
STATEMENT

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Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training

Minister's statement on safe return to campus this fall

VICTORIA – Anne Kang, Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training, has issued the following statement regarding post-secondary education in fall 2021:

“Today, Dr. Bonnie Henry, provincial health officer, advised the presidents of all public colleges and universities to prepare for a full return to on-campus education this September.

“This year has been incredibly hard, and I’ve heard from many students, faculty and staff who are eager to return to campus when it is safe. That’s why I’m encouraged by Dr. Henry’s advice that a return to in-person instruction can be done safely this fall for all students, staff and faculty. In fact, it’s important to do so for people’s well-being.

“I also know some people will be feeling nervous. Your safety is our top priority. At every step, we’re going to be working with Dr. Henry and all our partners to make sure the right measures are in place to keep people safe.

“This is just the beginning of a process. Last year, my ministry worked closely with health and safety experts, student groups, labour, Indigenous partners and post-secondary institutions to develop the Go Forward Guidelines that enabled the current hybrid model of post-secondary education: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/post-secondary-education/institution-resources-administration/aest_postsecgoforwardguidelines.pdf

“In the coming weeks, we will use that same successful process, working with Dr. Henry’s office, the Steering Committee for the post-secondary COVID-19 Go-Forward Guidelines and experts from across the post-secondary sector to plan for a safe return to in-person learning this fall.

“The guidelines will provide high-level guidance to post-secondary institutions for a safe resumption of on-campus learning. Institutions will then work with their local medical health officer and WorkSafeBC to develop more detailed safety plans for each institution.

“It has been a challenging year for post-secondary students, faculty and staff. I would like to acknowledge the significant efforts public colleges and universities made to continue meeting the needs of students during the pandemic, while successfully preventing the spread of COVID-19 on B.C. campuses.

“While we update the guidelines to ensure on-campus safety, I encourage students and families to start planning for in-person instruction on a campus of their choice in September.”

Contact:

Sean Leslie
Communications Director
Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and
Training
Sean.leslie@gov.bc.ca
250 893-4403

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