

Exporting Insights

Overview of the MENA Market

Agenda

- Introduction
- Overview of the middle east market
- Middle east & Asia international schools
- GESS Dubai - What to expect as an exhibitor
- GESS Dubai – A BESA member case study
- BESA & DBT at GESS
- Q&A



Photo by [Darcey Beau](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Introduction

Dave Smith
BESA





Overview of the middle east market

Danny Yeow
GEST Consultancy



Middle east market

- UK products & Services considered to be of the highest quality available.
- Competitive market – want best of breed solutions
- Special relationships with several countries and the UK (Saudi, UAE, Jordan etc.)
- Time zone proximity to UK, makes communications easier.
- Lots of similarities with the UK
- Generation of product & services
- Localise your offering.
- Must be aware of local customs and sensitivities. Be aware of local religion, culture & customs.



Strategic overview

- Government
- Vendors/Partners
- Affiliations/Associations
- Prestigious Schools/Groups
- Schools



Government

- Special relationships with several countries and the UK (Saudi, UAE, Jordan etc.)
 - Department of Business and Trade
 - British Educational Suppliers Association
- Vision 2030 – UAE, KSA
- TATWEER, TETCO – KSA opportunity
- NEOM
- 60% of schools in UAE are private international schools, with groups also buying charter schools.



Vendors / Partners

- Wide range of partners and distributors to work with – in a range of geographies
- Leverage local knowledge, local presence and potential network
- Simplify logistics
- Considerations
 - Build a strong relationship and do your background checks
 - Setting up your own entity is much easier now



Associations

- GESS - Great events in the region, webinars providing insight and CPD
- BESA - Provide a lot of help for events and high level opportunities too
- BSME - British Schools Middle East, events and CPD
- ISC Research - Hugely insightful market intelligence to make informed decisions and sales/marketing approach
- ISN - Networking platform, easier entry



International School Groups

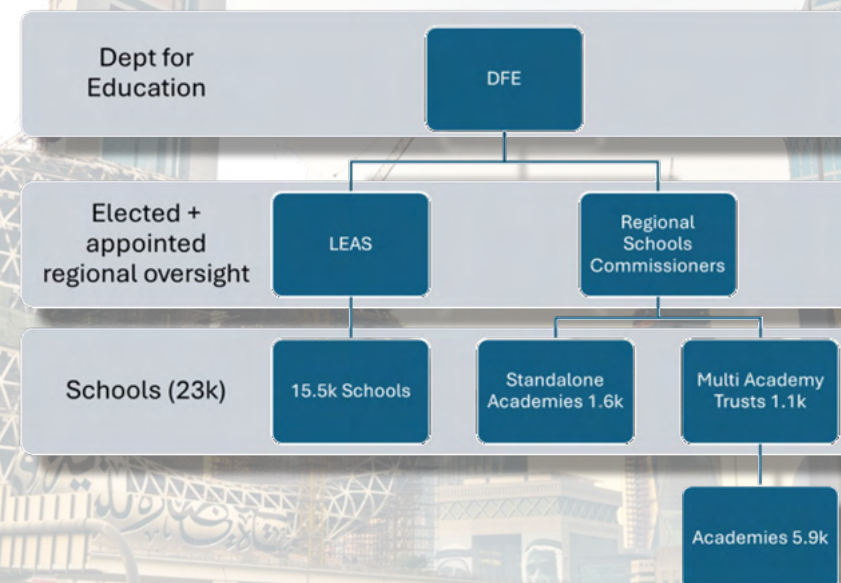
- Large number of international school groups in the region and growing
- Similarities to working with MATs in the UK
- Different ownership structures and operational models

UK School System - Academies

2010



2018



Individual schools

- Growing market
- Competitive
- Complete autonomy of their budget
- Fees are typically high comparative to worldwide market
- Software/supplier generation
- Partner with schools to localise and provide reference





Middle east & Asia international school market

Kim Lynch

Business development manager

ISC Research



International schools data you can trust

About ISC Research

The most comprehensive, current and objective data and intelligence on the world's international schools.

30 years of global, regional and local data and trends

- Inform strategy
- Understand market segments
- Benchmark against schools
- Explore market practice
- Identify market potential

Close to 200k
datapoints
collected
and verified
in 2023

19,300

ON CURRICULUM

45,751

ON ENROLMENT

47,881

ON TUITION FEES

75,064

ON CONTACTS

10 years of global growth



SCHOOLS

49
%

From 9,402
schools
to 14,010



STUDENTS

52
%

From 4.5 million
students
to 6.9 million



STAFF

57
%

From 423,270
teaching staff
to 664,645



TOTAL FEE INCOME

72%

From \$35.5 billion
to \$60.9 billion

Groups and brands

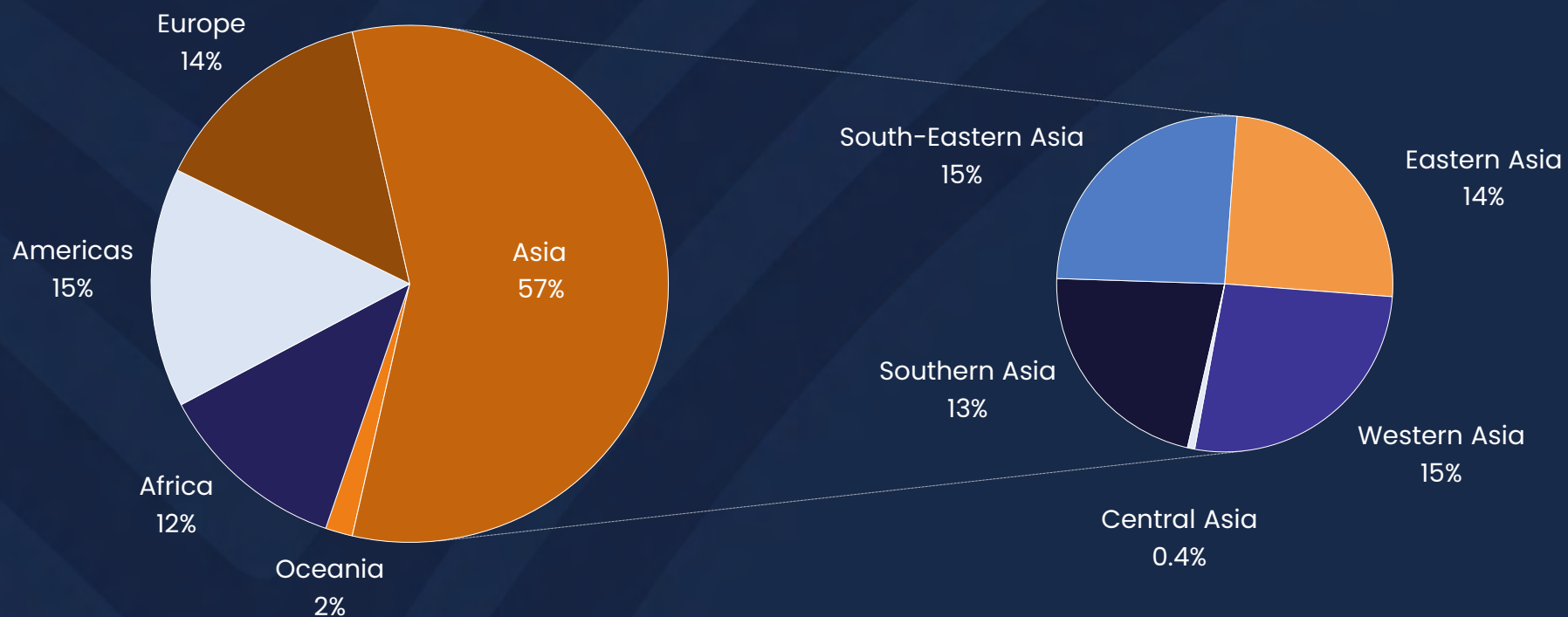
International schools part of
a school group

37%

181%

Growth in foreign independent
brand campuses since 2014

Global market by regions



Regional breakdown of English medium international schools, January 2024 data

Western Asia's leading countries

International schools



International school students



Why can international schools differentiate?

- More autonomy
- Potential to adapt more quickly to new educational developments and solutions
- Potential to attract a diverse global talent pool of teachers and leaders
- Requirement for English as an additional language (EAL) provision
- Good educational standards which drives up quality





GESS Dubai

What to expect as an exhibitor

Steve Whitley
EdTech Consulting



What is it?

- A vibrant show, similar to BETT UK, but smaller:
 - 8000+ Delegates
 - 350+ Exhibitors
- Spans all of education, at all ages, with a significant focus on EdTech products and services.
- Attended by:
 - UAE state schools
 - International schools
 - Resellers
 - Teachers & School leaders
 - School & Group owners



GESS

DUBAI

Dubai World Trade Centre

The 17th edition of GESS Dubai returns in 2024 with an exhibition showcasing a wide range of educational products from suppliers from all corners of the world and a CPD accredited conference featuring high level speakers and innovative content.

Sheikh Saeed Halls 1-3

Who visits?

- There will be visitors from all around the region and further afield:
 - Wider UAE (Abu Dhabi, Sharjah etc.)
 - Saudi Arabia
 - Oman
 - Kuwait
 - Jordan
 - Malaysia
 - Pakistan
 - Indonesia
 - Etc.



GESS DUBAI

14 November

Dubai World Trade Centre

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Sheikh Saeed Halls 1-3

Planning!

- Plan to be in Dubai for at least 2 or 3 days before or after the show, consider:
 - Book meetings with schools for these days.
 - Host a presentation at a hotel or in a school.
 - Meet with existing customers.
 - Arrange meetings with potential partners.
 - Be prepared to travel to other emirates (Abu Dhabi, Sharja etc.)
- Plan your visit well in advance!
 - Ensure your stand graphics. Furniture, AV equipment are booked well in advance.
 - Ship goods via recommended provider – or risk having nothing on stand!
- Tip - Consider onward travel to Asia...



GESS DUBAI

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Sheikh Zayed Halls 1-3



GESS Dubai

BESA member Case Study

The Happy Confident Company

Ian Hunter

Lime Education Consulting



How was it for you?

- The company
- Their story
- The road to Dubai
- The reality
- The return?

Lime

the
flappy
Confident
company

What would you do differently?

- Create a longer, better runway
- Create more noise beforehand
- Generate attendance and draw people to the event and stand
- Get a better location
- Promote the panel and increase audience
- Win an award!

Lime

the
flappy
Confident
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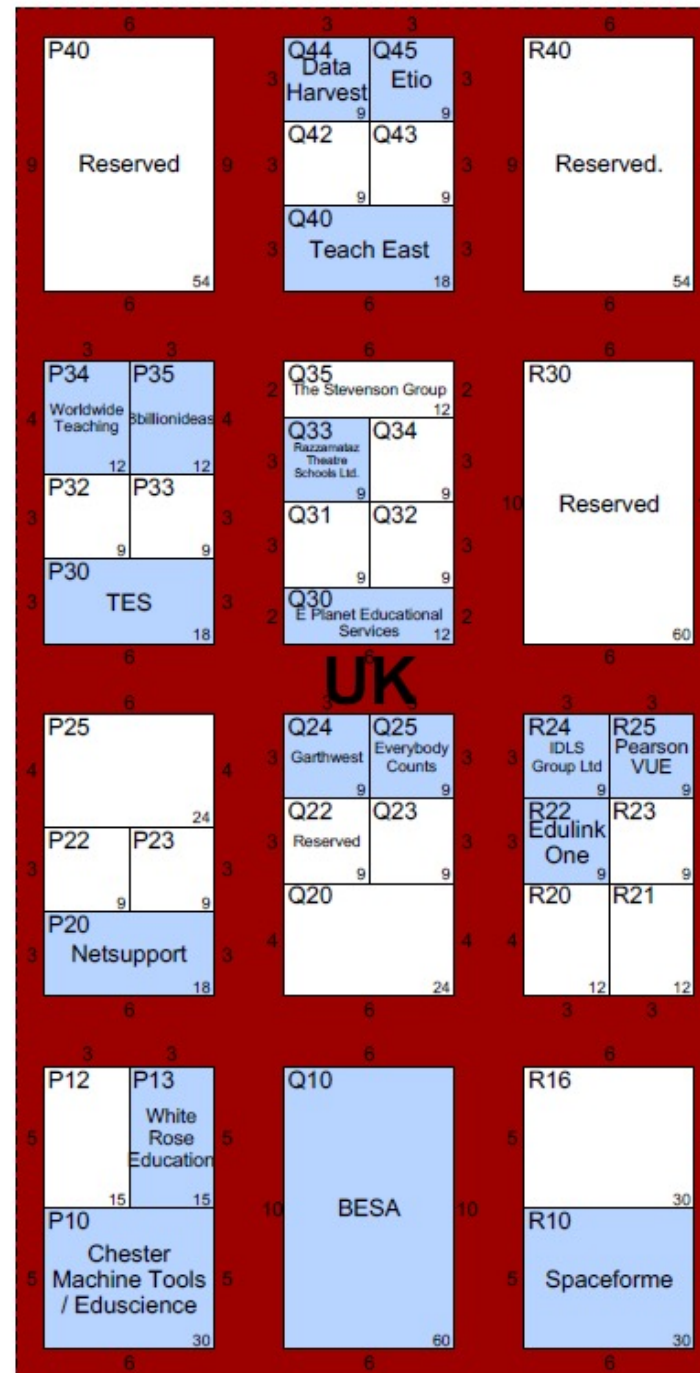


BESA and DBT at GESS Dubai

Dave Smith
BESA

GESS Dubai 2024

UK Pavilion 2024



Who's who

- BESA's Acting Director General Julia Garvey and Events Manager Samantha Marsh will be attending the event
- BESA will be supporting companies exhibiting on the UK pavilion and representing the wider BESA membership at the event.
- GESS Dubai team is headed by Jasper Ford and Joana Oliveira. The operations team will be on site throughout.
- More than 20 UK companies already signed-up to exhibit as part of the UK Pavilion – with 40 stand spaces available.

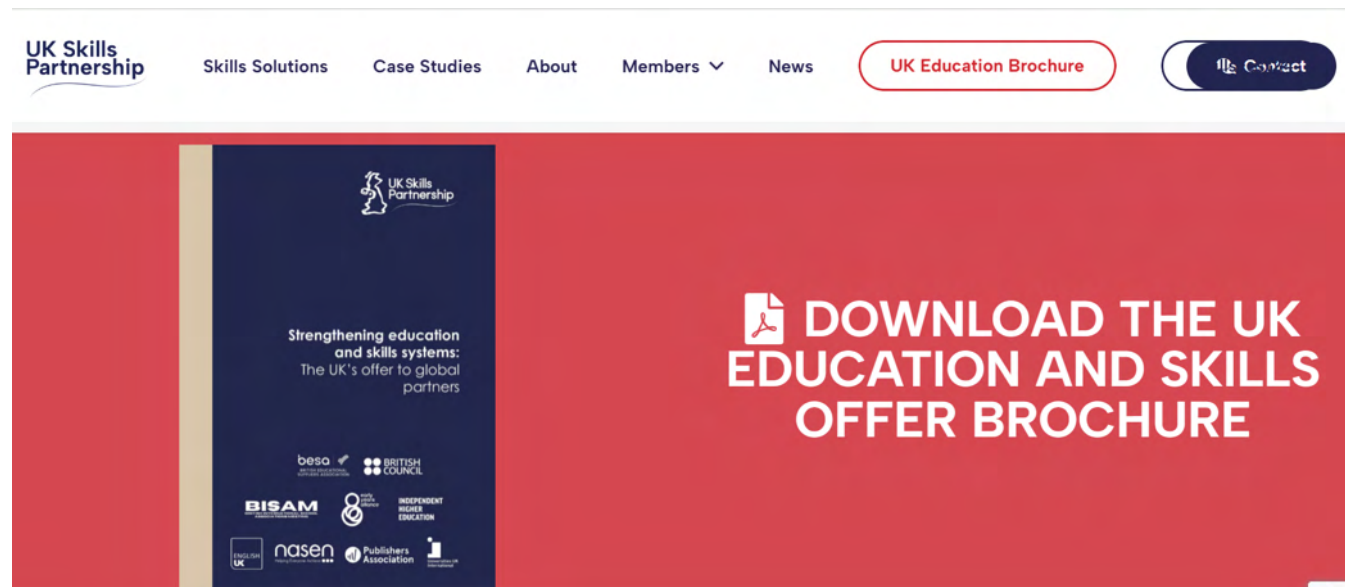
GESS Dubai 2024

Support from the Department of Business and Trade (DBT)

- Networking reception with local VIPs at the UK Embassy
- Hoping to have Northern Powerhouse in attendance
- Brochure with exhibitor details will be emailed to all contacts in the region
- UK's High Commissioner for Dubai was in attendance in 2023
- Collaboration with ISC – Breakfast presentation on Day 2 on international schools in the region

GESS Dubai 2024

UK Education and Skills Offer



<https://ukskillspartnership.org.uk/uk-education/>

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DBT

- Krishna Joshi – Head of International Education
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How to get the most out of your visit

Plan ahead

- Set realistic objectives for the show
- Check the floor plan of the event and conference programme
- Be flexible with your travel itinerary if possible
- Prepare a slide deck both online and a print version
- Watch the showreel of previous GESS Dubai events
- Make appointments in advance
- Read market briefings
- Plan and launch your pre-event marketing and PR

Everything you need to get
yourself and your goods to
the event

Shipping

- Shipping is often expensive and can take a long time
 - Use a reputable company
 - Can you take what you need on the plane with you?
- What to do if your equipment fails, gets lost in transit or you forget something
 - Speak to the BESA team
 - Try the exhibition organisers office
 - Ask other exhibitors – usually very helpful

Travel and accommodation options

- Arrive a day in advance
- The exhibition is being held at The World Trade Centre and there are a number of different travel options to the venue
 - Hail ride apps are available including Uber and Careem
 - Metered taxis via your hotel
 - World Trade Centre station on the Metro
 - Car parking available on site
- A number of [hotel options](#) available onsite

What to take with you

- Business cards
- Currency
- Chargers for electricity outlets
- eSIM
- Medicine and first aid kit

At the show

Make the most of the event

- Check out the [full agendas](#) in advance
- Attend the opening ceremony
- Identify sessions of relevance to you
- Meet other exhibitors the night before
- Attend the GESS Awards

At the show

At the end of the show

- Breaking down and exiting – don't leave early, you might miss out on a potential partnership
- Shipping back to the UK is expensive
- Sell or donate? In return for a pilot scheme or PR

At the show

9 things every event professional needs on their stand at all times

1. Wi-Fi
2. Water
3. Way of recording leads
4. Information about your company/product
5. First aid kit
6. Business cards
7. Food
8. Wipes (for cleaning furniture/kit down at beginning and end of each day)
9. Hand sanitiser

Generating leads and following up

- Be selective with conversations on the stand
- Use your time wisely
- Be wary of agreeing exclusivity
- Take blank business cards
- Follow up immediately and repeat
- Remember your objectives
- Rebook for 2025?

Q&A



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