

SEVP fee likely to rise in the USA

Students applying for an F-1 visa to study in the USA from October will have to pay US\$200, instead of the US\$100 currently, to be registered with the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) if proposals by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement are agreed.

The proposals include raising the fee for exchange students applying for a J-1 visa from US\$100 to US\$180, the fee for school certification from US\$350 to US\$1,700 and site visits from US\$230 to US\$655. Schools currently registered with SEVP will not have to pay the additional fees to recertify under the new rule.

Amber Pitts from Bridge-Linguatex in Denver, CO, attended a recent meeting about SEVP and reported that the increased revenue gained would be used to upgrade the current online system, enable paperless I-20 school acceptance forms and fund more compliance personnel to investigate suspicious schools (see right). Given that fees have not risen since the inception of SEVP in 2003, the rise does not seem exorbitant, although new schools face a steep incline in costs.

Pitts commented, "The increase in fees seems reasonable, considering the new and updated programmes." Julie Myers, Assistant

Secretary of Homeland Security for ICE, said the proposed rule "ensures that America remains a welcoming place for foreign students to study, while enhancing our abilities to protect our national security".

But Victor Johnson, Senior Advisor for Public Policy at Nafsa: Association of International Educators, said, "It's one of the myriad actions our government takes to provide disincentives for students to come here and study, at the same time that the heads of these agencies are giving speeches about how important it is for us to have foreign students come here." ●

Actilingua offers language teaching podcasts

AUSTRIAN language school, Actilingua, has launched a free German-English vocabulary trainer that students will be able to download as podcasts from their website. Once a student has subscribed to the service, a daily podcast will be downloaded automatically from Monday to Thursday to their computer.

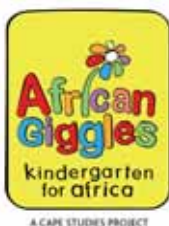
The initiative was developed by Dr Roland Ernst, Founder of Actilingua Academy and Michael Kohlfuerst from PromoMasters, an Internet promotion company based in Austria. Ernst said that the podcasts would significantly improve listening comprehension and pronunciation skills, although would not substitute the benefits of studying in a German language school. ●

South African language school sets up kindergarten

CAPE STUDIES language school in Cape Town, South Africa, has branched out into the pre-school education sector by opening a kindergarten for local children in Stanford.

African Giggles, which is situated 90 minutes away from Cape Town, offers day care and pre-school education using the Montessori methodology to local children from all different backgrounds between the ages of zero and six years. Instruction at the kindergarten is in English although the children – who come from Afrikaans, Xhosa, Zulu, German and English speaking backgrounds – also receive an hour of German language tuition per day.

Jens von Wichtingen, joint owner of Cape Studies, said that he and his partner, Daniel Stem-



A CAPE STUDIES PROJECT

met, came up with the idea after moving to Stanford with their son. "South Africa was very good to us so we want to give back," he said. "People live very happily together in Stanford and that's when we got the idea to run our own kindergarten to do our share."

Cape Studies is currently sponsoring the set up and running costs of the kindergarten for the first year and hopes to attract sponsorship from local and international businesses in the future. The kindergarten has a three-tier fee structure with the most expensive monthly fee being R600 (US\$79). Parents will also be able to reduce the amount they pay by volunteering to help supervise a playgroup or take the children on outings. ●

EF opens new schools in Chicago and Hawaii

LANGUAGE school chain EF is continuing its policy of expansion and has opened two new schools in Chicago and Hawaii in the USA.

Anders Ahlund, President of International Sales and Marketing at EF, said that the two new schools were part of ongoing expansion plans. "We are constantly looking at new destinations," he said. "We are trying to open a couple of new schools every year. This year we have already opened Chicago and Honolulu and we have a few more to come by the end of the year."

EF currently has 40 schools in 15 different countries and provides training in six different languages. Ahlund said that growing demand from students was driving the need to open language schools in new locations. "Thanks to the loyalty and professionalism of our agents, we need more capacity to accommodate a growing number of students. In a few cases we have moved locations and doubled capacity," he said.

EF Chicago is the first EF language school to open in America's Midwest. It currently has 100 students enrolled after opening in April this year and will offer English programmes as well as short summer courses, general and intensive year-round courses and internships. ●



The new EF centre in Chicago

Calendar	JULY	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	AUGUST	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	SEPTEMBER	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	OCTOBER	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
		22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	29	30	31					

27th International Education Exhibition

Date: July 12-16
Venue: Karachi/Lahore, Pakistan
Email: infoedu@cyber.net.pk

IEFT- International Education Fairs of Turkey

Dates: August 16-17
Venue: Istanbul, Ankara - Turkey
Email: dawn@ieft.net

FPP Edu-Media Expo Brazil Roadshow

Date: September 4-14
Venue: various, Brazil
j.ronchetti@fppmediacorp.com
www.fppmedia.com

The Alpha UK Workshop

Date: September 5-7
Venue: London, UK
jane@hothousemedia.com
www.hothousemedia.com

The LTM Star Awards

Date: September 6
Venue: London, UK
jane@hothousemedia.com
www.hothousemedia.com

The ICEF Higher Education Workshop

Date: September 7-9
Venue: Antwerp, Belgium
info@icef.com
www.icef.com

StudyWorld London

Date: September 8-10
Venue: London, UK
info@studyworldfair.com
www.studyworldfair.com

Annual Conference of the EAIE

Date: September 10-13
Venue: Antwerp, Belgium
eaie@eaie.nl
www.eaie.nl

Students to work straight away in Australia

STUDENT VISA holders in Australia now have the right to work as soon as they start their course and no longer have to apply for a separate work permit while in the country. This change to student visa regulations was introduced by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship and became effective on 26 April.

Sue Blundell, Executive Director at English Australia, said that she thought students and schools would welcome the new regulations. "For colleges it will remove the additional administrative workload associated with organising the extra work permission," she said. "For students it will mean they can work from the commencement of their course rather than waiting for the permission to work to be granted. Recently, delays of up to eight weeks in the grant of permission to work rights have been an issue."

The changes will also make the cost of a student visa and work permit cheaper as students will pay a one-off fee of AUS\$450 (US\$424) for a combined student visa and permission to work, instead of paying AUS\$430 (US\$405) for a visa application and AU\$60 (US\$56) for permission to work. Conditions attached to working in Australia will not change, however, with students still being able to work up to 20 hours during term time and an unlimited amount during official course breaks.

Jenelle Klintworth, Head of Student Services at RMIT English Worldwide in Melbourne, said that around 50 per cent of their students worked while studying at the school. "The students are very happy about being relieved of the bureaucratic burden of applying for the permission to work," she added.

Since September last year, recent graduates of courses lasting at least two years have been eligible to apply for a skilled graduate visa that enables them to stay and work in Australia for up to 18 months. Under the terms of the visa, graduates can leave and return to the country during the 18 months and will also be awarded 10 points towards their General Skilled Migration after completing a year working as a professional in Australia. ●

lalc celebrates 25 years

THE INTERNATIONAL Association of Language Centres (lalc) celebrated its 25th anniversary this year with a special gala evening during its workshop at which prestigious members from the association's history



Borges de Sousa now...

were honoured. Renato Borges de Sousa from Cial in Portugal was made Honorary Life President of the association (above) and founding members Mary Towers, James Swift, Cesar Rennert were in attendance as was loyal delegate Klaus Vetter.

The workshop, in Munich, Germany, welcomed 290 delegates from around the world and was preceded by an AGM, which saw the election of Walter Denz of Liden & Denz Language Centre in Russia as new lalc President. Jan Capper, Executive Director of lalc, told *Language Travel Magazine* that Tom Doyle of LCI in Ireland stood down as Vice President for Quality Assurance and "received the longest

standing ovation I have seen at an lalc AGM" for his work developing the association's accreditation standards.

"There was no blueprint for this kind of association [25 years ago]," related Capper, "so we had to learn as we went along. We have adapted to changing market conditions, but we have always remained a trade association, focused on partnerships with agents."

Renato Silveira from 2001 Travel in Brazil said he was very impressed with the whole event and subsequent fam trip to Muenster and Hamburg, commending walking tours of the cities visited so that agents could get a feel for them. "If I had to rate [the workshop] from one to 10, I would rate it 10!" he said.

Pictures of workshops in the early years were displayed for delegates to look at, one of which is shown below. ●



...and then in the early days

US school owner arrested for visa fraud

A LANGUAGE school operator in Los Angeles, CA, was arrested in April and charged with running a visa factory. Behzad Zaman operated two language schools in Los Angeles, Concord English Language Center and International College for English Studies, and is facing charges of assisting ineligible foreign nationals in fraudulently obtaining F-1 student visas and keeping them enrolled for extended periods when they were not attending classes.

Zaman was indicted with seven counts of fraud and misuse of visa, one count of conspiring to money launder and six counts of concealment of money laundering, which together carry a maximum penalty of 210 years in prison.

Robert Schoch at the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Office in Los Angeles said, "The scope of crimes alleged in this indictment make it one of the largest student visa fraud schemes ever uncovered here on the West Coast". ●

Currency

1xUS\$ =currency*

Argentinean	Pesos	3.178
Australian	Dollar	1.061
Brazilian	Real	1.688
British	Pound	0.510
Bulgarian	Leva	1.268
Canadian	Dollar	1.012
Chilean	Pesos	470.41
Chinese (PR)	Yuan RMB	7.004
Czech	Koruny	16.29
Danish	Kroner	4.838
Egyptian	Pound	5.367
EU	Euro	0.648
Hong Kong	Dollar	7.795
Hungarian	Forint	173.03
Icelandic	Kronur	77.12
Indonesian	Rupiah	9,249.6
Israeli	New Shekels	3.434
Japanese	Yen	103.54
Mexican	Peso	10.551
New Zealand	Dollar	1.297
Norwegian	Kroner	5.113
Pakistan	Rupees	67.510
Polish	Zloty	2.210
Russian	Rubles	23.81
Singaporean	Dollar	1.374
Slovakian	Koruny	20.72
South African	Rand	7.583
South Korean	Won	1,044.60
Swedish	Kronor	6.032
Swiss	Franc	1.049
Taiwanese	NT Dollar	30.852
Thai	Baht	31.924
Turkish	New Lira	1.266
Venezuelan	Bolivar	2.144

*Rates are subject to change and should be used as indications only. 08/05/08.

WYSTC 2008

Date: September 13-17
Venue: Brooklyn, NY, USA
mailto:mail@wystc.org
www.wystc.org

FPP Edu-Media Expo Latin America Roadshow

Date: September 17 - October 8
Venue: various, Latin America
j.ronchetti@fppmediacorp.com
www.fppmedia.com

The AAIEP Agents Workshop

Date: October 4-5
Venue: Washington DC, USA
info@csglobal.net
www.csglobal.net /
www.bmimedia.net

Foreign Languages Plus

Date: October 6-13
Venue: Moscow, St Petersburg - Russia
abroad@study.ru
http://plus.study.ru

Study Abroad and Language Fair

Date: October 7
Venue: Busan, Korea
kamc@korea.com
www.kamc.com

Scope on the Globe

Date: October 8-11
Venue: Utrecht, Netherlands
s.vdaakster@aromedia.nl
www.scopeontheglobe.com

International Education Fairs of Turkey

Date: October 12-19
Venue: Ankara, Izmir, Bursa, Istanbul - Turkey
info@ieft.net
www.ieft.net

The ICEF China Workshop

Date: October 14-16
Venue: Beijing, China
info@icef.com
www.icef.com

China Education Expo 2008

Date: 18-19 October
Venue: Beijing, China
Lily@fairlink.com.cn

a2 Morocco Fair

Date: October 21-22
Venue: Casablanca, Morocco
info@aafair.com