

# Inclusive Washroom Guidelines for BCIT

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# 1. Introduction

This is an assessment of washroom facilities conducted by TransFocus Consulting for the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) to consider the current level of transgender, non-binary, and Two-Spirit (TN2S) inclusion in washroom facilities. The Respect, Diversity, and Inclusion (RDI) department at BCIT engaged TransFocus to conduct two listening sessions among 14 BCIT stakeholders and review washrooms in 47 buildings on all six campuses. The report concludes with 24 proposed guidelines to address current issues and challenges as a means of improving inclusion of gender diversity at BCIT.

# 2. Background

#### 2.1 Terminology

The following terms and concepts are referred to or relevant to the document and are defined as follows for ease of common understanding.

**All-gender washroom** - A washroom that is available to anyone no matter their gender. These types of washrooms are either single-occupancy or multi-stall.

**Gender-designated washroom** - A multi-stall washroom that is designed for either women or men.

**Gender Identity** - refers to a person's innate and internal sense of their gender. It entails a wide range of identities that include woman, man, and those that exist between or outside of this binary (e.g., non-binary, agender, genderfluid, bigender, etc).

**Sex** - is assigned at birth based on the anatomy of a child including sex characteristics, hormones, and chromosomes. The following acronyms indicate different birth assignments, including: Assigned female at birth (AFAB) and assigned male at birth (AMAB).

**Transgender (Trans)** - is an umbrella terms that describes a wide range of people whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth.

Non-binary - refers to individuals whose gender identity that is neither exclusively woman nor man.

**TN2S (Trans (T), Non-binary (N), and Two-Spirit (2S)**: Acronym used to capture various common experiences under the broad umbrella of gender diversity.

**Two-Spirit** - refers to a cultural and spiritual identity used by some Indigenous people to describe variance in gender and sexuality. Two-Spirit is the common name; however, many Indigenous groups have their own specific term for that in their own language. The term "Two-Spirit" was coined in the 1990s by a group of pan-national Indigenous people working to reclaim their traditional words, stories, and roles from the harms of colonization.



#### 2.2 Need for Inclusive Design

There are many reasons to consider inclusive design of washrooms, especially for the relatively small and disenfranchised population of TN2S people. This section covers five key reasons for BCIT to explore and implement changes for greater inclusion of TN2S employees and students at BCIT.

**A. It's what other institutions are doing**: Whether at other post-secondary institutions or different levels of government, there is a steady trend towards greater privacy and increased quantities and distribution of all-gender washrooms. Local examples of this paradigm shift include University of British Columbia (2020 and 2021), Simon Fraser University (2017), and Emily Carr University of Art and Design (ECUAD 2021). Furthermore, municipalities in the Lower Mainland (including City of Vancouver and City of Surrey) have adopted similar standards and strategies (COV 2020 and COS 2021). Finally, Parks Canada recently published its directive on inclusive washrooms to establish that all future design builds have only all-gender washrooms (Parks Canada 2021).

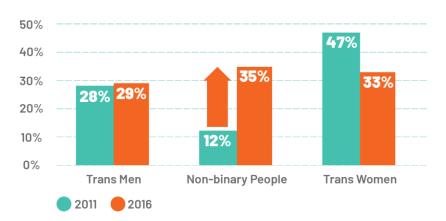
**B.** It meets expectations: Among younger generations, there is a growing expectation for organizations to understand and take action to support human rights. In particular, 43% of Millennials know someone with gender-neutral pronouns, and 70% of them feel strongly about the need for more all-gender washrooms (JWTI 2017). These are greater among Gen Zs. Since most of the students are in these generations, BCIT will continue to field requests for washroom changes.

**C. It helps TN2S people disproportionately impacted by COVID**: According to recent statistics released by TransPulse Canada among 820 TN2S respondents across Canada, 48% of respondents experienced adverse effects on their income from the pandemic, which increases to 59% for racialized respondents (TPC 2021). This population already faced multiple challenges prepandemic, which have been exacerbated by the pandemic. As such, addressing washroom issues is one step towards removing barriers and improving their lives.

**D. It benefits other facility users**: As HCMA Architecture and Design notes, "strategies that reduce barriers to access for a vulnerable population ultimately improve access for everyone" (HCMA 2018 and Bovens Marcoci 2020). The recommendations in this report address broader needs for greater access and flexibility to spaces with increased privacy and safety and decreased wait times.

**E. It's the future**: As societal understanding and acceptance grow, there has been an increase in people who feel more confident to disclose their transgender and gender diverse identities. For example, Figure 1 depicts a three-fold increase in the percent of people who identify as non-binary between 2011 and 2016 in a national survey of transgender people in the US. This has far-reaching implications on facilities that are typically built based only on the binary of men and women (e.g., gender-designated washrooms with no or limited alternative options).







#### 2.3 Methods

The consultation process used a mixed methods approach consisting of two listening sessions with community stakeholders and the Respect, Diversity, and Inclusion (RDI) department as well as two meetings with the BCIT facilities team. To supplement the qualitative findings, a quantitative inventory of existing washroom infrastructure at BCIT was created to assess issues around washroom availability, and explore areas of possible improvement.

#### 2.3.1 Listening Sessions

TransFocus conducted two listening sessions, which were attended by four students and 10 employees (faculty and staff) at BCIT. The sessions were organized by the Respect, Diversity, and Inclusion (RDI) department and took place on May 12 and 26, 2021. Five participants have lived experiences and nine attendees are allies of TN2S people. This method was chosen to provide context for the project, as well as insights into the specific challenges for BCIT community members. The issues raised will inform a more detailed assessment to get additional clarity on existing conditions.

#### 2.3.2 Washroom Inventory

Following the listening sessions, a meeting with the BCIT facilities team was held on June 14, 2021 to review the internal processes related to managing campus facilities and to obtain documentation (e.g. floor plans, design spec, database information) for all campuses. From a review of these documents, TransFocus created an inventory for a total of 47 buildings (excluding residential and those without any washrooms). The details of the inventory are provided in Appendix B.

Using this information, a gap analysis was conducted to identify common patterns of issues, and areas where all-gender washroom facilities were lacking. Finally, the washroom inventory ratios of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> National Center for Transgender Equality 2011 and 2016



gender-designated to all-gender washrooms were calculated within and across campuses at BCIT. On July 29, the initial findings were presented to the facilities team for discussion about the feasibility of potential recommendations.

Because the inventory was compiled by reviewing floor plansrather than conducting physical site visits, the calculations presented may not encompass undocumented changes. In some cases, due to a lack of information from available floorplans, the number of fixtures within a washroom is estimated based on washroom size and layout (highlighted in pink in Appendix B). This inventory is intended as a starting point and a physical site visit to groundtruth these numbers, which is recommended in Section 3.5.

#### 2.4 Experiences

#### 2.4.1 General

Gendered facilities, such as washrooms and change rooms, are often challenging spaces for TN2S people. Based on appearances and anatomy, fellow facility users frequently make assumptions about a TN2S person's gender and whether or not they should be able to access the washroom of their choice. Figure 2 breaks down how this dynamic occurs in men's and women's washrooms, which are largely absent in all-gender washrooms.

The more markers that are present for a facility user (e.g., beard, earrings, high voice, etc), the harder it is for someone to access certain types of facilities due to strong societal expectations for alignment between gender identity and expression. Furthermore, factors highlighted with orange dots are deemed by society as critical and often present significant barriers to TN2S people (and others) when accessing washrooms. Figure 2 also demonstrates how there are more factors at play in women's washrooms than in men's washrooms.

With the exception of dresses and ties, these factors are often dificult or expensive to change and, as such, may not be accessible to (or even desired by) all TN2S people. For example, laser hair removal of facial hair is an out-of-pocket expense that takes many appointments over several months to complete. Important to note that this kind of exclusion is more likely to happen to TN2S people; however, also occurs to some cisgender people whose appearance and/or anatomy does not match societal expectations.

On the mild side, other facility users make facial expressions or verbal comments and, on the extreme side, can involve staff and/or become physically abusive. According to a national survey of more than 27,000 TN2S people in the United States, 12% reported being verbally harassed when accessing washrooms and more than half (59%) of respondents chose to avoid using restrooms fearing confrontation (James et al 2016). In Canada, a 2014 study of 400 Ontarians revealed similar results, including 57% of respondents avoiding washrooms due to fear of being harassed (Scheim and Pyne 2014).



# Figure 2. Experiences in Different Washrooms based on Societal Expectations related to Appearance and Anatomy



#### 2.4.2 Specific to BCIT

The listening sessions surfaced several key themes that reveal adverse TN2S user experiences in washrooms at BCIT. In particular, there are three key conditions, one of which is unique to BCIT and the other two are shared in common with other organizations. These conditions produce particular adverse outcomes, especially for TN2S facility users. If negative experiences are repetitive and common, these can have long lasting impacts on TN2S people, including physical and mental effects. Figure 3 summarizes the key conditions, outcomes, and impacts on TN2S facility users in washrooms at BCIT. These are described in more detail in the sections that follow.

Figure 3. Conditions, Outcomes, and Impacts of TN2S Facility User Experiences in Washrooms at **BCIT** 

CONDITIONS	OUTCOMES	IMPACTS	
<ol> <li>People whose gender expression(s) and anatomical feature(s) do not match societal expectations of who should be in men's and women's washrooms</li> <li>+</li> <li>Lack of all-gender washrooms options in certain buildings and floors or unable to easily locate all-gender washroom</li> <li>+</li> <li>Busy class or work schedule</li> </ol>	<ol> <li>Negative reactions to certain people whose gender expression(s) and anatomical feature(s) do <u>not</u> match societal expectations of who should be in men's and women's washrooms</li> <li>Expend extra effort to get to desired washroom <u>or</u> access nearby washroom that is less desirable and more likely to be harassed</li> <li>Rushed or late to class or office</li> <li>Too busy to raise challenges or advocate for change with BCIT administrators</li> </ol>	<ul> <li>Feelings</li> <li>Excluded</li> <li>Frustrated</li> <li>Anxious</li> <li>Scared</li> <li>Self-conscious</li> <li>Alone</li> <li>Less than</li> <li>Exhausted</li> <li>Powerless</li> <li>Unsafe</li> </ul> Health <ul> <li>Increased UTIs</li> <li>Higher blood pressure</li> <li>Headaches</li> </ul>	

#### **Conditions**

The most prominent theme that was discussed by most participants was an overall lack of allgender facilities, particularly within older buildings. Most participants reported that they rarely had any available facilities on their floor, or even within their building. Attendees noted that on some floors, there are not even washrooms for both binary genders or that the only available optionis restricted to staff only.

Besides the lack of available all-gender facilities, there is inadequate signage and wayfinding available to assist TN2S people. Though a washroom map for the Burnaby Campus exists, many report that it is not easily found by the general public and it does not locate where the washrooms are within the buildings. Regarding the signage itself, participants indicated that washroom signage should better reflect the usage of all-gender washrooms. Participants recognize the need for better education on the topic of gender diversity and feel that changes in signage could play an important role in that effort.

Another theme unique to BCIT that amplifies challenges is the intensive course load taken by students at BCIT and tight turnarounds between classes. Many students said that even if they knew where the washroom was, they may not have the time to get there. It is even more challenging for



the large population of part-time students as many facilities are closed during their evening and weekend classes, further limiting their options. Lastly, many students highlight that the lack of free time significantly impacts the ability for students to advocate or raise awareness about these issues.

"The issue with BCIT is that the course load is really huge, so there is very little time for advocacy about spaces or inclusion efforts... Students are very on board and want these things to happen, but because there was no consultation or advocacy, administration doesn't see that this is an issue. "

#### ~ BCIT Student

"I think there are many possibilities for maps and signage to help people find those washrooms. Even binary washrooms should have the education piece like 'This is a binary washroom but gender diverse people are included, people are in the right washroom and know where they should be'."

~ BCIT Student

#### **Outcomes**

Based on the aforementioned conditions, TN2S people are left with dificult decisions, none of which completely solve the issues at hand. Some TN2S people report expending more energy and walking to nearby buildings to meet their specific washroom needs and risk being late to class or the ofice. A number of students report having to justify their lateness to their professors or otherwise appear unprofessional. Others decide to access washroom types that do not align with their gender and risk harassment from other facility users.

In some instances, the search for the right washroom presents additional challenges.

These issues are further compounded in situations where the only all-gender option also doubles as the only accessible option, leaving many TN2S persons feeling as though they are taking the space from others with physical disabilities.



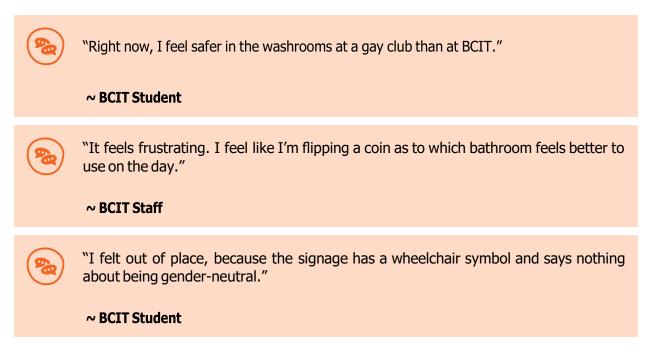
"Students should not have to out themselves to the professor to justify why they are late, and face issues of appearing unprofessional."

~ BCIT Student



#### **Impacts**

Based on the conditions and outcomes outlined above, TN2S people experience a range of physical and emotional impacts, which adversely affect their ability to study and work at BCIT. In particular, attendees at the listening sessions shared feelings of frustration, exhaustion, confusion, being unsafe, uncertain, and self-conscious. Beyond the emotional effects of challenges in washrooms, TN2S people also experience physical effects. These include increased urinary complications due to lengthy avoidance of washrooms as well as increased blood pressure.



The rest of the report provides additional insights into these challenges with the objective of providing workable solutions to address the issues faced by TN2S employees and students at BCIT.



## 3. Structural Issues

#### 3.1 Overview

BCIT is comprised of six campuses with a total of 47 buildings. Each campus has its own unique blend of issues and considerations vis-a-vis washrooms. Availability of all-gender washrooms is driven by two key factors, including numbers and distribution. Quantities of all-gender washrooms are linked to wait times. That is, where there are small numbers of all-gender washrooms available in a location, BCIT students and employees may have longer wait times to access this option. Distribution of all-gender washrooms is linked to walking distance. In other words, if there is low distribution of these types of washrooms, there could be greater distances to walk to access this option. Both quantity and distribution work together to decrease or increase access to all-gender washrooms. The sections that follow explore these two factors individually in more details.

To illustrate this relationship, BCIT's largest campus, Burnaby Campus, was broken down into four zones (Figure 4), each of which has a mix of quantities and distribution of all-gender washrooms. Fortunately, there is one zone (Zone 2) on this campus that has high distribution and quantities of all-gender washrooms and there is no zone on the Burnaby Campus that has low quantity and distribution of all-gender washrooms. However, there are three zones with opportunities for improvement, including: Zone 1 with low distribution (with greater walking distances), and Zones 3 and 4 with low quantities of all-gender washrooms, resulting in greater waiting times (Figure 5).

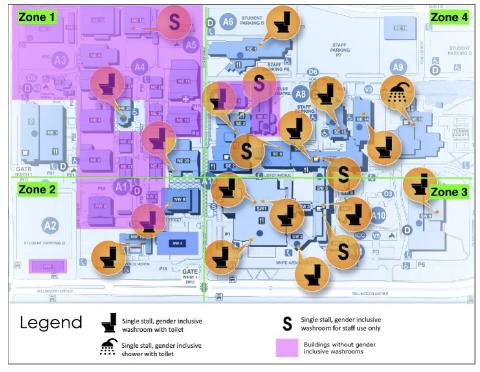


Figure 4. Areas of Burnaby Campus Lacking Distribution of All-gender Washroom Options



**Source**: BCIT Student Association with Zones and Shading added by TransFocus

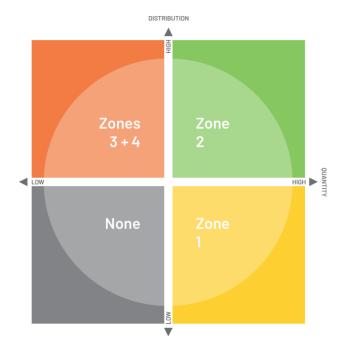


Figure 5. Zones of Burnaby Campus by Levels of Distribution and Quantity of All-Gender Washrooms

#### 3.2 Washroom Quantities

As part of creating the inventory, TransFocus calculated the quantities of gender-designated to all-gender facilities by location to identify gaps in existing buildings at BCIT. At present, there are 15% all-gender washrooms across all BCIT campuses (Figure 6), including 72 single-occupancy and 77 toilets in multi-stall facilities. As a point of reference, a common ratio that currently exists at other post-secondary institutions, such as UBC and Emily Carr, is at or above 25% all-gender washrooms (UBC 2020 and ECUAD 2021). Table 1 summarizes the breakdown of fixtures (including toilets and urinals) for each type of washroom at BCIT.

Of particular note are the 34 single-occupancy washrooms designated through signage for women and 29 single-occupancy washrooms for men. Detailed breakdowns of fixtures in each building are provided in Appendix A.

Type of Washroom	Number of Fixtures	% of Total	
Women's Washrooms	364 toilets*		
Men's Washrooms	244 toilets* 243 urinals	85%	

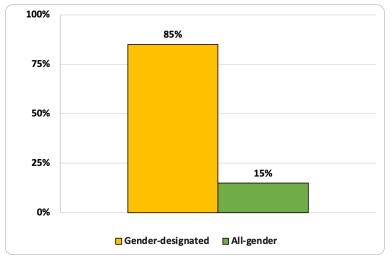
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All-Gender Washrooms (Single-occupancy)	72 toilets	15%
All-Gender Washrooms (Multi-stall)	77 toilets	13 %
TOTAL	1,000 fixtures	100%

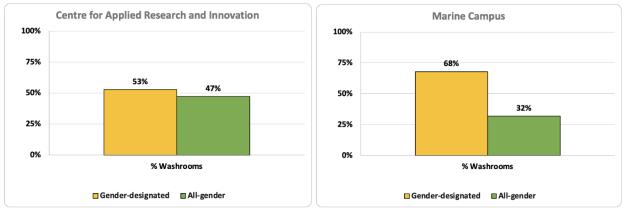
\* Counts include 63 single-occupancy washrooms, of which 34 are designated for women and 29 for men.

Figure 6. Percentage of Gender-Designated Compared To All-Gender Washrooms across All BCIT Campuses



However, the ratios vary greatly across and within campuses. One positive development has been the recent renovations of the Center for Applied Research and Innovation (CARI) and Marine campuses shown in Figure 7, where half or more of washrooms are now all-gender.

Figure 7. Ratio of Gender-Designated Compared To All-gender Washrooms at CARI and Marine Campuses





In comparison, some older campuses, such as Aerospace and Annacis Island campuses, have few current all-gender options. For example, of the 78 washroom fixtures at the Aerospace Campus, only two are all-gender and at the Annacis Island Campus there are 39 fixtures, of which 3 are all-gender (Figure 8). Even newer campuses, such as the Downtown Campus, are not exempt from low quantities of all-gender washrooms with only 8% of this type available for use.

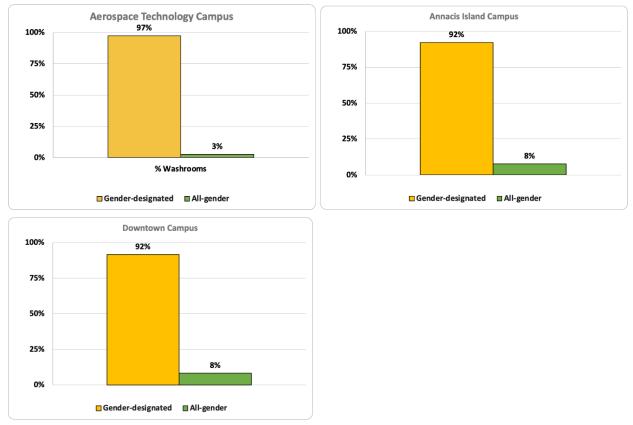
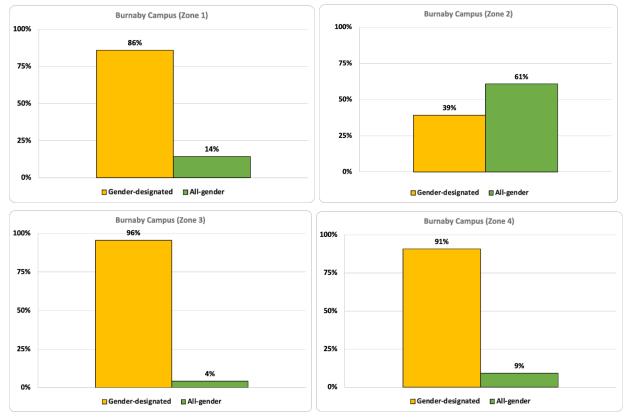


Figure 8. Ratios of Gender-Designated Compared to All-gender Washrooms at the Aerospace Technology, Annacis Island, and Downtown Campuses

At the Burnaby Campus, the quantities of all-gender washrooms varies by zone of the campus (Figure 4), ranging from a high of 61% all-gender for buildings in Zone 2 to a low of 4% for buildings in Zone 3. Figure 9 provides a breakdown of the percentages of all-gender washrooms to men's and women's washrooms for each of the four zones.



Figure 9. Percentage of Gender-Designated Compared To All-gender Washrooms at Burnaby Campus by Zone



#### 3.3 Washroom Distribution

Beside the quantity of all-gender washrooms, another issue is their distribution. This occurs at the campus level, but also within individual buildings and floors. For example, at the Burnaby Campus, Zone 1 has a lack of distribution of all-gender washrooms available to students and employees (Figure 4 with majority highlighted in pink). This results in greater distances that some students and employees need to walk to access washrooms. This map takes into account the upcoming projects for the buildings NE1 and NW4 which include large all-gender multi-stall washrooms.

This issue is also seen within multi-level buildings in how all-gender washrooms are distributed by floor. At the Downtown Campus, only 8% of washroom fixtures are designated all-gender, of which only one is on the 4th floor, and the remaining four located on the 2nd floor. This issue most affects those working on the upper floors of the building, where they may need to walk up to four floors away to use an all-gender option. In general across buildings at BCIT, the majority of single-occupancy washrooms are located on 1st or 2nd floors and less so on upper floors.

The last set of issues concern the distribution of washrooms on one floor. A common issue is shown in Figure 10, using the Downtown Campus 4th floor as an example.

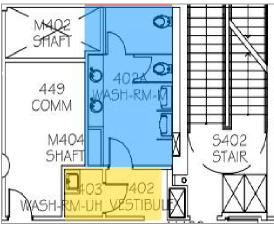
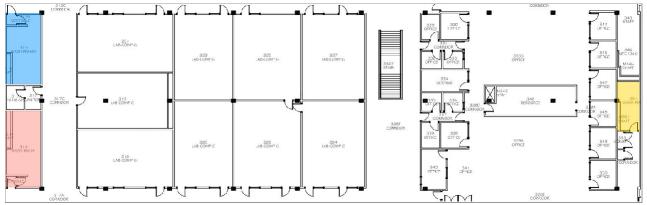


Figure 10. DTC04 Washroom Placement

For many, the choice to use an all-gender facility is linked to wanting to avoid complications in genderdesignated facilities. However, all-gender options are occasionally placed within areas where access overlaps with a conjoined gender-designatedfacility. This means that complications are not adequately eliminated, because TN2S people still need to go through a gender-designated space to get to the desired all-gender facility. Co-locating all-gender and gender-designated washrooms is a good practice, but care should be taken that there are distinct access points for each.

Another commonly identified issue is that all-gender washrooms are located on their own, far away from all other washroom types. An example of this is on the 3rd floor of SE8 (Figure 11), where the gender-designated facilities are centralised and the only all-gender option is located on the far right side of the floor. Furthermore, some all-gender washrooms are placed in areas that are for staff-only use, so they are not available for student use.

Figure 11. SE12-03 Washroom Placement



Furthermore, the dificulty for students of locating an all-gender washroom and the discomfort of entering predominantly staff areas of the building are especially challenging considering the intense course load and time constraints placed on students (as discussed in Section 2.3.2).



#### 3.4 **Privacy**

There is a strong desire and interest in privacy as part of the washroom experience among TN2S facility users. Privacy is mostly about wanting to avoid or minimize visibility, attention, and interaction with other facility users. This is particularly relevant to TN2S people because they are more likely to encounter harassment in washrooms. Of particular concern among many TN2S people (and others) is the gaps in stalls, frequently located directly across from sinks. As such, people washing their hands can see into the stall behind them, which compromises the TN2S person's privacy, especially as use of toilets is often gendered (e.g., standing versus sitting).

Privacy is achieved by separating oneself from other facility users by sight and sound. Participants identified several key features to create that separation, such as fully-enclosed stall doors as well as locks that communicate occupancy, which are becoming prevalent in newer buildings, such as the Health Sciences Centre. Distance from other facility users as well as anonymity can also contribute to a feeling of privacy.

#### 3.5 Proposed Changes

In order to address the challenges related to the distribution and quantities of all-gender washrooms within and between buildings, TransFocus recommends BCIT adopt 16 guidelines to improve the inclusion of TN2S students and employees at BCIT. Furthermore, these guidelines will also address the current lack of washrooms available to women that occurs in some buildings at BCIT. An overview of these proposed guidelines is provided in Table 2. G1 to G6 are top priority in terms of greatest impact and benefit on TN2S, while G7 to G11 are features best adopted together. Finally, G12 to G16 are design strategies that increase the comfort and ease of washrooms. **Legend**:





= Guideline applies to new design-builds

Guideline #	Issue Type	Proposed Guideline
G1	Number of washrooms + Distribution	<ul> <li>Conduct physical site visit(s) of existing buildings to confirm and add to a detailed inventory of single-occupancy and multi-stall washrooms across all BCIT campuses, including: <ul> <li>Number of fixtures in each washroom with differentiation between toilets and urinals</li> <li>Type of designation by gender</li> <li>Whether co-located with other types of washrooms</li> <li>If not co-located, distance to other types of washrooms, especially men's and women's to all-gender washrooms</li> <li>Centrally or remotely located with classrooms and/or ofices</li> <li>Absence/presence of colour-coded locks</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Table 2. Washroom Guidelines for Inclusion of Gender Diversity at BCIT

= Guideline applies to renovations



		<ul> <li>Absence/presence of menstrual dispensing and disposing</li> <li>Labelling (if any) of menstrual products</li> <li>Result of site visits used to verify percentage of all-gender washrooms available to students, employees, and visitors. Monitor this percentage over time as renovations and new buildings are</li> </ul>
		completed. The information collected from the site visits can be used to update inventory provided in Appendix A. <b>Note</b> : The physical site visit provides an opportunity to itemize key information beyond considerations of gender diversity, including accessibility and need for repairs, etc.
G2	Percentage of washrooms	Across all campuses, aim to achieve a <u>short-term goal</u> of at least <b>25% all-gender</b> washrooms (based on fixture count) with the <u>long-term goal</u> to surpass this minimum as existing buildings at BCIT undergo renovations. All new design-builds should be <b>fully all-gender</b> washrooms with a blend of options, including multi-stall and single-occupancy types. The latter option is important for maximum privacy for those who may not feel comfortable or safe inall-gender, multi-stall washrooms (which is a relatively new and unfamiliar configuration in North America).
G3	Number of washrooms	Avoid designating single-occupancy washrooms by gender or role (e.g., no men's-only or staff-only washrooms). Instead, ensure every single-occupancy washroom is all-gender through signage (See <b>G17</b> ).
G4	Distribution	At least one centrally-available all-gender washroom in each building. In multi-level buildings, availability of all-gender washrooms entails: <u>Minimum</u> : All-gender washroom on <i>alternating</i> floors. <u>Ideal</u> : All-gender washroom on <i>every</i> floor.
G5	Number of washrooms	<ul> <li>Every washroom should be all-gender with the following considerations based on size of building:</li> <li>In smaller buildings, all-gender washrooms can be mostly single-occupancy washrooms.</li> <li>In larger buildings, a blend of co-located majority multi-stall options and minority single-occupancy washrooms (for those in greater need of privacy) should be considered.</li> </ul>
G6	Distribution	Focus all-gender, multi-stall washrooms in high-traffic buildings and single building campuses.



G7	Privacy	Creating greater privacy in multi-stall washrooms through fully- enclosed washroom stalls (for toilets and urinals) with a smallgap at the bottom for safety. This applies to both gender-designated and	
		all-gender washrooms.	
G8 Privacy		Install hardware with visible indicator of occupancy (e.g.,colour- coded locks on stall doors or light indicator above stall door).	
G9	Privacy	Install sinks in a small percentage of washroom stalls, especially in larger universal stalls.	
G10	Safety	Dual entrance and exit without doors or transparent doors for increased sightlines and sound transmission (in moments of need).	
G11 Safety Ensure washrooms have openness and unobstructed lines increase passive and active monitoring.		Ensure washrooms have openness and unobstructed lines of sight to increase passive and active monitoring.	
G12 Access Locate washroom facilities close to staircases and e facilitate faster and more intuitive access.		Locate washroom facilities close to staircases and elevators to facilitate faster and more intuitive access.	
G13	Access Where possible, locate all-gender and gender-design washrooms in close proximity to each other in order to increa		
G14	Access	Ensure that entrances of single occupancy washrooms do not require access through gender-designated washrooms.	
G15	G15 Access G15 Centralize washrooms to key trafic areas and avoid place gender washrooms in areas predominantly accessed be and/or remote areas.		
G16	Reduce Pressure on Washrooms	Where deemed necessary by BCIT (e.g., high trafic buildings), low Wellness/Lactation Rooms without reference to gender that separate from, but proximate to, washrooms (See <b>G22</b> ). Use of room is provided without the need for a key.	



Figure 13 provides an overview of how the proposed guidelines fit together in a washroom space. These guidelines are particularly important for all-gender, multi-stall washrooms. This is because there is a paradigm shift moment in architectural design where all-gender, multi-stall washrooms are on the rise, but not fully accepted by the general population. That is, for some stakeholders, all-gender, multi-stall washrooms are relatively new and unfamiliar phenomena, causing hesitation or avoidance of these types of washrooms.

As such, there is a need to balance between meeting the needs of TN2S people and ensuring comfort and safety among other users. This is achieved through providing choice among options of various washroom types, so facility users can select the one that is right for them. As part of adjustment to this relatively new washroom type, it is recommended that key design features within all-gender, multi-stall washrooms increase social comfort, including privacy and safety.

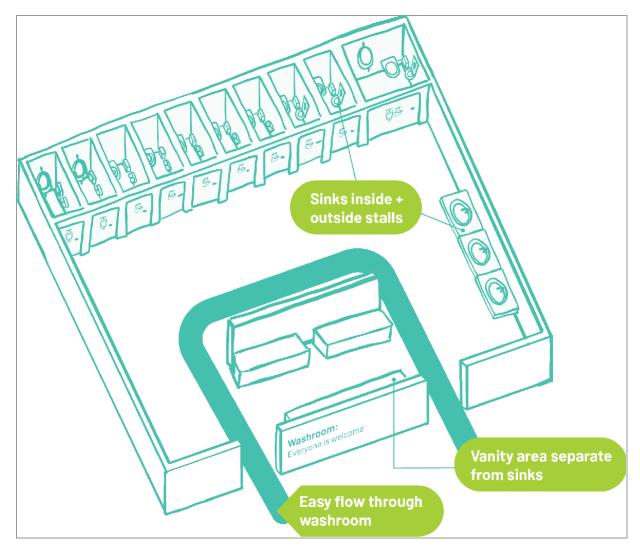


Figure 13. Example of Washroom with Proposed Guidelines



TransFocus proposes the following sequence of the proposed guidelines based on the ease of implementation and/or the greatest impact to address the lack of available all-gender washrooms. In particular, places where there are few to no all-gender options (e.g., Burnaby, Annacis Island, Downtown, and Aerospace Campuses) provide an important factor of prioritization. Another aspect of prioritization is renovating high-use facilities and existing facilities that are near the end of life. Table 3 summarizes the suggested sequence for implementing the guidelines with context-specific considerations and in order of priority.

It is recognized that washroom renovations in existing buildings are costly and complex. In particular, when exploring the addition of all-gender, multi-stall washrooms, there are unique considerations that need to be accounted for, including: 1) Code compliance (based on the building's occupancy) and 2) space availability (given the larger footprint of this type of washroom).

Туре	Proposed Step	Cost
Single- occupancy	Convert 63 of the existing single-occupancy washrooms across BCIT campuses that are currently designated for one gender to all-gender designation by making signage changes ( <b>G17</b> ). Of particular priority are buildings with no all-gender washrooms (e.g., buildings NE7, NE9, NE18, NE22, NE23, NE24, NW7, SE4, SE6 on the Burnaby Campus, Annacis Island Campus, and Aerospace Campus). This would increase the percentage of all-gender washrooms from 15% to 21%.	Low
Gender-designated, multi-stall	<ul> <li>Where possible based on code compliance, convert gender-designated washrooms to all-gender washrooms by making the following changes (in addition to G17):</li> <li>i) <u>Minimum</u>: Remove urinals and replace them with toilets that are in fully-enclosed stalls.</li> <li>ii) <u>Ideal</u>: Enclose urinals and toilets in stalls and label them and add a second entrance.</li> </ul>	High
Men's and women's with with shared walls Where possible (based on code compliance), remove the shared wall between men's and women's washrooms to create a large all-gender washroom. This is an important approach, because it provides suficient disruption of past use to allow for the space to be truly used by a mix of genders rather than past use being replicated in the newly renovated space.		High
Buildings with large men's multi-stall washrooms and smaller women's washrooms	Where possible (based on code compliance), convert the men's washroom to an all-gender multi-stall washroom. In some cases, the women's washroom can also be converted to single-occupancy accessible options.	High
All types Keep washrooms open after peak hours for part-time students, including priority buildings NE01, SE06, SW01, SE12 and SE01.		Low

 Table 3. Priority Actions to Implement Guidelines for Greater Inclusion of Gender Diversity

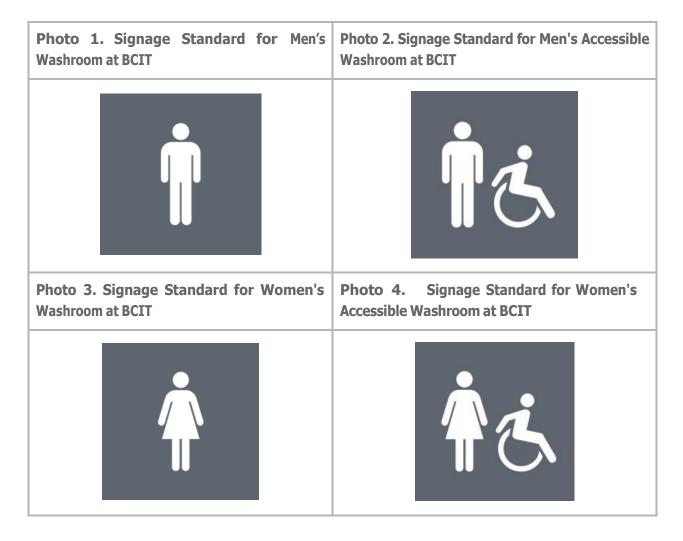


# 4. Signage and Wayfinding

#### 4.1 Issues

In many cases, the icons used for washroom signage can be unintentionally challenging for TN2S people. This section describes these issues in detail, illustrating them with examples of the current signage spec found in the BCIT Interior Signage Guidelines (BCIT 2021).

One of the main issues regarding the current spec for gender-designated washrooms is the usage of female and male icons for all gender-designated washrooms (Photos 1 to 4). Male and female icons set visual expectations about how someone should look when they access these washrooms. This presents challenges for TN2S people who may not appear aligned to societal expectations. This is particularly relevant in the women's washroom, where the expectation is that someone using the women's washroom appears or presents in feminine ways (as discussed in Section 2.3.1). This expectation is reinforced in the use of the sign where the person is wearing a dress.





Compared to the gender-designated signage, the existing signage for all-gender washrooms and change rooms (Photo 5 to 7) reflects current best practices. Using function-based icons shifts the focus away from gender towards what facility users are looking to use (e.g., toilet or shower). The additions of text and braille also help to increase accessibility of the facilities. The standard reflected in Photo 5 should be continued in existing and new buildings at BCIT.

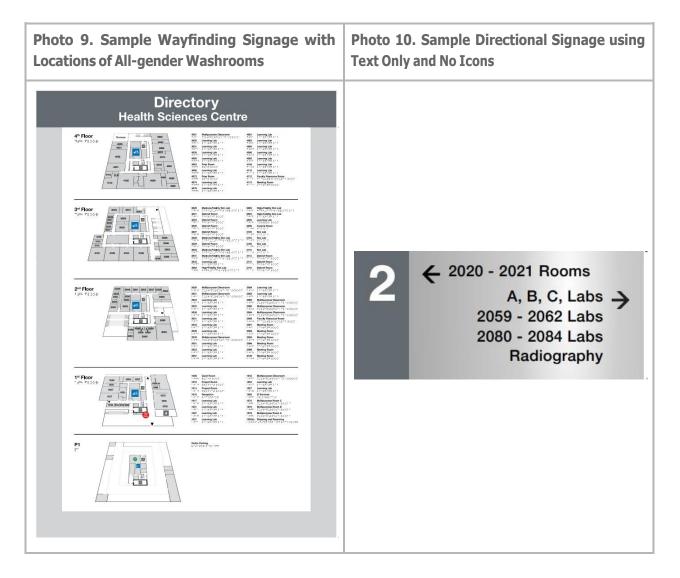
The key issue regarding signage on single-occupancy washrooms is that there is currently inconsistent signage across campuses and buildings. In the listening sessions, attendees noted that they saw the wheelchair icons for most single-occupancy options, and in some cases still saw the female and/or male icons. It is also not known what signage is used in the cases of gender-designated change rooms.

Lastly, there is signage used in and outside washrooms that unnecessarily references gender as demonstrated in Photo 8. This also occurs commonly in physical distancing signs (introduced during the pandemic) and elevator signage. The intention of these signs is to represent all people; however, only depicting female and male icons excludes non-binary people.

Photo 5. Signage Standard for All-gender Washroom (non-accessible)	Photo 6. Signage Standard for All-gender Washroom (Accessible)	
Washroom	Washroom	
Photo 7. Signage Standard for Locker rooms	Photo 8. Signage Standard regarding Maximum Occupancy	
Locker Room	Maximum Occupancy XXX Persons	



Beyond signage in washrooms, wayfinding was frequently cited by attendees of the listening sessions. Many attendees struggled to locate all-gender washrooms within their building. BCIT 2021 also depicts wayfinding resources like building directories and directional signs (Photo 9 to 10). These could be useful resources to help those trying to navigate washrooms at BCIT.



#### 4.2 Proposed Changes

With an understanding of the issues related to existing signage and wayfinding, Table 4 summarizes eight proposed signage guidelines that can be adopted at BCIT to support greater inclusion of gender diversity and support for other community members. These changes prioritize issues around providing clarity and consistency in washroom signage, shifting away from harmful gender expectations, and providing resources for those seeking all-gender options.



Table 4. Recommended	Guidelines f	or Signage and	Wayfinding at BCIT
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Guideline #	Issue Type	Proposed Guideline	
G17	Numbers	<ul> <li>Conduct a physical site visit to catalogue and photograph current signage configurations, including: <ul> <li>Use of female and male icons</li> <li>Use of function-based icons (e.g., toilet or shower)</li> <li>Use of text to designate washrooms by gender</li> <li>Use of wheelchair icon to designate for accessibility</li> <li>Use of colour(s) on signage</li> <li>Absence/presence of braille</li> <li>Absence/presence of explanation at entrance of all-gender, multi-stall washrooms</li> </ul> </li> <li>Note: The site visit(s) provide an opportunity to itemize key information beyond considerations of gender diversity, including wheelchair icon and braille.</li> </ul>	
G18	Entrance	Avoid use of female and male symbols on <u>all</u> washroom and wayfindin signs at BCIT. Instead use text and function-based icons, includin toilet, shower, urinal, and wheelchair icons.	
G19	Entrance	Add signage at entrances of single-occupancy washrooms to explain that people with accessibility needs and gender diversity have priority (but not exclusive) use of these washrooms. Signage should clarify and remind that needs are not always visible to other facility users.	
G20	Wayfinding	<ul> <li>a) Signs at gender-designated washrooms point to the nearest all-gender washroom option(s) and vice versa.</li> <li>b) Use text and/or toilet icons on wayfinding signs in buildings to point facility users in the direction of different types of washrooms, especially all-gender options.</li> </ul>	
G21	Directory	Ensure that all buildings install or update the directory at the entrance of the building to provide the location of all-gender washrooms.	
G22	Мар	Update the current washroom map by adding the specific locations or room codes for all-gender and accessible washrooms and increase the map's visibility for new students and employees.	



G23	Maximum Occupancy	Avoid use of female and male icons for maximum occupancy or elevator signage. Instead use depictions of humans from the torso up, which removes references to gender (as illustrated in the example).					
G24	Lactation/ Wellness Rooms	Signage for Wellness/Lactation Rooms should not reference gender or anatomy (e.g., reference to breastfeeding or female icon). Some alternative options for BCIT's consideration are icons of bottles or only using text (as illustrated in the examples below).					



Photos 11 and 12 provide best practice examples of signage at Emily Carr University of Art and Design (ECUAD) and Clayton Community Centre (City of Surrey).





# 5. Conclusion

Based on an exploration of floorplans and insights from listening sessions with BCIT stakeholders, TransFocus surfaced challenges experienced by TN2S people. The current washroom inventory at BCIT is predominantly gender-designated (i.e., women's and men's washrooms). There are lower percentages of all-gender washrooms, typically single-occupancy.

The consultation results repeatedly point to TN2S people having poorer experiences and greater unmet needs related to washrooms across BCIT. In particular, they face more discrimination in washrooms, expend more effort to locate the washrooms they need, and experience more discomfort and health complications.

The information from these efforts yielded critical ideas for adaptation, addition, and removal of design features to improve washroom experiences for TN2S facility users. TransFocus proposed 24 guidelines in order to address existing gaps in availability and distribution of all-gender washrooms at BCIT.

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# **Appendix A - BCIT Washroom Inventory by Building**

TransFocus created this inventory for a total of 47 buildings (excluding residential and those without any washrooms) using floor plans provided by BCIT. Because the inventory was created using documentation rather than conducting physical site visits, the calculations presented may not encompass undocumented changes. In some cases, due to a lack of information from available floorplans, the number of fixtures within a washroom is estimated based on washroom size and layout (highlighted in pink in the table below). This inventory is intended as a starting point and needs further groundtruthing during physical site visits to verify the numbers listed on the next two pages.

Building	Location	Single- occupancy Designated All-gender	Multi-Stall Washroom Designated All-Gender	Total All- Gender Washrooms	Single- occupancy Designated Female	Single- occupancy Designated Male	Multi-Stall Washroom Designated Female	Multi-Stall Designated Male Toilets	Multi-Stall Designated Male Urinals	Total Number of Fixtures in Multi-stall Washrooms
	1st Floor	1	0	1	1	1	13	5	8	28
Aerospace Technology Campus	2nd Floor	1	0	1	0	0	10	4	6	20
	3rd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	8	3	5	16
	4th Floor	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	2	6
	5th Floor	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	2	6
Annacis Island	1st Floor	1	0	1	0	0	15	4	7	26
Campus	2nd Floor	2	0	2	0	0	4	3	3	10
	1st Floor	0	10	10	0	0	5	3	3	11
Burnaby Campus:	2nd Floor	1	10	11	1	1	5	3	3	13
NE1	3rd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	8	6	6	20
	4th Floor	0	0	0	0	0	8	6	6	20
Burnaby Campus:	1st Floor	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	3	7
NE2	2nd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Burnaby Campus:	1st Floor	2	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
NE3	2nd Floor	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Burnaby Campus:	1st Floor	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	4	10
NE4	2nd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Burnaby Campus:	1st Floor	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Burnaby Campus: NE6	2nd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	7	12
Burnaby Campus: NE7	1st Floor	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Burnaby Campus:	1st Floor	0	0	0	0	0	2	5	4	11
NE8	2nd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Burnaby Campus:	1st Floor	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	3	7
NE9	2nd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	5
Burnaby Campus: NE10	1st Floor	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	3	5
Burnaby Campus:	1st Floor	0	1	1	0	0	3	3	2	8
NE12	2nd Floor	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Burnaby Campus: NE16	1st Floor	1	0	1	0	0	0	3	3	6
Burnaby Campus: NE18	1st Floor	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	5
Burnaby Campus:	1st Floor	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
NE20	2nd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Burnaby Campus: NE21	1st Floor	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	5	11
Burnaby Campus: NE22	1st Floor	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	3	7
Burnaby Campus: NE23	1st Floor	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	3	7
Burnaby Campus: NE24	1st Floor	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	3	7
Burnahi Camerra	1st Floor	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	3
Burnaby Campus: NE25	2nd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	4
11223	3rd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	4
Burnaby Campus: NE28	1st Floor	0	0	0	1	0	3	3	0	7
Burnaby Campus: NW1	1st Floor	1	0	1	1	0	2	1	2	6
Burnaby Campus: NW3	1st Floor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2nd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	5
Burnaby Campus:	1st Floor	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
NW5	2nd Floor	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Burnaby Campus:	1st Floor	2	0	2	0	0	0	3	3	6
NW6	2nd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	2	8
Burnaby Campus: NW7	1st Floor	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	4

1



Building	Location	Single- occupancy Designated All-gender	Multi-Stall Washroom Designated All-Gender	Total All- Gender Washrooms	Single- occupancy Designated Female	Single- occupancy Designated Male	Multi-Stall Washroom Designated Female	Multi-Stall Designated Male Toilets	Multi-Stall Designated Male Urinals	Total Number of Fixtures in Multi-stall Washrooms
Burnaby Campus: SE1	1st Floor	2	0	2	0	0	3	7	6	16
	2nd Floor	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	2	6
Burnaby Campus: SE2	1st Floor	2	0	2	1	1	16	6	10	34
	2nd Floor	4	0	4	0	1	10	4	6	21
	3rd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	2	6
Burnaby Campus: SE4	1st Floor	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Burnaby Campus: SE6	1st Floor	0	0	0	0	0	5	2	4	11
	2nd Floor	0	0	0	1	1	8	3	5	18
	3rd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	3	8
Burnaby Campus:	1st Floor	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	2	5
SE8	2nd Floor	1	0	1	0	0	2	1	1	4
Burnaby Campus: SE9	1st Floor	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Burnaby Campus:	1st Floor	1	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	3
SE10	2nd Floor	1	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	3
	1st Floor	1	0	1	0	0	3	1	1	5
Burnaby Campus:	2nd Floor	2	0	2	0	0	5	2	3	10
SE12	3rd Floor	0	1	1	0	0	4	3	3	10
	4th Floor	0	0	0	0	0	6	3	3	12
Dumahu Camana	1st Floor	0	0	0	0	0	5	2	2	9
Burnaby Campus: SE14	2nd Floor	1	0	1	1	0	3	2	2	8
	3rd Floor	1	0	1	0	1	3	2	2	8
Burnaby Campus: SE16	1st Floor	2	0	2	0	1	14	4	6	25
Burnaby Campus:	1st Floor	2	0	2	0	0	3	1	2	6
SE40	2nd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	5
Burnaby Campus:	1st Floor	1	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	2
SE41	2nd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	2	8
Burnaby Campus: SE42	1st Floor	1	0	1	0	0	4	1	2	7
Burnaby Campus:	2nd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	6	1	2	9
SE50	1st Floor	2	0	2	0	0	2	2	2	6
	1st Floor	2	0	2	1	1	18	5	7	32
Burnaby Campus:	2nd Floor	0	0	0	2	2	6	2	2	14
SW1	3rd Floor	0	0	0	1	1	6	2	2	12
	4th Floor	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	6
Burnaby Campus:	1st Floor	1	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	4
SW2	2nd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	4
	3rd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	4
	1st Floor	0	0	0	1	1	9	4	3	18
Burnaby Campus: SW3	2nd Floor	2	0	2	0	0	8	3	1	12
	3rd Floor	0	0	0	1	1	3	8	8	21
Burnaby Campus: SW9	4th Floor	0	0	0	1	1	3	8	8	21
	1st Floor	2	0	2	1	1	0	2	2	6
Centre for Applied	2nd Floor 1st Floor	0	0	0 10	0	0	1	1	0	2
Research & Innovation	2nd Floor	1	6	7	1	1	4	2	2	10
Downtown Campus	1st Floor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2nd Floor	2	2	4	0	0	4	2	2	8
	3rd Floor	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	2	8
	4th Floor	1	0	1	0	0	4	2	2	8
	5th Floor	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	2	8
	6th Floor	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	2	8
	7th Floor	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	2	8
	8th Floor	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	2	8
	1st Floor	4	0	4	0	0	4	2	3	9
Marine Campus	2nd Floor	1	0	1	0	0	4	1	3	8
	3rd Floor	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0

