

This will be the last regular issue of *Not-So-Foreign*.
During the summer, issues will be published once in July and August
Higher-Edge will resume its regular schedule in September.

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

South African MBAs

In May, the South African Council on Higher Education removed the accreditation from 10 of the country's 38 MBA programs, claiming that they did not meet standards agreed upon by experts from international and local bodies. Programs that met some of the requirements were granted conditional accreditation, and have a year to improve. The immediate outrage from the students enrolled in unaccredited programs is understandable, although the Council has stated that degrees issued to current students will remain valid. What is of greater concern however was the need to de-accredit programs in the first place.

Accreditation does give both students and employers peace of mind; that the majority of the programs in South Africa achieved some approval is encouraging. While accreditation authorities exist for other degrees (such as the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology), there are few accreditation authorities that can affirm the quality of MBA programs. South Africa's approach to de-accredit inadequate programs sets a solid foundation for the future of such programs.

Source: "MBA 'trauma' takes its toll as institutions get the axe," *The Sunday Times*, 23 May 2004.

OVER THE COUNTER

Less Cheating In China?

Each of the 7.5 million students writing this year's Chinese National University Entrance Examination (*gaokao*) has signed a form stating that they will not cheat. The *gaokao* is an important test for Chinese students, as it determines their placement in universities. Although this measure does not guarantee that cheating will not occur, this is an indication of the Chinese Ministry of Education's awareness of the problem of cheating in these national exams. The culture to succeed in China has led to instances of fraud, ranging from cheating in the *gaokao* and other exams, to the purchase of fake degrees and certificates.

Higher-Edge will be comparing and contrasting the *gaokao* and the high school graduation exams (*huikao*), in the May/June 2004 issue of *Insight, On-site: China*. For more information, email: editor@higher-edge.com.

Source: "China acts against student cheats," BBC, 8 June 2004.

THE PLAYING FIELD

Guide For Chinese Students In New Zealand

New Zealand, already a popular alternative for study abroad students from China, may perhaps see an increase in interest with the release of a Chinese language version of its Ministry of Education's *Guide to Living and Studying in New Zealand for International Students*. The 73-page guide, to be distributed in China by New Zealand immigration authorities to those with approved visas, gives Chinese students an opportunity to learn about and prepare themselves for the day-to-day life of an international student in the country.

China had previously warned students in August 2003 to avoid New Zealand, claiming that the country was unsafe and that Chinese youths would develop bad habits. Bilateral relations were also strained last year when two private schools in New Zealand went bankrupt, forcing the international students (including 1,500 from China) to finish their programs with other institutions. Even so, it is clear that New Zealand places utmost importance in international education. With plans to inject \$40 million NZD (\$25 million USD) into the international education industry over the next four years, New Zealand may see itself become more desirable as an overseas education destination.

A copy of the *Guide* can be found online [here](#). (in English and Chinese)

Source: "Chinese version of Guide for students released in NZ," Xinhua News Agency, 8 June 2004; "Situation of Chinese Students in Austral, NZ Worrying," *People's Daily*, 4 August 2003.

GLOBE TIPPING

Faster Train Travel In China

Intercity train travel in China now offers non-stop service between certain cities. Express trains will be indicated with a "Z" on train schedules. The Beijing-Shanghai route (Train Z21), which previously took around 14 hours, will now take around 12 hours - leaving Beijing at 7:00 pm and arriving in Shanghai the next morning at 7:00 am.

To ride on these express trains, you have to purchase the tickets 20 or 180 days before your departure, so if speedy travel is important for your next trip to China, plan ahead! Tickets become invalid if payment has not been received seven days before departure.