

New bill offers hope for US schools

Currency

		1xUS\$ =currency*
Argentinean	Pesos	3.012
Australian	Dollar	1.420
Brazilian	Real	3.055
British	Pound	0.547
Bulgarian	Leva	1.624
Canadian	Dollar	1.314
Chilean	Pesos	643.70
Chinese (PR)	Yuan	8.282
Czech	Koruny	26.34
Danish	Kroner	6.166
Egyptian	Pound	6.223
Euro	Euro	0.829
Hong Kong	Dollar	7.799
Hungarian	Forint	207.09
Icelandic	Kronur	71.652
Indonesian	Rupiah	9,209.6
Israeli	New Shekels	4.527
Japanese	Yen	111.29
Maltese	Lira	0.353
Mexican	Peso	11.453
New Zealand	Dollar	1.549
Norwegian	Kroner	6.968
Polish	Zloty	3.653
Russian	Rubles	29.180
Singaporean	Dollar	1.723
Slovakian	Koruny	33.273
South African	Rand	6.258
South Korean	Won	1,167.6
Swedish	Kroner	7.628
Swiss	Franc	1.274
Taiwanese	NT Dollar	33.990
Thai	Baht	41.450
Turkish	Lira	1,481,246.0
Venezuelan	Bolivar	1,918.5

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

WHM agreement between Australia and Taiwan

A WORKING Holiday Maker visa will now be available to all Taiwanese students in Australia, the Department for Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (Dimia) has announced.

The reciprocal arrangement, which takes effect on November 1, will mean Australian language schools that will now be able to offer certain work experience programmes to Taiwanese students.

The programme permits young people aged between 18 and 30 to undertake full-time paid work of up to three months in duration. Australia has WHM agreements with 15 countries in total, including Japan, Korea, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Hong Kong, Italy and France. □

A glimmer of hope for an improvement in business for US language schools, in the shape of the International Student and Scholar Access Act (ISSAA), has arrived for English language schools in the USA. Republican Senator for Minnesota, Norm Coleman, has introduced a Senate Bill that is making its way through Congress in the next few months.

The aim of the bill is to improve access to graduate schools in the USA for international students. However, if passed, the bill will also usher in benefits for those working in the English language teaching sector. One provision of the bill is that it mandates a reduction in the Sevis fee for short-term students.

It also aims to make the visa issuance process more efficient – allowing applicants and institutions to enquire about the status of a visa application; and promotes changing a requirement to prove a student has no intention of migration to the USA to a measure to prove the student has adequate finances to finish their course of studies while in the country.

“I meet too many students who want to study at Minnesota’s fine colleges and universities... but because they simply don’t have spouses or homes in their native lands, they are rejected for student visas,” said Coleman. “This criteria needs to change, as I believe we do ourselves, both economically and diplomatically, a major disservice if we close off our country to qualified legitimate foreign students.”

Kelly Franklin, Past-President of the American Association of Intensive English Programs (AAIEP) – which is also lobbying for a reduction in the Sevis fee for short-term students – welcomed the bill, although he pointed out that even if it is successfully passed, many stipulations may be watered down in the final version. “I do think it’s noteworthy that the current conditions have necessitated such a step,” he said.

The Sevis fee of US\$100 was announced in July, and came into effect on September 1. Students

applying for a visa from this month onwards have been required to pay the fee, which is used to fund a student tracking system, prior to visa issuance. The cost of US\$100, in addition to the visa application fee, does constitute a significant expense for short-term students. According to Franklin, the payment procedure by mail also presents a fairly complex instruction process for students whose English language skills may be fairly basic.

“There are two-and-a-half pages of instructions for a one-page form,” he said. “The actual paper version should be the least desirable method of paying the

fee, and I hope that the online version will be a good bit simpler.” Franklin said he was sure that the fee – and payment process – would be off-putting to students and agents initially, although he pointed out that the process might also encourage students to use agents. However, Jesse Ro at American Language Communication Center in New York felt the fee would not deter solvent students from applying.

The fee is non-refundable and can be paid via the Internet, by mail or by a third party. If a visa is denied, and the student reappplies within 12 months, then the Sevis fee is not repaid. □

UK amends visa change rule

ADDITIONAL measures have been introduced in the UK to cut down on possible immigration abuse. Measures possibly affecting foreign students include the move to prevent short-term visitors changing visa category to a work permit visa.

Indian newspaper sources report that the changes, which come into effect on October 1, will make it more difficult to gain employment in the UK and therefore it will become less appealing as a study destination. However, UK Home Secretary, David Blunkett, made it clear that graduates would still be able to switch visa status.

Foreign nationals on temporary visas who wish to remain in

the UK to study will be able to switch onto degree level courses only. The maximum time allowed in the country on successive short courses is also dropping from four years to two years.

“Our proposals to prevent temporary migrants from switching into other immigration categories is necessary to ensure there is a clear distinction between temporary and permanent migration routes,” said Blunkett. “These common sense measures are preferable to a blanket ban on switching – the highly skilled will be able to stay in the UK and further their careers but temporary migrants will need to leave at the end of their stay.” □

Slight drop in numbers for Malta

A SLIGHT drop of 1.4 per cent in English language student numbers was recorded by Malta’s National Statistics Office for the year 2003, compared with 2002. The annual survey, released in July, revealed that student numbers from Germany – the most significant student provider country – and other countries including Russia, Italy, Libya and Sweden had declined.

Those countries registering an increase in student visitors to Malta included Austria, France,

Spain, China and some Eastern European countries. Some nationals represented a significant number of overall tourists from their country in Malta. For example, Russian students at English language schools accounted for almost 19 per cent of all Russian tourists in Malta last year.

Europeans accounted for 94 per cent of all English language students and the 16-to-17 year old age group accounted for the highest proportion of students, according to the survey. □

Beta's parliamentary tea party

THE BRITISH Educational Travel Association (Beta) has continued its efforts to motivate the UK educational travel sector

and raise its profile among decision makers in parliament. In July this year, Beta hosted a reception and afternoon tea at the Houses of Parliament to allow members of the industry to meet each other and talk to members of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Tourism.

Members and other delegates heard speeches from Lord Pendry and Minister for Tourism, Richard Caborn. The speakers underlined the parliamentary group's commitment to



enhance business opportunities for the sector and support initiatives such as the bill to bring UK time in line with European hours,

and London's bid to host the Olympic Games in 2012.

"Attended by over 100 senior industry representatives, MPs and VIPs, the event really cemented our hard work in [promoting] the youth market," said Emma English, Executive Director at Beta.

Association membership spans a range of UK interests, from incoming

youth tour operators and budget accommodation providers to niche holiday specialists and English language schools.

Chinese studying overseas number 700,000

THE MINISTRY of Education in China has released figures revealing that, since 1978, when the policy to allow overseas study was put in place, 700,000 Chinese have furthered their study in foreign countries.

Of these, 170,000 nationals have found jobs in China once they have finished their studies, 350,000 are still studying or conducting research overseas, and the rest have chosen to work in foreign countries.

The Ministry of Education has been trying to attract overseas-educated graduates back to China by creating favourable conditions for overseas graduates to start their own businesses. Statistics reveal that Beijing is the first choice of city for students returning to work in China, according to Chinaview website. □

NZ's new Asian-friendly immigration website

A REMODELLED website has been launched by New Zealand's immigration department featuring a smiling Western and Asian child on its home page. The intention is to encourage more Asian visitors, according to news sources, as statistics reveal that the number of Asian migrants coming to New Zealand is dropping.

The first part of the overhaul, for areas dedicated to migrants, visitors and overseas students, was completed in May and Immigration Minister, Paul Swain, said website visits had increased by more than 70 per cent since then.

"The Internet is a vital tool in ensuring New Zealand has the right people and skills to move the country forward," said Swain, adding that the site reflects a long-term strategy towards customised service for enquiries. □

Calendar

VI Fedele Annual Meeting

Date: 30 September - 3 October
Venue: La Coruña, Spain
Contact: Astrid Verlot, Fedele, c/o CN 340, Km 189.6, Marbella, 29600, Spain
Tel: +34 952 834 782
Email: info@fedelespain.com

Expo Estudiante

Date: 6-7 October
Venue: Lima, Peru
Date: 9-12 October
Venue: Bogota, Cali - Colombia
Date: 16-17 October
Venue: Panama City, Panama
Date: 19-24 October
Venue: Guadalajara, Monterrey, Mexico City - Mexico
Contact: Rupert Merrick
C&S Asociadas
Alameda Santos, 1470
Sao Paulo, 1470, Brazil
Tel: +55 112 896599
Fax: +55 112 510251
Email: rupert@csglobal.net

The Partnership Workshop

Date: 25 October
Venue: Mexico City, Mexico
Contact: C&S Asociadas (as above)

Scope on the Globe

Date: 13-16 October
Venue: Utrecht, Netherlands
Contact: Janine Bekker, Aromedia, Postbus 58202, Amsterdam, 1040, Netherlands
Tel: +31 206 646127
Fax: +31 206 646168
Email: scope@aromedia.nl

The Asia Workshop

Date: 18-20 October
Venue: Shanghai, China
Contact: Andreas Marks, ICEF, Am Hofgarten 9, Bonn, 53113, Germany
Tel: +49 228 201190
Fax: +49 228 2011944
Email: a.marks@icef.com

International Education Fairs of Turkey

Date: 20-24 October
Venue: Ankara, Izmir, Istanbul - Turkey
Contact: Global Visions Education, Receptapa Cad., Imren Apt No:15/6, Kat:1, Istanbul 34437, Turkey
Tel: +90 212 361 6825
Fax: +90 212 361 0538
Email: info@ieft.net

Expolingua Portugal

Date: 21-23 October
Venue: Lisbon, Portugal
Contact: Goncalo Borges de Sousa, Expolingua Portugal, Rua da Esperanca, 4 - 2, Lisbon, 1200-657, Portugal
Tel: +351 213 966089
Fax: +351 213 966223
Email: info@expolingua.pt

The Alpha China/Alphe Asia Workshops

Date: 21-23 October
Venue: Shanghai, China
Date: 25-27 October
Venue: Phuket, Thailand
Contact: Jane Gilham
Hothouse Media
11-15 Emerald Street
London, WC1N 3QL, UK
Tel: +44 20 7440 4027
Fax: +44 20 7440 4033
Email: jane@hothousemedia.com

Nexus World of Study Fairs

Date: 23-24 October
Venue: Beijing, China
Date: 26 October

Venue: Shanghai, China
Date: 28 October
Venue: Hong Kong
Date: 30-31 October
Venue: Singapore
Contact: Jason Newman, Nexus Media, Nexus House, Azalea Drive, Swanley, Kent, BR8 8HU, UK
Tel: +44 1322 660070
Fax: +44 1322 616323
Email: jason.newman@nexusmedia.com

Int. Education Fair

Date: 30-31 October
Venue: Bangkok, Thailand
Contact: Saijai Sriyayanta, 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

Expolingua Prague

Date: 5-6 November
Venue: Prague, Czech Republic
Contact: Beate Kleessen, ICWE, Leibnizstr. 32, Berlin, D - 10625, Germany
Tel: +49 303 276140
Fax: +49 303 249833
Email: beate.kleessen@icwe.net

The Language Show

Date: 5-7 November
Venue: London, UK
Value Added Events
1st Floor, Capital House
2 Michael Rd
London, SW6 2AD, UK
Tel: +44 207 7369955
Fax: +44 207 7361645
Email: info@thelanguageshow.co.uk

The Berlin Workshop

Date: 7-9 November
Venue: Berlin, Germany
Contact: ICEF (as above)

ICC/ISS Workshop

Date: 7-14 November
Venue: Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya - Japan
Contact: ICC International Communication Center, Sankei BLDG 3F, 1-28-10, Takadanobaba, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, 169-0075, Japan
Tel: +81 3 5272-2433
Fax: +81 3 5272-2447
Email: uk@iss-ryugaku.co.jp

CIEE Annual Conference

Date: 10-13 November
Venue: Santa Fe, NM, USA
Contact: Karen Bailey, Council on Internat. 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

20th International Fair "Education and Career"

Date: 18-20 November
Venue: Moscow, Russia
Contact: Irina Shipilova, RTV Media, Shukhova str. 14 of. 301, Moscow, 113162, Russia
Tel: +7 095 2377226
Fax: +7 095 2370355
Email: rtv@znanie.info

Le Salon de L'Education

Date: 18-21 November
Venue: Paris, France
Contact: Camille Rabehanta L'Etudiant, 27 Rue du Chemin Vert, Paris, 75011, France
Tel: +33 148 07 42 86
Fax: +33 148 07 02 92
Email: camille.rabehanta@letudiant.fr