

SUBJECT	NON-REFUNDABLE ACCEPTANCE DEPOSIT
MEETING DATE	JUNE 14, 2018

Forwarded to the Board of Governors on the Recommendation of the President

**APPROVED FOR
SUBMISSION**



Santa J. Ono, President and Vice-Chancellor

FOR INFORMATION	
Report Date	May 1, 2018
Presented By	Andrew Szeri, Provost and Vice-President Academic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Master of Data Science program proposes to increase the current \$1,000 non-refundable acceptance deposit for both domestic and international students to \$3,000.

The deposits are required of students who accept an offer of admission to the MDS program. The increase to the non-refundable acceptance deposit would be effective for the September 2019 intake. Acceptance deposits are credited towards the first tuition instalment. Students who do not commence their programs, after accepting an offer of admission, are not refunded their deposits.

Attachments

1. Memorandum approved by the President: Non-refundable Acceptance Deposit for the Master of Data Science (MDS) Program
2. Student Tuition Deposit Consultation Report

INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES SUPPORTED

Learning
 Research
 Innovation
 Engagement
 International
 (Internal / External)

or Operational

DESCRIPTION & RATIONALE Please refer to the attached memorandum approved by the President: Non-refundable Acceptance Deposit for the Master of Data Science (MDS) Program.

BENEFITS The intent of the non-refundable acceptance deposit is to encourage applicants Learning, Research, Financial, Sustainability & Reputational with offers of admission from UBC and from other universities to make their decisions with respect to their choice of program in a timely manner. Such decisions will permit the Master of Data Science program to make timely offers to waitlisted students if and when spaces become available.

RISKS Financial, Operational & Reputational	The Master of Data Science program does not foresee any hardship resulting from this deposit requirement. The intent of the fee change is not to place undue hardship on the applicants. Special arrangements will be made for students who may not be able to pay the increased deposit on a case-by-case basis.
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SCHEDULE Implementation Timeline	The increased non-refundable acceptance deposit for the MDS Program will be effective for incoming students commencing study in the 2019-2020 academic year.
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CONSULTATION Relevant Units, Internal & External Constituencies	A consultation was undertaken with the AMS and Graduate Student Society, by the VP Students Office, between March 5, 2018 and April 4, 2018. The report of the consultation is attached.
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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Professor Santa J. Ono, President and Vice-Chancellor
FROM: Professor Andrew Szeri, Provost and Vice-President Academic
DATE: May 1, 2018
RE: **Non-refundable Acceptance Deposit for the Master of Data Science (MDS) Program**

It is hereby requested that the President approve an increase to the non-refundable acceptance deposit for domestic and international students applying to the Master of Data Science (MDS) Program, effective for the academic year 2019-2020. The non-refundable deposit is levied when a student (domestic or international) accepts an offer of admission and is applied to the student's first tuition instalment.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The MDS program proposes to increase the current \$1,000 non-refundable acceptance deposit to \$3,000 for domestic and international students. The deposit is applied to the first instalment payment for tuition. The increase would be effective for the September 2019 intake. Students who accept an offer of admission and then fail to register will forfeit the deposit.

The Master of Data Science (MDS) program is a 10-month full-time professional program, consisting of 24 one-credit courses followed by a 6-credit capstone course in April-June. It is jointly offered by the Departments of Statistics and Computer Science.

The intent of the fee change is to encourage applicants to make their acceptance decisions in a timely manner. Such timely decisions permit the program to make offers to waitlisted students if and when space becomes available. The intent of the fee change is not to place undue hardship on applicants. Special arrangements will be made, on a case-by-case basis, for students who may not be able to pay the increased deposit.

Currently some students accept an offer to the program and renege before the start of the program. As an example, the 2017/18 cohort started with 50 accepted offers, which was the departments' intake target. However, by September 2017, 8 students (16% of the number offered admission) "walked away" from the \$1,000 deposit, leaving the program with 42 students.

The difficulty caused by losing students is twofold. First, the spaces could have been taken up by students who were enthusiastic and committed to the program. Second, the lost revenue creates challenges for the departments. However, if the departments make too many offers over target, to account for this attrition, there is a risk of over enrolment and insufficient infrastructure and resources to support the program and its students.

A consultation was undertaken with the AMS and Graduate Student Society, by the VP Students Office, between March 5, 2018 and April 4, 2018. The report of the consultation is attached.

Schedule of Implementation:

Academic Year 2019-2020

MASTER OF DATA SCIENCE PROGRAM

STUDENT TUITION DEPOSIT CONSULTATION REPORT

The Vice-President Students Office, in partnership with the Faculty of Science, conducted a student consultation regarding the change in tuition deposit proposal for the Master of Data Science (MDS) Program. This report outlines the consultation process and summarizes student feedback including the student representatives' submission verbatim in Appendix 2.

Student Representative Bodies Invited to the Consultation

- Alma Mater Society (AMS)
- Graduate Student Society

Mode of Consultation

The consultation consisted of an e-consultation and a face-to-face meeting. Student representative groups were invited to the consultation through email, and asked to distribute the invitation to their constituents as they felt appropriate. Student representative groups were also offered a face-to-face meeting to discuss the tuition proposal. A meeting with student representatives and faculty representatives was not requested.

Basis of Consultation: The consultation was based on a tuition proposal and rationale document created by the Faculty. Please see Appendix 1 for the invitation and tuition rationale document.

Timelines: The e-consultation was conducted over the period of March 5th to April 4th, 2018.

Summary of Student Feedback: A submission was received jointly from the AMS. The verbatim submission is in Appendix 2. No additional comments were received

Organization	Summary
AMS submission	SUPPORT NEW TUITION DEPOSIT "The AMS does not oppose the new tuition deposit and we are grateful to the University for including student input in this process." ACCOMODATIONS "...the AMS hopes that special arrangements are made available to applicants unable to pay the increased deposit."

APPENDIX 1: INVITATION TO CONSULTATION AND FEE CHANGE RATIONALE DOCUMENT

Good morning,

There is a submission by the Faculty of Science to change the tuition deposit for the Master of Data Science program.

In order to inform the program leads and the Board of Governors with regards to the **tuition deposit proposal** for this program, the University is undertaking a consultative process to get your comments as student representatives, and provide an opportunity for students to provide individual comments on the tuition proposal if they wish. **Please note: the scope of this consultation process is limited to the tuition deposit proposal.**

The consultation will consist of:

1. e-consultation

Please find attached a document which outline the details of the fee change proposal, including:

- an overview of the program,
- the rationale for fee change and
- the proposed fee change.

Please share the document and this email as you see appropriate. **Comments on the fee change proposal and student submissions can be provided confidentially to: jenna.omassi@ubc.ca (Jenna Omassi, Advisor, Vice President Students Office).**

2. Face to Face meeting

If requested by student representatives, we can arrange a face-to-face meeting with the program leads regarding this tuition proposal. Please advise as soon as possible if you would like us to arrange a meeting.

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS WILL END ON APRIL 4, 2018.

Confidentiality

Comments will be collected by the Vice-President Students Office, and only staff within that office will know the identity of individual students submitting comments. At no time will anyone outside of the Vice President Students Office know the identity of individual students who submit comments to this consultation. Your comments will only be used for the purposes of the tuition consultation.

Comments from individual students will be stripped of any identifying information to ensure confidentiality, but otherwise will be provided to the responsible program leads and Board of Governors verbatim.

Comments received from student organizations will be reported as coming from those organizations, and provided to the responsible faculty and Board of Governors as received. There will also be a summary report of the consultation developed for the Faculty and Board of Governors.

Please let me know if you have any questions about the process.

Thank you.

Jenna Omassi
Advisor, Strategic Support Team
Vice-President Students' Office
University of British Columbia
jenna.omassi@ubc.ca

CHANGE OF ADMISSIONS FEE CONSULTATION

MDS PROGRAM

Description:

The Master of Data Science (MDS) program is a 10-month full time professional program, consisting of 24 one-credit courses followed up a 6-credit capstone course in April-June. It is jointly offered by the Departments of Statistics and Computer Science. For more details, see <https://masterdatascience.science.ubc.ca/>.

Proposed Fee Change:

The MDS program proposes to increase the current \$1,000 non-refundable tuition deposit to \$3,000 non-refundable tuition deposit. The deposit is applied to tuition fees for students who enter the MDS program. The scheduled implementation would be the spring of 2019 (when deposits are first required to secure an offer to the MDS program) for entrance in September of 2019. With this timeline, we will advertise the increase on our website before admissions for the 2019-2020 cohort are opened. This proposal would be a one-time increase.

The current tuition rate for the MDS program is \$31,212 for domestic students and \$42,436 for international students. Thus, the proposed deposit represents 9.6% and 7.1% of the tuition amounts, respectively. We anticipate the tuition will increase gradually, however there is no intention to regularly increase the deposit amount, meaning that these percentages will slowly decrease over time.

Fee Rationale:

The intent of the fee change is to encourage applicants to make a decision in a timely manner. Such timely decisions permit us to make offers to waitlisted students if and when space becomes available. The intent of the fee change is not to place undue hardship on the applicants. Special arrangements will be made with students who may not be able to pay the increased deposit on a case-by-case basis.

Currently some students accept an offer to the program and back out before the start. Last year, we started with 50 accepted offers, which was our target number as mandated by the department Heads. However, by September, **8 students (16% of 50 admits)** walked away from the \$1000 deposit, leaving us with 42 students.

The difficulty caused by losing students is twofold. First, the spot could have been used for a student who was genuinely enthusiastic and committed to the program. Second, the revenues from MDS support research and teaching initiatives in the departments of Statistics and Computer Science. However, if we make too many extra offers to account for students potentially foregoing the deposit and dropping out, this generates problems for space and resources.

APPENDIX 2: STUDENT SUBMISSIONS

There was a submission from the AMS.



Submission to the UBC Board of Governors regarding the Tuition Deposit for the Master of Data Science.

April 4th, 2018

Dear Board of Governors,

This submission is being made on behalf of the Alma Mater Society (AMS) of UBC Vancouver in response to the request for feedback from the Vice President Students Office sent on March 5th, 2018 on the tuition deposit for the Master of Data Science.

The proposed non-refundable tuition deposit is to increase from \$1,000.00 to \$3,000.00. The scheduled implementation is the spring of 2019 for the 2019-2020 cohort.

The AMS hopes that UBC will continue to commit significant aid and scholarships for this program to ensure these opportunities are accessible to all financial backgrounds. Furthermore, the AMS hopes that special arrangements are made available to applicants unable to pay the increased deposit.

The AMS does not oppose the new tuition deposit and we are grateful to the University for including student input in this process. We look forward to the great work that will be accomplished by those students who enroll in the program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Ehrenholz', written in a cursive style.

Alan Ehrenholz
President
AMS Student Society of UBC Vancouver
president@ams.ubc.ca

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Max Holmes', written in a cursive style.

Max Holmes
Vice President Academic and University Affairs
AMS Student Society of UBC Vancouver
vpacademic@ams.ubc.ca