

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

Review on impact of top-up fees in U.K.

Britain's Department for Education and Skills (DFES) has commissioned a review to assess the impact of top-up fees on British universities. Starting 2006, British universities will be charging £3,000 (U.S. \$ 5,673) as top-up fees instead of tuition fees charged earlier. While tuition fees are paid up front by all students whose parents earn over £32,000 (U.S. \$ 60,512) per annum, top-up fees do not have to be repaid until the student has graduated and is earning over £15,000 (U.S. \$ 28,364) per annum. Repayments are based on income, rather than the sum owed, and debts will be subject to a zero per cent real interest rate.

The issue of top-up fees has generated much controversy in Britain, and already an increasing number of students have started applying to universities in Scotland and Wales in a bid to escape top-up fees. According to *BBC News*, "there was a 17% increase in students from England applying to Scottish universities in the year to April. Welsh universities saw a 12% increase in applications from England over the same period. Applications to Scotland and Wales from England were 28,948 and 42,021 respectively in the year to April. Northern Ireland also saw a rising number of applicants from England - up from 865 to 1,128."

Source:

["Academics to monitor impact of top-up fees."](#)
The Guardian, April 14, 2005

["Wales and Scotland draw students."](#)
BBC News, April 28, 2005

GLOBE TIPPING

Keeping cash handy in Asia

When traveling to countries in Asia such as Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, one must make sure that there are a variety of financial options available in the form of credit cards, travellers' cheques and cash. Consult your automatic teller machine (ATM) card provider for information about overseas services and availability. Not all overseas ATMs accept international cards, and it is advisable to carry sufficient cash for everyday requirements.

THE PLAYING FIELD

New direction for IDP Education Australia

Australia's leading student recruitment agency IDP Education Australia is embarking on a new marketing strategy to boost overseas student numbers. With Anthony Pollock, the agency's new Chief Executive Officer on board, IDP is moving away from its previous "one size fits all" promotional strategy and developing into a company that promotes individual universities based on their strengths and requirements.

Mr Pollock told *The Australian* that "IDP would focus more on the needs of students once they enrolled at an Australian university and would become more involved in the recruitment of students to Australian university programs operating offshore."

IDP, a not-for-profit company wholly owned by the nation's 38 publicly owned universities, had suffered a setback due to severe financial and management difficulties for most of 2004. There was also a significant drop in Australia's market share in the AUD \$ 6 billion (U.S. \$ 4.6 billion) international student market during this period. In December 2004, the agency closed seven of its 90 overseas offices and retrenched 60 staff. Serious cash-flow problems led to an AUD \$ 7 million (U.S. \$ 5.4 million) rescue bid by Australian universities.

Source:

["New chief, fresh vision for IDP;"](#)
The Australian, April 27, 2005

OVER THE COUNTER

International Educators Training Program

Queen's University will be organizing the third [International Educators Training Program \(IETP\)](#) from June 13-17, 2005 at Queen's University international Centre at Kingston, Ontario. The program provides competency-based training to international education professionals working with both Canadian and overseas students. Individual tasks, group projects, case studies, skill development and problem solving comprise a significant part of the training sessions.

This year's keynote address will be delivered by Canadian jazz saxophonist and flutist Jane Bunnett in the form of a music take on international education. The program has been attended by more than 100 participants in the last two years. This year, the organizers are expecting another 50-75 people. Participants, for the most part, work in colleges and universities in the areas of study abroad or international student services. Other attendees include staff from school boards, non-governmental organizations as well as institutions in the public or private sector that actively work to internationalize their activities.