

Transfer in BC

A brief history of
BC's post-secondary
transfer system



How it began...

University of British Columbia (UBC), founded in 1915, along with its satellite campus (Victoria College, in 1920) are the only options in BC for students wanting to pursue advanced academic study leading to a degree and professional qualifications.



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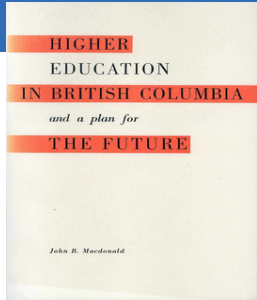
Public Schools Act: Two-Year Colleges

1958 – *Public Schools Act* amended allowing school boards to establish two-year colleges:

- Colleges must be affiliated with UBC, thus assuring acceptance by UBC of credits taken from colleges.
- Students would be able to transfer to third year of a university degree.
- No school board acted upon this amendment, but Kelowna School Board did conduct a feasibility study on formation of a college in the Okanagan.

1960 – BC Vocational School opens in Burnaby under direct management of the provincial government. The Nanaimo Vocational School had been providing vocational education since 1936.

Macdonald Report Published



REPORT: Higher Education in British Columbia and a Plan for the Future

62

1962 - Release of the report *Higher Education in British Columbia and a Plan for the Future* by John B. Macdonald, President of UBC.

Recommendations included:

- Creation of two-year colleges which offer a range of programs, including academic programs at the 1st and 2nd year level and technical programs.
- Colleges to be autonomous and self-governing and not part of a unified provincial system.
- Colleges to be under school board control, supported in part by local taxation and designed to meet local needs.
- Creation of two four-year colleges in Victoria and the Lower Mainland.

63

1963 - Public Schools Act amended yet again allowing establishment of autonomous colleges under school board control.

- *Colleges to be formed following local plebiscites and referenda.* Institutions to offer two years of Arts and Science programming as part of their program base.
- *Students to be able to transfer credit to universities.*
- *Beginning of need for enhanced cooperation and coordination among autonomous institutions to ensure a shared understanding of quality standards for degree-level programming.*

1963 - Academic Board of Higher Education of BC

created through amendments to the Universities Act, following recommendation from Macdonald report.



- Key roles were advising on development of new colleges and ensuring colleges were adhering to consistent academic standards.
- Board assumed a leadership role in formalizing the transfer process.
- Membership included university representatives but no college representatives.
- Board developed a facilitative and collaborative rather than an authoritative relationship with colleges.

64



BC Institute of Technology (BCIT)

1964 - First technology students enrol at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) created at same Burnaby site as the BC Vocational School.

65



Vancouver City College (VCC)

1965 - Vancouver City College (VCC) becomes first autonomous community college in BC, formed by bringing together Vancouver Vocational Institute (1949) and Vancouver School of Art (1925).



Simon Fraser University (SFU)

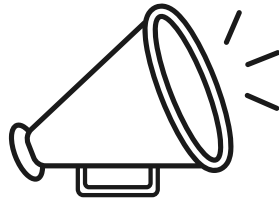
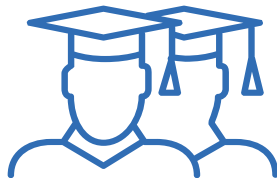
1965 - Simon Fraser University (SFU) opens as a full university in Burnaby rather than as a four-year college, as was recommended in the Macdonald report.



1965-75

Nine more community colleges formed across BC based on local support through plebiscites:

Selkirk College
Okanagan College
Capilano College
College of New Caledonia
Malaspina College
Douglas College
Cariboo College
Camosun College
Fraser Valley College



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The Students Speak!

In November '68, 180 students occupy the Administration Offices at SFU to protest lack of transfer opportunities for Vancouver City College students who had enrolled in 1st and 2nd year university transfer courses. The protestors were removed by the RCMP after 54 hours.

See the Knowledge Network's documentary *The Graduates: A History of Higher Education in BC*

Four New Community Colleges

Northern Lights
Northwest
East Kootenay
North Island

1975 - Four new community colleges established by government in areas of the province not yet served by colleges.



1966:

- First transfer students from VCC and Selkirk accepted at university through informal agreements.
- First research studies initiated under auspices of the Academic Board on transfer student performance.

Articulation Committees

In December '68, at a conference sponsored by the Academic Board, decision made to develop the first standing committees (which became Articulation Committees) to deal with transfer problems in specific disciplines:

- There was an understanding that if educators did not solve perceived problems on their own, government may intervene.
- Subsequently, each university published its own Transfer Guide which listed equivalent college and university courses and could be used by students in planning their education.

1971 - Provincial government melds regional community colleges with provincial vocational institutes.

Post-Secondary Articulation Coordinating Committee

1974 - The Post-Secondary Articulation Coordinating Committee is formed:

- Role of overseeing transfer and articulation in BC.
- Membership included senior academic officer from each public college and university and registrar from each university.
- Academic Board is dissolved by government.



Principles & Guidelines for Transfer

1976 - Post-Secondary Articulation Coordinating Committee develops first set of *Principles and Guidelines for Transfer*. Adopted by all college councils and university senates.

Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act Passed



Creation of Institutes

1978 - Creation by Act of five provincial institutes (besides BCIT, which had existed previously).

- Justice Institute of BC
- Open Learning Institute
- Emily Carr College of Art
- Pacific Vocational Institute
- Pacific Marine Training Institute



Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT)

1983 - Nicola Valley Institute of Technology created in Merritt to address low participation and success rates of First Nations students in other institutions.

1983-89

The Post-Secondary Articulation Coordinating Committee continues to meet to oversee articulation and transfer and the work of an expanding number of Articulation Committees.

77

1977 - Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act passed:

- Perceived by institutions as an attempt by government to play more of a central coordinating role in development of a college system.
- Government assumed responsibility for 100% of both capital and operating costs at colleges.

1977 - Creation by Act of the Academic Council:

- One of three intermediary councils created to coordinate activities across colleges and institutes.
- Academic Council given responsibility for articulation and transfer.
- Post-Secondary Articulation Coordinating Committee continued its work as an agent of the Academic Council.



Kwantlen College

1981 - Kwantlen College formed as a separate institution from Douglas College.

78

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1983 - Academic Council and two other intermediary councils abolished through College and Institute Amendment Act:

Councils abolished because of widespread criticism about their centralizing role at the expense of institutional autonomy, their confusion in mandate, and their lack of coordination among each other.

83

86

BCIT+



The Pacific Vocational Institute merges with BCIT.

87

1987 - University academic vice presidents form transfer credit subcommittee to develop a set of policies and procedures which had to be met by private colleges before their courses could be considered transferable to universities.

1988 - The **Open Learning Agency** is formed through legislation by combining the Open Learning Institute and the Knowledge Network. The new agency includes the Open University and Open College and provides a credit bank function for students.



1989 BCCAT established

BC Council on Admissions created as a result of a recommendation in the Access for All report:

- Created to formalize and to provide more consistency and staff resources to the function of coordinating transfer in an increasingly differentiated system.
- A formal agency but with no legislative authority.
- Continued to coordinate Articulation Committees and transfer agreements among autonomous institutions using a facilitative approach.
- Funded by provincial government. Council membership made up of post-secondary institutional representatives but no government representatives.

1990 BCCAT publishes first single, annual *BC Transfer Guide*, thus replacing individual university Transfer Guides.



University College of the Fraser Valley

1991 - Fraser Valley College becomes a university college.



Institute of Indigenous Government

1991 - The Institute of Indigenous Government is established in Vancouver.

88

"Access for All" Report Released

1988 The Provincial Access Committee releases report entitled "Access to Advanced Education and Job Training in British Columbia" (commonly referred to as the "Access for All" report).

89

BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL ON
ADMISSIONS & TRANSFER

SUPPORTING BC'S
EDUCATION SYSTEM

University Colleges

Malaspina-Cariboo-Okanagan

1989 Three colleges become university colleges to expand degree opportunities outside the Lower Mainland and Victoria. Degrees are developed and offered under auspices of traditional BC universities.

University colleges become sending and receiving institutions.



University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC)

1990 - The provincial government announces the establishment of the University of Northern British Columbia in Prince George.

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Two Private Institutions Join the BC Transfer System

1991 Columbia College and Coquitlam College become the first private institutions to join formally the BC Transfer System and are listed in the BC Transfer Guide.

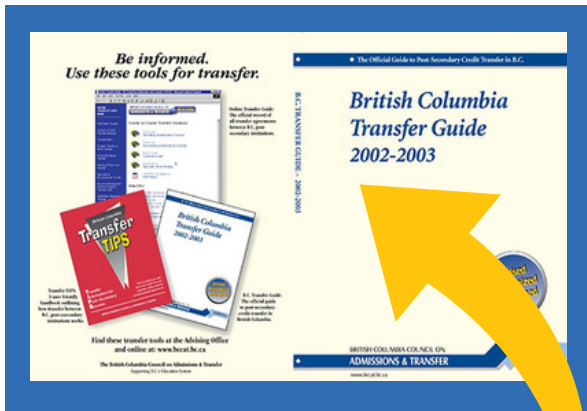
Both Columbia and Coquitlam Colleges had developed articulation agreements with BC universities for many years prior to being included in the Transfer Guide.

1992

BCCAT carries out minor revisions to the Principles & Guidelines for Transfer.

Associate Degrees

1992 BCCAT, in consultation with institutions, develops curriculum requirements for provincially recognized two-year academic credentials – the Associate of Arts degree and the Associate of Science degree.



1995

BCCAT develops and posts the first searchable, web-based BC Transfer Guide.

+ Provincial Developments

- **University colleges and two institutions** (BCIT and Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design) **given degree granting authority.**
- **The College and Institute Act** amended to create Education Councils which were given the authority, jointly with College Boards, to develop and implement policies pertaining to the granting of transfer credit.



Research

1996 – Implementation by BCCAT of a comprehensive research program to measure student mobility and transfer system effectiveness.

Transfer Innovations

1999 Initiation of **Transfer Innovation Projects** with Articulation Committees to improve transfer, recommend innovative approaches to transfer, and provide better information on transfer options.

92



Trinity Western University

1992 - Trinity Western University becomes part of the BC transfer system as a private receiving institution and is listed in the BC Transfer Guide.

93



Yukon College

1993 - Yukon College becomes part of the BC transfer system and is listed in the BC Transfer Guide.

94



Langara College

1994 - Langara College formed as a separate institution from Vancouver Community College.

95



Kwantlen University College
Royal Roads University
Technical University of BC

- Kwantlen College becomes a university college.
- Technical University of BC announced.
- Royal Roads University established.

96

Block Transfer in Spotlight



1996 "Charting A New Course" released by Ministry of Education, Skills and Training as a strategic plan for the college, university college, institute, and agency system.

Plan includes recommendation that course-by-course assessment for transfer be replaced by block transfer.

97

1997 BCCAT leads system-wide examination of transfer policy and models to determine whether alternative approaches, such as block transfer, could replace or supplement course- to-course transfer.

Resulted in agreement that course-to-course transfer is a viable system but that improvements can be made by actively exploring alternative forms of transfer.

99

Associate Degrees: Revisions

2000-01 Curriculum requirements for associate degrees are revised and institutions are encouraged to establish guaranteed transfer credit for all courses completed within an associate degree. *By 2001, all traditional universities and all university colleges had formally approved such a guarantee.*

2001 - Corpus Christi College becomes the fourth private institution in the transfer system and is listed in the BC Transfer Guide.

+ Degree-Granting Institutions



2003 Subsequent to the passage of the Degree Authorization Act, colleges are given authority to grant applied baccalaureate degrees and university colleges are given authority to grant applied Master's degrees.



2005 BCCAT launches BCTransferGuide.ca

BCCAT releases improved version of web-based Transfer Credit Evaluation System and launches BCTransferGuide.ca as a stand-alone website.

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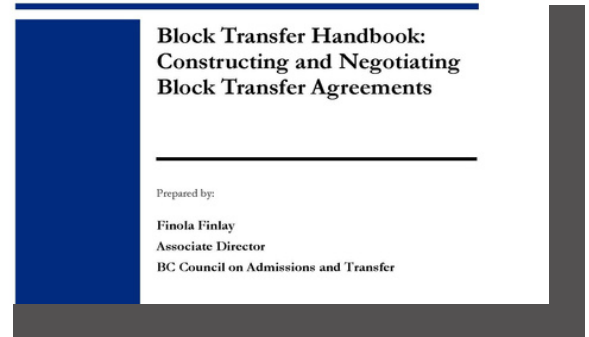
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2000 Release by BCCAT of *Block Transfer Handbook* with revised principles and guidelines for block transfer.



Transfer Credit Evaluation System (TCES) Launched

2001 Development of a web-based Transfer Credit Evaluation System to further improve the speed and efficiency of administrative processes.

BCCAT Expands Focus on Admissions



2003 BCCAT expands its role in the area of admissions by forming an Admissions Committee and undertaking a number of projects to help better understand student mobility, capacity, and demand.



Education Planner

2004 - BCCAT undertakes management of the former Opening Doors website. The enhanced site, Education Planner, offers students access to admissions information on over 1,500 undergraduate programs at 26 public post-secondary institutions..



Student Transitions Project

2005 The Student Transitions Project (STP) is formed as a partnership between the Ministries of Education and Advanced Education and public post-secondary institutions to link student data across education systems to answer questions on student mobility. BCCAT joined the STP in late 2005 due to the intersection between BCCAT's work in admissions and the work of the STP.

2005 BC Transfer System Developments - Public & Private



- **Thompson Rivers University** is formed through the amalgamation of the University College of the Cariboo and BC Open University. Okanagan
- University College is split to become **UBC Okanagan** and **Okanagan College**.

Three *private institutions* are approved to negotiate transfer agreements for specific degree programs and have those agreements listed in the BC Transfer Guide:

- **University Canada West**
- **Sprott-Shaw Community College**
- **Lansbridge University**

BCTS Membership Developments

2006–2007 Fairleigh Dickinson University and Quest University are each granted ministerial consent (following DQAB review) to offer specific degrees in BC and are subsequently approved to negotiate transfer agreements within the BC Transfer System.

2006 Vancouver Central College (later Alexander College) is granted ministerial consent (following DQAB review) to offer an Associate Degree and is subsequently approved to negotiate transfer agreements within the BC Transfer System.

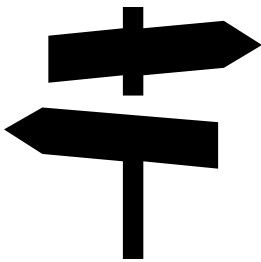
2007 Lansbridge University has its degree-granting consent removed by the Ministry of Advanced Education and is subsequently removed by BCCAT from the BC Transfer System.

2007–2008 The University of Phoenix is granted ministerial consent (following DQAB review) to offer specific degrees in BC and is subsequently approved to negotiate transfer agreements within the BC Transfer System. (The University is removed from the Transfer Guide in 2008 after it announces its intention to move out of BC.)

2008:

- BCCAT releases *Best Practice Guide: A Resource for Receiving Institutions*.
- BCCAT also releases the policy document *Recording Block Transfers with PCTIA–Accredited Institutions*. (This policy allows private institutions that are non-degree granting institutions to be included in the block transfer section of the BC Transfer Guide.)

Inter-Provincial Transfer



2008–2009:

Council approves a policy in December 2008 which allows Alberta post-secondary institutions to enter the BC Transfer System based on strong evidence of existing transfer activity and student traffic. The Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT) approves a similar policy allowing BC post-secondary institutions into the Alberta Transfer System in May 2009.

Athabasca University is admitted by Council to the BC Transfer System under the new policy, making it the second out-of-province institution in the system.

06

NVIT+



2007 - The Institute of Indigenous Government is merged with the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology.

07



*With this move, there are 11 universities, 11 colleges, and 3 institutes in the BC public post-secondary system.

New Teaching Universities

08

2008 The *University Act* is amended to allow five institutions to be covered under the Act as “special purpose, teaching universities,” later to be called “teaching-intensive universities. The new universities include:

- **Kwantlen Polytechnic University**
(formerly Kwantlen University College)
- **Vancouver Island University**
(formerly Malaspina University-College)
- **University of the Fraser Valley**
(formerly University College of the Fraser Valley)
- **Capilano University**
(formerly Capilano College)
- **Emily Carr University of Art and Design**
(formerly Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design)

09

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2010



The **College of the Rockies** is approved to offer its first degree. With this approval, 22 out of 25 public post-secondary institutions in BC are offering degrees.

BCCAT undertakes the first comprehensive rewrite of the *Principles and Guidelines for Transfer* since 1976.



Multi-Directional Transfer

2012-2013 BCCAT *Enabling of the BC Transfer System* initiative results in all member institutions becoming both senders and receivers of articulation requests. All guidebooks and policies are re-written to reflect this major shift in policy and practice.

BCCAT Celebrates 25 Years!

2014 BCCAT celebrates its 25th anniversary. To commemorate, the Council launches the BCCAT Transfer Awards program, acknowledging the exemplary contributions of individuals to supporting and advancing transfer and articulation in BC.



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Associate Degree Review

2012-2014 BCCAT oversees provincial review of the associate degree and changes to curriculum requirements.



Provincial MOU

2014 BCCAT and parallel Councils in Alberta, Ontario and New Brunswick sign memorandum of understanding to facilitate inter-and intra-provincial credit transfer in Canada.



ARUCC/PCCAT Transcript & Transfer Guide

2015 The ARUCC/PCCAT *Transcript and Transfer Guide* is launched, designed to serve as a national, online resource for Canadian registrars, transfer practitioners, and post-secondary policy developers.



BCTransferGuide.ca and EducationPlanner.ca see an approximate average of 150,000 unique visits (combined) per month.



2017



24%

BCTransferGuide.ca surpasses 200,000 course agreements. The website also sees a dramatic rise in usership, with 1.8 million unique visits (24% more than the previous year).

Provincial MOU Expanded

BC * Alberta * Saskatchewan *
Manitoba * Ontario * New Brunswick
Nova Scotia

2017 Seven provincial credit transfer councils expand the 2014 MOU, signing a new agreement to enhance student mobility across Canada. BCCAT's membership policies (regarding private and out-of-province institutions) are revised and consolidated into one main policy document. (BCCAT Policy 3a: Membership in the BC Transfer System.)

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EducationPlannerBC

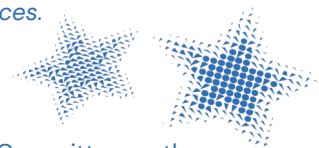
2016 The ministry responsible for advanced education asks BCCAT to work with BCcampus and post-secondary institutional partners to provide oversight for the integration of BC's online education planning and application services and the further development of a common application service for BC's public post-secondary system.

2017-2019 *ApplyBC* and *Transcripts BC* are integrated with *Education Planner* to form a new, consolidated and centralized education planning and application website. **EducationPlannerBC (EPBC)** is formalized as the organization overseeing the EPBC website and services.

BCcupms Celebrates 50th Anniversary



2017 BC Committee on the Undergraduate Program in Mathematics & Statistics, BC's longest-running articulation committee, celebrates its 50th anniversary.



Transfer Credit System (TCS)

2018 - The Transfer Credit Evaluation System is upgraded; the new Transfer Credit System (TCS) leverages newer and smarter technologies, improving the integrity of the transfer database and increasing the efficiency of transfer credit processes.

2019: BCCAT completes pilot project with UBC focused on importing their internal tables into the [Transfer Credit System \(TCS\)](#). This project opens the way for all BC Transfer System member institutions to import their historical records of decisions, allowing members to leverage the articulation activities of each other.

BCCAT begins a major review of the [Transfer Innovations](#) project funding program, the first since its launch in 1999.

[BCTransferGuide.ca](#) undergoes an external review, informing plans for future updates and enhancements.

BCTransferGuide.ca Expansion Continues

2020: Expansion of [BCTransferGuide.ca](#) continues as additional institutions agree to having their external transfer equivalencies incorporated into the BC Transfer Guide database. As a result, students near and far are able to explore transfer agreements between BC institutions and institutions around the world.



2021-22 BCCAT launches a bigger, better BCTransferGuide.ca, with improved accessibility, adaptivity, and responsiveness to improve user experience. The site includes pan-Canadian and international transfer agreements, and searchable Adult Basic Education and English as an Additional Language (EAL) transfer guides.

- By June 2022, **70,000** external transfer equivalencies had been added to the BC Transfer Guide database.

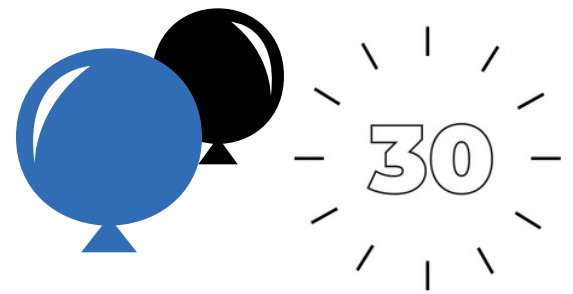
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2019 - BCCAT celebrates 30 years since its creation as the coordinating and facilitating agency overseeing the BC Transfer System.
(Available at youtube.com/bccat_org.)



2020 COVID STRIKES

2020 The COVID-19 pandemic strikes, and BC post-secondary institutions face a variety of related challenges, regarding online delivery, credit transfer agreement continuity, alternative grading, and more.

BCCAT collaborates with BCcampus and institutions and system partners to share resources and identify best practices. BCCAT provides relevant system news updates on its website as developments unfold.

2020 BCCAT hosts the first-ever online Joint Annual Meeting (JAM). The event is very well-attended with over 370 registrants, and the theme focuses on "Transfer & Articulation in a Time of Pandemic".

See BCCAT's YouTube Channel for a look at JAM session and highlight videos.

BCcupms Holds 100th Meeting



May 2022:
BCcupms (the Mathematics & Statistics Articulation Committee) holds its 100th meeting, (1967–2022).

BCCAT Technologies - Enhancements & Developments

2023 - BCCAT continues to develop and enhance Transfer Credit System (TCS) technologies, including creating a “transfer widget” for post-secondary institutions to use on their own websites, and a new reciprocity feature for course equivalencies on the BC Transfer Guide.

Pathways Tool Under Construction

2023 - BCCAT embarks on the development of a proof of concept transfer pathways building tool to connect course equivalency data in the Transfer Credit System (TCS) with program-level requirement information.



New Member Institution

2024 Western Community College, a private college, becomes a member of the BC Transfer System.

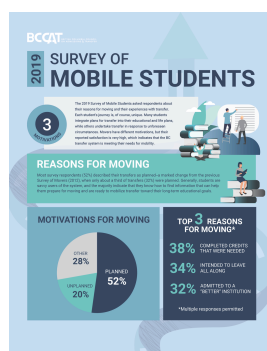
2024 The **Student Transitions Project** releases an infographic looking at 20 years of data gathered, and key findings over the years.

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2023 - BCCAT works with a number of institutions to create the “Transfer To” video series introducing transfer pathways available across BC’s transfer network. Available at youtube.com/@bccat_org



Survey of Mobile Students



2023 - BCCAT publishes findings from a survey of mobile students. In 2019, BCCAT collaborated with BC Stats to conduct a survey of transfer students (“movers”) examining their decisions, motivations, and experiences within the BC transfer environment.

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BCCAT Celebrates 35 Years!

2024 - BCCAT celebrates 35 years of working and growing with BC’s transfer ecosystem.

At JAM 2024, the event celebrates “Growing Together” as a transfer ecosystem, marking BCCAT’s 35th anniversary, 15 years of JAM, and 10 years of BCCAT’s Transfer Awards.

35th

BCCAT WEBSITE - BCCAT.CA

- **Council** bccat.ca/about/council
- **Committees** bccat.ca/about/committees
- **Research** bccat.ca/research
- **Articulation** bccat.ca/articulation
- **Technology** bccat.ca/technology
- **Publications** bccat.ca/publications
- **History** bccat.ca/system/history
- **2024 Annual Review**
bccat.ca/publication/annualreview2024/



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