

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

Demand for postgraduate qualifications

The Graduate Management Admissions Council (GMAC) predicts that in post 2010 world, there will be a huge demand for postgraduate courses and the MBA will be a much-sought-after qualification. The Bologna Accord signed by 40 European countries will come into effect in the year 2010. According to the terms of the agreement, the signatory countries have agreed to revamp their education systems to keep pace with the demands of the twenty first century workplace.

The new system, similar to a British-North American degree system will have three or four year Bachelor's degrees and one to two year Master's degrees. Countries such as Germany and France have had Bachelor's degrees of longer duration, considered higher than the standard three or four year degrees. With a uniform system of education across the European continent, students will be free to move to other countries to pursue higher education.

According to the GMAC estimate, there will be 2.4 million Bachelor's degree holders in Europe in 2010 and 12,000 new programmes in business and management will be offered by business schools in order to meet the increase in demand for business qualifications.

Source: "[Boom in masters degrees predicted](#)," BBC News, 20 January 2005

OVER THE COUNTER

Visa fraud in China

The Canadian embassy in Beijing has reported instances of Chinese students taking the help of unscrupulous agents in order to outwit embassy officials conducting telephone verification interviews.

The agents begin their preparations weeks in advance of the actual telephone interview. Detailed questionnaires are prepared on the different types of questions visa officials may ask and include standard responses to these questions. These questionnaires are then handed out to an "employer" arranged by the agent to pose on behalf of the "student."

THE PLAYING FIELD

Online research tool for students

International students applying to U.S. colleges and universities often make decisions based on unofficial published rankings and word-of-mouth publicity by alumni, friends and relatives. Now, with the help of an online research tool created by The Education Trust, a Washington DC-based thinktank, students can find out the graduating rates of students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds/genders at 1,395 of 2,500 public and private four-year colleges and universities in the US.

Data is available at www.collegeresults.org. The research has been supplied by the US Department of Education. The website also provides sections on how to interpret the database. The survey makes it clear that while enrolment rates have risen at American colleges and universities, graduation rates have not kept pace.

The survey is aimed at bringing attention to falling graduation rates and is also geared to help prospective American students interested in taking up a college education. However, international students interested in studying in the US can use the website to get useful information about different institutions' academic and research priorities, financial and academic infrastructure.

Source: "[Website helps out in choice of college](#)," DesMoines Register, 20 January 2005; "[Colleges urged to change how they treat students](#)," USA Today, 18 January 2005

GLOBE TIPPING

Visa on arrival in Indonesia

The government of Indonesia is offering a visa on arrival service to visitors to the country. The cost of this service depends on the length of the visit (whether 72 hours or more) and the applicant's nationality. After de-planing in Jakarta, travellers will find a well-marked kiosk that gives professional attention, using sophisticated printing equipment to print an entry visa which is then affixed to the passport. For those trying to assist needy students in Aceh, special permission may still be required to visit that region which was afflicted by the tsunami of December 26, 2004.