public scrutiny and help to develop a prosperous economy in an environmentally sustainable manner. This is critical to Government's commitment to control spending and balance the budget.

Government is making open information a priority across the public sector to enhance transparency and accountability in the delivery of programs, public services and the use of public resources.

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Government is responsible for providing funding, setting the legislative, regulatory and policy frameworks in which public post-secondary institutions operate along with establishing the institution's mandate. This includes the following statutory provisions:

Section 47.1 of the *University Act* and the *Designation of Special Purpose, Teaching Universities Regulation*:

A special purpose, teaching university must do all of the following:

- provide adult basic education, career, technical, trade and academic programs leading to certificates, diplomas and baccalaureate and masters degrees, English as a second language and adult special education programs that meet the needs of its designated region; and
- so far as and to the extent that its resources from time to time permit, undertake and maintain applied research and scholarly activities to support the programs of the special purpose, teaching university.

Within the terms of the legislation, the Vancouver Island University will, in fulfilling its mandate, consider strategic priorities of Government when allocating institutional resources. The strategic priority actions of Government for 2017/18 are:

- Develop and implement an updated Skills Gap Plan, in alignment with priorities of the BC Skills for Jobs Blueprint;
- Continue to deepen BC's talent pool, in support of the #BCTECH strategy, ensuring opportunities for students in the technology sector;
- Work in partnership with the Government and Aboriginal communities, organizations and institutes to implement the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and Action Plan to increase the participation and success of Aboriginal learners;
- Continue to deliver on provincial priorities for international education, including pursuing opportunities to advance the two-way flow of students, educators and ideas;
- Continue to actively encourage and promote the development and use of online resources and open textbooks to support post-secondary affordability for students;
- Continue to actively participate in the development and implementation of a common application system for all public post-secondary institutions in the province;
- Promote safe campuses by developing policies and actions to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct and assault of all forms;
- Meet or exceed the financial targets identified in the Ministry's three-year Service Plan as tabled under Budget 2017, including maintaining balanced or surplus financial results; and
- Continue to maximize the efficient use of public post-secondary administrative resources through participation in the Administrative Service Delivery Transformation initiative.

Principled public sector governance remains a priority for Government. Public post-secondary institutions are expected to undertake comprehensive professional development to enhance orientation of their board members and senior executives. Government will be providing

programs and resources designed to assist with orientation and to ensure understanding of the accountabilities and expectations of public sector boards and organizations.

For detailed information about TAP directives, please refer to the following link, [Taxpayer Accountability Principles](#).

Government is committed to continue to strengthen the relationship between Government and public post-secondary institutions. This strong focus on increased two – way communication supports and ensures a mutual understanding and appreciation for institutional priorities.

In addition, it is expected that your institution will continue to be diligent in ensuring familiarity with and adherence to statutory obligations and policies that have broad application across the public sector. Please refer to the following link for a summary of these accountabilities: [Public Service Organization Accountabilities](#).

As public post-secondary institutions that receive funding from the Government, institutions are expected to conduct their affairs in a manner consistent with the legislative, regulatory and policy framework established by Government and share in upholding TAP. This includes:

1. Adhering to the policy, guidelines and directions of the Public Sector Employers' Council regarding executive compensation and the management freeze (so long as the freeze remains in place).
2. Ensuring that institutional operational and financial activities, including procurement and travel, are conducted consistent with Government standards for cost-consciousness and the most cost-effective use of taxpayer resources.
3. Conducting board matters in accordance with the Orientation for B.C. Public Post-Secondary Institution Board Members guidelines.
4. Helping to achieve goals identified by B.C.'s Climate Leadership Plan.

The Core Policy and Procedures Manual of Government can be found for reference at <http://www.fin.gov.bc.ca/ocg/fmb/manuals/CPM/CPMtoc.htm> and other supporting documents found on the Public Sector Employers' Council Secretariat website at <http://www.fin.gov.bc.ca/psec/>.

The Ministry has posted the annual reporting requirements for public post-secondary institutions on its website. This document outlines the statistical, financial and performance reports for the fiscal year. The Institution agrees to meet these requirements by providing the reports and high quality data necessary for Government to carry out its responsibilities.

Public post-secondary institutions are required to identify major capital projects, including information technology projects, through quarterly reporting to the Ministry. This includes capital and information technology projects with a total cost greater than \$50 million, regardless of funding source.

Each board member acknowledges this Mandate Letter by signing the attachment to this letter. The Mandate letter is to be posted publicly on your institution's website and a copy signed by all Board members provided to the Ministry and made available upon request.

I look forward to our regular meetings focusing on strategic priorities, performance against TAP, and working together to protect the public interest at all times.

Sincerely,



Andrew Wilkinson  
Minister

Attachments: Signature page template  
Taxpayer Accountability Principles

pc: Honourable Christy Clark  
Premier

Ms. Kim Henderson  
Deputy Minister to the Premier and Cabinet Secretary

Ms. Athana Mentzelopoulos  
Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Finance

Ms. Sandra Carroll  
Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Advanced Education

Ms. Cheryl Wenezenki-Yolland  
Associate Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Finance

As members of the Vancouver Island University Board of Governors, we individually and collectively acknowledge our statutory obligations to act in the best interests of Vancouver Island University and affirm as Board Members to take into account the Taxpayer Accountability Principles in exercising our duty.

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Imtiaz Taj  
Elected Student Member

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Aubrey Robertson  
Elected Student Member

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Chris Burnley  
Elected Faculty Member

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Linda Derksen  
Elected Faculty Member

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Sheila Davidson  
Elected Non-Faculty  
Member

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Gregory Charles Constable  
Government Appointed  
Member

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Warren Erhart  
Government Appointed  
Member (Alumni)

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Terence D. Fitzgerald  
Government Appointed  
Member (Alumni)

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Claire I. Moglove  
Government Appointed  
Member

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Jonalan Oddleifson  
Government Appointed  
Member

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Erralyn M.P. Thomas  
Government Appointed  
Member

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Louise Mandell  
Chancellor

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Ralph Nilson  
President and  
Vice-Chancellor

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Makenzie Leine  
Vice-Chair, Board of  
Governors  
Government Appointed  
Member

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Allan R. Wiekenkamp  
Chair, Board of Governors  
Government Appointed  
Member

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Date Signed

## BC Taxpayer Accountability Principles

Further information available at: <http://gov.bc.ca/crownaccountabilities>

- 1 Cost Consciousness (Efficiency)** Strengthen cost management capabilities and foster a culture of cost-consciousness at all levels of public sector organizations. Provide public services and programs as efficiently and effectively as possible to “bend the cost curve” and support sustainable public policies and programs as a lasting legacy for generations to come.
- 2 Accountability** Transparently manage responsibilities according to a set of common public sector principles in the best interest of the citizens of the province. By enhancing organizational efficiency and effectiveness in the planning, reporting and decision making, public sector organizations will ensure actions are aligned with government’s strategic mandate.
- 3 Appropriate Compensation** Comply with a rigorous, standardized approach to performance management and employee compensation, which reflects appropriate compensation for work across the public sector that is consistent with government’s taxpayer accountability principles and respectful of the taxpayer.
- 4 Service** Maintain a clear focus on positive outcomes for citizens of British Columbia by delivering cost-efficient, effective, value-for-money public services and programs.
- 5 Respect** Engage in equitable, compassionate, respectful and effective communications that ensure all parties are properly informed or consulted on actions, decisions and public communications in a timely manner. Proactively collaborate in a spirit of partnership that respects the use of taxpayers’ monies.
- 6 Integrity** Make decisions and take actions that are transparent, ethical and free from conflict of interest. Require the establishment of a strong ethical code of conduct for all employees and executives. Serve the citizens of British Columbia by respecting the shared public trust and acting in accordance with the taxpayer accountability principles.