

## THE PLAYING FIELD

### *Foreign trained Chinese students return to China*

Over the last year, there have been various reports published in international media about the decrease in numbers of Chinese students at foreign universities especially in countries such as the U.K and U.S. The 2006 Work Conference On the Selection of Government-Sponsored Overseas Students has further revealed that nearly 97.02% of the more than 23,000 Chinese students who have received funding from the Chinese government for studies abroad over the last decade have returned to China after completing their studies.

The return rate increased to 99% in 2004. The number of government-sponsored students abroad also increased from approximately 3,000 in 1995 to a record of 7,000 in 2005. Many state-funded programmes require that the recipient return to China. However, these figures do not reflect the return rates of self-funded students.

Source: ["Over 99% govt-sponsored overseas students returned in 2004," People's Daily Online, December 2, 2005](#)

## OVER THE COUNTER

### *South Africa's new curriculum*

South Africa's National Curriculum Statement promises to deliver a new curriculum to Grades 10 to 12 over the next three years. Under the revised curriculum, students will now write seven instead of six subjects and will be required to score a 30 per cent pass mark in four of those subjects. There will be no higher or standard grade. All subjects will be treated at an equivalent level. The old ABCDEFG grades are to be replaced by a rating code with seven (outstanding achievement) being the highest for 80-100 marks. The lowest will be 1 for 0-29 marks, indicating that the pupil has failed.

The entry requirements for higher education have also been changed. In order to get admission into a degree level course, a student must have a National Senior Certificate with an achievement rating of at least 50% in four approved degree subjects. For Diploma programmes, a National Senior Certificate with a

scoring of 40% in four subjects is required.

Source: ["30% and you pass matric," Sunday Tribune, November 27, 2005](#)

## ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

### *Britain rolls out red carpet for overseas students*

Britain's chancellor Gordon Brown has announced measures that will improve Britain's performance as an international student recruiter. There is to be a 50% rise in government support and funding for marketing and promotion of British higher education to students outside the European Union. International students completing postgraduate degrees will be allowed to work in the UK for up to 12 months. The same employment opportunities will be available to foreign undergraduates in shortage sectors, benefiting nearly 50,000 students. In Scotland, overseas students completing bachelor's degrees, Higher National Diplomas or postgraduate degrees will be allowed to work in Scotland for two years. A UK-China partnership scheme has been set up to encourage academic exchanges and research collaboration with China.

Source: ["Universities support Brown's overseas commitment," The Guardian, December 6, 2005](#)

## GLOBE TIPPING

### *Getting around China*

First time travelers to China should remember to carry a map with directions on how to get to important places like say the hotel, appointment locations, seminar venues etc, printed in Mandarin Chinese (also called *Putonghua*), the official spoken language of China.

Soon after one clears immigration, the map should be kept handy so that it can be shown to people if required. This is vital if one is relying on public transit or taxis to get around.