

Admissions

VST admits qualified students to its programs of study regardless of age, colour, gender, sexual orientation or preference, national or ethnic origin, or disability. VST does not discriminate on the basis of any of these in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, bursaries or other programs administered by the School.

For information on our programs, please visit page 11. Downloadable Applications Forms (in pdf format) can currently be accessed at the School's website at www.vst.edu. You can also apply directly via our online application also found on the website. Paper application forms for the Diploma and Degree programs may be obtained from the Admissions Coordinator by email at possibilities@vst.edu, by phone at 604-822-0824 or 1-866-822-9031 extension 2.

Application Dates:

Applications for admission in September should be received no later than **June 30th**.

Applicants wanting to have their application considered for a VST Scholarship must apply no later than **March 15th** (see page 55 for Scholarship details).

Applicants expecting to need VST student housing should apply no later than **March 15th** in order to register early for student housing.

Applicants intending to begin studies in January must apply no later than **October 15th**.

Application Procedures and Requirements

Diplomas and Basic Degree Programs (M.Div./M.A.T.S.)

Academic expectations—Applicants for Diploma and Basic Degree programs should have a general understanding of persons, society, culture and religion, as well as a reasonable ability to read philosophical and theological writing with comprehension. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to write in clear and correct English. If a student encounters difficulties in any of these areas, the student should anticipate taking longer to complete the program.

Bachelor's Degree—Applicants to diploma or degree programs should normally hold a Bachelor's degree or the equivalent from a college or university holding membership in the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada or accredited by a regional association in the United States, or a degree that, in the judgment of the Admissions Committee, is of equivalent standing. Under special circumstances, some mature students may be admitted without a first degree (see below).

To apply to our diploma and basic degree programs, please submit a completed Application for Admission to the Admissions Coordinator and include the following:

- A Personal Statement (1,000 words)
- Theological Reflection (1,500 words)
- Three letters of reference indicating background, character, personal maturity, motivation, health, education and capability for study at the appropriate level
- Official academic transcripts
- \$75.00 application fee.

Specific Requirements for Diploma and Basic Degree Programs

Diploma in Denominational Studies: Special Student Status

Students requiring denominational studies at the request of their denomination may complete the Diploma as "Special Students" and do not have to go through the regular admissions procedure at VST. Special Students in this case are those who have been required by their denominations to do a program in denominational studies and whose academic background and fitness for ministry have been assessed by the denominational authorities. A student must complete the regular admission process if he or she is not required to complete the Diploma by the denomination. Contact the Registrar at 604-822-9563 or registrar@vst.edu for details and a Special Student application form.

Master of Divinity Degree

Candidates must have a clergy person from their denomination/faith tradition as one of the three references when applying.

Native Ministries M.Div. by Extension Program

The choice of suitable candidates for this program is made by the local community and the appropriate denominational authorities. The community or congregation covenants to support and guide the candidate. The denominational authorities undertake sponsorship of the candidate and financial responsibility for the training. Requirements for admission include a Bachelor's degree or two years of undergraduate study.

Mature students may be admitted with one year of undergraduate studies. Upon completion of the M.Div. Foundational Courses, such students may apply for admission to the M.Div. program.

To request an assessment of academic eligibility, please contact the Native Ministries Program Office directly. In certain cases, courses taken in other programs may be recognized as being the equivalent of credit courses within the post-secondary system of the Province of British Columbia.



Applicants must provide clear evidence of sponsorship by the appropriate ecclesiastical body. This body must demonstrate that the student is preparing for ministry with First Nations people or is already exercising such ministry. This could take the form of a First Nations congregation, a mixed or integrated congregation or an urban-based ministry. Applications must be accompanied by a signed covenant from the student's ecclesiastical authority. This covenant indicates that the denomination is prepared to provide the student with the necessary support to pursue the degree program.

Applications for the Native Ministries Master of Divinity by Extension degree program and for the Native Ministries Consortium Summer School are available from the Native Ministries Program Office. Applications to this program are handled directly by the Native Ministries Program Office. For more information, see the Native Ministries Information Handbook, the VST website at www.vst.edu or contact the Native Ministries Program Office directly at 604-822-9480 or at nmp@vst.edu.

Master of Theology

The following are required for admission to the Master of Theology program:

- A Masters level degree in theological study (M.Div., M.A.T.S., etc)
- Normally, reading knowledge of at least one modern language appropriate to the proposed field of study in addition to English
- Competency in biblical language or languages (for biblical work)
- A sufficient mastery of any other ancient or modern language required for the thesis topic.

To apply to the Master of Theology program, please submit a completed Application for Admission to the Admissions Coordinator and include the following:

- An Academic Paper (5,000 – 7,500 words)
- Statement proposing area of study and interest (250 words)
- Three letters of reference from persons familiar with academic ability
- Official academic transcripts
- \$75 application fee

Doctor of Philosophy (in conjunction with the University of Wales Lampeter)

As a research degree, the PhD requires for admission a thorough background in theological study, research, and method, an in-depth knowledge of one area of theological study, and all requisite languages. Normally, this background is obtained by the student holding two prior degrees in theology (an M.Div. and a Th.M., for example). A student without the necessary background will be admitted to the Masters of Theology (Th.M.) program at VST and upon successful completion of that program, may apply to the PhD program.

The following is required for admission to the Doctor of Philosophy program:

- Two Masters level degrees in theological study (M.Div., M.A.T.S., Th.M., etc)
- Evidence of ability to do advanced level research and writing (a thesis or major research paper as a part of one of the Masters degrees)
- Normally, reading knowledge of at least one modern language appropriate to the proposed field of study in addition to English; competency in biblical languages (for biblical work)
- Academic references attesting to superior ability in theological study and research
- An interview with the VST Director of Doctoral Programs and consultation with VST Advanced Degree faculty appropriate to the proposed field of study
- \$75 application fee

Application dates for the PhD program differ from our other programs. For more information on the program please contact the Admissions Coordinator at possibilities@vst.edu or 604-822-0824 or 1-866-822-9031 extension 2. For information about the Theology and Religious Studies Department at the University of Wales Lampeter, consult www.lamp.ac.uk/trs/.

Additional Application Information

Applicants without a Degree

VST will consider applications from applicants without a baccalaureate degree only if it is sufficiently demonstrated that the applicant is fully capable of graduate level work. Applicants for admission in this category must have completed the equivalent of at least two years of study in a university arts program before being admitted to the School. In some instances, the

Admissions Committee permits students to register if they have one year of arts degree credits. However, in such cases, the student must make up a second year of university credits through university courses before beginning the final year of the degree program. Typically, applicants in this category under the age of 35 will not be considered, and are encouraged to complete their baccalaureate degree before applying to VST.

Students applying to the M.Div. degree program without a first degree (B.A. or equivalent) must already be accepted as candidates for ministry in their respective denominations. Applicants may be granted permission to register in up to three courses/term prior to full admissions if they can demonstrate that they are well into the process of becoming full candidates and have completed all or most of their VST application file.

English as a Foreign Language

Applicants whose first language is not English must provide evidence that they can read, write and speak in English at a graduate level. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) must be completed and the results should be provided with the student's Application for Admission form. The minimum TOEFL score required for admission to VST is 80 for Diplomas, M.Div. and M.A.T.S. degrees, and 90 for Th.M. and Ph.D with the following breakdown:

Basic Degrees:	minimum composite total 80
Reading:	minimum 22
Listening:	minimum 20
Speaking:	minimum 18
Writing:	minimum 20

Advanced Degrees:	minimum composite total 90
Reading:	minimum 24
Listening:	minimum 22
Speaking:	minimum 20
Writing:	minimum 24

An applicant with the minimum composite score but performing below the minimum in any of the subject areas may be admitted, but required to do additional work in the area of deficiency, or given probationary admission until the completion of a successful term of study.

Internet-based TOEFL testing can be done at most universities.

Assessment of Transfer Credit

Decisions about the specific requirements for transfer students to complete a degree program at VST will be made in consultation with the student and the Registrar, ideally before entry. Transfer students applying for advanced standing through work completed elsewhere must have completed that work no more than seven years prior to admission to VST. No more than one-third of the credit hours required for a VST degree may be transferred into a student's program.

Admissions Categories

Where an applicant does not meet all the requirements for unconditional admission to one of VST's degree programs, the following Admissions categories may apply:

Conditional Admission: Under special circumstances, applicants may be admitted while certain official documents are still outstanding. The outstanding documents must be sent by the end of the student's first term of study. Failure to submit the outstanding documents will cause the conditional admission to be revoked. Conditional admission will be changed to unconditional admission once the outstanding documents have been received and evaluated as satisfactory.

Probationary Admission: Under exceptional circumstances, applicants may be granted probationary admission despite an academic record below normal entrance expectations. Students so admitted will be permitted to register for a maximum of 9 credits in their first term and may be required to take a graduate student writing workshop at their own expense and without academic credit or financial assistance from VST.

Probationary status will be removed on the condition that an 'Approved' grade is received in the student's first 9 credits and they complete and pass any writing programs required of them. If any courses are 'Not Approved' in the first term, the student may be required to withdraw from studies at VST or continue under Academic Probation for another term (see Supplementary Calendar/Student Handbook for more information on Academic Probation).

It is the policy of the School not to grant probationary admission to students coming from outside Canada.

Student Categories

Degree/Diploma Student—a student who is enrolled as a candidate for a degree or diploma, full time or part time.

Occasional Student—a student who is given permission to enroll in specific courses without the intention of pursuing a diploma or degree program but who would be eligible to do so. A student may maintain Occasional Student status for a total of four academic years, or 21 credit hours of course work, whichever comes first. After four years of study, the student may apply for transfer into one of VST's degree programs. The degree must then be completed within an additional three years of study.

Special Student—a student for whom a custom-designed program is offered to meet specific needs or who is registered in a degree program in another institution.

Permission to Register—In certain cases, a student may be granted permission to register for degree credit prior to being admitted into a degree program at VST. A student who is granted permission to register may take up to 9 credit hours per term, the exact number of credit hours being determined by the Registrar in consultation with the Admissions Committee and/or the Dean's Advisory Council. Permission to register will be reviewed at least annually to determine whether the student may (a) continue in this category, (b) be required to complete the admission requirements for a diploma or degree program or (c) be denied further enrollment.

Auditing Student—an auditor is a student who participates in a course at VST but does not complete assignments nor receive degree credit for the course. No academic record will be kept for an auditing student. Permission to audit a class must be obtained through the Registrar's office, and at times, permission must be granted from the instructor of the class.

Tuition and Student Fees

Students admitted to the School carry responsibility for the full payment of tuition, student and residence fees. Tuition for degree programs (with the exception of the Native Ministries M.Div by Extension and the Ph.D. programs) is charged by credit hour. International students pay an additional 60% levy on tuition fees. Seniors (65 or older) and immediate family of VST staff and faculty pay 50% of tuition fees.

In addition to regular tuition fees, all students, full and part time, are responsible for the following:

- VST Student Association (VSTSA) fees
- VST Technology Fee
- UBC AMS (Alma Mater Society) student fees
- Health & Dental Plan
- U-Pass Bus Pass (www.upass.ubc.ca)

The UBC AMS fees allow students to access a variety of services available on the UBC campus, including UBC libraries, recreation and sports facilities. During the first three weeks of their academic year, those students with equivalent health and dental coverage through a private plan can opt-out of the Health and Dental Plan. All students must pay for the U-Pass, except those students who meet specific criteria as outlined by the AMS.

Tuition fees are set annually by VST's Board of Governors and published with the deadlines for fee payment each spring in the Supplementary Calendar, as well as appearing on VST's website at www.vst.edu. Contact the Admissions Coordinator possibilities@vst.edu or at 604-822-0824 or 1-866-822-9031 extension 2 for more details.

Fee Refunds

Withdrawal from some portion of the program may result in the reassessment of fees and a partial refund. Refund of fees is calculated for the day the Registrar's Office receives in writing from the student notification of his or her desire to withdraw from their course or program. Withdrawal forms are available from the Registrar's Office.

Medical Insurance

If you are resident at the School, you are required to have appropriate hospital and medical insurance coverage. If you are a Canadian student from another province, you should find out from your provincial medical plans about continuing your coverage while you study in BC. Premium payments for provincial medical plans (where required) are your responsibility.



Admissions Appeal Process

Any applicant who has applied for admission to VST and has been turned down by the Admissions Committee has the right to appeal the decision. For more information on the process contact the Admissions Coordinator at possibilities@vst.edu or 604-822-0824 or 1-866-822-9031 extension 2.

For more information on admissions procedures for any degree program, fees, dates and policies please see the Supplementary Calendar, visit the website or contact the Admissions Coordinator by email at possibilities@vst.edu or by phone at 604-822-0824 or 1-866-822-9031 extension 2.