

RAISING THE BAR: THE CASE FOR AGENT TRAINING IN BC

FRIDAY, JANUARY 14, 2011

1:30-4:30 PM

SFU HARBOUR CENTRE

ROOM 1400

Agents and education consultants play a critical role in the international student recruitment process for many institutions and districts in British Columbia. Across the sector, from K-12 districts to language schools to universities and colleges, effective agent relationships often make the difference between exceeding enrollment targets or falling short, particularly in agent-driven student markets such as India, Korea, Brazil, Germany, and China. While most districts and institutions have programs in place for training new agents, standards of delivery vary widely, and appropriate screening, training, and annual reviews may be difficult for some smaller institutions.

Other jurisdictions, such as Australia and New Zealand, have more formal and often sector-wide training and agent accreditation schemes in place. Agents may be trained by a specialized body, achieve some form of certification, and their names be published in a central online directory for the benefit of students, parents, governments, and institutions. The experience in these jurisdictions – a quality driven approach to education consultants and agents, and a transparent approach to achieving consensual formal standards – has been invaluable to the growth of the international education sector and to the consumer protection of the individual student.

Over the past two years, BCCIE has piloted a number of agent training formats during Team BC Missions and other marketing events. Based on broad stakeholder feedback, and the advice of international partners, we are now in the planning stages of developing a more robust, integrated BC recognition scheme for agents who work with BC districts and institutions.

Join BCCIE staff as we explore the successful ‘New Zealand Specialist Agent’ training module and present highlights from the experiences of other jurisdictions in formal agent training. A panel of BC sector representatives will also offer case studies for effective training and will discuss their thoughts on a province-wide model. In the final hour, we will open the discussion to the audience to gather your thoughts and feedback on the case for agent training in BC.

This event is free and will follow our morning K-12 Roundtable. To attend these events, please register online at www.bccie.bc.ca/educators/professional-development before **Tuesday, January 11**. Our full 2010-11 schedule of events is now online and may be accessed via the For Educators section of www.bccie.bc.ca. For those unable to attend, a follow-up webinar summarizing the discussion will be held in late January.