

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

Aussie Universities Must Adapt to Avoid "Recession": Vice-Chancellor

Flat or declining foreign student enrollments are putting pressure on Australian universities to change if they want to "stay viable," Glyn Davis, vice-chancellor of Melbourne University and chair of Australia's Group of Eight top-ranked universities said recently.

"We're going to have to compete, and compete on a range of fronts. We're looking for the flexibility to be much more responsive to our markets," Professor Davis said. "It's not that we're doing anything wrong, it's just that students who once could go to America, Britain or Australia can now go to about 150 different countries offering English-language courses at prestigious institutions." The government, he said, should deregulate the Australian university system, giving schools the freedom to set their own fees, for example.

Competition has also come in the form of new Australian private colleges, which have drawn many foreign and domestic students away from public universities.

Source: "[We Must Deregulate or Perish: Uni Chief](#)," *The Australian*, Jan. 2, 2007

OVER THE COUNTER

Malaysian Government Creates International Student Branch

A new division of the Malaysian Higher Education Ministry will work to ease the entrance to foreign students into the country, and manage issues related to them during their stay.

The government has also created a council to come up with a strategy for promoting Malaysia's higher-education system overseas. Malaysia, which wants to be attracting 100,000 foreign students by 2010, had about 45,000 by 2005, according to government sources. Most were from Indonesia, China, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Yemen. Malaysia has also directed its universities and colleges to improve the English skills of their teaching staff.

Sources: "[Higher Education Ministry Sets Up International Students Division](#)," Bernama.com (Malaysian National News Agency), Jan. 23, 2007; "[Universities Told To Enhance Students' Competency In English](#)," Bernama.com, Jan. 22, 2007

THE PLAYING FIELD

China to Canada: Crack Down on Crooked Private Colleges

The Chinese government is refusing to budge on a recent warning it gave to Chinese students, advising them to avoid Canadian private career colleges. China says it won't lift the warning until both federal and provincial governments act to protect international students from educational swindlers.

The warning followed a number of publicly-reported disputes between foreign students and Canadian private colleges—disputes of the kind Chinese officials say crop up every year. At least 17 lawsuits have been filed against Kingston College, a Vancouver private college which was ordered to close its doors last fall for offering degrees from unaccredited institutions.

A significant proportion of international students in Canada study in the provinces of Ontario or British Columbia. Ontario recently announced a tougher set of regulations governing private colleges, and the B.C. government says it will introduce new rules this spring. Education in Canada is generally a provincial matter, and the Canadian federal government says it's not responsible for regulating schools.

Last fall, the South Korean consulate in Vancouver recommended its students be careful when choosing western Canadian colleges.

Source: "[China Demands Canada Protect its Students from Educational Rip-offs](#)," *Ottawa Citizen*, Jan. 18, 2007

GLOBE TIPPING

Qantas, Emirates Allow Cell Phones

With the U.S. possibly on the verge of allowing cell phone use over American skies, many say mobile phones will soon be routinely permitted on the world's passenger aircraft. Two major carriers have already announced they'll be allowing cell phone use—after a fashion. Qantas will be permitting e-mails and text messages, and actual voice calls only over Australian skies; and Emirates will allow no more than six calls at a time, and only during the day.

Source: "[Cell Phones Invade Qantas, Emirates Air](#)," *ConsumerAffairs.com*, January 30, 2007