



A Virtual Reality Approach to Safety Messaging.

A Four-Year Collaboration with Marketing Students & Northamptonshire PFCC.

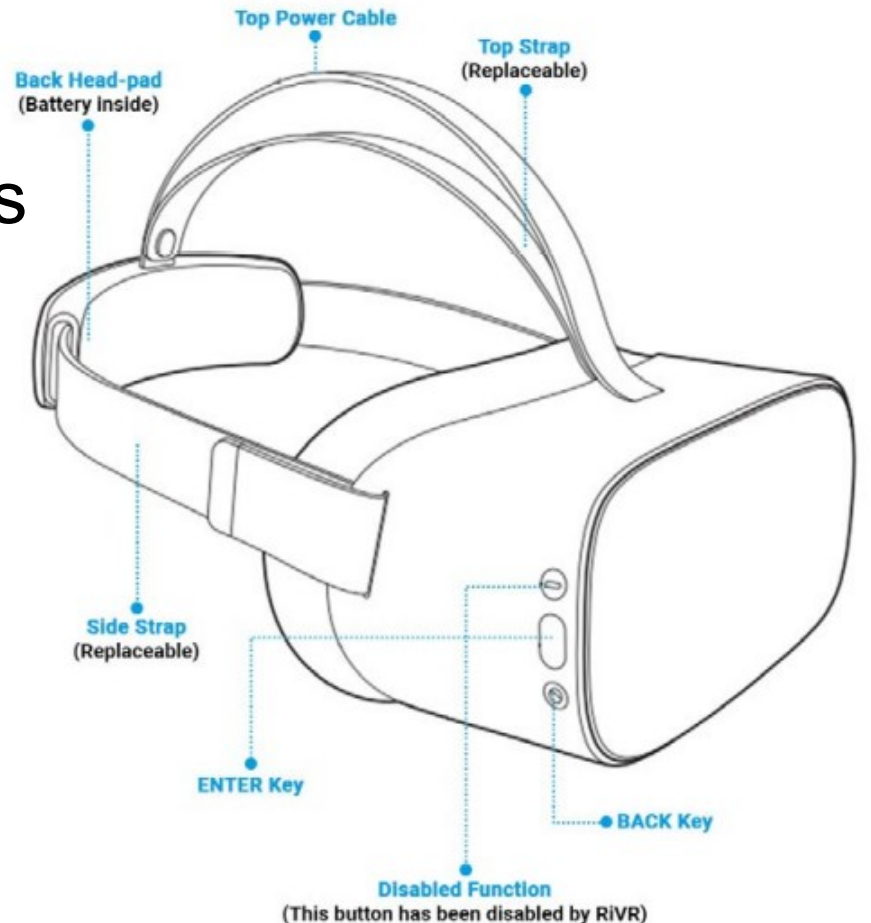
Introduction to the Project.

Lecturers | Safety team | Technicians

Creating VR scenarios for safety-related topics

Embedded in comms module

Non-media marketing students engaging in full-cycle VR production



Collaboration with Northamptonshire PFCC



Why VR: A modern, immersive way to communicate safety messages and initiatives

Key technology: VR classroom in a box and Insta 360 kit supplied by RiVR

Purchased using SWaN (Safer Women at Night) Fund. On loan from PFCC

Live client involvement: PFCC providing real-world brief and feedback



The VR Creation Process.

Briefing & Research

Ideation & Pitching

Storyboarding & Filming

Editing

Launch & Promotion

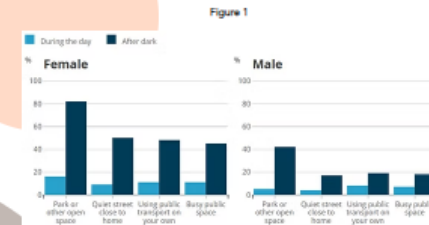
Our Audience.

Primarily 16-25-year-old UON students living on campus or commuting from other towns with a tertiary audience of 16-25-year-olds living in the UK.

Sexual comments and other unwanted encounters occur frequently in bars and nightclubs for this age group, with fears of drink spiking and rape, despite it being pervasive (Gunby et al., 2020).

Figure 1 establishes the proportion of adults feeling unsafe in different situations at different times of day with women feeling the most unsafe after dark - 58% of women aged 16-34-year-olds feeling unsafe using public transport after dark (ONS, 2022).

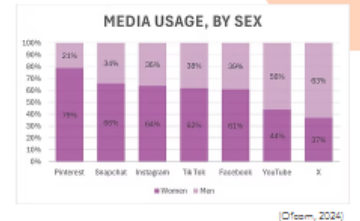
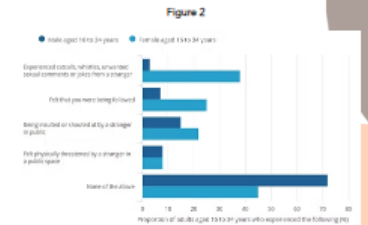
Figure 2 establishes the proportion of adults, by sex, experiencing types of harassments with 1 in 2 women experiencing at least one form of harassment (ONS, 2022).



Media Usage:

Women tend to engage more online yet are also more sceptical about the internet's value - women aged 18-24 tend to spend, more than an hour longer a day than men, on average 6.5 hours (Ofcom, 2024).

People often change their behaviour to improve their perceived levels of safety when out in public in the dark - 64% walk a longer route that is busier or better lit, 58% cross the street to avoid others, 32% wear one earphone or listen at a lower volume and 11% carry a personal alarm (Neighbourhood Watch, 2022).



Our Client: PFCCO.



Business Context

Campaign strategy and plans:

"Equip people with more knowledge of how to keep themselves safe while raising awareness of existing measures in place to keep women and girls safer. The secondary message is to promote conversations around violence against women and girls."

Organisation analysis:

Role: Voice of the people while leading policing within Northamptonshire and aiming to deliver an effective and efficient police service; they're responsible towards ensuring community needs to be able to improve the relationship between citizens by restoring the trust (PFCC, 2025a).

What we made.

Short-form 360 videos made to be viewed in VR headset.

Kiosk / Trade stand style operation.

Used at events and open days.

Operated by students and security team.



Student Involvement & Learning Outcomes.

Real-world marketing experience 'authenticity'.

Co-creation with clients – work with purpose. Also competing messaging priorities & sensitivities.

Collaboration with actors, venues, professional colleagues & external parties.

Storytelling, project management, creative direction, etc. Unfamiliar technology.



Example 1: Safer streets.

Focus on student safety in night-time economy.

Emphasis on being street-smart. Routes, spiking, SNO van.



Example 2: Water Safety.

Float to live, what 3 words & other safety strategies.

Helped by Fire & Rescue.

Technical complexity.



Expertise in VR Co-Creation.

Reflections on 4 years of collaboration:
Advice on experiential learning projects.
Managing the equipment.
Champions make it work.
Not easy, but worth it.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

6 STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT



1 COLLABORATION

Build your internal network to unlock projects with external stakeholders. Professional services are usually very happy to collaborate as long as you are respectful of their time. Involve them early and in specific ways, but don't expect them to do your job for you! Recognise those that help you - to their line management and to the world.



2 CRITICAL PATH

Invest your time in a detailed plan at the start. Work out which things CANNOT slip and book them in, especially if they involve others - e.g. sign-off or training, or a particular venue or equipment.



3 VITAL TASKS

It is not a democracy. There are some tasks which may be too important to fail. Watch them carefully and intervene if you need to. Make sure you explain why. Other non-essential tasks can fail - make sure it is handled as a learning experience. Create opportunities for people with a range of skills & engagement levels to contribute.



4 JEOPARDY

Manage and communicate reputational risk and reward. Manage expectations, especially with external stakeholders. Under-promise and over-deliver. Don't sugar-coat the imperfect world for students - this is where experience wins over textbooks and case studies. Communicate failure, mess, drama. Talk about the risks in the project. This makes it authentic.



5 STRETCH

Capitalise on student excitement - listen to their ideas, let them show you their skills and have choice through negotiated learning if possible. Celebrate student wins publicly and encourage storytelling in ways which might help their employability. Make sure students doing exceptional project work understand how to translate it into grade.



6 SAFETY NET

Don't design-in failure. Landmark experiences, well communicated create FOMO and drive up attendance - but there may be valid reasons for non-participation. Create authentic tasks which can be undertaken asynchronously for resits and students with other challenges. Include reflection in assessment to test learning. It can be surprising.



Tough Crowd?

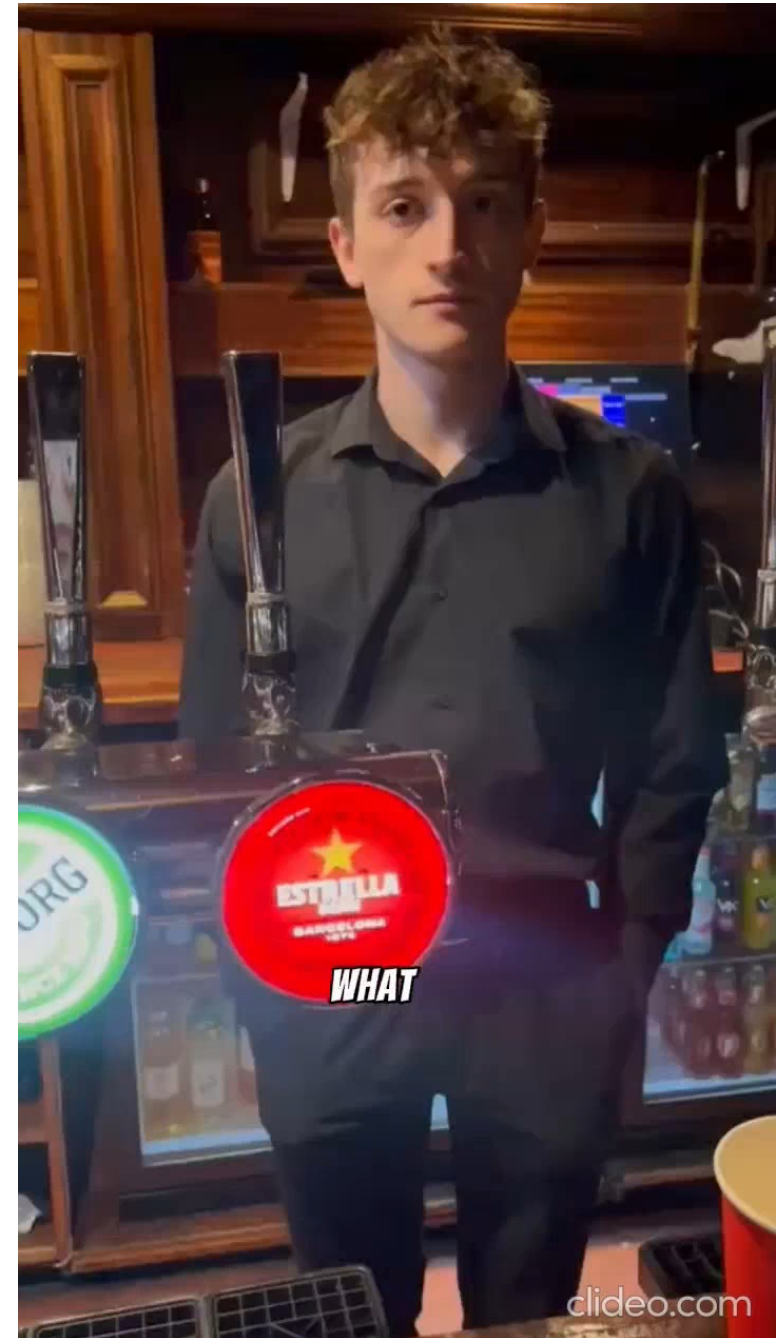
Impact.

Approx 200 students engaged in safety topics x 13 weeks. 10,000 hours.

Association of University Chief Security Officers (AUCSO) - Winner: Initiative of the Year - Security and Community

“One of my top 3 days at Uni”

Expertise developed & shared.



Tips on 360° Video.

Think of the camera as a person (can be POV).
Watching vs. being.

Use sound, action, interest in all directions otherwise
there's no point. Consider a narrator to drive the action.

Put effort into staging to reduce post-production.

Consider what happens before & after.



Questions?



Case Study