

New visa rules for Canada

Currency

		1xUS\$ =currency*
Argentinean	Pesos	2.710
Australian	Dollar	1.886
Brazilian	Real	2.277
British	Pound	0.697
Bulgarian	Leva	2.221
Canadian	Dollar	1.588
Chilean	Pesos	647.20
Chinese (PR)	Yuan	8.277
Czech	Koruny	35.01
Danish	Kroner	8.462
Egyptian	Pound	4.620
EU	Euro	1.136
Hong Kong	Dollar	7.799
Hungarian	Forint	276.03
Icelandic	Kronur	99.47
Indonesian	Rupiah	9525.0
Israeli	New Shekels	4.750
Japanese	Yen	131.70
Maltese	Lira	0.464
Mexican	Peso	9.020
New Zealand	Dollar	2.286
Norwegian	Kroner	8.693
Polish	Zloty	4.087
Russian	Rubles	31.220
Singaporean	Dollar	1.835
Slovakian	Koruny	47.471
South African	Rand	11.12
South Korean	Won	1320.5
Swedish	Krona	10.269
Swiss	Franc	1.667
Taiwanese	NT Dollar	34.860
Thai	Baht	43.540
Turkish	Lira	1,305,000.2
Venezuelan	Bolivar	904.9

*Rates are subject to change and should be used as indications only, 08/04/02

German teachers refresh language knowledge

IN FOUR years time, all eight-year-olds in Germany are to be taught a foreign language in state junior schools, and their teachers have been told to brush up on their language skills in order to be able to take these extra language classes themselves.

Following a successful model established in Austria and the Netherlands, existing teachers will be expected to improve their language knowledge instead of hiring additional teachers. In Hamburg, teachers have been asked to give up their holidays to take crash courses, while in North Rhein-Westfalia, according to the *Times Educational Supplement*, teachers are expected to attend a year-long after-school course. □

International students in Canada will soon be able to study in the country on a visitor visa for up to six months, instead of three months, which is expected to boost the average length of stay for short-term language students. In a further positive development for the industry, students will also be allowed to work part-time off-campus, as long as they are enrolled on a full-time course at a college or university.

Industry representatives welcomed the new regulations, which, according to Didier Bergeret, Co-President of the Council for Second Language Programs (CSLP) in Canada, have been a "long time coming". Virginia Christopher, President of the Private English Language Schools' Association (Pelsa), commented that Canadian language schools were now able to compete on a more level playing field, with similar regulations to schools in competitor countries. "Students wanting to [study] for six months will save the time,

trouble and expense of applying for a student authorisation [visa] before they leave their countries," she said, "so hopefully, Canada will be more attractive to them."

Valerie Richmond, President of the Canadian Association of Private Language Schools (Capls), added, "[Our] number-one lobbying priority was the three to six month visa exemption. We are delighted that this has been approved."

The regulations are part of the new Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and are scheduled to be approved on 28 June, following the public consultation period. At the Canadian Education Centre (CEC) Network, Anne Stockdale said, "We'll be publishing information about the new regulations for a global audience on our new intertional student website, StudyCanada.ca, which launches on 1 June."

Although the new regulations have been welcomed, Christopher at Pelsa said that some private language teaching centres felt that

publicly-funded institutions were favoured by the new rules, as the new work rights only extend to students in academic or career programmes at college or university. Students can apply for work rights after one year's full-time study, and they can apply while taking language classes leading to academic study.

"The private schools feel that all students should be eligible to work, no matter what type of programme they are enrolled on," said Christopher. "Restricting the eligibility just forces students who are desperate to come abroad to apply for programmes they may not even be interested in."

Bergeret at CSLP, representing publicly-funded institutions, said he felt the new work rule would not make a huge difference to potential students, but he said it would enable students to extend their study duration once in Canada. "Our students have always been eligible for on-campus jobs, [but the new rule] provides a student with more choices." □

Bad schools under investigation in Ireland

THE IRISH police are investigating a number of English language teaching schools in the country amid claims of institutions operating as "visa factories" and fake certificates of attendance being issued to students.

A civil servant was arrested and then released without charge earlier this year as part of an ongoing investigation into visa irregularities. One school closed down in December while under investigation and students turned up to find no classes, no computers and no teachers. Other police inquiries have revealed a school with up to 2,000 students on its register but only two classrooms in which to teach.

Language schools' body, MEI~Relsa, welcomed these efforts to regulate the industry, which prides itself on its quality reputation. "It is through these [police] investigations and the filtering system managed by the

Advisory Council for English Language Schools (Acels) that we can be sure the integrity of our industry is maintained," said Gill Nother, Manager at MEI~Relsa.

There are no requirements for schools setting up in Ireland to meet certain criteria, although 80 per cent of English language students in the country are thought to attend schools recognised by Acels. According to a report in the *Irish Times*, the Department of Justice and the Department of Foreign Affairs are preparing a number of initiatives to prevent further visa abuse, turning loose guidelines into regulations.

Ernie Crossen, of the Dublin School of English, who is a member of MEI~Relsa's government liaison committee, told *Language Travel Magazine* that the investigation stemmed from the close relationship that MEI~Relsa had built up with the Department of Justice. He added that reports

about the investigations in the Irish press had been slightly exaggerated to give an impression of a large-scale investigation, when in fact "it's more like a check-up really", he said.

The five schools at the centre of the investigations are believed to target predominantly Chinese and Russian students. They are suspected of supplying students with fake attendance certificates, which are needed for the renewal of residence permits. A larger number of schools are reportedly being monitored for comparison between the numbers of students on their registers and the size of their facilities available.

There is one downside to the investigations, according to the *Irish Times*. Two Chinese students told the paper they were cutting short their study plans in Ireland after being made to feel as if they had done something wrong when questioned about visas. □

One-stop website for Australian education

AUSTRALIA has caught up with the UK in the race to entice international students by launching a comprehensive website offering information about all education prospects in the country. Since March, enquiries have been directed to www.education.gov.au, which has separate sections for students, parents, educators, policy makers and industry.

Students are directed to websites offering search facilities by course or institution as well as tips on study costs and living in Australia, while the central website also serves as a forum for industry interests and there are opportunities to access online discussion forums and relevant government bodies.

In January this year, the UK launched its Education UK brand website at www.educationuk.org, which has included a listing of English language teaching institutions on the site since March. □

Bell closes two UK schools

UK-BASED language school chain, Bell International, is to close two of its UK training centres from the end of this month in a bid to "reposition" its operations. Richard Rossner, Chief Executive at Bell, commented that although it was "regrettable" to close the Oxford and Bath centres, with the loss of jobs and outstanding staff, "we are sure that it is right for Bell in the long-term to focus on fewer sites in the UK and to continue the development of the quality service for which Bell is renowned".

The decision was taken in response to a rise in demand for English language training outside of the UK and the continuing decline in the number of students coming to the UK, he said. Bell has recently expanded its presence internationally through joint ventures and is increasing its network of associates, particularly in Eastern Europe. □

Revival of New York language schools' association

AN ASSOCIATION of language teaching schools in New York State in the USA has been re-established so that members can work towards common goals. Originally formed 10 years ago and then disbanded once its aims had been achieved, the association is now regrouping to fight new threats – primarily that English language teachers may be required by the state to have studied certain university courses to be eligible to work.

César Rennert, President of the New York English School Association (NYESA), as the association is now known, explained that such a requirement, should it come into effect, allowed no consideration for other relevant factors, such as teaching or administrative experience. "This is one of the important challenges that has been put before us," he said.

Members of NYESA have visited officials at the State Capitol and, according to Rennert, "we have made considerable headway in making our wishes known". With around 40 members at the time of going to press – some of whom have multiple centres – the association is hoping to encourage all schools in the state to join.

"We hope that with our strength in numbers, we can show the world that New York State is one of the best destinations to learn English in," said Rennert. He added that all association members would be expected to uphold "the high standards that our students seek. We hope that this time, NYESA will not be an ad-hoc association."

Plans for the group include consistent quality evaluation, a dedicated website, attendance at fairs and workshops and NYESA-sponsored fairs and meetings. □

The Alphe UK Workshop

Date: 23-25 August
Venue: London, UK
Contact: Hothouse Media
Matthew Northover
or Jane Gilham
11-15 Emerald Street
London, WC1N 3QL, UK
Tel: +44 20 7440 4027
Fax: +44 20 7440 4033
Email: matthew@hothousemedia.com
jane@hothousemedia.com

Arels International Language Fair

Date: 27-29 August
Venue: Brighton, UK
Contact: Annie Wright, Arels
56 Buckingham Gate
London, SW1E 6AG, UK
Tel: +44 20 780 29200
Fax: +44 20 780 29201
Email: info@arels.org.uk

International Educational Fair

Date: 27 August
Venue: Pusan, Korea
Contact: Mansuk Bae, KAMC
422-30 Jangjeon 3 - Dong
Keumjeong-Ku
Pusan, 609-840, Korea
Tel: +82 51517 7340
Fax: +82 51517 7341
Email: kamc@thru.net

MEI-Relsa Agent Workshop

Date: 2 September
Venue: Co. Clare, Ireland
Contact: MEI-Relsa,
17 Lower Camden St,
Dublin 2, Ireland
Tel: +353 147 53122
Fax: +353 147 53088
Email: info@mei.ie

Language Parade

Date: 6-8 September
Venue: Budapest, Hungary
Contact: LingVisit Educational & Language Travel Ltd.
PO Box 435, Budapest 62,
H-1395, Hungary
Tel: +36 12695489
Fax: +36 13022863
Email: lingvisit@lingvisit.hu

14th Annual Conference of the EAIE

Date: 11-14 September
Venue: Porto, Portugal
Contact: EAIE Secretariat
PO Box 11189
Amsterdam, 1001
The Netherlands
Tel: +31 205 254 999
Fax: +31 205 254 998
Email: eaie@eaie.nl

Expo-Estudenoxterior.com Brazil Roadshow

Date: 12 September
Venue: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Date: 14 September
Venue: Londrina, Brazil
Date: 16 September
Venue: Curitiba, Brazil
Date: 18 September
Venue: Riberao Preto, Brazil
Contact: Daniel Ripple
Front Page Promotions Media
Rua Cardoso de Almeida
Maceio, Brazil
Tel: +55 823 279266
Fax: +55 823 279266
Email: daniel@fppmedia.com

Foreign Languages Plus

Date: 19-22 September
Venue: Moscow, Russia
Date: 28-29 September
Venue: St Petersburg, Russia
Contact: Stas Gaponov, BKC
International House
Starovagankovskiy pr 15 off 5,
Moscow, 121019, Russia

Tel: +7 095 737 5225
Fax: +7 095 737 6579
Email: plus@study.ru

The California Workshop

Date: 13-14 September
Venue: Los Angeles, USA
Contact: Icef, Am Hofgarten 9
Bonn, 53113, Germany
Tel: +49 228 201 190
Fax: +49 228 201 1944
Email: icefbonn@icef.com

WYSTC 2002

Date: 29 September - 5 October
Venue: Rhodes, Greece
Contact: WYSTC Secretariat
Bredgade 25H
Copenhagen, DK-1260,
Denmark
Tel: +45 339 39620
Fax: +45 339 35646
Email: mailbox@wystc.org

Salon "Education"

Date: 16-20 October
Venue: Namur, Belgium
Contact: Frank Leglise,
People & Places,
Blvd Emile Bockstael 191
Brussels, 1020, Belgium
Tel: +32 242 32880
Fax: +32 242 32889
Email: info@saloneducation.be

The Tokyo Workshop

Date: 21-22 October
Venue: Tokyo, Japan
Contact: Icef (as above)

Expolingua Portugal

Date: 24-26 October
Venue: Lisbon, Portugal
Contact: Goncalo Borges de Sousa
Expolingua Portugal
Rua da Esperanca,
4 - 2 Lisbon, 1200-657
Portugal
Tel: +351 139 66089
Fax: +351 139 66223
Email: info@expolingua.pt

International Education Fair

Date: 26-27 October
Venue: Taipei, Taiwan
Contact: Vivien Liu, Tosa
Room 1122,
No.15 Fuhsing Rd, Taipei
Taiwan, ROC 105
Tel: +886 27739330
Fax: +886 27739481
Email: tosa@tosa.org.tw

The Alphe Asia Workshop

Date: 29-31 October
Venue: Phuket, Thailand
Contact: Hothouse Media (as above)

International Education Fair

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

Vieta International Education Fair

Date: 8-9 November
Venue: Hanoi
Date: 10-11 November
Venue: Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Contact: Vieta c/o Vietnam Education
Promotion Association
30 Ta Quang Buu, Hanoi
Vietnam
Tel: +84 48223675
Fax: +84 48223699
Email: vieta@fpt.vn