

Alphe UK and StudyWorld are a hit with attendees

The beginning of September was a busy time of year for many agents and educators as hundreds flocked to London in the UK to take part in the annual Alphe London and StudyWorld agent conferences.

Alphe London attracted 260 agents and 170 educators this year and the event was the biggest yet, according to Alphe Manager Jane Gilham. "We were pleased to break all our attendance records this year while still providing a quality experience for all our guests," said Gilham. The event was held in the Victoria Park Plaza hotel in the centre of London from 5-7th September.

Alicia Woods, Regional Marketing Manager for International Marketing at Edith Cowan University in Australia, said that it was particularly worthwhile for them to attend Alphe this year. "We wanted to suss out the potential from the Central and Eastern European student markets," she said. "These new markets are tricky to access from Australia and I have made a few good contacts and discovered some good market intelligence. It has been more worthwhile than I expected."

Alphe's online appointment system, called Meeting Manager, also went down well with delegates this year. "Dr Wes Koczka from University Canada West in Victoria, BC, said, "It is easy to be very selective [on Meeting Manager] as you can identify agents from specific countries and see each agent's profile. It is a pretty good appointment system and I like the idea of having pictures of all the delegates I will be meeting in advance."



Delegates at this year's Alphe UK enjoyed the busy atmosphere



This year's StudyWorld was held in London for the second time

in touch and swap pictures and business information throughout the year (see www.hothousemedia.com to log in).

Attendees at this year's StudyWorld were also pleased with the event. Graham White from Eastbourne School of English in the UK said that London was definitely a good long-term venue for attendees. Andrew Fisher from EAC in the UK said that it was useful to have the two workshops close together. "It gives a real opportunity to meet with clients, hold initial discussions about business development, and then be able to expand on these discussions again a few days later with a further face-to-face appointment," he said.

StudyWorld attracted 420 agents and 248 educators on the 8-10 September.

The highlight for many at Alphe UK this year was the LTM Star Awards that were held at a venue in the city of London on Saturday 6th September (see pictures in Grapevine, page 12). Scott Wade, Director of Hothouse Media, used the event to officially launch the company's latest online product, InTouch, which has been designed to enable agents and schools to stay

in touch and swap pictures and business information throughout the year (see www.hothousemedia.com to log in).

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Student spend up in New Zealand

THE TOTAL expenditure by international students studying in English language schools in New Zealand increased by NZ\$7 million (US\$4.8 million) in the year ending March 2008, to reach NZ\$242 million (US\$166 million).

The latest statistics from Statistics New Zealand show that the largest increase in expenditure and tuition fees this year was from Saudi Arabian students, who spent an extra NZ\$3.9 million (US\$2.7 million), reflecting an increase in student numbers from this country. Overall, Korean students spent the most and this figure increased by 6.7 per cent on the previous year to NZ\$26.6 million (US\$18.2 million) in 2007/2008.

The estimated total value of expenditure by all international students studying in New Zealand was NZ\$1,514 million (US\$1,037 million) for the same year.

Australia changes visa requirements

THE AUSTRALIAN government has announced a range of visa assessment level changes that will greatly benefit a number of key student markets for the language travel sector, including China.

From September this year, China was moved from assessment level four to assessment level three in the Elicos sector meaning that Chinese students no longer have to take an IELTS test when applying for a visa to study on a stand alone English language programme.

Sue Blundell, Executive Director of English Australia, said the only Chinese students to study in Australia so far were those on pathway programmes who had an English level of IELTS 5.0 or higher and that currently the English language teaching market for Chinese students didn't exist for Australia. "The change in assessment level and removal of the IELTS requirement means that Chinese with lower levels of English can now come to Australia to study and

providers who have never been able to recruit students from China before can now access this market," she said.

Andrew Chan from Han Gao Training School in China said this was "good news for Chinese students". He commented that the Australian government had been guilty of ignoring the economic power of China and has been "losing a great piece of revenue in the education sector".



The ICEF Work & Travel Forum
Date: October 31 - November 1
Venue: Berlin, Germany
wtforum@icef.com
www.icef.com

China Education Expo 2008
Date: November 1-2
Venue: Guangzhou, China
Lily@fairlink.com.cn

a2 Kazakhstan Fair
Date: November 1-5
Venue: Almaty, Astana - Kazakhstan
info@aafair.com
www.aafair.com

The ICEF Berlin Workshop
Date: November 2-4
Venue: Berlin, Germany
info@icef.com
www.icef.com

Expolingua Praha
Date: November 7-8
Venue: Prague, Czech Republic
info@icwe.net
www.expolingua.cz

British Boarding Schools Workshop
Date: November 7-9
Venue: Windsor, Berkshire, UK
Suzanne@britishboardingschools.co.uk
www.britishboardingschools.co.uk

21st Tiece Study Abroad Expo
Date: November 8-9
Venue: Bangkok, Thailand
manager@tiece.com
www.tiece.com

a2 Turkey Fair
Date: November 8-15
Venue: Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir - Turkey
info@aafair.com
www.aafair.com

Kaplan Aspect opens new school

KAPLAN ASPECT is to open a new school in Portland, OR, in the USA in January 2009. The school will be located near the Portland State University and will offer three academic exam courses, Toefl, the GMAT and the GRE, as well as General Intensive English, General English and Vacation English.

Carina Wong, Communications Director at Kaplan Test Prep and Admissions, said that the Kaplan Aspect school would be opening in a centre owned and operated by Kaplan Test Prep and Admissions. "Portland is a popular west coast location for those seeking a mixture of outdoor activities and urban lifestyle. Its affordable cost of living, as well as its close proximity to university placement service partner schools, is particularly attractive for students," she added.



Students face fee hike in Ireland

NON-EUROPEAN international students studying in Ireland for over three months will have to provide fingerprints and pay an extra €50 (US\$72) to register with the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB) after the mandatory fee was increased from €100 (US\$155) to €150 (US\$217) in August.

Adrian Cummins, Chief Executive of MEI~Relsa, said that the new fee was introduced without any prior consultation with interested parties and was likely to have a detrimental effect on the language travel industry in Ireland. "The international student market is now worth €900 million (US\$1,302 million) to the Irish economy and this new measure will send shockwaves through the sector and has the potential of putting Irish jobs at risk," he said. "An international student will be slugged with a disproportionate cost."

Margaret Purdy, International Sales & Marketing Manager at Swan Training Institute

in Dublin said that news of the fee hike took them by surprise. "We think the increase is too much and also the very short notice we were given [was bad] as I had to write urgently to agents in Brazil who had students travelling that weekend," she said. "Obviously, all these changes make students nervous and sometimes the rumour machine between them can make us lose business, but overall I don't think it's a question of a €50 (US\$72) increase that would deter them."

Cummins is also concerned that proposed new rules, which would see international students wanting to work part-time having to apply for a work permit and then re-registering with the GNIB when they found a job, would also add to costs for international students. "Once I students find a job and get a work permit, they would have to re-register with the GNIB and pay another €100 (US\$155)," he said.

The fingerprinting requirement for those registering with

the GNIB is part of the new system that was introduced in November last year. All those seeking permission to reside in Ireland have their fingerprints embedded in a biometric chip on their registration card. Brian Lenihan, the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform said, "I am committed to ensuring the state meets its responsibilities in the wider context of EU cooperation both in the fight against crime and the coordination of Member states' efforts in respect of immigration and asylum."

Currency

1xUS\$ =currency*

Argentinean	Pesos	3.032
Australian	Dollar	1.198
Brazilian	Real	1.679
British	Pound	0.561
Bulgarian	Leva	1.353
Canadian	Dollar	1.062
Chilean	Pesos	516.19
Chinese (PR)	Yuan RMB	6.835
Czech	Koruny	17.12
Danish	Kroner	5.157
Egyptian	Pound	5.402
EU	Euro	0.691
Hong Kong	Dollar	7.806
Hungarian	Forint	165.09
Icelandic	Kronur	85.107
Indonesian	Rupiah	9,546.78
Israeli	New Shekels	3.585
Japanese	Yen	108.42
Malaysian	Ringgit	3.427
Mexican	Peso	10.429
New Zealand	Dollar	1.459
Norwegian	Kroner	5.550
Polish	Zloty	2.342
Russian	Rubles	23.318
Singaporean	Dollar	1.430
Slovakian	Koruny	20.896
South African	Rand	7.892
South Korean	Won	1,129.9
Swedish	Kroner	6.561
Swiss	Franc	1.109
Taiwanese	NT Dollar	31.811
Thai	Baht	34.383
Turkish	New Lira	1.222
Venezuelan	Bol. Fuertes	2.147

*Rates are subject to change and should be used as indications only. 04/09/08.

IHWO celebrates 55 years of teaching

ONE OF THE largest international language school chains worldwide, the International House World Organisation (IHWO), is celebrating its 55th anniversary this year. The first school was originally set up by John and Brita Haycraft in Cordoba, Spain in 1953 and currently the organisation has over 140 schools partners in 54 countries teaching 17 different languages.

Micheal Carrier, Chief Executive of IHWO said that the company's aims for the next five-to-10 years were very clear. "We expect a lot of growth in the next years," he said. "Our strategy is first to develop new affiliated schools in all the capitals cities and then to look for high quality partners in other major cities."

A recent addition to IHWO's many courses is an online teacher training course that offers EFL teachers worldwide a flexible way

of receiving tuition. Schools also use the most up-to-date teaching technology, including interactive white boards.



CIEE Annual Conference
Date: November 12-15
Venue: Nashville, TN, USA
conference@ciee.org
www.ciee.org

Education and Career XXI
Date: November 13-15
Venue: Moscow, Russia
rtv@znanie.info
www.znanie.info

Expolingua Berlin
Date: November 14-16
Venue: Berlin, Germany
info@expolingua.com
www.icve.net
www.expolingua.com

a2 Azerbaijan Fair
Date: November 15-16
Venue: Baku, Azerbaijan
info@aafair.com
www.aafair.com

Education and Career XXI
Date: November 20-22
Venue: Nizhny Novgorod, St Petersburg, Russia
rtv@znanie.info
www.znanie.info

MEI~Relsa Taiwan/Korean Workshop
Date: November 22, 25
Venue: Taipei, Taiwan; TBC, Korea
info@mei.ie
www.mei.ie

The Alphe Japan Workshop
Date: November 26-28
Venue: Tokyo, Japan
jane@hothousemedia.com
www.hothousemedia.com

VIII International Fair
Date: November 26-29
Venue: Vilnius, Lithuania and Riga, Latvia
info@ergo.edu.lv
www.eci.home.lv

The Alphe Korea Workshop
Date: December 1-3, 2008
Venue: Seoul, Korea
jane@hothousemedia.com
www.hothousemedia.com

The ICEF Americas Workshop
Date: December 7-9
Venue: Miami, USA
info@icef.com
www.icef.com