

# UK and USA face stiff competition

## on the move



In September this year, Clare Osborne became the new

Headmistress of Stonar School in the UK, taking over from Sue Hopkinson. Previously Deputy Head at St Joseph's College in Ipswich, Mrs Osborne has worked in both the independent and grant-maintained sectors, and participated in research and committee work on curriculum development in the UK.

## next issue

In Issue 1, 2003, our two Subject Focus features will cover health and beauty courses in Canada and Viticulture in Australia and New Zealand. Destination Analysis takes a look at international student trends in the UK higher education sector.

According to a report by the British Council, the popularity of the UK and the USA as first choice study destinations for a number of key overseas markets has fallen sharply in the last few years. The findings are the result of a British Council report called 'Connecting futures', which was published in June this year and is based on surveys of nearly 5,000 people aged between 15 and 25 from Bangladesh, Egypt, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Palestinian Territories, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. Comparisons with a similar British Council survey conducted in seven common countries in 1999 and 2000 reveal that while the USA was the first choice destination for 49 per cent of interviewees and the UK for 32 per cent in the earlier report, this figure has decreased to 35 per cent and 22 per cent respectively.

The results are particularly disappointing for the UK whose government launched a campaign in 1999 to increase the number of international students studying there by 25 per cent (see *Education Travel Magazine*, October 1999, page 34). Political factors are likely to have played a part in the USA's declining popularity, with Canada being the most popular first choice destination for the Palestinian Territories.

However, the report says the biggest changes in preference 'are not due to political factors which might have waned in the medium to long term'. The number of Malaysians and Egyptians choosing the UK as their first choice has halved since the previous report, while the UK's popularity as a first choice destination in Pakistan has increased.

Malaysian student numbers in the UK have seen big decreases since 1998 when the Asian economic crisis hit this market particularly hard. Separate figures produced by the British Council in Malaysia show a slight increase in students coming to study in the UK in 2001/2002 compared to the previous year. However, the current figure of 10,000 still falls woefully short of pre-1998 levels which stood at 17,000. Recent recognition by the Malaysian government of the need for more IT skills within its workforce should increase the market for education travel in Malaysia, according to Sarah Barton from the British Council. 'Countries like the UK, Australia, Canada, USA [and] New Zealand will continue to attract a high percentage of students from Malaysia,' she added.

While the 'Connecting futures' report shows that the USA and the UK are experiencing a decline in popularity, the number of interviewees choosing Australia, Canada and Japan as their first choice destination has increased. Collectively, the percentage of people choosing Australia, Canada or Japan as their first choice destination increased from 11 per cent to 26 per cent in the most recent report.

Australia is increasingly being seen as a major player in the international education world and a recent report by IDP shows that international student numbers studying in Australian universities -both on and off-shore -have increased by 18.7 per cent over the last 12 months and further growth looks likely. IDP Chief Executive, Lindy Hyam, said, 'Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia, China, Indonesia, India, the USA, Thailand and Norway are now the nine key source countries for Australian universities. What is also significant is the continuing strong growth this year from some of the new and emerging markets. For example, the number of students from Europe and Latin America grew by 28 per cent and 53 per cent respectively.'

Japan is also proving to be an increasingly popular study destination for students, especially for those from Asia. According to the 'Connecting futures' report, Japan is now the second most popular destination for Indonesia and Malaysia, and it has showed large increases in popularity in a number of other countries.

Last year, Japan's Ministry of Education, Science and Technology introduced a framework to increase the number of overseas students studying in Japan and it has recently increased the number of test dates for foreign students to take the Examination for Japanese University Admission for International Students (EJU) and introduced more test locations. International students can now sit the test in Indonesia, Vietnam, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan, the Philippines and Malaysia as well as in Japan.

## New scholarship scheme

Students wanting to undertake postgraduate study in Europe will be able to apply for full funding to cover their tuition fees and living costs, thanks to the new Erasmus World scholarship scheme which was announced by the European Union this year.

The scheme, which is due to start in 2004, will eventually provide funding for up to 2,000 students each year but initially 4,200 students will be offered scholarships in the first four years. Interested applicants will first have to enrol directly with a European university and be recommended to a Europe-wide commission for the final selection.

Viviane Reding, the European commissioner responsible for education, said, 'European universities receive too few students and visiting scholars from other continents.'

## agent speak

**Q. What are the main areas of potential friction between you and your partner universities/colleges and high schools?**

'The most frequent problem with educational institutions is the web as [we] give the students all the information and after that they [can enrol] through [the school's website]. The solution is to have [exclusive] representation [so that] all the students enrolled from your country are [considered] your students.'  
**Claudia Ibarbo, Ibarbo Representaciones, Colombia**

'In China, the various embassies have different procedures and [application] regulations for Chinese students. Most of the school providers do not fully understand their own

country's immigration procedures or why their country applies such procedures to China.'  
**Betty Jing, Han Gao Consulting Co., China**

'I would say that the most common friction is delay in answering our messages [which] happens particularly with big colleges and universities where a lot of bureaucracy is present. We think that good communication is the key to a good relationship. We think that international education deserves personalised attention.'  
**Andres Galindo, Global Connection, Colombia**

## German immigration reforms

After three months of political wrangling, the German President Johannes Rau signed a landmark immigration bill in June this year which will allow international graduates of German universities to work in Germany for up to five years. From January 2003, student visa holders will also be able to work off-campus for up to 180 half days without a work permit and work part-time at an institute of higher education or in any other academic position with no time restriction.

Jan Hansen, from Humboldt Universität in Berlin, said that the new bill would provide an additional source of funding for students and also enable them to undertake practical aspects of their courses.

'The new legislation may be useful for students who want to complete internships during their studies. Here, the new legislation makes it easier to complete longer internships,' he said.

The bill was introduced in August last year by Germany's Interior Minister Otto Schily in an attempt to address the country's growing deficit in skilled labour.

Dr Hans-Dieter Rinkens, President of the Deutsches Studentenwerk (DSW) -the umbrella organisation of 61 student services in Germany - welcomed the new immigration law and said, 'With this signature, the Federal Republic of Germany has given a clear signal to foreign students that they are welcome in Germany.'

# calendar

## Tax on student fees in New Zealand

The New Zealand Government has announced plans to charge schools, colleges and universities a levy on the fees collected from international students from January 2003. The money collected will be used to fund an industry body to ensure development, promotion and quality assurance within the industry.

Collection of the levy has been introduced in order to ensure the cohesive development of an industry that last year contributed NZ\$1 billion to New Zealand's GDP. So far the response from education providers in New Zealand has been mixed.

'The main aspect that is controversial is that this levy is an additional tax loaded on top of the GST of 12.5 per cent we already contribute to the central coffers,' said Peter Wilkins from the Eastern Institute of Technology in Hawke's Bay.

## Reduced visa costs

Following a meeting between George Bush and Vladimir Putin, the cost of student and exchange visitor visas for Russian and US students to study in each other countries has been reduced from US\$500 to US\$65, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

The reduced visa fees, which came into effect in June this year, are part of a wider plan to improve relations between the two countries and 'remove barriers to trade and investment, and stimulate economic development'. James Warlick, Consul General at the US Embassy in Moscow, said that he hoped the latest developments would help get rid of the 'cold-war atmosphere' which lingered over the countries' visa processes.

## Sevis update

The American Council on Education sent a letter to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) earlier this year expressing doubts that the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System

(Sevis) would be operational by the proposed deadline of January 2003.

The first stage of the system went online in July, enabling schools to apply for eligibility to accept international students, but the software needed to enable the batch processing of students' details is unlikely to be available in time for all schools to implement it before the January deadline. Without batch processing, schools will have to file each foreign student report individually to the INS.

The letter, which is supported by 33 different US education organisations, urged the INS to set a new compliance date of 180 days after the system is fully operational.

## UK visa changes

The cost of a visa for entry into the UK increased by between eight and 10 per cent in July this year in the first price increase since 1995. The extra revenue will be used to provide additional staff and services to meet the increasing worldwide demand for UK visa services and meet increased administration costs.

In addition, from May this year, students from Switzerland have been granted the same entry and residence rights in the UK as students from countries in the European Economic Area (EEA) and they no longer need permission to work.

## English-medium classes in Malaysia

Concerned by Malaysia's decreasing level of English language knowledge, the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, has introduced plans to bring in English-medium teaching for maths and science subjects.

Samantha Fong, from Informatics College in Malaysia, which offers a number of different level courses in English, welcomed the new plan. 'English is an international language. With the English course that we have, it can certainly help to prepare weak students to become more versatile [and] secure their confidence.'

## October

### CEAIE Annual Conference & International Forum on Education

Date: October 6-8  
Venue: Beijing, China  
Date: October 12-13  
Venue: Shanghai, China  
Contact: Fairlink Exhibition Services, Room 1155, Jingxin Building, A3 Dongsanhuan Bellu Beijing, 100027, China  
Tel: +86 106 466 0654  
Fax: +86 108 451 0572  
Email: fairlink@public.gb.com.cn

### Scope on the Globe

Date: October 10-12  
Venue: Utrecht, Netherlands  
Contact: Aromedia Events, Derkinderenstraat 20 Amsterdam, 1062 DB, Netherlands  
Tel: +31 206 646127  
Fax: +31 206 646168  
Email: vvandriel@aromedia.nl

### Salon "Education"

Date: October 16-20  
Venue: Namur, Belgium  
Contact: People & Places Blvd Emile Bockstaal 191 Brussels, 1020, Belgium  
Tel: +32 242 32880  
Fax: +32 242 32889

### 12th Asian Student Fair

Date: October 19-24  
Venue: Karachi/Lahore, Pakistan  
Contact: International Educational Services PO Box 10503, Saddar, Karachi 10503, Pakistan  
Tel: +92 303 7326602  
Fax: +92 218 131919  
Email: infoedu@cyber.net.pk

### The Tokyo Workshop

Date: October 21-22  
Venue: Tokyo, Japan  
Contact: Icef, Am Holgarten 9, Bonn 53113, Germany  
Tel: +49 228 201 190  
Fax: +49 228 201 1944  
Email: icefbonn@icef.com

### International Education Fairs of Turkey

Date: October 23  
Venue: Ankara, Turkey  
Date: October 24  
Venue: Izmir, Turkey  
Date: October 26-27  
Venue: Istanbul, Turkey  
Contact: Global Visions Educ., Mesrutiyet Cad. Asli Han No: 18, Kat: 7

Galatasaray, Istanbul, Turkey  
Tel: +90 212 249 1981  
Fax: +90 212 249 5625  
Email: info@left.net

### Middle East Education Fair

Date: October 23-25  
Venue: Dubai, UAE  
Contact: Seven Continent Exhibition Org. PO Box 42013, Dubai, UAE  
Tel: +971 42240556  
Fax: +971 2240858  
Email: sceo@emirates.net.ae

### International Education Fair

Date: October 25-28  
Venue: Taipei, Taiwan  
Contact: Tosa, Rm 1122, No. 15 Fuhsing Rd, Taipei, ROC 105, Taiwan  
Tel: +886 277 39330  
Fax: +886 277 39481  
Email: tosa@tosa.org.tw

### Nexus World of Study Asia Postgraduate MBA Fair

Date: October 26-27  
Venue: Bangkok, Thailand  
Date: November 2-3  
Venue: Hong Kong  
Date: November 9-10  
Venue: Suntec City, Singapore  
Contact: Nexus Media  
Nexus House, Azalea Drive Swanley, Kent, BR8 8HU, UK  
Tel: +44 1322660070  
Fax: +44 1322616305  
Email: jason.newman@nexusmedia.com

### The Alpha Asia Workshop

Date: October 29-31  
Venue: Phuket, Thailand  
Contact: Hothouse Media, 11-15 Emerald Street, London, WC1N 3QL, UK  
Tel: +44 207 4404037  
Fax: +44 207 4404033  
Email: matthew@hothousemedia.com

## November

### International Education Fair

Date: November 2-3  
Venue: Bangkok, Thailand  
Contact: Tieca, 503/30 KSL Tower, 18th Floor, Sri-Ayudhaya Road, Phayathai, Rajthavee, Bangkok, 10400 Thailand  
Tel: +662 642 6114  
Fax: +662 642 6115  
Email: admin@tieca.com

### CIEE Annual Conference

Date: November 4-9  
Venue: Atlanta GA, USA  
Contact: Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE), 633 Third Avenue, 20th Floor, New York, NY, 10017, USA  
Tel: +1 212 822 2782  
Fax: +1 212 822 2779  
Email: conference@ciee.org

### Vieca Int. Education Fair

Date: November 8-9  
Venue: Hanoi, Vietnam  
Date: November 10-11  
Venue: Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam  
Contact: Vieca, 30 Ta Quang Buu, Hanoi, Vietnam  
Tel: +84 48223675  
Fax: +84 48223699  
Email: vieca@ipt.vn

### The Berlin Workshop

Date: November 11-12  
Venue: Berlin, Germany  
Contact: Icef (see above)

### Oriente European Education and Employment Fair

Date: November 14-16  
Venue: Brussels, Belgium  
Contact: Oriente, Avenue de l'Armee 24 Brussels, 1040 Belgium  
Tel: +32 27416161  
Fax: +32 27320509  
Email: info@cpexpo.com

### Kosa International Education Fair

Date: November 16-17  
Venue: Seoul, Korea  
Contact: Myong Dong Overseas Study Centre, Rm 302 Chungjung Bldg 825-27 Yoksam-Dong, Seoul 135-080, Korea  
Tel: +82 27547777  
Fax: +82 25561109  
Email: mdostudy@chollian.net

For more information and confirmation of the events listed in Calendar, please contact the organisers. If you would like your forthcoming event listed, please contact us.

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Email: mail@hothousemedia.com



**Full name:** Australian Council for Private Education and Training

**Year established:** 1992

**Organisation's main role:** to enhance the quality and growth of education by working with the government, education and training providers, and industry and community organisations.

**Contact:** Tim Smith, Acpet, Box Q1076, QVB PO NSW, 1230, Australia  
Tel: +61 (0)2 9299 4555  
Fax: +61 (0)2 9299 4221  
Email: acpet@acpet.edu.au  
Web address: www.acpet.edu.au

## How does your association help its members in the international market?

Acpet supports its members by lobbying the Australian government on the full range of regulatory and student visa issues and through generic promotion of private colleges as desirable destinations for students from overseas.

## What was the association's most important achievement over the past year?

Playing a major role in encouraging the Australian government to promote generic branding of Australia as a place to study, and ensuring that private colleges have the same opportunities and entitlements

in the regulatory framework for international students.

## Does Acpet work with international recruitment agents?

Australian private colleges rely very much on international agents in student recruitment and Acpet's interest is to ensure members deal with agents of good repute and experience.

## How are your members faring internationally?

The new student visa regime has not helped international student recruitment but it is encouraging that the government has responded to Acpet and others to undertake a review of the visa restrictions.