

New buildings for British ELT

There is significant activity on the property front among English language schools in the UK. Three established schools – International House (IH) London, Bell International and Study Group – are either acquiring new premises or building their own new premises from scratch.

Firstly, IH London has moved from its Piccadilly premises, where it was for 30 years, to a brand new “state-of-the-art learning environment” in London’s Covent Garden in March. Covering seven floors, the new purpose-built premises has 52 air-conditioned classrooms.

Richard Abrial, Director of Sales and Marketing at IH London, said, “When not studying, students can relax and take in the view from our Sky Lounge and rooftop terrace, enjoy freshly prepared food and drinks at the café and espresso bar or simply enjoy the location.”

Meanwhile, Bell International has acquired a new residential school close to Tunbridge Wells in Kent. A former girls boarding school, the Bell Bedgebury International School is set in 220 acres of parkland and will open in September. Chief Executive of Bell, David Pottinger, explained, “We have been looking for a suitable new UK location for some time, as part of a global expansion programme, and our criteria have been strict.”

He continued, “In particular, we have been searching for a combination

of good transport links, outstanding facilities and an estate of cultural or historic interest. In Bedgebury, I’m delighted to say that we have found all three.” The school will offer year-round residential tuition for clients preparing for study in mainstream UK schools and also host the Bell Bedgebury Language Centre, which is being transferred from Saffron Walden near Cambridge, offering residential language training for 16+ year olds and teacher training.

Study Group has also been investing heavily in brand new learning facilities, with a building project close to Brighton train station in the city centre slowly taking shape and scheduled for completion in the autumn. The UK£28 million (US\$54.2 million) project will culminate in the creation of an international study centre housing Bellerbys College and Embassy CES students, a 375-bed student residence and global and UK corporate headquarters under one roof.

The building will have a restaurant, library, Internet café, private study rooms, common room, exam and lecture hall, art studios and six science laboratories as well as over 60 classrooms. “Our brand new centre takes the international student experience in Britain to new levels,” said Principal, Nigel Addison. “Modern teaching spaces with the latest technology combined with the excellence of our academic staff will give students all they need to succeed.”



The new IH London centre (left and above left); the Bell school (top); the Study Group building design (above)

Malvern House offers uni application service

LONDON-BASED language school Malvern House has announced it is launching an application service for all students seeking help to apply for the next stage of their education pathway, be that a short course or longer-term degree course.

Called OnCourse, the service is open to any student, whether they are studying at

Malvern House or not. Katherine Bradley, Marketing Manager, explained that agencies would receive commission on the paid-for service if they sent students just for OnCourse, as well as from partner universities. Malvern House students pay no additional fee.

“From speaking with our agents, we have found that universities are often very difficult to work with, having lengthy application

Numbers boost in Australia

THE LATEST GOVERNMENT figures published by Australian Education International reveal further inclines in student visas issued in 2006 across all education sectors in Australia. Overall, there was a 13.6 per cent rise in new enrolments commencing in 2006, with growth of 19.4 per cent registered for the ELT sector.

As Sue Blundell, Chief Executive of English Australia pointed out, these figures only relate to students entering the country on a student visa, so the 56,615 commencements for English language courses reported is likely to reflect just under half the total market size. (Results of an English Australia survey to reflect total market size

were not available at the time of going to press).

Asia remained the most vital market across all sectors with India showing the strongest growth, although Brazil also fared well. Minister for Education, Julie Bishop, said the industry continued to make a “vital contribution” to the economy.

processes, maximum numbers of agents per country and so on,” she said. “We hope that this will be an attractive proposal for our current network of agents and also attract new partners.”



British Boarding Schools Workshop

Date: May 1-3
Venue: London, UK
Email: Suzanne@britishboardingschools.co.uk
Web: www.britishboardingschools.co.uk

IH Agent Workshop 2007

Date: May 10-12
Venue: Gozo, Malta
Email: affiliates@ihworld.co.uk
Web: www.ihworkshop.com

StudyWorld 2007

Date: May 11-12
Venue: Berlin, Germany
Email: beate.kleessen@icwe.net
Web: www.icwe.net

The Partnership Workshop, Canada

Date: May 23-24
Venue: Vancouver, BC, Canada
Email: info@csglobal.net
Web: www.csglobal.net / www.bmimedia.net

The AAIEP Agents Workshop

Date: May 26-27
Venue: Minneapolis, MI, USA
Email: info@csglobal.net
Web: www.csglobal.net / www.bmimedia.net

Nafsa Annual Conference

Date: May 27 - June 1
Venue: Minneapolis, MI, USA
Email: kathleenp@nafsa.org
Web: www.nafsa.org

The Alphe UK Workshop

Date: August 31- September 2
Venue: London, UK
Email: jane@hothousemedia.com
Web: www.hothousemedia.com

The LTM Star Awards

Date: September 1
Venue: London, UK
Email: mail@hothousemedia.com
Web: www.hothousemedia.com

Capls and CLC to join forces in Canada

MEMBERS OF the Canadian Association of Private Language Schools (Capls) and the Canada Language Council (CLC) have voted to join forces and present a united front to the world under the auspices of one association. In what is a logical step for the two associations, both of which have enjoyed government support in promoting Canada's international education industry, one cross-sectoral association will be formed that will have as its basis for membership an accreditation scheme modelled on the existing CLC Quality Assurance Scheme.

Linda Auzins at Capls said that a steering committee would meet regularly to plan a course of action until next February when the hybrid association will be launched. "The new association will provide a strong identity for the Canadian language training sector," she said, noting that as well as using CLC's accreditation scheme as a benchmark, the association would use the marketing, organisational and advocacy strength of Capls. Gerry La Belle, President of Capls, added, "A great deal of effort and commitment has gone into the development of our Canadian language training sector and we are looking forward to this new phase of our development."

Virginia Taylor at CLC said, "We are thrilled at the prospect of joining together with Capls. All language programmes in Canada will now have the opportunity to be recognised under one umbrella." ●

Online booking for Alphe conferences

MEETING MANAGER, a new system designed to enable workshop delegates to get in touch with each other and make appointments online, has been launched by Hothouse Media, the company behind the Alphe Conferences and *Language Travel Magazine*.

Jane Gilham, Alphe Manager, said the extensive testing



of the system meant that its first road-test, for delegates attending Alphe Latin America in Brazil, went extremely well.

"Our Alphe delegates like the new system because they only have to load up their business and contact details once," she said. "Any educator or agent who wants to attend an Alphe in the next 12 months, should go to Meeting Manager via www.hothousemedia.com and fill in their details." ●

Amerispan situation close to resolution

SINCE WE REPORTED that US agency, Amerispan, had left significant debts in the wake of its closure, it appears that most language schools affected have had some monies returned to them, despite initial claims by Amerispan that it was unable to honour its debts.

The Association of Unpaid Language Schools (Aulas) claimed the outcome as a victory for the affected schools that got together to campaign for a fairer end result (see *Language Travel Magazine*, March 2007, page 6). On its website, it claimed, "[News of payment] shows that Aulas has been a very effective tool in creating pressure to [achieve results]."

A number of schools confirmed that they had received at least part-payment of their debts (either 30 per cent or 50 per cent seemed typical) and in some cases, agreed to a continuing partnership with Don Quijote USA, which acquired Amerispan's assets.

Ex-owner of Amerispan, John Slocum, said that after

finding a buyer and collecting debts owed to Amerispan, the final and most difficult step in resolving the situation was to find a way to settle with schools. "I'm very appreciative of [Don Quijote USA's] work with me to guarantee to promote [certain] schools who were willing to accept partial payments," he said.

One language school observed that they felt it unfair that they had had no choice but to agree to a flat 50 per cent repayment offer – because they were in financial difficulties – despite the fact that other schools had been repaid in full, as detailed on the Aulas website. ●

Currency

1xUS\$ =currency*		
Argentinean	Pesos	3.097
Australian	Dollar	1.271
Brazilian	Real	2.104
British	Pound	0.523
Bulgarian	Leva	1.479
Canadian	Dollar	1.173
Chilean	Pesos	539.00
Chinese (PR)	Yuan RMB	7.741
Czech	Koruny	21.26
Danish	Kroner	5.635
Egyptian	Pound	5.701
EU	Euro	0.756
Hong Kong	Dollar	7.814
Hungarian	Forint	190.18
Icelandic	Kronur	67.470
Indonesian	Rupiah	9,193.2
Israeli	New Shekels	4.211
Japanese	Yen	116.52
Malaysian	Ringgit	3.511
Maltese	Lira	0.324
Mexican	Peso	11.181
New Zealand	Dollar	1.447
Norwegian	Kroner	6.141
Polish	Zloty	2.948
Russian	Rubles	26.135
Singaporean	Dollar	1.534
Slovakian	Koruny	25.690
South African	Rand	7.478
South Korean	Won	943.85
Swedish	Kronor	7.032
Swiss	Franc	1.215
Taiwanese	NT Dollar	33.020
Thai	Baht	33.052
Turkish	New Lira	1.420
Venezuelan	Bolivar	2,147.0

*Rates are subject to change and should be used as indications only. 14/3/07.

Primary language tuition for all in the UK

IN AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT that its current policy on foreign language study is not working, the UK government has decreed that all primary schools will teach a foreign language to pupils from the age of seven by 2010.

The decision, in the wake of a report into national language learning by Lord Dearing, has been made in the hope that the current downward trend in foreign language study will be halted. Currently, language study can be dropped at the age of 14 and test-takers at GCSE level have dwindled from 80 per cent to 50 per cent of the population since the ruling came into effect in 2004.

Education Secretary, Alan Johnson, said, "I want languages to be at the heart of learning. The earlier you start learning a language the better. [This move] will give pupils seven years to build their knowledge, confidence and experience."

The Dearing report recommended an active use of "immersion courses" to help pupils manage the transition from primary to secondary school level. It also called for UK£50 million (US\$97 million) in extra funding to achieve these aims. ●

StudyWorld

Date: September 3-5
Venue: London, UK
Email: fair@englishuk.com
Web: www.studyworldfair.com

The Icef Higher Education Workshop

Date: September 10-11
Venue: Trondheim, Norway
Email: info@icef.com
Web: www.icef.com

Annual Conference of the EAIE

Date: September 12-15
Venue: Trondheim, Norway
Email: eaie@eaie.nl
Web: www.eaie.nl

Foreign Languages Plus

Date: September 15-17
Venue: Moscow, Russia
Date: September 23-24
Venue: St Petersburg, Russia
Email: abroad@study.ru
Web: <http://plus.study.ru>

WYSTC 2007

Date: October 3-5
Venue: Istanbul, Turkey
Email: mailbox@wystc.org
Web: www.wystc.org

International Education Fairs of Turkey

Date: October 6-10
Venue: Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara - Turkey
Email: info@ieft.net
Web: www.ieft.net

Study Abroad and Language Fair

Date: October 9
Venue: Busan, Korea
Email: kamc@korea.com
Web: www.kamc.com/fair.htm

Scope on the Globe

Date: October 10-13
Venue: Utrecht, Netherlands
Email: s.vdaakster@aromedia.nl
Web: www.scopeontheglobe.com

The Icef China Workshop

Date: October 17-19
Venue: Shanghai, China
Email: info@icef.com
Web: www.icef.com

The Alphe Russia Workshop

Date: October 28-28
Venue: St Petersburg, Russia
Email: jane@hothousemedia.com
Web: www.hothousemedia.com