

Vitesse Biotechnology program (VBP) Update

Date: 9/4/02

To: VBP mailing list

Cc:

From: Taras Hollyer, Program Manager, Biotechnology and Life Sciences

RE: VBP update

Priority: High

Dear potential VBP applicants:

As you may well know, Vitesse is in the final stages of putting together the Vitesse Biotechnology Program for Foreign Trained Professionals (VBP). I am pleased to report that much progress has been made in preparing the VBP for its anticipated start in November 2002. The following memo is issued to all of you on the mailing list to keep you up to speed on what's happening.

1. VBP launch and call for applications:

The expected date for the launch of the VBP will be November 2002, at which time those accepted into the VBP begin their language training sessions prior to meeting with their sponsor company to determine their courses to be taken in the January 2003 academic semester.

A call for applications is to be issued near the end of September and will last for two weeks, whereupon all applicant data will be compiled. The application process is expected to be quite competitive, and all applicants will be required to undergo language testing to determine the level of English language proficiency. The maximum application fee is \$361 and includes the following:

1. Cost of English language test (CAEL) - \$86
2. Cost of foreign transcript assessment by World Education Services (WES) \$200.
3. Vitesse administration fee \$75.

The fee is higher than other Vitesse programs due to items 1 and 2 above. The language test and transcript assessment are included as part of the application process in order to ensure that all applicants are minimally competent in English and are given credit for their education gained abroad - two issues that commonly come up as barriers to getting a job. **Should you already have current CAEL test marks or a course-by-course evaluation of your transcript by WES, you will not need to pay for that portion of the application fee.**

The other benefit is that applicants who do not find a space in the VBP can use the CAEL and WES results for applying to jobs as CAEL is accepted across Canada and abroad and WES assessments are accepted all over the world, so even if you don't get in, you will have two documents that will clear up any questions a potential employer might have about language and Canadian equivalence of your education. These records are stored with CAEL and WES so you can access them in the future, as you deem appropriate.

2. The acceptance process for VBP:

The VBP is a pilot project, and so enrolment is limited to a maximum of 20 students for the 2002-2003 November intake. Future intakes will be higher according to the number of company sponsorships. Competition for spaces is expected to be high, and success in obtaining a place in the VBP depends on the following:

1. Eligibility:

You must be:
A Canadian Citizen or Permanent Resident.
Foreign trained
Not employed in the biotech industry

2. Language Benchmark:

In order to ensure that VBP students will succeed in a university setting, applicants must achieve an overall CAEL score of 60 or greater for further consideration in the VBP selection process. The CAEL scores will also be used by VBP students later to help tailor their language instruction.

3. Successful assessment by WES:

At the most basic level, WES needs to tell us that your bachelor's degree has a Canadian equivalent, which is pretty well a given for the vast majority of universities in the world. The WES report will also be used with VBP students later on to help determine which courses you need to take.

4. Making it on to the short list after having their applications scored.

Upon completion of the data collection process, the top 40 – 70 candidates will be short-listed based on the strength of their applications. Each application will receive a score out of 100, which will be derived from the data obtained from their application and test scores.

5. Having a successful interview with a company.

The number of spaces that are available in the VBP depends on how many spaces are provided by companies, since a primary objective of the VBP is to have VBP graduates employed with a company. The short list mentioned in point 4 above would be forwarded to companies who will set up interviews with people they are interested in. This part of the process is just like the regular job seeking process. The companies inform us of whom they wish to mentor after deciding whom they want to work with. At that point, these candidates will enter into the VBP.

6. How long is the acceptance process going to take?

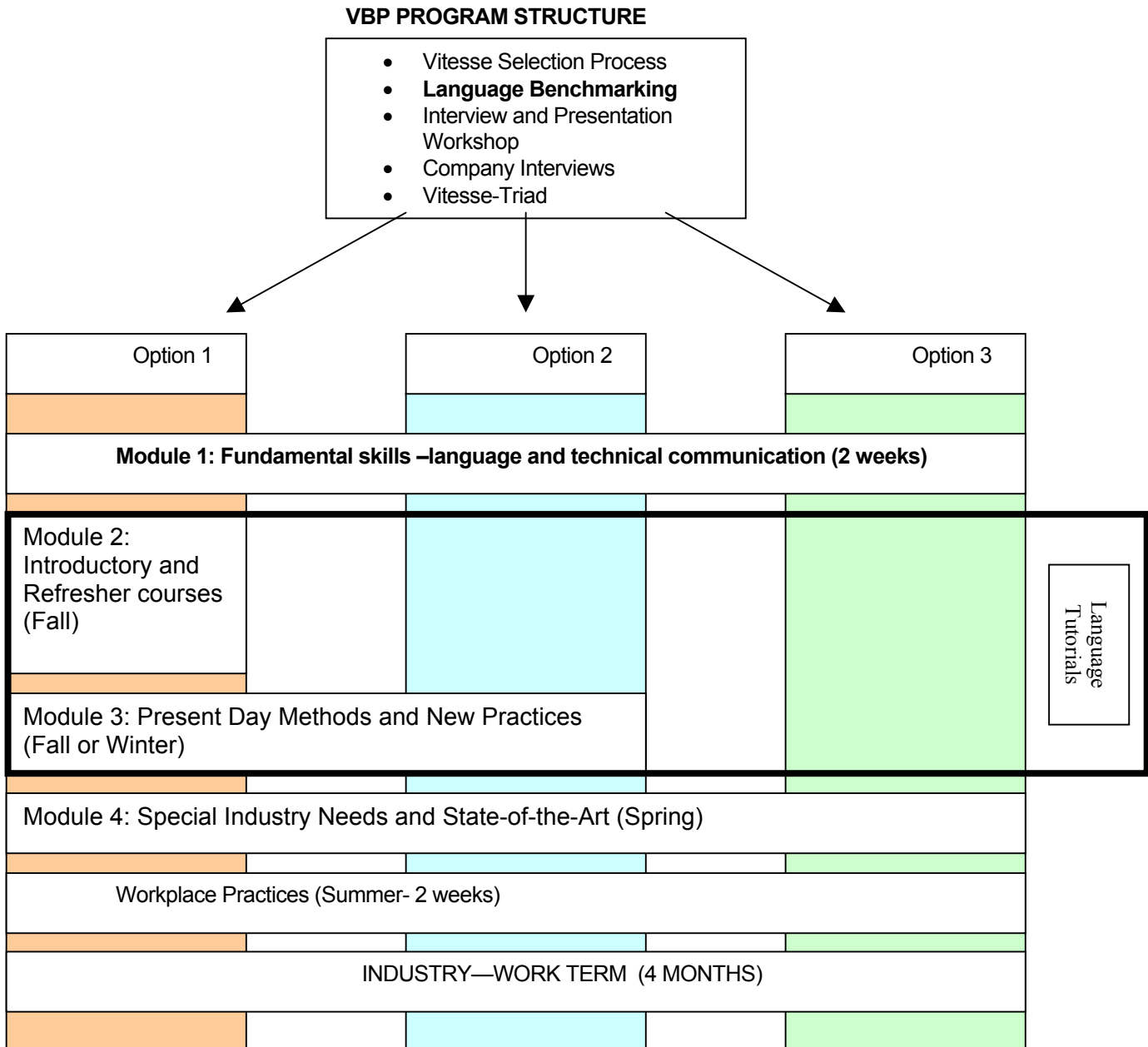
Given the many elements involved in selecting highly qualified candidates, it would take 6-7 weeks from the deadline application to be placed with a company and accepted into the VBP.

7. Do I need to re-apply if I do not get into this intake?

You do not need to re-apply, and you will automatically be considered for future intakes should you wish. You may need to re-take the language test if your score is too low, however you will only need to pay for the test and not the full application fee.

3.0 Design of the VBP

The design of the is depicted in the figure below, VBP consists of one two-week intensive period of language training, one or two academic semesters (depending on your educational needs), one two week intensive course on Canadian Workplace Practices (soft skills) and one two-week semester on state-of-the-art techniques and concepts in biotechnology. A four-month work term will then follow, after which your sponsoring company makes the final decision to hire you on.



4.0 Tuition fees: you only pay half.

1. **The cost.** The tuition fee for the VBP is expected to be \$5000 - \$8,000 + books, with the company paying 50% of the fee plus any expenses for books. Other finding alternatives may also be available to help students and companies pay the fee. The final tuition rate depends on the educational option that is selected for you in consultation with the company.

5.0 Employment after finishing the VBP

Students who enter the VBP will be sponsored by a company with the understanding that they are doing so with the expectation that they will hire the student pending successful completion of the VBP. **This, however, is NOT a guarantee that the company will hire you.** Keep in mind, however, that a company that interviews you, helps pay for your education, and has specific input into your training is likely to hire you on after having invested a fair amount of resources in you, and so a lack of a job with them will usually be due to some critical event such as a company being restructured, bought out, collapsing, or a critical breakdown in academic or work term performance on behalf of the student.