



SUBJECT	New and Increased Acceptance Deposits for Specified Graduate Programs
SUBMITTED TO	Finance Committee
MEETING DATE	September 14, 2023
SESSION CLASSIFICATION	Recommended session criteria from Board Meetings Policy: OPEN
REQUEST	APPROVAL REQUESTED IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Finance Committee, under authority delegated by the Board of Governors, approves new and increased acceptance deposits for specified graduate programs as identified in Appendix A to the briefing, effective for the 2024W admissions cycle.
LEAD EXECUTIVE	Gage Averill, Provost and Vice-President Academic, UBC Vancouver
SUPPORTED BY	Bhushan Gopaluni, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President Faculty Planning, UBC Vancouver Susan Porter, Dean and Vice-Provost Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

PRIOR SUBMISSIONS

The subject matter of this submission has not previously been considered by the Finance Committee.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The upcoming changes to UBC's e-payment solution and integration into the Applicant Service Centre (ASC) will largely automate the collection of acceptance deposits with the applicant process to graduate programs starting in the application cycle for 2024W. Consequently, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies consulted with graduate programs on their interest to implement an acceptance deposit. Specified graduate programs propose non-refundable acceptance deposits as identified in Appendix A for students who accept offers of admission.

Acceptance deposits must be paid when applicants accept the offer of admission, and are credited towards the first tuition instalment. Graduate programs have the ability to set deadlines for acceptance of offers, as well as extend those deadlines for particular applicants. Graduate programs also have the ability to waive the acceptance deposit if they consider it appropriate under special circumstances. Deposits are non-transferrable between graduate programs.

The intent of implementing non-refundable acceptance deposits is to encourage acceptances from qualified and genuinely enthusiastic applicants, and reduce holding seats for applicants who may not intend to enroll. Moving quickly through an applicant waitlist is of critical importance to avoid undue stress on applicants. Acceptance deposits can lead to a reduction in the melt rate, enabling programs to meet enrolment targets. A high melt rate can negatively impact graduate programs, especially those run at cost recovery. Acceptance deposit revenue from applicants who do not enroll can partially offset this financial impact. A broad implementation of acceptance deposits in course-based master's programs facilitates communication to applicants and presents a consistent admission process to this type of program across different disciplinary faculties.

A consultation was undertaken with the AMS and the Graduate Student Society, by the VP Students Office, between May 16 to June 13, 2023. A copy of the consultation report is attached.

APPENDICES

1. Proposed and Current Acceptance Deposits for Domestic and International Students
2. Student Consultation Report

Appendix A

Proposed and Current Acceptance Deposits for Domestic and International Students

UBC Vancouver Program Name	Proposed Domestic Acceptance Deposit	Proposed International Acceptance Deposit	Current Domestic Acceptance Deposit	Current International Acceptance Deposit
MEng Electrical and Computer Engineering	\$1000	\$1000	-	-
MEng Mining Engineering	\$1000	\$1000	-	-
MEng Mechanical Engineering	\$1,000	\$2,000	-	-
MEng Mechatronics Design	\$1,000	\$2,000	-	-
MEng Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering	\$2,000	\$4,000	-	-
MEng Biomedical Engineering	\$1,000	\$1,000	-	-
Master of Occupational Therapy	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$300	\$300
Master of Public Policy and Global Affairs	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Master of Food and Resource Economics	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$600	\$900
Master of Land and Water Systems	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$300	\$840
Master of Food Science	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$300	\$840
Master of Science in Audiology and Speech Sciences ¹	\$1,000	N/A	\$200	N/A
Master of Community and Regional Planning	\$1,500	\$1,500	-	-
Master of Law Common Law	\$1,000	\$1,000	-	-
Master of Laws in Taxation	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$500	\$500
Master of Arts in Economics	\$1,000	\$1,000	-	-
Master of Public Health	\$500	\$500	\$250	\$250

¹ Domestic enrollment only

OMNIBUS PROPOSAL

PROGRAM TUITION, FEE, DEPOSIT CONSULTATION REPORT

The Vice-President, Students Office, in partnership with UBC Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies conducted a student consultation regarding the implementation of acceptance deposits for UBC's graduate programs. 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 (GSS)

Mode of Consultation

The consultation consisted of an e-consultation. 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/zoom meeting to discuss the tuition proposal. A meeting was not requested by student representatives.

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 Tuesday May 16, 2023 to Tuesday June 13, 2023.

Summary of Student Feedback: Submissions were not received by AMS or GSS and no individual student submissions were received.

APPENDIX 1: INVITATION TO CONSULTATION AND TUITION RATIONALE DOCUMENT

*****This message is sent on behalf of Dr. Samantha Reid, Executive Director of the Office of the Vice President, Students*****

Hello everyone,

There is a proposal by UBC Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies regarding the implementation of acceptance deposits for UBC's graduate programs.

In order to inform the program leads and the Board of Governors with regards to the **acceptance 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 proposal if they wish. **Please note: the scope of this consultation process is limited to the acceptance deposit proposal.**

The consultation will consist of:

1. e-consultation

Please find attached a document which outlines the details of the tuition proposal, including:

- an overview of the program,
- the student consultation that has happened to date,
- the tuition and fees rationale for the program, and
- the proposed tuition and fees.

Please share the document and this email as you see appropriate. **Comments and student organization submissions on the tuition proposal can be provided to Irena Deretic – Administrative Coordinator, Office of the Vice President Students (vpsassist@mail.ubc.ca).**

2. Face to Face/Zoom meeting

If requested by student representatives, we can arrange a face-to-face/Zoom 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 TUESDAY JUNE 13, 2023 AT MIDNIGHT.

Confidentiality

- Comments will be collected by the Vice-President Students Office, and only analysts 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,

Samantha

Samantha Reid Ph.D.

Executive Director

Office of the Vice President Students

The University of British Columbia | Musqueam & Syilx Okanagan Nation Traditional Territories

6328 Memorial Road | Vancouver BC | V6T 1Z2

Phone 604 827 2922 | samantha.reid@ubc.ca



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

PROGRAM TUITION, FEE, DEPOSIT CONSULTATION: OMNIBUS PROPOSAL

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

UBC's graduate programs are highly sought after, both by domestic and international applicants, resulting in a highly competitive application process where the number of offers available is substantially smaller than the number of qualified applicants. Consequently, it is necessary for applicants to make a decision regarding admission offers in a timely manner and follow through enrolling in the program after acceptance.

Unfortunately, a number of applicants who accept admissions offers do not enroll and may not communicate this decision to graduate programs in time to extend an offer to another qualified applicant. In particular, international applicants require significant lead time in order to apply for a study permit and make other necessary arrangements for an international relocation. Unfilled seats in programs not only have negative consequences for applicants who miss out on the opportunity of graduate education, but also prevent the University from fulfilling its mandate to create new generations of professionals, often in sought-after disciplines.

Acceptance deposits are non-refundable payments assessed to applicants to accept an offer of admission to a graduate program. These payments are credited towards the first tuition installment, resulting in no increase in the total cost of the program to students who enroll. The non-refundable deposits are credited to the program if the student fails to enroll after accepting the offer.

Acceptance deposits are broadly used at the undergraduate level where all new students have to pay deposits to accept their admission offers. Only 33 graduate programs have implemented deposits to this date¹. Even though individual programs have added deposits over the last decade, a major limiting factor was the absence of a robust technological solution that provided proper automation, resulting in large amounts of manual labour.

The upcoming changes to UBC's e-payment solution and integration into the Applicant Service Centre (ASC) will largely automate the collection of acceptance deposits with the application process to graduate programs starting in the application cycle for 2024W1. Consequently, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies has consulted with graduate programs on their interest to implement an acceptance deposit starting in that application cycle.

Upon approval of this proposal, the changes will be reflected in all public materials to ensure applicants are fully informed.

PROPOSED TUITION, FEE, OR DEPOSIT CHANGE

The proposed rates of acceptance deposits for domestic and international applicants are detailed in Table 1, to take effect in the 2024W1 admission cycle. Graduate programs have the ability to waive the acceptance deposit if they consider it appropriate under special circumstances. The acceptance deposit must be paid at which the applicants accept the offer of admission. Individual programs have the ability to set deadlines for acceptance of offers, as well as extend those deadlines for particular applicants.

Deposits are non-transferable between graduate programs.

¹ As of Mar-2023.

Table 1 - Proposed and Current Acceptance Deposits for Domestic and International Students

UBC Vancouver Program Name	Proposed Domestic Acceptance Deposit	Proposed International Acceptance Deposit	Current Domestic Acceptance Deposit	Current International Acceptance Deposit
MEng Electrical and Computer Engineering	\$1000	\$1000	-	-
MEng Mining Engineering	\$1000	\$1000	-	-
MEng Mechanical Engineering	\$1,000	\$2,000	-	-
MEng Mechatronics Design	\$1,000	\$2,000	-	-
MEng Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering	\$2,000	\$4,000	-	-
MEng Biomedical Engineering	\$1,000	\$1,000	-	-
Master of Occupational Therapy	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$300	\$300
Master of Public Policy and Global Affairs	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Master of Food and Resource Economics	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$600	\$900
Master of Land and Water Systems	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$300	\$840
Master of Food Science	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$300	\$840
Master of Science in Audiology and Speech Sciences ²	\$1,000	N/A	\$200	N/A
Master of Community and Regional Planning	\$1,500	\$1,500	-	-
Master of Law Common Law	\$1,000	\$1,000	-	-
Master of Laws in Taxation	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$500	\$500
Master of Arts in Economics	\$1,000	\$1,000	-	-
Master of Public Health	\$500	\$500	\$250	\$250

PROPOSED TUITION, FEE, OR DEPOSIT RATIONALE

Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies conducted consultation sessions with graduate programs which currently charge acceptance deposits. No significant challenges or negative outcomes were identified. The following is a list of positive outcomes which support the implementation of acceptance deposits:

- Good faith acceptance of admissions offers and fairness to applicants: a non-refundable acceptance deposit discourages the acceptance of an offer from applicants who may not intend to enroll. Programs with competitive enrollment may not be able to offer admission to qualified and genuinely enthusiastic applicants as a result of holding seats for these undecided applicants. The combination of acceptance deposits with acceptance deadlines compels these non-committed applicants to make a concrete decision.
- Waitlist management: moving quickly through an application waitlist is of critical importance to avoid undue stress on applicants. If definitive decisions are received earlier, it allows graduate programs to make offers in a timely manner to qualified applicants who were initially waitlisted. This ensures access to available seats in programs and provides enough time for proper planning, including time to secure study permits, relocation planning (domestically or internationally), and important decision making such as work opportunities for partners, school enrolment of children, or other important life decisions.

² Domestic enrollment only

- Enrollment planning: the implementation of acceptance deposits can lead to a reduction in the melt rate, enabling programs to meet enrollment targets.
- Mitigation of the impact of melt: A high melt rate can have negative impacts for graduate programs, particularly those which run at cost recovery. The transfer of the acceptance deposit to the program from applicants who do not enroll can partially offset this financial impact.
- Internal consistency: a broad implementation of acceptance deposits in course-based master's programs facilitates communication to applicants and presents a consistent admission process to this type of programs across different disciplinary faculties.

It is noteworthy that the implementation of acceptance deposits, both at the graduate and undergraduate level, has generally been supported by the student societies in the past during the consultation process. In particular, the ability to ensure full cohorts, i.e., maximizing access to education, has been pointed out as a clearly positive outcome. The need for exceptions for students in particular circumstances has also been highlighted, which are incorporated into the process, as programs have the ability both to waive the deposit, and to extend the deadline for offer acceptance.