

September 29, 2014

English Language Support
(Degree, Diploma, and Certificate Programs)
Faculty of International Education
Vancouver Island University
900 Fifth Street
Nanaimo, BC
Canada

Letter of Reference re: Kathleen Bortolin's support of English Language Support initiatives

We are pleased to write a reference regarding Kathleen Bortolin. Over the past couple of semesters, we have found occasion to draw on the considerable expertise of Kathleen in specific initiatives of our program, English Language Support for international students in degree, diploma, and certificate courses at Vancouver Island University.

One such initiative was a focus group we held with seven international students on May 8 2014 at VIU. Kathleen gave guidance to us at all stages of the focus group: being receptive to our germ of an idea, drafting and finalizing questions, giving advertising suggestions, making room arrangements, facilitating the group, and debriefing the results.

It was our first experience holding a focus group, and Kathleen's patience and expertise lent ease and professionalism to the process. Her background with international students was evident both in the forming of questions and in her sensitivity and phrasing as a facilitator. In the debriefing session, she gave valuable insight to the main themes of the focus group's responses.

We have also consulted with Kathleen in matters related to internationalization, student-faculty interface, and digital academic support. In particular, she collaborated in designing and delivering a presentation about VIU's new digital learning commons to the English Language Centre faculty.

Throughout our collaborative and consultative efforts, she has demonstrated respect for participants and enthusiasm for our projects. We would be very happy to continue working with Kathleen in the future.

Sincerely,

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is for Sylvia Arnold and is quite stylized and cursive. The signature on the right is for Les Barclay and is also cursive but more legible.

Sylvia Arnold and Les Barclay (Instructors)