

Between 2019 and 2022, we helped to connect UK colleges with VET institutions in other countries through partnerships aimed at enhancing private sector engagement and boosting the relevance of their offer for both learners and employers.

## Mentoring partnerships

### How they worked

Each UK college provided 12 months of dedicated support to a cluster of four colleges in a focus country, selected through an application process overseen by local ministries and the British Council. Each cluster developed an action plan to agree the focus and activities of the partnership, and completed a self-evaluation at the end of the partnership. UK colleges oversaw the operations of the partnerships, with any necessary support provided by the British Council.

### Who was involved

Nine mentoring partnerships took place between UK and overseas colleges throughout the lifetime of the VET Toolbox.

- Hertford Regional College and Kien Giang Vocational College, Hue Tourism College and Korea Vocational Technology College of Bacgiang (VKTECH) in Viet Nam (2019-21)
- Dudley College and Karachi Tools, Dies and Moulds Centre, Construction Technology Training Institute, Shipyard Training School and Government College of Technology in Pakistan (2020-21)
- South West College and Polytechnics Mauritius Limited with Mauritius Qualifications Authority in Mauritius (2020-22)
- Belfast Metropolitan College and Nswazwi Brigade, Zwenshambe Brigade, Maun Technical College and Selebi Phikwe Technical College in Botswana (2020-22)
- South West College and Accra Technical Training Centre, Walewale Technical Institute and Kumasi Technical University in Ghana (2021-22)
- South Eastern Regional College and Government Advance Technical Training Centre, Aman Institute of Vocational Training, Step Institute of Art, Design and Management and Technical Training Centre, Quetta in Pakistan (2021-22)
- Edinburgh College and Mangochi community Technical College, Lilongwe Technical College, Mzuzu Technical College and Soche Technical College in Malawi (2021-22)
- Isle of Wight College and Taletso TVET College in South Africa (2021-22)
- Herford Regional College and National Apprentice and Industry Training Authority (NAITA), Head Office, NAITA, Colombo, NAITA, Matara and NAITA, Jaffna in Sri Lanka (2021-22)

### What worked well

- Each UK college provided a wide range of experts to support partnership themes, whose input proved to be valuable and inspirational to the cluster colleges.
- All participants valued learning from the experience of their international partners facing similar challenges.
- Activities were carefully planned, and each cluster identified additional themes that were relevant to their needs. The high-quality training provided by UK colleges was valued by participants and helped to develop their confidence in engaging with employers.
- Participating colleges valued an opportunity to broaden their skills and incorporate different members of staff into international work. Cluster colleges benefited from access to a wide range of materials shared by the UK colleges, including teaching materials, policies and other documents, which were customised to improve practice in pedagogy, management and employer engagement

### Impact

As a result of the supportive relationships formed, many partner colleges have noted increased knowledge and confidence to address challenges in their own institutions and increased motivation to implement change.

Early impact of the partnerships includes updated curricula, greater engagement with employers and improved management processes, resulting in higher rates of student satisfaction and retention. Many partners believe the partnerships have helped them make progress towards achieving international standards in key areas of their work. Others highlight the higher level of skills students are developing as they benefit from new internship opportunities.

“It gave us knowledge, energy and drive to forge ahead and build partnerships with industries.”

**Lilongwe Technical College, Malawi**

“It used to be difficult to place students in enterprises. Now we have good relationships with many businesses, who now choose to recruit our students. The number of internships has risen significantly and students can now put theory into practice.”

**Partner college in Viet Nam**

