



**Sultan Qaboos Univeristy**  
**College of Economics and Political Science**  
**Postgraduate Programmes**  
**MARKETING PLAN**

**TARGETS**

1. International employees of corporate partners in Oman.
2. Expatriates living and working within the GCC.
3. GCC citizens.
4. Citizens of other Arab countries.
5. International audience.

**SITUATION  
ANALYSIS**

**Strengths**

- SQU's status as the only public university in the Sultanate is a clear strength.
- A strong awareness of and connection to the College unites alumni and community members across generations and programmes.
- Students benefit from access to outstanding faculty members who are recognised for teaching and academic contributions.
- Affiliation with two world-class business accreditation organisations: the European Foundation Management Development (EFMD), and the American Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) increases standing in the local and global community.
- There is a significant amount of momentum created by the current accreditation initiative and built further by current leadership.
- Solid library resources, particularly electronic resources.

	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limited attention to brand identity.</li> <li>▪ Limited resources for marketing expenditures over a number of years due to the economic downturn.</li> <li>▪ Limited facilities and infrastructure compared to international standards.</li> </ul> <p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increased demand for postgraduate programmes.</li> <li>▪ Safe and peaceful country with a unique environment attractive to international students.</li> <li>▪ Growth in multinational companies entering the country, providing opportunities for developing further links with industry.</li> </ul> <p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Competing postgraduate programmes in Oman.</li> <li>▪ Increased competition in the form of online courses which are not offered by the College.</li> </ul>
<b>POSITION STATEMENT</b>	CEPS' talented and experienced faculty inspires students to examine issues critically, think creatively and act effectively. By providing industry-based and research-informed innovative postgraduate programmes, we equip our postgraduate students with workplace-ready experience and knowledge, or the ability to pursue further graduate studies.
<b>UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oman's first, largest and only public university.</li> <li>• Distinguished faculty.</li> <li>• Extensive library access.</li> <li>• Strong industry links.</li> </ul>

<p><b>COMPETITORS</b></p>	<p><b>Within country:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Majan College</li> <li>• Gulf College</li> <li>• Modern College of Business and Finance</li> <li>• Sohar University</li> <li>• Nizwa University</li> <li>• College of Banking and Financial Studies</li> </ul> <p><b>Universities and colleges in neighbouring GCC countries.</b></p> <p><b>Online programmes offered by regional and international providers.</b></p>
<p><b>OBJECTIVES</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop integrated marketing communications by implementing branding practices within the College that include the development of a clear brand identity for the College, and the postgraduate programmes.</li> <li>• Improve brand image amongst respective international students.</li> <li>• Build and extend affinity for the College, particularly among corporate partners.</li> <li>• Increase awareness of the postgraduate programmes in the business community to facilitate future employment.</li> </ul> <p>These objectives are designed to emphasise the College’s distinctive postgraduate programmes, distinguished faculty and other key stakeholders. The Deanship of Postgraduate Studies in collaboration with the Deanship of External Relations and Internationalisation, and the individual postgraduate programme directors will play key roles in the implementation of this plan.</p>

<p><b>GOALS</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 1</b> Develop and launch a branding campaign in order to target local corporate partners and international audiences to enhance visibility of all postgraduate degree and postgraduate certification programmes offered by the CEPs/University.</p> <p><b>Goal 2</b> Raise awareness and improve knowledge of the postgraduate programmes offered by CEPs.</p> <p><b>Goal 3</b> Position CEPs as an internationally recognised and innovative college that welcomes international student enrolments in its postgraduate programmes (MBA, MSc and MA IRSS).</p> <p><b>Goal 4</b> Optimise digital presence of the postgraduate programmes offered by CEPs.</p> <p><b>Goal 5</b> Develop collaborative research projects with national and international partners.</p>	
GOAL	STRATEGY	TACTICS
<p><b>Goal 1</b> Develop and launch a branding campaign in order to target local corporate partners and international audiences to enhance visibility of all postgraduate degree and postgraduate</p>	<p>1.1 Develop marketing communications and branding campaigns for MBA, MSc IS and MA IRSS programmes that will clearly define and articulate CEPs' core <i>brand values</i> and communicate that articulation to the broader university community and the marketplace.</p>	<p>1.1a Design promotional videos to help infuse the CEPs brand position into all external communication.</p> <p>1.1b Create a tagline that reflects the aims of the postgraduate programmes.</p> <p>1.1c Create a direct marketing campaign targeting international employees of our corporate partners and advisory board members.</p>

certification programmes offered by the College.	<p>1.2 Design marketing communications tools to communicate CEPS' <i>brand values</i> to national international targets to be used online and at recruitment events.</p> <p>1.3 Build the College's <i>brand reputation</i> through social and digital networks.</p>	<p>1.1d Identify and adopt a brand ambassador with International exposure.</p> <p>1.1e Publish a bi-monthly newsletter to educate readers and industries about the exciting new developments and on-going programmes.</p> <p>1.2a Design an overall brochure (both domestic and international) for student recruitment and image development as a first look at the postgraduate College degree programmes.</p> <p>1.3a Create a FB social media page to reflect current postgraduate and MBA graduate college resources, events, and faculty mentorship.</p> <p>1.3b Add new social media accounts such as LinkedIn to promote postgraduate degree programmes and certificates.</p>
<p><b>Goal 2</b> Raise awareness and improve knowledge of CEPS' postgraduate programmes.</p>	<p>2.1 Design events, promotional and marketing materials for the postgraduate College Student Ambassador Programme.</p>	<p>2.1a Create a series of (initially two) videos that illustrate key distinctions and provide awareness of CEPS' postgraduate programmes featuring faculty and students.</p> <p>2.1b Identify suitable channels for dissemination of videos, such as social media platforms, higher education exhibitions, and career fairs both internationally and locally.</p>

		<p>2.1c Develop a partnership with OmanAir to leverage inflight promotion on national and international flights.</p> <p>2.1d Design and procure corporate merchandise that illustrates CEPS postgraduate programmes.</p> <p>2.1e Use brand ambassador to communicate the postgraduate programmes.</p>
<p><b>Goal 3</b> Position CEPS as an internationally recognised and innovative college that welcomes international student enrolments in its postgraduate programmes (MBA, MSc and MA IRSS).</p>	<p>3.1 Maintain strong ratio of qualified international faculty members.</p> <p>3.2 Communicate the postgraduate programmes offered by CEPS to international audience (abroad, GCC countries, international employees of corporate partners etc.).</p> <p>3.3 Promote postgraduate programmes at international and local conferences, exhibitions and academic journals.</p>	<p>3.1a Continue to provide attractive benefits packages to expatriate appointees</p> <p>3.1b Provide conference funding for active researchers to present at international conferences and network with potential new staff.</p> <p>3.2a Assign international student recruitment agencies to recruit students for the postgraduate programmes.</p> <p>3.2b Design recruitment and testimonial videos from currently enrolled postgraduate students and alumnus for website.</p> <p>3.3a Develop partnerships with academic and trade exhibitions and conferences.</p> <p>3.3b Identify electronic higher education publications specialising in student advancement. Contact editors to pitch the idea of writing articles positioning CEPS and Oman as an attractive destination for postgraduate studies.</p>

<b>Goal 4</b> Optimise digital presence of postgraduate programmes offered by CEPS.	4.1 Design processes to monitor website traffic to the postgraduate programmes.  4.2 Develop and maintain pages for postgraduate programmes on social media.  4.3 Increase use of technology and e-learning for postgraduate students	4.1a Subscribe to Google analytics to track visits to the postgraduate programmes pages of the website and selected links activity.  4.1b Optimise search engine traffic to the Postgraduate Programmes pages of the website.  4.2a Use social media platforms to communicate about postgraduate programmes: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, SlideShare, Tumblr, Instagram.  4.3a Explore the use of Apps (such as Kahoots and Poll Everywhere) to increase interaction and engagement of postgraduate students.
<b>Goal 5</b> Develop collaborative research projects with national and international partners	5.1 Pursue students exchange initiative with University of Utara (Malaysia).  5.2 Expand research data collection through international students enrolled on post-graduate courses.	5.1a Sign Agreement with University of Utara.  5.1b Design and schedule a programme for exchange visits.  5.1c Assign a coordinator from each university to explore the extent of collaboration potential.  5.2a Liaise with Course Coordinators to help encourage postgraduate students to engage in cross-cultural research.  5.2b Explore opportunities for research funding from partner corporations and university sources for cross-cultural data collection.

	<p>5.3 Develop Masters by thesis programmes to enhance research opportunities through students and supervising faculty.</p>	<p>5.2c Encourage faculty to partner with postgraduate students to undertake and publish research.</p> <p>5.3a Run formal supervision training programmes for faculty members interested in supervising Masters by thesis programmes.</p> <p>5.3b Emphasise to students the benefits and value of undertaking a Masters by thesis.</p> <p>5.3c Offer preparatory courses that develop skills required to undertake a research thesis.</p>
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