

Full name: Study Cairns

Year established: 1997

Organisation's main role: to increase international student numbers by marketing Cairns as a premium location for quality education

Contact: Helen Simpson, Marketing Coordinator, Study Cairns, PO Box 7421, Cairns, QLD 4870, Australia

Tel: +61 7 40551568

Fax: +61 7 40317939

Email: info@studycairns.com.au



What is Study Cairns and who are its members?

Study Cairns is a not-for-profit marketing group of export education providers based in Cairns, Australia. Our members are government and private providers of primary, secondary and tertiary education, business and technical courses, English language courses, study tours and student accommodation.

How does Study Cairns help overseas students?

Study Cairns operates a website which matches students with courses and forwards their profile to the relevant institution. We also work closely with education counsellors in many countries, teaching them the benefits of studying in Cairns so they can better advise their students.

What was the association's most important achievement in the last year?

Our most important achievement has been our sourcing of funds for

proactive external marketing for Cairns as an education centre, the subsequent appointment of a marketing coordinator and refocusing the group on its commercial priorities.

What kind of support does your association offer its members?

Member institutions are promoted exclusively through all Study Cairns activities such as the website, CD-Rom, video and familiarisation [trips]. Study Cairns also has a role in lobbying on issues that affect members, such as regulatory requirements and quality assurance.

How are your members faring against their international rivals?

Over 6,900 students came to Cairns to study in 2000, earning the region approximately AU\$30 million (US\$ 15 million) in export income. Analysis indicates that [international] student numbers will grow to approximately 19,000 by 2010.

Q. Which study destinations are showing the most growth in popularity with your clients, for which type of education, and why?

"Our most popular study destination is still Canada, but Ireland and Australia are getting popular too. We mostly sell long-term courses from three to nine months. As it is sometimes difficult for our students to obtain a Canadian visa we offer Ireland as an inexpensive alternative."

Michelle Castro, Director, Viajes de Idiomas Piar, Venezuela

"Due to [the terrorist attacks] in New York, most of our students switched their study destination from the USA and Canada to Australia and New Zealand. The most growth is for Australia, increasing by 60 per cent."

Danny Chang, Manager, Educational Foundation of Europe, Taiwan

"England has always been the most popular destination. There is more demand for professional and academic programmes – GCSE, A-level, foundation and university programmes. The clients are prepared to pay more instead of having budget programmes."

Vera Arsentieva, Director, Educational and Consulting Centre 'Intellectual', Russia

"Australia and the UK have seen the largest increase in student enrolments. This is partly due to Australia [being] seen as [having] lower tuition fees and living [costs], a safe environment, close proximity [to Hong Kong] and [also] the courses [in Australia] are designed for international students. Whereas for the UK, it is such an established market [with] a similar education system to Hong Kong."

Jimmy Wong, Chief Executive, Hong Kong Overseas Study Centre, Hong Kong

"Recently the popular destination seems to be Canada, due to the currency advantage over the USA and UK. Certainly, Australia has the same advantage in currency, however, the distance between Turkey and Australia is a major drawback for our clients. Four year university education is the goal of every high school student in Turkey, yet the university entrance exams are extremely competitive. [Therefore] degree programmes [overseas] are in high demand."

Meral Onat, President, Monat Ltd, Turkey

Germany looks to overseas students

A government-backed joint initiative, involving 35 different institutes and organisations, was launched in Germany last year in order to increase the number of international students choosing to study in Germany. The initiative, known as the "Joint Initiative for the Promotion of Study, Research and Training", is to be financed by the Federal German Ministry for Education and Research for an initial three years. The project aims to promote German education through a worldwide information campaign and improve residency conditions for foreign students and guest scholars.

Eva Matthäi, from the Carl Duisberg Society – a member of the initiative – said that as tuition for international students in public universities is free, German universities want to increase their international enrolments to encourage "the transfer of knowledge about the German way of living, mentality and language, with the target of establishing future economic relationships".

In a further example of the German government's efforts to increase educational ties throughout the world, construction of the first German university overseas will be completed in Cairo, Egypt this year. The private university will be linked to German institutions in Stuttgart and Ulm and will grant both undergraduate and graduate degrees, focusing primarily on science and technology subjects. Initially, instruction will be in English and German, but eventually all subjects will be taught in German.

Korean education for all

The Ministry of Planning and Budget in Korea, together with the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, has announced plans to spend 847 million won (US\$800,000) on a new project aimed at encouraging international students to study in Korea.

The project will include setting up websites to provide international students with information on Korean universities, a new online application system and measures to simplify Korean universities' entrance procedures. Changes to Korea's immigration laws in February this year have also meant that international students are now able to work during their time studying in Korea.

Yeonhee Gu, from the International Cooperation Division of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, said that students from Asia represent the largest markets for Korean educational establishments. "Tuition and living costs are cheaper [in Korea compared to] those of other developed countries such as the USA, UK and Japan – considering the good quality of education on offer in Korea," he said. "Korean companies have advanced into China, Vietnam and Indonesia, and these companies want to recruit [nationals] from these countries] who have experienced life in Korea."

The government's increased efforts to attract more international students is in response to a growing financial deficit – US\$820 million in 2000 – which has resulted from the large number of Korean students going abroad to study, compared with the few foreign students that come to Korea. Six thousand foreign students are currently studying in Korea, compared with over 150,000 Koreans studying overseas.

More students choose UK unis

According to figures published by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (Ucas) in the UK, the number of students from outside the European Union (EU) taking up places at UK universities and colleges in 2001 increased by 19.9 per cent on the previous year. A total of 17,365 non-EU students accepted places on full-time higher education courses last October, compared to 14,483 at the same point in 2000.

China is now the third-largest supplier of overseas students to the UK and numbers have increased by 82 per cent to 1,907 students, compared to 1,047 students in the previous year. Enrolments from students in countries in Africa, such as Ghana, Zimbabwe and Nigeria, also increased significantly in 2001.

Mark Bickerton, Director of the International Office at the University of North London in the UK, has seen increasing numbers of international student applications and enrolments at his institution. "I would say that the biggest impact [on international enrolments] has been the availability of the Internet and email," he said. "I don't think the Prime Minister's initiative has made much difference, except that it provided an opportunity for the British Council to do some good promotion work and to create a more useful and relevant brand image."

The UK's education brand will be given a boost this year with the development of a new Education UK website. The site offers a comprehensive fully searchable listing of courses available for international students in the UK, along with information on visas, fees, accommodation, the UK education system, applications through Ucas and living in the UK. The new website is being developed by a



consortium led by Ucas and Hotcourses – a publishing and web guide company – and is due to be officially launched this spring. It is hoped that the site will help fulfil government targets of welcoming 50,000 international students on to higher education courses by 2005.

Piera Gerrard, Deputy Director of the Education Counselling Service of the British Council, said, "As part of the Prime Minister's initiative we are looking to build a site that will transform the process of finding out about and applying for educational courses in the UK."

New exam for students wanting to study in Japan

International students wanting to study at a college or university in Japan will soon be required to sit a standard aptitude test, either in their own country or in Japan, which will assess their suitability for entry. The test will be administered by the Japanese government and is being introduced in an attempt to encourage more international enrolments by making the application process speedier, more consistent and easier to understand.

Students will be able to take the test in eight locations in Japan and 10 locations outside the country – mostly in Asia, where 90 per cent of Japan's foreign students come from.

Carol Lee, Assistant Director of the agency GIEA Taiwan, said that previously students wanting to study in Japan had to sit an entrance exam and go for an interview. "Compared to [applying to]

study in another country, it took more time for international students to apply [to study in Japan]," she said. "It is good that now Taiwanese students can take the exam in Taiwan. If it goes well, I think that the new test will make applications [run] more smoothly."

The new test for international students is part of a framework introduced by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to increase the number of international students studying in Japan to 100,000 within the next 10 years.

According to a report by the Ministry, the number of foreign students studying in higher education in Japan in 2001 increased by 23 per cent on the previous year. Chinese students make up the largest proportion of international students currently studying in the country, representing 56 per cent of the total number of 78,812.

Further changes for student visa application system in Australia

Following its major shake-up of the student visa application system last year (see *Education Travel Magazine*, October issue, page 19), Australia has introduced further changes in an ongoing effort to reduce visa application processing times.

Students already studying in Australia on a student visa can now apply for permission to work over the Internet while those from countries in assessment level one and two can apply for a student visa over the Internet from within Australia. Also, from March this year, student visa applications from

Chinese students are being handled by the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs' processing centre in Adelaide.

Rachel Wang, from Beijing Oz Enrolment Center of International Education in China, was optimistic about the change. "At the moment it takes about eight to 10 weeks to get a student visa for Australia. After March 1, it is said it will take eight weeks," she said.

It is hoped that the recent changes will further streamline the visa application process and enable the system to cope with

growing numbers of international student visa applications. In 2001, the Australian educational service industry grew by 19 per cent over the previous year, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Educational services were recorded as the third-largest service industry – behind tourism and transportation – and generated over AUS\$4 billion (US\$2 billion) in revenue from students.

"Australian educational institutions are positioning themselves more and more as key players in the international arena of education," said Lindy

Hyam, Chief Executive of IDP Education Australia. "Given the current world climate, I see safety as being a key decision-maker for students in the future."

Education agents worldwide report that Australia is popular for financial as well as safety reasons. "The [biggest] reason to study [in Australia] is that living and tuition costs compare well with other countries and many international students are permitted to work part-time on a casual basis," said Pannipa Wongdarassamee, Manager of International Study and Travel Center in Thailand.



James Carpenter became the new headmaster for Rannoch School in Scotland this year. He has previously taught at Cheltenham Ladies College, Fettes College and Glenalmond.



Professor Charles Bodman-Rae has been appointed Elder Professor of Music at Adelaide University in Australia. Previously Director of Studies at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, UK, Professor Bodman-Rae will play a key role in the creation of the Elder School of Music through the merger of the University's Elder Conservatorium of Music and the city's Flinders Street School of Music.



Stuart Bannerman, previously Head of the International Student Centre at Queen Margaret University College in Scotland, has taken up the new post of Head of EFL at the University of Dundee. Mr Bannerman is looking forward to a fresh challenge after building the International Student Centre at Queen Margaret University College from scratch.



Carl Loo has recently been appointed Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Sylvan Learning Systems Asia Ltd. Previously the founding Chairman of NextEd Ltd. of Hong Kong, Mr Loo will help grow Sylvan Learning Systems' existing assets in Asia, as well as explore new opportunities for the company's subsidiary company, Sylvan International Universities.



Jenny Hannan became the new General Manager of Education at Insearch University of Technology Sydney, in Australia, in February this year. Previously employed at Billy Blue language school in Sydney for seven years, Ms Hannan is looking forward to working in a university environment.

next issue

In issue 3 2002, *Destination Analysis* reveals US market trends.

Amendment

On page 23 of the January 2002 issue of *Education Travel Magazine*, we wrongly stated that Vancouver School of Theology had a total of 416 students on its degree programmes. The correct number is 179.

