

# INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

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## SKILLS FOR SUCCESS:

**How can vocational training help grow revenues,  
student recruitment and international brand?**

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## Overview of session

- Delegate-led workshop
- Background to UWS
- Vocational training – what it is and why do it?
- Challenges in delivering training
- Student personas in learning design
- The SAFEA case study
- Tackling challenges
- Questions

# About the University of the West of Scotland

- 5 campuses, 4 academic schools
- 17,000 students
- The local university for over 30% of Scotland's population
- Global collaboration with over 100 institutions
- Largest trainer of healthcare workers in Scotland, UK leader in teacher training\*.
- Specialise in vocational and applied programmes



## Background to vocational training demand

- Multiple government agencies around the world have identified that upskilling their workforce is key to economic growth strategy
- In many nations the demand for skills outstrips skilled workers or skilled trainers in these fields, and policy and practice are looking to nations with those skills for academic support



## Background to vocational training demand

Some partners know exactly what they want and have a targeted approach:

### ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CONSULTANCY - ST VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES



**Sector**  
Technical, Vocational  
and STEM



**Region**  
Caribbean

The government is looking for consultancy services for environmental education development.

You must be able to develop a curriculum that covers:

- disaster risk reduction
- climate change mitigation and adaptation

Some are less sure:

### TRAINING PROGRAMMES AND COURSES - KUWAIT

A leading university is looking for UK training programmes and courses in a wide variety of sectors.

## Why run vocational training for overseas clients?

- To build awareness of the university overseas
- Build connections and collaboration opportunities
- Professional development for our staff
- Student opportunities
- Student recruitment
- Course development
- Portfolio diversification
- Income generation



# What are the challenges?

## Discuss in groups:

Think about:

- How the courses differ from 'regular' courses
- Needs of the students or delegates
- Stakeholders involved



## Some of the challenges of delivering vocational training

- Making contacts/ winning the business
- Commercial differences
- Managing expectations
- Realistic outcomes
- Backgrounds of the students/delegates (both educational and cultural)
- Timelines – client vs trainer
- In-country delivery vs inbound groups
- Pricing





## Understanding your students

- The profile of a student on vocational training (particularly short courses) may be very different from our typical understanding of international students
- Administrators, course designers and trainers need to understand the differences in order for programmes to succeed



# Creating student personas (1)

## Persona Card - Learning Design



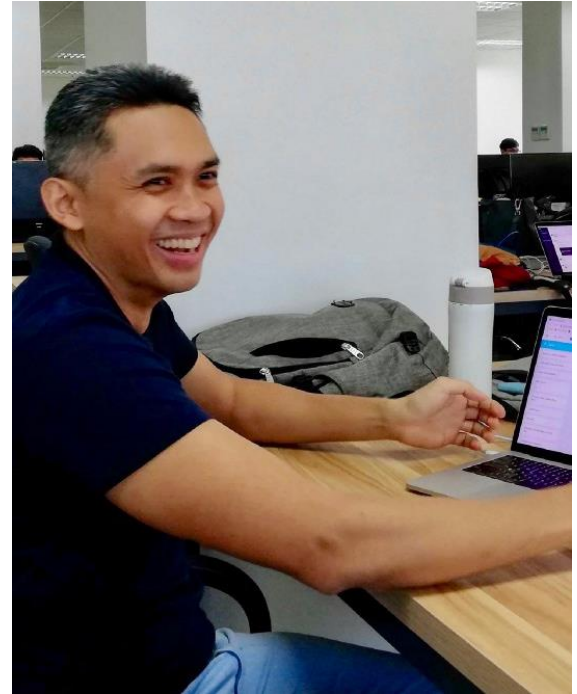
	<b>Name:</b> <b>Gender:</b> <b>Age:</b> <b>Lives in ... with ... Likes ...</b>
<b>Nationality</b>	
<b>Likes &amp; dislikes</b>	
<b>Education and experience</b>	
<b>Role and responsibilities</b>	
<b>Technical skills</b>	
<b>Subject domain skills and knowledge</b>	
<b>Motivation and desires</b>	
<b>Goals and expectations</b>	
<b>Obstacles to their success</b>	
<b>Unique assets</b>	

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## Creating student personas (2)

Four example personas:

- Chinese government official, on a short course on urban reform
- Nurse from Brazil, studying cardiology
- Cabin crew from UAE, on short course in customer service
- Human resource manager for the marine industry, Philippines



## CASE STUDY: SAFEA - background

- Chinese national programme for mid and senior-level public servants, run by the **State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs**
- Overseas experts (including institutions) are approved to deliver vocational/professional level training in selected 'frameworks'
- Groups of 10-20 delegates travel to study for 1-2 weeks in their chosen subject



## CASE STUDY: the UWS experience

- Approved since 2018
- Only Scottish university with approval
- Full time team for coordination & delivery
- Deliver 24 frameworks, including:
  - Waste & Water Management
  - Education reform
  - Human Resources
  - Welfare reform & social security
  - Artificial intelligence
  - Construction engineering



## Why SAFEA for UWS?

- One format providing multiple cohorts
- Our strengths fit their needs
- Use existing infrastructure
- Repeat groups year on year, with cross-promotion possibilities
- Staff professional development
- In line with wider international strategy: PG recruitment & high level connections
- Fits Scotland's national strategy



## SAFEA: Challenges

- Very tight timelines – confirmation sometimes less than a week in advance
- Diverse individuals with differing expectations in one group
- Expectations of programme inclusions sometimes hard to achieve – both in time constraints and possibilities
- University staff lacking in confidence



## Outcomes

- Year 2 feedback – average 98% satisfaction
- Groups returning on a self-funded basis
- New links in China – additional research and training opportunities
- Academics motivated and engaged
- Plans to expand offering into health and new technologies





## Addressing & anticipating challenges

Use the persona to consider:

- How the challenges and issues can be navigated
- How this persona can be used to assist revenue growth, student recruitment and international brand – both within their CPD and on a wider level



# Questions?

