

Notice of Intent
BC (Canada) Degree Quality Assessment
[Vancouver University Colleges Worldwide](#)

The plain text of this document constitutes our Notice of Intent for Exempt Status. The linked documents therein provide the fuller context of submission and organization profile.

A. Purpose of Application

1 Our “university” name is in conformity with DAA section 3(2), having been authorized to us under both the Society (Vancouver University Colleges) and Company (Geo Vancouver University Colleges) Acts. [We would, however, welcome a change of name, to Vancouver University Worldwide (or Vancouver Worldwide University), approved by the Minister to the corporate registry in accordance with standard practice in British Columbia]. We invite a thorough examination of our past and current degree-award process and visits to member colleges in Canada and abroad. Our request is for the Minister to favorably recognize and/or approve our structure, as summarized in a diagram published on our [homepage](#); and to favorably recognize and/or approve our degree process and degrees as detailed in documents linked from the [degrees](#) section of our website. This application is made in a [broad context](#). Prior to the establishment of BC's present Gordon Campbell government, we asked the then Opposition Leader to support an accreditation system that would address our long-standing [problem](#). He then [agreed](#). After the 2000 BC Election, a relevant Act was adopted. Unfortunately, we have grave [doubt](#) about its applicability to our context. We have asked that it be amended or flexibly implemented so as to address the context of the world's first global consortium university (equal member colleges, not branches or franchising).

2 We have been [headquartered](#) in British Columbia, and have - in BC and various other jurisdictions - offered [aggregate-learning](#) process, field-based, and classroom-based degrees for three decades (with, in Vancouver, an emphasis on Education and Business Administration). Our degrees have been at the associate level commencing 1970; the bachelor and master commencing 1983; and the doctorate commencing 1992.

We pioneered in BC - particularly in aggregate-learning context - the Associate, Applied Science, Information Technology, and General Studies degree designations; and the Learning Credentials Credit Bank concept, subsequently copied by OLA as ICES.

We also pioneered in credit for field-based learning, as recognized in the AAUA's 1997 Khaladjian Award competition for innovation in higher education. In the classroom programs context, we in BC pioneered Montessori Elementary teacher education. In all of this pioneering, classroom and other, our degree authority has been based in the widespread Common Law tradition that a university with lawful university name is presumed to award degrees. (See further B below). There are numerous historic British (e.g. Chichester) and other Common Law examples of institutions awarding degrees without the word even being mentioned in their Royal or other corporate charter.

3 Some Common Law jurisdictions in the United States, Canada, UK, and Australasia, have more recently enacted statutes at variance with the long-standing Common Law tradition. The 2002 BC DAA is such a variance. When Notice of Introduction of the DAA was made in the BC Legislature, and even before seeing its details, we anticipated a grandfather status as [recommended](#) by the BC Supreme Court. We froze our then [website](#) and sent a print text copy with explanatory letter to the BC Premier and Minister of Advanced Education. Our purpose in so doing was to provide evidence of our prior-

to-DAA degree operations in the anticipated grandfather context. We then found that instead of respecting Mr Justice Maczko's obiter dictum, the DAA had been drafted in many ways such as to likely frustrate our operational [continuance](#) in British Columbia. We affirm that we meet objective interpretation of the criteria and guidelines for exempt status, as stated in Exempt Status "Criteria and Guidelines" on the DQAB website. But we also welcome a thorough evaluation of Vancouver University Worldwide.

B. How VUW Meets the Criteria for Exempt Status

1 In [1982-83](#) as then New Summits College [and prior as the Vancouver Institute for Postsecondary Studies (VIPS) and collateral Point Roberts Institute (PRI)], we had fully anticipated enactment of a Fall 1983 private Act like Trinity Western University's, pursuant to discussions held by (then) Board Chair Lila Chen and the (then) Premier. (Ms Chen also affirmed that then-MP Iona Campanola had been advised of this promise. Ms Campanola is now Lt. Gov. of British Columbia).

2 Political turmoil unfolded in BC in early 1983 - a political outburst then referred to as "Operation Solidarity" - and puerile allegations circulated suggesting that we would be replacing a public university. In this somewhat bizarre context, the government of the day postponed our Bill affirmation. Instead, lawyer Art Lee was instructed to incorporate a governing society (then named New Summits University College Society) and, by further advice of lawyer Les Petersen, Mr. Petersen's firm (Boughton Company) collaterally incorporated New Summits University College Corporation to award our degrees (re s. 15, Society Act). Expressing an immediate measure of credit transfer collegiality, UBC gave transfer standing to some courses reflecting our long-standing pre-New Summits VIPS-PRI programs (later published in the April 1984, UBC *Transfer Guide*), and we reciprocally then recognized UBC courses relevant to our programs for in-transfer credit. (In both contexts, see reference Y in the C3 Table below. Note also that, in 1992, when our name and presumption was pluralized and raised to full graduate degree context (see B4-C1 below), UBC - in competitive protest - unilaterally withdrew its former transfer credit recognition of our courses).

3 Ms Chen was solemnly assured in 1983 that the ambiguously public-sector-context University Act would not be referenced in our context. She was advised that BC would selectively not be enforcing certain provisions of the University Act due to objections made by the American Consulate General/Embassy on behalf of American programs then moving into BC, and by certain BC theology colleges which award secular degrees without statutory authority to do so. As documented in the [BC Supreme Court](#), the foregoing early Eighties understandings were also the subject of explicit correspondence with the Minister of Advanced Education. (And note that there is nothing in the PPSEC Act which exempts the American and Bible colleges from the University Act).

4 At our late 1984 Convocation the Guest of Honour, Mayor Mike Harcourt, bestowed (a) some classroom-based learning associate degrees, (b) some classroom-based and aggregate-learning context bachelor and master degrees, and (c) an honorary doctorate to Charles Woodward, who had designated an ECE teaching facility for us. (Note that we are very conservative with respect to doctorates, whether [honourary](#) or [earned](#). We did not commence accepting candidates in doctoral context until our structural framework - changed to a university of colleges rather than a singular university college - was formally identified in 1992). For further historical notes, scroll down [here](#).

5 In 1992 New Summits University College (singular) was authorized by the BC Ministry of Advanced Education and Corporate Registry to change its name and pluralize its framework presumption to that of Vancouver University Colleges (Society and Corporation). Premier Mike Harcourt had specifically endorsed such progress in writing prior to his becoming premier. To more transparently differentiate functions, the Corporation was collaterally and simultaneous renamed - and likewise pluralized - to Geo Vancouver University Colleges.

C. Prerequisite Time Period

1 As recounted above, VUW has accepted students into associate degree standing since 1970, the bachelor and master since 1983, and doctoral candidacy since 1992. Our degree programs have been regularly advertised in the BC media throughout the era. By way of examples, our MBA was advertised in the *Vancouver Sun*, p D3, 6 December 1991; and both our MBA and Master of Education programs at page B3, 19 May 1992. We announced doctoral options in 1992 - on campus, electronically, and by press release (ignored in Canada). Interested candidates made various levels of commitment in the research doctorate context, and two are here detailed in the below Table (refs A and B). Some are still engaged in their research, more than a decade later, including a candidate (Gor) who received a supplementary research grant from the Tai Foundation NY in 1999. Some have possibly held back on completing their doctoral work due to the history of negativism which we have been subjected to by some persons in BC public-sector institutions and the bureaucracy (a negativism which we usually only learn about via third parties to whom the negative remarks are communicated). Note also that our first classroom-based cohort at doctoral level, a DBA program conducted by Singapore-based member college CPPD in conjunction with the Insurance and Financial Practitioners Association of Singapore (and SE Asia), commenced in 2003.

2 Any appropriate person - media, academia, government - respecting privacy law stipulations is welcome to examine archival photocopies of transcripts from earlier decades, as well as more recent transcripts now in electronic data format like the examples shown below. We have long maintained a stated policy of transparently open transcripts, minus student number and personal address identity. If a graduate has special reason for withholding a transcript from transparency, this is respected (save in the special case of research-based degrees). For technical and privacy reasons, the below transcripts mostly show only the summary Narrative Transcript page. Full documentation (transcripts of prior studies, etc) is available in the Registry archives.

3 The wide-spectrum samples provided in the below **Table** are not fully representative of the three decades and scope of our degrees award. These samples largely date from our 'Nineties electronic data era and more recent awards. Undergraduate transcripts dating back to 1970 (associate), and bachelor and master transcripts from the 'Eighties, are in paper-only files and problematic (fading, size etc) to upload as scanned documents. They are available for scrutiny in the Registry archives. The below transcripts were somewhat randomly pulled from the data bank, but with intent to provide some samples of degrees (a) largely completed at a constituent member college [e.g., BC Montessori Teachers College] in Canada; (b) largely completed at an affiliate member college [e.g., AMTC, Calgary] in Canada; (c) completed in 'external' aggregate-learning (inclusive of oral examination) context; and (d) research-based degrees. Only one example (ref E) is that of a graduate who completed his degree studies at one of our overseas affiliate member colleges. We chose reference E to illustrate how we, like Heriot-Watt University Edinburgh and many others around the world, when appropriate, accept MBA candidates who lack an undergraduate degree - but who instead have extensive relevant professional

experience in the course subject. Other students in his MBA cohort have prior bachelor degrees. DBA studies are now underway at the same overseas member college.

Table

doctorate:	research D. phil:	A transcript	B transcript
DBA see text C 1	research M.phil:	C transcript	D transcript
master (more):	E transcript	F transcript	G transcript
post-grad diploma	H transcript	I transcript	J transcript
bachelor:	K transcript	L transcript	M transcript
bachelor:	N transcript	O transcript	P transcript
bachelor:	Q transcript	R transcript	S transcript
associate:	T transcript	U transcript	V transcript
associate:	W transcript	X transcript	Y transcript

4 Our programs and processes are further illustrated in academic context by -
 (a), anecdotal accounts of alumni being [accepted](#) into higher studies and at other universities, and into visa or professional status, on the basis of our earlier degree;
 (b), [media](#) ads (C1 above) and articles referring to our degree programs here and abroad;
 (c), long-standing [memberships](#) in degree-context and other academic bodies; and by
 (d), the 1987 to 1996 editions of the Canadian Government's *National Guide to College and University Programmes*. Throughout 1987-1996 Vancouver University – identified first as New Summits University College and later as University Colleges – and Trinity Western University were the only BC private institutions listed in the *National Guide*, which ceased publication in 1996.

5 There was a constant tug of war in the above era reflecting objections by misguided BC public sector union activists trying to convince the *National Guide* editors that Vancouver University's degree programs should not be identified in the publication. The erratically implemented outcome compromise was that our aggregate-learning degree context was almost completely ignored in the *Guide*. And our in-Canada classroom-based bachelor degrees and postgraduate diplomas were often coded as though (in Quebec-terminology context) *license* programs - but, paradoxically, some of our master degree programs were sporadically properly identified as concluding in the master degree. And note further C1 above.

D. Organizational Capacity

1 The physical framework of VUW is like that of Oxford and Cambridge, except that our member [colleges](#) are dispersed around the world, rather than around a particular city. [Like at Oxbridge and London, our member colleges collaborate together - and often compete for students!]. Even in Vancouver BC, our local member colleges are dispersed rather than centralized on a campus. So like Oxford, Cambridge, London - and Portland State University - we do not have a conventional "campus". And also like London - in a procedural context rather than physical framework - we conduct a significant aggregate-learning "external" degree process which involves face-to-face, postal mail, and electronic consultation between our consortium Registry staff and the advisory staff and faculty at subject-relevant member colleges, consulting firms, and other organizations.

2 Despite today's easy access to on-line research and learning resources, we expect constituent and affiliate member colleges to have a learning resources facility and a print library [like that of our constituent BC Montessori Teachers College], or be in accessible

proximity to same like at BCIT's downtown campus - which has no on-site library but does have nearby access to the extensive print collections of VPL. Our [policy](#) in this matter was recently emphasized in the *Province*.

3 Our organizational capacity is supported by and reflected in our long-standing participation in a wide range of credible peer academic [organizations](#), and is further best measured by the reported satisfaction of alumni. The president of VUW is a 2002-4 Board member of the American Association of University Administrators and we affirm its Statement of Professional [Standards](#). Holders of VUW degrees, both classroom-based and aggregate learning based, have been accepted for higher studies by globally-credible (including US regionally-accredited) universities - and hired as faculty by other universities. When Registry staff have thought do to so, such anecdotes have been noted in the files. Now, in the context of the present application, and for other future accreditation purposes, we are searching Registry files to better cross-reference these and other outcomes; and we are trying to contact earlier-decades alumni for their anecdotes. Meanwhile, we have also commenced posting received anecdotes - when requested by alumni - on our [alumni](#) page.

E. Missions and Policies

1 Our organizational mission is the continuance and expansion of the world's first global secular consortium university - consisting of equal member colleges rather than branches and franchises – and, within such context, to address the needs of learners in both developed and developing countries. Although a member college may considerably reflect its prevailing local religion or culture, the university per se openly expects member colleges to accept students regardless of caste, culture, ethnicity, gender, or religion.

2 We maintain the institution/student relationships and affirmation of academic freedom [policies](#) (top link item) dating back to our 1982-83 NSC catalogue (see page 18). But again, because our member colleges are located in differing jurisdictions around the world, policies at member colleges necessarily also reflect and affirm these policies in a local context.

3 We have some particular missions within our above leading statement. Here are two.

(i) In geographic perspective we share a concern for the learning needs of island states; for environmentally isolated communities; and for poor heavily populated communities. So whenever possible we particularly welcome new member colleges in those contexts. Our headquarters host country, Canada, is a member of both the Commonwealth and the Francophone community. We have recently asked Canada for financial support in a special outreach to similarly belonging Cameroon (Africa) and four island states (Dominica, St Lucia, Mauritius, and Vanuatu).

(ii) In academia, we perceive some prevailing academic approaches - such as those relating to degree and course credit transfer - as being often little more than a snobbery negatively affecting adult learners. So in our aggregate-learning context we grant credible [transfer credit](#) to many of the part-time outcome-tested professional and certification courses/modules taught by other colleges and universities - which they themselves often decline to acknowledge as equal to more traditional full-time offerings. We also grant credit for field-based and work-based learning, and were runner-up in the 1997 AAUA Khaladjan Award for Innovation in Higher Education for our pioneering.

F. Governance, Faculty, Services, and Facilities

1 VUW is unique in the extent to which it permits faculty, staff, and students participate in its top-level [governance](#). As therein stated - and further facilitated by an option in our student registration [form](#) - alumni, faculty, staff and students may elect to become members of the Vancouver University Colleges Society. They may as such participate in annual and general meetings of the governing society and stand for election as a participating-categories director. There are usually directors representing alumni, faculty, staff, students and member colleges and institutes. There is no limitation on the topics about which the Society may discuss and decide, although obviously there are limitations in the extent to which VUW can determine academic and related matters in specific jurisdictions around the world.

2 In addition to the consortium Board and Faculty Council, each member college has its own internal governance and procedures for stakeholder (staff/faculty, student, alumni) participation. The chief academic officer of each member college, and of appropriate programs within each college, is expected to have an earned doctorate. Depending upon levels of instruction, faculty is expected to have a graduate degree, although in some subjects and circumstances a bachelor degree along with professional certification and experience is equally appropriate. Registrars and librarians are required to have degrees and are recognized as academic officers.

3 Proposals for new classroom-based degrees, and new degree designations in the aggregate-leaning context, are first discussed at one or more member colleges and/or by staff in the Office of President and University Services (OPUS) and Registry. It is referred electronically to the Faculty Council and Board and, if a major departure from past patterns is proposed, it will likely need to be approved at the AGM/Convocation.

4 At its member colleges and OPUS and Registry, VUW has appropriate faculty, services, financial resources, and physical facilities to ensure that students complete their programs cohesively. VUW programs are largely developed and delivered by full-time faculty members. Faculty is credentialed by the degrees of credible universities and by professional organizations in the subject and level of instruction. At member colleges all subject-appropriate faculty (not merely full-time faculty) have appropriate degree levels for the level of courses [modules, in the terminology of some countries] they teach.

5 We collectively - Registry staff, member colleges staff and faculty, et al – focus upon student orientation, technical facilities access, learning access and skills, health concerns, recreation, counseling and career planning. These needs are flexibly addressed in the context of each member college's country location. Member colleges and programs are visited and reviewed by OPUS at college site or regional Convocations - the visitation expenses for which are provided by the member college or group of member colleges in a regional [examples: scroll down [here](#)].

6 We look forward to review visit by DQA personnel at OPUS and Registry and at BC-located member colleges. Some member colleges abroad have indicated that they can immediately afford to finance the visit of a DQA person in present context. For other member colleges in developing countries, we may have to postpone DQA visit until special donations make such visits possible.

7 Vancouver University Colleges Society is a charitable organization registered as such in both Canada and the United States. [The Corporation per se conducts no business, in the usual sense of the word - its principal function being the formal signing of degrees in

a non-variance Common Law location or where otherwise permitted to do so]. Each member college is responsible for its own operational budget. The expenditures serving the university at-wide presently average a modest annual \$500,000, and are directly expended on its behalf by member colleges and charity-motivated corporations and individuals. Donations and degree graduation fees cover the expenses of the Registry and Office of President and University Services (OPUS). All degree graduation fees are placed in legal trust account between the date of their reception and subsequent award of degree.

8 The university is structurally not dependent upon the economic and academic program circumstances of one jurisdiction. Thus the university's multi-sourcing structure provides outstanding security to students, who know that their university will survive and serve them despite whatever economic and other conditions may strike individual locations around the world.

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