

## destination analysis

## Higher education providers in the UK

Increased visa costs have proved challenging to UK higher education providers, but they are raising the stakes and many are establishing a presence overseas.

The last few years have thrown up many challenges for those involved in international recruitment in higher education in the UK, with visa fee hikes (see *Education Travel Magazine*, September 2005, page 42) and an increase in rejections for Chinese students applying for visas (see *Education Travel Magazine*, January 2004, page 49) affecting the market.

For some, 2005 brought a decrease or slowing down of international enrolments. Adrienne Clarke, Head of International Recruitment at London Metropolitan University, confirms, "Recruitment did not increase as much [in 2005] as it did in previous years. There seems to have been a decrease from China in particular for most universities." However, Clarke adds, "Some student markets, such as Nigeria and Vietnam, are growing."

Despite the difficulties experienced in some student markets – the number of Chinese students accepted into higher education decreased by 22.5 per cent between 2004 and 2005, according to Ucas statistics – overall, the state of the industry does look fairly stable. The total number of non-European Union (EU) students accepted on to higher education courses increased by one per cent in 2005, which included significant increases from Nigeria (69 per cent), Pakistan (16 per cent), Sri Lanka (17 per cent) and the USA (seven per cent).

These increases can largely be attributed to the impressive marketing efforts of the universities and colleges themselves, with many diversifying from their traditional marketing methods to reach a wider student base. "Education fairs are having less impact now than they used to," says Clare Montgomery from the University of Arts London, although she does point out that this observation varies from country to country. "We are investing much more into the Internet than we were before," she notes.

An increasing trend among many higher education institutions in the UK is the development of in-country partnerships, offices and branch campuses in countries around the world, which all help to raise the international profile of the institution

while also directly recruiting more overseas students.

The University of Arts has already set up preparatory academies in India and Korea in order to channel a steady supply of quality university applicants to their doors and Montgomery says this policy will be expanded in the future. "We plan to establish a greater number of linking programmes, preparatory programmes and links with schools, to take students through different levels of their education with us, including their English language requirements," she explains.

At the University of Luton, expanding course provision beyond UK borders is also a key part of the international marketing strategy. Mahesh Yanambakkam explains, "We have a number of new partnerships in China, Southeast Asia [and] South Asia. [We have also launched a distance learning] e-MBA in India, Oman and Kuala Lumpur. These factors have considerably raised the university's international profile." Meanwhile, at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, Scotland, Michelle Stewart says, "We are exploring the idea of a branch campus in Kuala Lumpur."

While investigating new opportunities overseas is undoubtedly an important way of staying ahead of the local and international competition, government policy – particularly when it comes to visas – also has a part to play. Scottish universities received a boost this year with the introduction by the Scottish Executive of the Fresh Talent Initiative, which grants international students a two-year work permit to stay in the UK on completion of their further or higher education studies (see *Language Travel Magazine*, March 2004, page 6). According to Stewart, this has already had an effect on enrolments at the university. "Our numbers have increased by five per cent," she relates. "Much of the increase has come from India, this is partly due to the Fresh Talent Initiative."

Following on from the success of this initiative, education providers in the rest of the UK may also soon benefit from a change in the rules that will allow postgraduate students and students from some shortage sectors to work for a year after completing their studies (see news, page 53).

## subject focus

## Secretarial courses

The following institutions in these study destinations offer one or a range of secretarial/office administration courses to international students.

Location	Name of institution	Number of secretarial courses available	Min. hours tuition a week	Entry requirements			
				Min. Toefl score	Min. IELTS score	Interview	School leaving cert. Entrance exam
<b>Australia</b>							
Box Hill, VIC	Box Hill Institute	3	20	530	5.5		
Cairns, QLD	Tropical North QLD TAFE	1	20	530/197	5.5	✓	
Mt Gravatt, QLD	Moreton Institute of TAFE	1	20	530/197	5.5	✓	
Perth, WA	APIIT Australia	2	20	500	5	✓	
<b>Canada</b>							
Cranbrook, BC	College of the Rockies	24	15	550	6	✓	
Edmonton, AB	NorQuest College	2	–	560		✓	✓
Fort St John, BC	Northern Lights College	3	30	213	6		
Niagara, ONT	Niagara College	2	21	173	5.5	✓	
Ottawa, ONT	Algonquin College	3	–	213	6	✓	
Vancouver, BC	Capilano College	5	20	560/220	6.5	✓	✓
<b>New Zealand</b>							
Porirua	Whitireia Community Polytechnic	3	20	525/196	5.5	v	
Wellington	Wellington Institute of Technology	6	20	450	5	✓	✓
<b>UK</b>							
Chichester	Chichester College	2	15		5		
Dumfries	Dumfries & Galloway College	3	–				
Weymouth	Weymouth College	–	15		4.5	✓	✓
<b>USA</b>							
Gadsden, AL	Gadsden State Com. College	17	12	500/173			✓

Percentage breakdown of non-EU students accepted into UK higher education 2005

