

Abroad Perspective - Switzerland Popular With English Studying Japanese

Switzerland, in broadening the global aspect of its education system, is becoming a popular destination for young Japanese students to study English. While still the place for learning hospitality, this traditionally safe and comfortable country is now offering intensive English study programs. Institutions such as the Kumon Leysin Academy of Switzerland (KLAS) provide students the opportunity to not only learn English but also exposes them to a wider array of cultures from around the world. KLAS offers smaller classes designed to foster a "practical education in English" for students, while parents benefit from the knowledge that more avenues are opened up for tertiary education. For colleges and universities looking to diversify their campus population, students from Switzerland can offer a greater appreciation of education on a global scale. Hiroshi Watanabe, principal of KLAS notes that "About 40 percent of our graduates enter colleges in the United States, Canada and Britain."

Source: Yoko Mizui. "Want to learn English? Head to Switzerland." Daily Yomiuri, 5 August 2003. •

Globe Tipping - International Driving Permit (IDP)

If one plans on renting an automobile while overseas, it is wise to purchase an International Driving Permit, or IDP (not to be confused with the International Drivers Licenses). Valid for one year from the date of purchase, the IDP is useful even if one does not plan to drive as it provides proof of one's identity in 10 different languages and is recognized in over 150 countries outside of the United States. In addition, certain car rental companies will require one to possess an IDP.

The IDP is available for purchase through the American Automobile Association (AAA). For more details:
<http://www.ouraaa.com/travel/other/idp/>

Tip - Bring a headset for your cellphone if you plan on using it in the car - driving in a foreign place will usually require one's full attention.

For more information:
<http://www.drunkdrivingdefense.com/national/international-drivers-license.htm> •

Over the Counter - Dealing With Student Visa Fraud

As stated in last week's report in NSF on the arrest and detention of student visa violators in Toronto, the front pages of Canadian newspapers never addressed the issues Canadian schools (and those in the United States and elsewhere) face in regards to being targets of visa scams.

Coverage of this growing problem/issue could consider whether institutions verify or screen international applicants? Do schools follow up to see if individuals who are granted admission, ever show up at classes? If individuals do not show up, what does the school do next? Do institutions issue tuition refunds to individuals who arrive on campus only to claim their funds? If a student becomes academically ineligible, who is responsible to insure the student returns home?

These are only a handful of a potential myriad of critical questions, with even more critical answers, which require responses if one is serious about tackling student visa fraud.

Higher-Edge CIO Dani Zaretsky speaks on student visa abuse, how to detect and prevent it, at the Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE) annual conference in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island from October 24-27. •

The Playing Field - Arab Interest in Universities

At last May's NAFSA conference in Salt Lake City, the largest annual global get-together for international educators (5,500 people came to Utah), attendees heard representatives from U.S. educational offices for Arab nations in the Gulf area lament that interest in higher studies in the United States has dropped severely. In the "post 9/11 era," a report authored by Dr. Al-Wotaid of Kuwait and Dr. Al-Salmi of Oman presented a stark and strong message to American educators stating, "it is imperative that we increase American awareness that Bin Laden does not represent true Islam." The report expressed in bold type that "true Moslems are not terrorists". Dr. Al-Wotaid told a packed hall of several hundred delegates that given increasingly higher hurdles to obtain visas and the anxiety of Arabs to go to the U.S., Kuwaiti government money is now targeting Canada (instead of the USA) for sponsored post-secondary education opportunities. •

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