

## Advising Degree-Bound ABE Students

Many college and university college Adult Basic Education (ABE) students are upgrading with the specific goal of accessing degree program opportunities. Not fully understanding how university admissions work, some ABE students are disappointed to find that they are not eligible to apply directly to a university degree program from ABE. This document explains why this situation may arise and provides pointers for advising degree-bound ABE students.

### Understanding University Admissions

All universities in B.C. follow a standard procedure for admitting applicants: they provide a number of application categories under which students can apply and establish criteria for each category. For example, in any given year, a university might admit students directly from a secondary school in B.C., from secondary schools in Canada but outside B.C., from college or university college transfer programs, from other universities, from international locations, etc. In order for applicants to be evaluated for admission, each student's admissibility is determined on a "basis of admission."

Basis of admission refers to the evidence upon which the admission decision is primarily based. Only one basis of admission is possible for a student. For example:

- A student who has just graduated from a B.C. secondary school would be assessed using the "B.C. Grade 12" basis of admission (required courses, approved examinable courses, Grade Point Average or GPA).
- A student who has completed an adequate number of credits in a college or university college transfer program would be assessed using the "B.C. College Transfer" basis of admission (specific number of transferable courses, GPA).
- A student who had graduated from a B.C. secondary school

and then completed only a few credits at a college or university college (fewer than the minimum credits required to qualify for the B.C. College Transfer basis of admission at that university) would be assessed using the "B.C. Grade 12" basis of admission, although performance in his/her transfer courses may also be taken into account.

- A student who has graduated from the B.C. Adult Graduation Diploma will be assessed using the admission requirements for "BCAGD" graduates.

### The British Columbia Adult Graduation Diploma (BCAGD) as a Basis of Admission

The BCAGD is a graduation diploma that allows adult students who have not previously graduated from a B.C. secondary school to attain graduation status. Courses taken in a secondary school and/or courses taken in a college or university college ABE program (referred to as "ABE program" or "ABE courses" in the remainder of this document) can be used to fulfill the requirements of the credential. If the course is taken in a secondary school, and the course is provincially examinable, then the student's grade must include the marks earned in the Provincial Exam.

There are no Provincial Exams for ABE courses. Detailed information about the requirements for the BCAGD can be found in the *ABE Articulation Handbook* at <http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/abe/handbook/handbook.pdf>.

B.C. universities recognize the BCAGD as a basis of admission. Table 1 (next page) provides a summary of the admission requirements at four universities for BCAGD applicants. This information was obtained from electronic and hardcopy calendar information of the four universities in June 2004. *Please consult the most recent information in each university's calendar for the purpose of advising students.*

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**Table 1. B.C. Adult Graduation Diploma (BCAGD) as a Basis of Admission at Four Universities**

	UBC	SFU	UVic	UNBC
<b>Minimum Age</b>	19	19	19	19
<b>Course Requirements— Advanced Level or Grade 11</b>	ABE advanced level or Grade 11 courses in the following: English, Mathematics (ABE) or Principles of Mathematics 11, a Science, one of Social Studies (ABE) or Social Studies 11 or First Nations 12 or Language 11.	Four courses (16 credits) at Grade 11 or advanced level to include the following: English, Mathematics, Social Studies or First Nations 12, an experimental or Laboratory Science.	English, Mathematics (academic), a Laboratory Science, and Social Studies 11 or equivalent at the advanced or Grade 11 level. (Courses done through the secondary system must each be worth 4 credits.)	
<b>Course Requirements— Provincial Level or Grade 12</b>	Four subjects at the ABE provincial or Grade 12 level including English, and three additional subjects chosen from the following: Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics (ABE) or Principles of Mathematics 12, Computer Science (ABE), Geology, Geography, History, English Literature, Languages.	Four courses (16 credits) at the Grade 12 or provincial level to include English, and three additional subjects selected from the following: Biology, Mathematics, Chemistry, English Literature, Languages, Statistics, Geography, History, Physics.	English, plus three approved academic subjects at the provincial or Grade 12 level. (Courses done through the secondary system must each be worth 4 credits, and provincial examinations must be written if offered in the subject taken.)	English, and three of the following subjects, at the provincial or Grade 12 level: Applications of Mathematics, B.C. First Nations Studies, Biology, Calculus, Chemistry, Comparative Civilizations, English Literature, French, German, Geography, Geology, History, Japanese, Latin, Law, Mandarin, Physics, Principles of Mathematics, Punjabi, Spanish, Technical and Professional Communications, Writing.
<b>Grade Requirements</b>	Minimum average of C+ or 67% based on the four ABE provincial or Grade 12 courses presented which must be graded. (Grade 12 course results must include the provincial examination component of the course.) <b>Note:</b> Because of enrolment limitations, the academic standing required for admission to most programs is higher than C+ or 67%.	Minimum average of C+ or 67%, based on the Ministry of Education grading scale. (All four Grade 12 or provincial levels subjects must be graded.) <b>Note:</b> Due to enrolment limitations, the academic standing required for admission to most programs is higher than C+ or 67%.	Minimum average of 67%. (All courses presented for admission must be graded.)	Overall average of 65% or better. <b>Note:</b> Students who have completed an ABE Diploma or Adult Dogwood prior to September 2000 will be evaluated based upon previous UNBC policy regarding each credential.
<b>Prerequisites</b>	Entrance requirements to specific programs parallel those for B.C./Yukon secondary school graduates. Applicants should refer to the calendar (see web address below) for specific program requirements.	Entry requirements to Business Administration, Computing Science, Engineering Science, Kinesiology, Tech One and the Faculty of Science parallel those for B.C. secondary school graduates.	All applicants must have the appropriate pre-requisites for the program to which they have applied. Admission requirements for the Faculty of Engineering, the Faculty of Science and the Health Information Science program parallel those for B.C. secondary school graduates.	
<b>Web-based Calendars</b>	<a href="http://students.ubc.ca/calendar">http://students.ubc.ca/calendar</a>	<a href="http://www.reg.sfu.ca/calendar">http://www.reg.sfu.ca/calendar</a>	<a href="http://web.uvic.ca/calendar">http://web.uvic.ca/calendar</a>	<a href="http://www.unbc.ca/calendar">http://www.unbc.ca/calendar</a>

## Advising Students in ABE Programs Who Wish to Apply for Admission to Degree Programs in B.C.

Some students who are taking ABE courses at a college or university college have already graduated from a B.C. secondary school. Others have not graduated, and they have no plans to do so. Still others have the objective of achieving secondary school graduation and are working to fulfill the requirements of the BCAGD, either using all ABE courses or a mixture of ABE and secondary school courses.

Whether graduating with a BCAGD is part of their plan or not, many college or university college ABE students enrol in ABE programs

in order to upgrade their skills or fulfill prerequisites for admission to specific post-secondary programs. If their objective is to gain admission to a degree program, it is vital that they understand their options, and especially the criteria under which they can be admissible to a university.

### Option 1: Continue at the Same Institution

Many institutions besides universities are now offering degree programs, and others are planning to do so in the next few years. Continuing at the same institution is normally a good option since the institution will usually have established processes whereby its own students can access more advanced programs.

### Option 2: Continue, Then Transfer

ABE students who wish to access degree programs at other institutions can stay at their own institution for one or two years, taking academic/university transfer courses, or a diploma program that transfers as a block of credit, and then apply for admission to another institution. While university colleges and degree-granting provincial institutes may not have specific admission categories for transfer applicants, universities do.

Students and advisors can go to the Online Transfer Guide for information on applying to universities using “B.C. College Transfer” as the basis of admission (<http://www.bccat.bc.ca/admissions/astransferstudent.html>). This information can also be found in BCCAT’s *Transfer TIPS* publication, which is available in institutional advising centres and online at <http://www.bccat.bc.ca/tips/index.html>.

### Option 3:

#### Apply for Admission Directly from an ABE Program

a) *To a degree program at an institution other than a university*

Although some degree-granting institutions other than universities have few academic requirements for admission to the institution, all require students to satisfy prerequisites for individual degree

programs and courses in order to gain admission. In most cases, particularly for academic math and science courses, the prerequisites are the same as for equivalent university courses. That is, students must have successfully completed the appropriate grade 12 course, or its equivalent ABE course. For more information on admissions and prerequisites,

consult <http://www.bccat.bc.ca/admissions/prerequisites.html>.

b) *To a degree program at a university*

Applying to a university directly from a college or university college ABE program can be more complex. The key to advising students in this situation is to make a determination about what the university would consider as the basis of admission: B.C. Grade 12, BCAGD, or some other admission category.

i) *If the student has graduated from a B.C. secondary school and has completed ABE courses in order to upgrade marks or satisfy missing prerequisites, the basis of admission will still be “B.C. Grade 12.”* Students should be carefully advised if they have completed grade 12 and ABE courses because each university has slightly different policies on how it treats such students. If students took ABE courses deemed equivalent to high school courses (see equivalency tables at <http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/abe/handbook/handbook.pdf>) to satisfy missing prerequisites, some universities may accept those courses as part of grade 12. Furthermore, if students took equivalent ABE courses to improve their grades in grade 12 courses **that are not** provincially examinable, some universities may also accept those courses as part of grade 12.

However, students cannot take ABE courses to improve their grades in grade 12 courses **that are** provincially examinable because the final grade in a provincially examinable course previously taken in secondary school cannot be increased by taking an equivalent ABE course. The best option for advising

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students wanting to improve their grade 12 marks in specific courses that are provincially examinable is to recommend that they enrol in courses offered by a school district program (regular or adult) and re-take the grade 12 course, including the Provincial Exam.

*ii) If the student is graduating with the BCAGD credential, Provincial Exams are required only for those courses which have been completed through a school district adult education or regular grade 12 program. The basis for admission is "BCAGD" and this student is eligible to apply directly to the university.*

*iii) If the student has not graduated with either a B.C. Grade 12 Dogwood Diploma or a BCAGD, but has taken ABE courses to upgrade skills or fulfill prerequisites, then the basis of admission may be one of the less common categories, such as mature student, special admission, out of province, etc. In this situation, it is important to stress that universities prefer, and routinely advise, that such students continue in a college or university college transfer program and apply for admission once they become eligible to be considered under the "B.C. College Transfer" basis of admission.*

**In summary, it is important that ABE students, their instructors, and advisors recognize fully the range of options open to them. In particular, students who wish to continue to degree programs at universities need to understand the concept of "basis of admission" and how admissibility is determined at each university in B.C.**

### ▶ **General Education Diploma (GED)**

Some students take a battery of tests to achieve a GED, which is considered by some employers to be a grade 12 equivalent. Students should be advised that some universities may accept a GED but only under exceptional circumstances and as part of a comprehensive application package for students applying under special admission categories, such as a mature student. UVic and UNBC mention the GED in their calendars, stating that applicants who have completed the GED will be considered for admission on an individual basis. Applicants must have a minimum score of 58.5% on the GED. Neither UBC nor SFU recognize the GED.

This publication is our fifth in the *Advisor* newsletter series.

Previous editions are available for your review on the BCCAT website:

**Beyond Course-to-Course: New Information in Program Transfer** (May 2003)

<http://www.bccat.bc.ca/pubs/advisor03-05.pdf>

**New Routes to Transfer** (November 2001)

<http://www.bccat.bc.ca/pubs/advisor01-11.pdf>

**Can I Transfer FROM a University?** (January 2001)

<http://www.bccat.bc.ca/pubs/advisor01-01.pdf>

**New Associate Degree Requirements** (June 2000)

<http://www.bccat.bc.ca/pubs/advisor00-06.pdf>

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