



<b>SUBJECT</b>	Non-Refundable Acceptance Deposit - Master of Biotechnology, UBC Okanagan
<b>SUBMITTED TO</b>	Finance Committee
<b>MEETING DATE</b>	June 3, 2025
<b>SESSION CLASSIFICATION</b>	Recommended session criteria from Board Meetings Policy: OPEN
<b>REQUEST</b>	<b>APPROVAL REQUESTED</b> IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that, in accordance with authority delegated by the Board of Governors, the Finance Committee approves non-refundable acceptance deposits of \$3,000 CAD for domestic students and \$5,000 CAD for international students for the existing Master of Biotechnology (MBtec) at UBC Okanagan, effective September 2026.
<b>LEAD EXECUTIVE</b>	Rehan Sadiq, Provost and Vice-President Academic, UBC Okanagan
<b>SUPPORTED BY</b>	N/A

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The course-based Master of Biotechnology (MBtec) program is designed for learners with a bachelor's degree looking for access to mid- to high-level industry positions, as well as professionals looking to reskill or upskill to pivot or pursue advancement in their careers. Learners will gain extensive hands-on experience with microbial, plant, and animal cell-culture techniques, advanced techniques such as organoid production, CRISPR-mediated gene-editing, protein expression, metabolomics, and bioinformatics, including access to high-performance computing via UBC's Advanced Research Computing facility. They will also be trained in the use of state-of-the-art instruments such as mass spectrometers and DNA sequencers.

### *Key features of the program*

- **Fast track timeline:** The MBtec is a 16- to 20-month, course-based, master's program.
- **Hands-on experience:** The MBtec includes 21 credits of hands-on, laboratory-based courses complemented by seminar courses comprised of presentations from expert industry speakers. Students can further develop their skills as they complete two four-month internships.
- **Fulfill high demand:** A comprehensive scan of historical job postings between 2018 and 2023 revealed 5,748 Biotech openings in BC, of which 44% required a graduate degree. Further, a wide-ranging market report put biological technologists and technician job growth between 2017 and 2022 at 5%, and projected growth for 2022 to 2027 at 8%.
- **Economic Impact:** The BC Biotechnology industry is booming. In 2018, revenue from BC's life sciences sector was approximately \$5.4 billion, which was an increase of 5.6% from the previous year (*Life Sciences in British Columbia: Sector Profile, 2020*). Graduates of this program will help to foster this ongoing success and growth.

### **Proposed Acceptance Deposit: Rationale**

Acceptance deposits aim to reduce melt, which is the difference between the number of students accepting their offers and the number of students who show up by the add/drop deadline. Acceptance deposits are charged when students accept their offers, and the deposit is counted towards their tuition. Thus, the acceptance deposit does not increase the overall cost to students.

Following are the reasons for introducing such a deposit for the MBtec program:

- **Enrollment planning and melt reduction:** The MBtec program needs accurate enrollment estimates to secure the necessary internship placements. Without a deposit, comparable professional masters’ programs experience 30% to 50% melt. This would create significant challenges for resource allocation and would disrupt internship coordination with industry partners. The unpredictability jeopardizes professional opportunities and creates an unnecessary administrative burden of tracking fluctuating enrolment numbers.
- **Efficient resource planning:** The laboratory-intensive nature of the MBtec program makes a full cohort critical for financial sustainability. Running labs below capacity increases per-student costs and reduces operational efficiency. To make this program as financially effective as possible, we need some assurance that students who accept their offer plan to attend.

**Costs of comparable Acceptance Deposits**

For comparison, the UBCO Calendar (<https://okanagan.calendar.ubc.ca/fees/policies-fees>) shows the following tuition deposits for graduate programs for 2024-25

	Domestic	International
<b>Applied Science</b>		
Master of Engineering Leadership	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
<b>Management</b>		
Master of Management	\$1000.00	\$1000.00
<b>Science</b>		
Master of Data Science	\$3000.00	\$3000.00

**Proposed Acceptance Deposit**

The Faculty proposes a **\$3,000 acceptance deposit for domestic students** and a **\$5,000 acceptance deposit for international students** which strikes a healthy balance between affordability and an incentive to accept an offer only when they have a strong intent to come to campus.

**APPENDICES**

1. Master of Biotechnology (MBtec) Acceptance Deposit: Consultation Report



# Master of Biotechnology (MBtec) Acceptance Deposit: Consultation Report

Date of Report: April 25, 2025

[The course-based Master of Biotechnology \(MBtec\) program](#) is designed for learners with a bachelor's degree looking for access to mid- to high-level industry positions, as well as professionals looking to reskill or upskill to pivot or pursue advancement in their careers. Learners will gain extensive hands-on experience with microbial, plant, and animal cell-culture techniques, advanced techniques such as organoid production, CRISPR-mediated gene-editing, protein expression, metabolomics, and bioinformatics, including access to high-performance computing via [UBC's Advanced Research Computing facility](#). They will also be trained in the use of state-of-the-art instruments such as mass spectrometers and DNA sequencers. This technical training will be complemented by professional skills development in areas such as technical writing, project management, and effective presentations, and a weekly seminar with invited speakers from the biotechnology industry. Students will be required to complete two internships with regional industrial partners.

## ***Key features of the program***

- **Fast track timeline:** The MBtec is a 16- to 20-month, course-based, master's program.
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Proposed Acceptance Deposits

We believe that a **\$3,000 acceptance deposit for domestic students and a \$5,000 acceptance deposit for international students** strikes a healthy balance between affordability and an incentive to accept an offer only when they have a strong intent to come to campus.



### Confidentiality

Comments were collected by the Office of the Associate Vice-President Students, and only analysts within that office know the identity of individual students submitting comments. At no time will anyone outside of the Office of the Associate Vice-President Students know the identity of individual students who submit comments to this consultation. 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 Faculties and the Board of Governors verbatim.

### Results of the Student Consultation

The Associate Vice-President, Students Office, invited elected student leadership to participate and to share with their student members the opportunity to provide feedback on this proposed new program tuition.

The tuition consultation was sent by email to the elected student leadership in the Student Union Okanagan. They were contacted by email on March 25, 2025 and asked to provide feedback by Thursday April 17, 2025. A variety of methods were offered including an online (Zoom) consultation, in person, or email feedback.

The Office of the Associate Vice President Students did not receive any feedback from students regarding this consultation.