

VSA Assignment Description

Assignment Title	Plumbing Construction Specialist
Assignment Modality	Standard
Assignment Number	42107
Country	FIJI
Location	Suva
Partner Organisation	Pacific Polytech
Duration	12 months

Sustainable Development Goals



1. Partner Organisation Overview

Pacific Polytech provides vocational education and targets school dropouts in rural and urban areas in professions that are in high demand in Fiji. Pacific Polytech is a registered not-for-profit technical training institution in Fiji, founded to address the gap in technical education created by the closure of the Technical Colleges of Fiji (TCF) in late 2020. TCF's closure left a significant void in the delivery of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), negatively impacting the economy by reducing the supply of skilled workers across key sectors such as manufacturing, construction, and services. Established in March 2021 by former TCF staff, Pacific Polytech aims to fill this gap by providing accessible TVET opportunities, particularly to those with limited educational options.

Pacific Polytech work to equip students with the skills and qualifications necessary for better employment prospects and improved livelihoods. With campuses across Fiji, including in Suva, Lautoka, Tavua, Nausori, Labasa, Nadi, and Bua, we reach both urban and rural communities. We are also expanding, with four new campuses in development and plans to establish an additional four by the end of 2024 in the Maritime region. Through this growth, Pacific Polytech is committed to strengthening Fiji's workforce and supporting economic development. There is interest to also address the skill gap in these demand areas. The overall outcome is to address existing national skills shortage and skills gap, while upskilling vulnerable youths for employment.

2. Assignment Overview

Pacific Polytech seeks input from actual practitioners, with experience in the field, to review our Provider Qualifications (PQs), that is developed by Pacific Polytech, to get a fresh perspective in the field of **Construction: Carpentry, Block Laying, Painting, Tiling, Plumbing, Welding** (any of these specialised areas / or 1 or two or more of these 'areas'); and to support skills transfer to our current trainers in these fields. We aim to enhance our training quality through feedback on our PQs and through Training of Trainers, as well as having trainers collaborate directly with our instructors and students. This partnership will improve training standards, increase employment opportunities for graduates, and elevate the organization's reputation. The role will be carrying out in-situ training and traveling across Fiji to relevant campuses to support monitoring and coaching of trainers in their delivery.

3. Goal/Outcomes/Outputs

Goal

Pacific Polytech's goal for this assignment is that: -

- 1) Provider Qualifications (PQ's) in the field of construction are reviewed, updated as appropriate, passed by Higher Education Commission Fiji (HECF) and being implemented as part of training being delivered by Pacific Polytech
- 2) Local trainers in the field of construction having the added confidence of having undergone "Training of Trainer" courses and being more knowledgeable and effective when training their students
- 3) Students graduate with sound knowledge in the field of construction which will help them have more certainty in obtaining jobs - as the industry will be aware of the extra expertise that is now within the organisation.

Outcome 1

Pacific Polytech has PQs in the field of construction that is updated and approved by the Programme Advisory Committee.

- Working with the Assistant Director Academic, the volunteer will collaborate with the Head of School of Trades & Technology and the Head of Department: Construction to:
- Review the current PQs being delivered and those under development.
- Identify gaps and suggest changes where appropriate, incorporating these once changes have been confirmed by the team

Outcome 2

Trainers in all campuses of PP throughout Fiji are trained in construction that the volunteer has experience on.

The volunteer will be working with the Assistant Director Academic to:

- Deliver training of the trainers' workshops to local trainers.
- Observe and provide coaching to local trainers in their education delivery with the students (at the training labs on site).
- Measure skills transfer progress through continuous monitoring and evaluation by the Volunteer, assessing the improvements/quality of trainers who have undergone the 'Trainer of Trainer' sessions and areas for further training.
- Provide recommendations on counterpart's progress to the Director.

4. Reporting, Working Relationships and Capacity Building

The volunteer will work closely with the Heads of Schools and the Director to assess the PQs and will be engaged directly with the trainers for skills transfers and coaching on the training delivery to students. The role will work closely with the Head of School Construction, report to the Assistant Director Academic and be accountable to Pacific Polytech's Director.

At the individual level, the Assistant Director of Academic Affairs and the Head of the School of Construction will gain valuable experience working alongside the volunteer in the development of Provider Qualifications (PQs) and training the trainers' modules. Pacific Polytech trainers will also benefit from upskilling and coaching, enabling them to deliver more effective training to students. Additionally, students will directly benefit from the updates to the PQs, enhancing their learning experience. At the organizational level, Pacific Polytech will see improvements in the quality and effectiveness of its PQs. At the sector level, if the PQs prove to be more effective and relevant to societal needs, they could be adopted by Fiji Quality Standards. Finally, at the community level, graduates will be job-ready for industries projected to have a high demand for skilled workers.

The volunteer and Pacific Polytech will have an ongoing relationship with the VSA Programme Manager in terms of assignment monitoring, reporting, professional advice and personal support.

As needs on the ground may change over time, the volunteer is encouraged to review and update the Assignment Description on arrival in consultation with the partner organisation and VSA Programme Manager. By their very nature, development situations can involve significant change, so it is advisable that the volunteer periodically reviews and reflects on the Assignment Description throughout the Assignment to ensure the best development outcomes are being achieved.

5. Selection Criteria/Position Requirements

Professional Specifications

Essential

- Minimum of five years of being an actual practitioner in the field of CONSTRUCTION (in any of the following areas: Construction: Carpentry, Block Laying, Painting, Tiling, Plumbing, Welding)

Desirable

- A Diploma or Degree in the field of Construction.
- Candidates with 10 years (+) experience in plumbing construction are encouraged to apply.

Personal Specifications

Essential

- Able to interact well with "grassroots" people and people in the villages/rural communities.
- A person dedicated to improving the lives and providing "second chance" in life to students who "dropped out" of the system due to failing exams or being unable to afford attending the formal school system, etc.
- Able to move around and "live" in village (& rural) settings for short periods of time, as and when required.
- 'Can do' attitude and proactive in progressing targeted outcomes.

Desirable

- Experience working in the Pacific

6. VSA Essential Attributes

- Commitment to volunteering, to VSA and to the partner organisation

- Cross cultural awareness
- Adaptability and a willingness to approach change or newness positively
- Able to form good relationships, both personally and professionally, with work colleagues and in the community
- Resilience and an ability to manage setbacks
- Initiative and resourcefulness
- An ability to facilitate learning through skills exchange

7. Country Context

For more information about Fiji, see <https://vsa.org.nz/our-work/countryregion/fiji/>

8. Living and Working Situation

Location: Nabua or Nausori campus (Suva - Nausori corridor) – Either campus is fully fenced, in a safe neighbourhood. Transport is readily available and passes on the nearby main road so travel to work will be easy by public transport. Taxis are used by a great number of staff as their costs are very reasonable.

Office space: desk, air conditioning, internet access, around 8 staff in total in that staff room. Training space (training of trainers) + of students: in a classroom with desks etc + open air training: (covered space for actual competency-based training: learning-while-doing).

Additional Information

Standard Assignment (12 months or more)

Residency status

VSA volunteers must be New Zealand citizens or have New Zealand permanent residency status, and currently living in NZ.

Pre-departure briefing

As part of the volunteer's contract, successful candidates will be required to take part in a pre-departure briefing course run by VSA in Wellington and complete all required pre-reading.

Final appointment

Final appointment will be subject to satisfactory medical and immigration clearances (costs covered by VSA), partner organisation acceptance, and successful completion of the pre-departure briefing course.

Family status

VSA supports partners to accompany volunteers on assignments of six months or longer. However, volunteers with accompanying dependents will not be considered for this assignment.

Fundraising

VSA funding stakeholders are both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) and donors. We ask volunteers and accompanying partners to fundraise to help cover the cost of sending volunteers throughout the Pacific and beyond. Fundraising can be as simple as doing something you enjoy with a group or friends, and our Fundraising team is available to help you every step of the way.

Vaccination requirements

Potential volunteers are advised that VSA's insurers require volunteers to be vaccinated, prior to departure, in accordance with the instructions of VSA's medical adviser. VSA covers the cost of any required vaccinations.

Children's Act

While on assignment, VSA volunteers may be required to work with children and/or may choose to participate in informal activities in their own time that involve interactions with children (such as

coaching teams or teaching English). VSA is committed to the protection of vulnerable children and adults, which also includes meeting our commitment under the Children's Act 2014.

The information requested during the application process is necessary to assist VSA to determine applicant suitability to work and/or interact regularly with children, and is part of a series of pre-selection checks undertaken on all applicants for VSA assignments.

Volunteer package

The volunteer's package includes the following:

Reimbursements and grants

1. The volunteer may be entitled to an establishment grant to help them set up in their country of assignment, and a rest and respite grant after a specified period of active service in-country to encourage the volunteer to take a break away from the immediate assignment location. These grants depend on the length and location of the assignment. The volunteer's contract will specify any grant entitlements.
2. A resettlement grant of NZ\$200 will be paid for each month the volunteer is on assignment. This is payable on completion of the assignment.
3. The volunteer will receive a monthly living allowance of FJD 1,520.

Accommodation

Basic, comfortable furnished accommodation will be sourced by VSA. In some circumstances volunteers may be asked to share accommodation.

Airfares and baggage allowance

VSA will provide the volunteer with economy airfares to and from New Zealand for their assignment plus a baggage allowance.

Insurance

VSA will provide travel insurance to cover baggage and personal property, and non-routine medical expenses for the duration of the assignment. Further details of the insurance cover will be provided during the volunteer pre-departure briefing.

Utilities

VSA will reimburse volunteers reasonable expenses for household utilities while on assignment.

Final terms and conditions relating to the specific volunteer assignment will be confirmed in a personalised volunteer contract.