

UVic Edge Voice Guidelines

Our voice

It's our role as UVic communicators to tell a clear, consistent, and compelling story to the world about who we are, what we do and why we matter. The language we use to tell the UVic story matters. Our voice plays an important role in how we attract students, interact with community partners and engage with alumni, faculty, staff and supporters.

Our voice is a combination of three elements: the tone of our communications, the overall character we convey, and our unique messaging.



Tone

UVic's voice is not just about what we say but also how we say it. As a shorthand, remember the three Cs of our tone of voice:

Clear—direct, succinct, easy-to-understand

Credible—believable, authentic, genuine

Conversational—compelling, engaging, evocative, personal

A clear voice

Strong expression is direct, succinct, and easy-to-understand. Passive voice and excessive wordiness can confuse readers. Get straight to the point. UVic's voice is active. It doesn't waffle. State what we do. Avoid bureaucratic language and legalese.

Weak expression	Strong expression
We are focusing our attention on the development of [x]	We develop [x]
We seek to explore [x]	We are exploring [x]
We have a diverse range of programs that provide [x]	Our programs provide [x]
We strive to ensure that ...	We ensure that ...
Subsequent to reviewing the aforementioned report ...	After reviewing the report ...
As part of the institution's ongoing commitment to ensuring better quality services, we intend to ...	We're proud of our service quality. To make it even better, we are ...

A credible voice

Be genuine and specific. Vague generalities and hyperbole undermine credibility. Include facts and figures. Explain the benefits.

Less credible	More credible
An exciting new course ...	This course is grounded in the latest research from (or other qualifiers) ...
Our facilities are world class ...	You'll work with lab equipment that is usually reserved for international research teams ...
We're a leading research university	We're consistently ranked in the top [x] in research

A conversational voice

The goal of communications is to bring the UVic experience to life. Make the language personal, engaging, and evocative. Use colourful nouns and active verbs that convey real emotions like “explore” or “defy boundaries.” We’re welcoming and passionate. Be conversational with personal pronouns like “you” and “we.” Avoid bureaucratic, institutional language. Write as though you are telling a good friend about an experience that really matters.

Here are a few principles to keep in mind when crafting your communications.

Principle	Instead of ...	Use ...
We're personal. Speak directly to your audience. Use first person pronouns.	The University runs a series of open houses for prospective students in October.	Join us for one of our open houses in October. We'd love to show you the campus and answer your questions
We're empathetic. Show we really care with inclusive welcoming language!	Students have access to academic support resources.	We know that your first weeks can seem overwhelming. Right from the start, your academic advisor provides practical advice on [x].
We're optimistic and passionate ... Inspire people with a sense of possibilities.	The university is involved in important research.	We tackle essential issues that matter—to people, places and the planet.
We're smart but accessible ... Respect the intelligence of our audiences without being esoteric.	Our approach disambiguates the relationship between experiential and theoretical learning while building on synergies across disciplines.	Our multi-disciplinary approach combines the best of theory and hands-on experience.

Check out [UVic's Style Guide](#) for specific details on spelling, abbreviations, punctuation, inclusive language, academic terms and other editorial content.

Character

Our character attributes are the distinct qualities that reflect “UVic-ness” and our one-of-a-kind spirit. In your communications, ask yourself if these traits come through:

World-inspired: We celebrate the natural environment and the diverse cultures—Indigenous and international—that help shape our knowledge of the world.

Sample text: We’re at the heart of a vibrant Pacific Rim community, rich with Indigenous and international perspectives.

Vital and creative: Infuse our communications with a sense of energy—we are a place of ideas and imagination.

Sample text: Living and learning in one of the world’s most environmentally rich regions inspires bold action and new ways of thinking.

Discovery-centered: Whether it’s about personal discovery or groundbreaking research, the UVic experience is fuelled by uncovering new possibilities.

Sample text: Discovery and exploration come naturally here.

Passionately engaged: Bystanders can only observe. The UVic experience should convey active participation and personal interactions.

Sample text: Together, we serve society through the knowledge we create, impart and mobilize.

Message

The more we consistently connect our brand themes into our own communications and activities, the greater the impact we’ll have. By reinforcing these ideas across the entire UVic experience, people will better understand exactly who we are, what we stand for and why they should choose the University of Victoria.

Communicating the UVic Edge

The UVic brand story

What makes UVic different is the fusion of three ingredients: **dynamic learning and vital impact in Canada’s most extraordinary environment for discovery and innovation.** Together, these elements nurture creative activity and ground us in the urgency of sustainability and healthy societies; shape our world view with Indigenous and international perspectives; and fuel our commitment to economic well-being, technological advances and social justice.

Below we give examples of how to integrate these ingredients in your messaging.

Our powerful edge

Our shorthand for this brand story is “the UVic edge.” It’s a *concept*—not a tagline—that reflects the many meanings of “edge” that can infuse our communications:

- The edge is where breakthrough, exciting things happen.
- Having an edge helps you succeed.
- The edges where disciplines intersect generate unique perspectives and insights.
- Powerful forces of change often emerge at the edges first.
- Edges inspire new perspectives that can challenge conventions and the status quo.
- Edges are places of freedom and discovery.

Dynamic Learning

Dynamic learning is the interplay of teaching, research-inspired insights and hands-on experiences. Dynamic learning creates a natural advantage for our students by accelerating personal growth and career success.

Sample copy lines:

- The world is interconnected and dynamic. Learning should be too.
- Here, dynamic learning is fuelled by research-inspired insights and personal, hands-on experiences. Dynamic learning is about being inspired to ask different questions.
- The interplay of ideas and action gives students a powerful edge of career-relevant expertise and personal growth.

Vital impact

Vital impact drives our sense of purpose. As an internationally renowned teaching and research hub, we tackle essential issues that matter to people, places and the planet.

Sample copy lines:

- Essential, life sustaining—that’s the kind of vital impact that defines us.
- We’re focused on urgent issues that matter to people, places and the planet.
- Sustainability, healthy societies, social justice, jobs and a strong economy are at the core of our commitment to meaningful change.

Extraordinary environment

Discovery, creativity and innovation come naturally here. We’re at the heart of a vibrant Pacific Rim community, rich with Indigenous and international perspectives, that inspires us to defy traditional boundaries and world views. Our extraordinary environment inspires bold action and new ways of thinking:

Sample copy lines:

- Our size and structure nurture rich personal connections on campus and beyond.
- Our Pacific Rim location breeds a passion for exploration.
- We live, learn, work and explore on the edge of what’s next—for our planet and its peoples.

Our key audiences

These core messages can be adapted to suit the priorities of specific audiences, but it’s important that we use the same tone across our diverse audiences. Just because we’re speaking to students, for example, doesn’t mean we speak like students, rather, we speak in the tone and voice we’ve described in this document.

One way to bring the key messages into a vocabulary that our audiences best understand is through the use of quotations. When we describe a term like Vital Impact we can use a student quote to create meaning, context and benefit in an authentic voice with the right vocabulary.

Students

Choose the world’s best environment for dynamic learning and discovery experiences that will give you a valuable edge, personally and professionally.

“I kept saying ‘I can’t believe I’m in class right now,’ when we were hiking through a national park, talking to locals in a village, or wandering through a palace. I realized the value of experiential learning opportunities like these. Instead of simply learning about topics, we saw them first-hand and had the opportunity to engage with them.”

—Geography student Julia Bennett, about a field school in India.

Faculty and staff

Pursue a meaningful career in the world’s best environment for dynamic learning and discovery—a place where you can create vital impact.

“Uvic ties together my greatest passions. Here, my research matters and that’s something I carry forward to the students I teach and work with each day. I belong to a community of academic heroes within a community where I’ve made lifelong friends and mentors. All this wrapped up in a beautiful environment to think, teach and live in.”

—sample professor quote

Alumni, donors and partners

Engage with us in the world’s best environment for dynamic learning, discovery and meaningful partnerships. The impact we create together is vital to people, places and our planet.

“The health of the ocean affects everybody. My supervisor Dr. Tunnicliffe taught me that we have to take risks in our research. A lot of what we try to do doesn’t work, but when it does, it’s a game changer.”

—Donor funding helped Ocean Sciences PhD student, Jackson Chu, build equipment to experiment with a new method for measuring the metabolism of animal samples.