

UK language school closes doors to students

A language school in Glasgow is currently under police investigation after closing its doors without warning in June this year. A number of students who had enrolled on English courses at Able English have been left stranded with no information on how to get their money refunded.

Juliana Vasquez from Colombia paid Able English, the English teaching arm of Kelvin Business School, UK£1,200 (US\$2,424) for a 25-week English course that was due to start on 16 June. Laura Day, Vasquez's sister who lives in Glasgow, said, "My sister arrived to start her course and the premises were closed. We have been to the building many times and phoned the school but no one answers and the Director, David Morrison's, mobile number is disconnected."

Day said that she had reported the school to the police, the Trading Standards Service and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) but nobody had been able to help her recover her money.

Morrison told *Language Travel Magazine* on 11 July in an email that he was out of the country and had been since 12 June. "There has been a serious impact to the school due to two key-holding staff resignations," he said. "I have been forced to indefinitely postpone all classes and courses until I can clean up the mess. Refunds will be issued subject to the school's standard terms and conditions." However, at the time of going to press, Vasquez had yet to be contacted by Morrison regarding a refund.

Graham Robertson from the Glasgow branch of the Trading Standards Service said, "We have had a meeting with the

Strathclyde police in order to combine our enquiries," he said. "The police are making further enquiries as to the whereabouts of Mr Morrison. We have been to his business address and his home but we have not been able to contact him." A spokesperson from Strathclyde police confirmed that the investigation was ongoing.

Other students have also been affected. Alexander

Colorado from Colombia, who lives in France, said, "I arrived at the school in June for a four-week language class after obtaining my visa in Paris and was told to return the next day. When I came back, the doors were all locked and I was not able to contact anyone from the school."

Kelvin Business School is listed on a DIUS list of legitimate education providers, used by the Home Office to issue student visas. A government spokesperson said, "Schools listed on the [IDIUS] list have to meet certain criteria to prove that they are bona fide organisations. These include having a schedule of classes, running courses that have a minimum of 15 hours supervised study a week for visa holders and keeping records of attendance. If a school was found not to be meeting these criteria, they would be removed."

The UK's immigration system is currently undergoing an overhaul (see *Language Travel Magazine*, October 2006, page 6) and an announcement regarding the requirement that all education providers accepting international student visa holders be accredited was due at the time of going to press.

Vasquez was initially offered free tuition by local school, Live Language, in any of its classes with spaces and Glasgow School of English has since offered her a permanent place on a course.



Student, Juliana Vasquez, outside the locked door of Able English

"Languages in crisis" in Australia

THE GROUP OF EIGHT (Go8), an association of eight leading research universities in Australia, has called on the Australian government to implement policies to stop the decline of language learning among Australian citizens.

The discussion paper, *Languages in crisis: A rescue plan for Australia*, was released earlier this year and calls for compulsory second language education from primary school to year 10, the introduction of incentives for school students to keep up their language studies – such as a 10-per-cent bonus on university entry scores for year 12 students who have successfully undertaken studies in a language other than English in their last year at school – and the provision of extra funding to help universities retain quality language teachers.

Michael Gallagher, Go8 Executive Director, said, "Crisis is not too strong a word to describe the decline in foreign language educa-

tion in our schools and universities. The percentage of year 12 students graduating with a second language has fallen from 40 per cent in the 1960s to as low as six per cent in some states in Australia today." He added, "At tertiary level, where Go8 universities are responsible for delivering the majority of foreign language education, the number of languages available has fallen from 66 to 29 in the past 10 years."



The Alpha 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

StudyWorld London
Date: September 3-5
Venue: London, UK
Email: info@studyworldfair.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 1-5
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

Two quality labels for French language schools

French language school association, Fle.fr, has announced a new quality label – the Label Fle – that will be available from January 2008. In April 2006, the French government launched a separate accreditation scheme for French language schools – the Label Qualité Français Langue Étrangère – and 22 schools were awarded accreditation under this label earlier in the year.

Alain Foubert from Fle.fr, which has 43 members, said that the new quality mark differed from the government accreditation scheme by taking “a global approach to the quality process, comprising all the tuition and all types of public a centre caters for as well as related features and services”. The quality scheme is available to all French language schools in France – not just Fle.fr member schools – and a handbook detailing the auditing process will be available to schools from September.

The government accreditation scheme was launched by the French Ministries of Education, Foreign Affairs and Culture and assesses French language schools in the five different categories of welfare, premises and equipment, programmes, teaching staff and

management. Currently 68 schools have either applied or been accredited.

Christophe Tissoit from Institut de Touraine in Tours, which has already received the government quality label, said, “I think the example of the UK and the British Council inspired the whole process of creating a quality label in France. Today there are over 300 French language schools operating in France. The FLE quality label will give visibility and facilitate the selection.”

Eleri Maitland from French in Normandy in Rouen said that they had already applied for government accreditation and would also apply for the Fle.fr association quality mark. “We want to be the best,” she said, “and accreditation is part of the process.” ●



French language schools will be able to display one or both of these new labels under the new accreditation schemes

Nova suspends operations

THE JAPANESE MINISTRY of Economy, Trade and Industry has suspended part of the language school chain Nova Corp's business operations for six months after the company was found guilty of lying to customers about its services.

The company is Japan's largest language school chain and operates over 900 schools with some 480,000 students. However, the school is said to be unable to sign up students for courses running for one year or more, nor those totalling 70 hours and above for six months starting from June.

An investigation by the ministry found that students were misled regarding the availability of classes, entrance fees and the cancellation policy and the company's practices were judged to be “organised and malicious”.

In an interview following the decision, Nova President Nozomu Sahashi said an internal enquiry would be set up within the school and that he would seek to regain students' trust. ●

Language school provides bursary for university fees

A CANADIAN LANGUAGE school has launched an innovative scholarship programme for students going on to study at a range of universities and colleges in Canada. Students studying at Hansa Language Centre in Toronto will be able to apply for a one-time bursary for their first year of studies at one of 10 different universities or colleges in Canada.

David Oancia from the school said they had recently negotiated with Trent University in Peterborough, ONT, to offer the Trent-Hansa International Award, a CAN\$1,500 (US\$1,425) scholarship towards the first year of studies at Trent University. “It will be available to all Hansa Language Centre students who complete at least three months of our intensive English programme, score 86 on the Toefl iBT and meet the academic requirements of Trent University,” said Oancia.

The Hansa Scholarship Program was launched in December last year and so far 25 students have taken up the bursary. “In the following months, another 15 students will be starting their university prep courses and are looking to enrol for the January 2008 start dates,” said Oancia.

Funding for the scholarships comes from a combination of the language school and the universities and colleges themselves and Oancia said that the school was expecting to increase its numbers of long-term students through the programme.

He added, “We are also receiving a fair amount of money to establish and promote the programme from Industry Canada's Language Industry Program. For example, in September 2008, they have funded a tour of Brazil, Chile and Argentina. We will be promoting the programme in the CEC mini fairs in Brazil and Buenos Aires's ExpoUniversidad as well as making presentations in high schools, universities and English academies in Buenos Aires, Mendoza, Santiago de Chile and Valparaiso, Chile.” ●

Currency

1xUS\$ =currency*

Argentinean	Pesos	3.106
Australian	Dollar	1.162
Brazilian	Real	1.906
British	Pound	0.495
Bulgarian	Leva	1.428
Canadian	Dollar	1.052
Chilean	Pesos	519.95
Chinese (PR)	Yuan RMB	7.581
Czech	Koruny	20.88
Danish	Kroner	5.433
Egyptian	Pound	5.701
EU	Euro	0.730
Hong Kong	Dollar	7.816
Hungarian	Forint	180.05
Icelandic	Kronur	61.008
Indonesian	Rupiah	8,982.88
Israeli	New Shekels	4.234
Japanese	Yen	122.44
Malaysian	Ringgit	3.439
Maltese	Lira	0.313
Mexican	Peso	10.803
New Zealand	Dollar	1.286
Norwegian	Kroner	5.822
Polish	Zloty	2.754
Russian	Rubles	25.589
Singaporean	Dollar	1.516
Slovakian	Koruny	24.384
South African	Rand	7.015
South Korean	Won	919.76
Swedish	Kronor	6.709
Swiss	Franc	1.208
Taiwanese	NT Dollar	32.851
Thai	Baht	31.371
Turkish	New Lira	1.290
Venezuelan	Bolivar	2,147.3

*Rates are subject to change and should be used as indications only. 10/07/07.

Study Abroad and Language Fair

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

Expoltalian in Italy Workshop

Date: October 11-13
Venue: Rome, Italy
Email: p.foti@italianinitaly.it
Web: www.italianinitaly.it

International Education Fair

Date: October 25
Venue: St Petersburg, Russia
Email: ekaterina@begin.ru
Web: www.begin.ru

WEBA Agents Workshop

Date: October 29-31
Venue: Florence, Italy
Email: info@worldeducate.com
Web: www.worldeducate.org

Icef Work & Travel Forum

Date: November 2-3
Venue: Berlin, Germany
Email: wtforum@icf.com
Web: www.icef.com

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@icf.com
Web: www.icef.com

The Alpe Russia Workshop

Date: October 26-28
Venue: St Petersburg, Russia
Email: jane@hothousemedia.com
Web: www.hothousemedia.com

a2 Kazakhstan Fair

Date: November 2-3
Venue: Almaty, Kazakhstan
Email: info@aafair.com
Web: www.aafair.com

Icef Berlin Workshop

Date: November 4-6
Venue: Berlin, Germany
Email: info@icf.com
Web: www.icef.com