

THE PLAYING FIELD

U.K foreign student scholarship schemes axed

The British government's decision to axe two major international scholarship schemes has come under fire. The cuts involve a reduction in the Chevening scholarship programme from £27.3m (\$ 54.5m U.S.) in 2007/08 to £18.86m (\$ 37.67m U.S.) this year and an end to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) contribution to the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship plan from 2009/10. The funding for these scholarships enables more than 1,500 international students to study in the U.K. each year.

University heads have criticised the move as they fear it will not only deter foreign students from applying to U.K. universities as well as jeopardise opportunities for U.K. students to study abroad. Universities U.K. Chief Executive Diana Warwick said: "Scholarships are still viewed very positively by overseas governments and prospective students. Many scholarship students go on to be leaders in their fields, retaining valuable links with the U.K. and acting as ambassadors for our universities."

The number of overseas students studying at U.K. universities increased to 330,000 last year - one in seven of the total university population - with a significant increase in students from India and China. Overseas students have become a lucrative source of earnings - contributing an estimated £10bn (\$ 19.9bn U.S.) each year to the U.K. economy, according to figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency.

Source: "[Fears over foreign student cuts.](#)"
[BBC News, March 20, 2008](#)

GLOBE TIPPING

Country Time Zones at a Glance

Looking for a quick way to find out what time it is in another country? You might want to bookmark a free web site, "[Local Times Around the World.](#)" The site automatically gives you the current time of various locations in quite possibly every country on earth (not to mention Pacific islands and Antarctic research stations). It also provides other useful bits of information, such as the difference of a location from Greenwich Mean Time and whether or not that location follows Daylight Saving Time.

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

Russian Students Head to Europe

As Russia's middle class becomes wealthier, the prospect of an overseas education becomes less daunting. Students are heading, in greater numbers, to universities in countries such as Germany and the United Kingdom.

According to the German Academic Exchange Service or DAAD, some 10,000 Russians are currently studying in Germany, most of them working on graduate or postgraduate degrees. More than 12,500 Russians are studying in Britain. One of the main selling points of European universities is their very low tuition fees, or sometimes the absence of any fees at all.

Source: "[Russian Students Head to Europe.](#)"
[The Moscow Times, March 18, 2008](#)

OVER THE COUNTER

Exam Leakage Row in Kenya

First, it was political unrest that put Kenya's education sector in limbo. Now, allegations of exam leakage and corruption has put the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) in the news. Last week, results of over 4,000 candidates who wrote last year's Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations have been recalled by the KNEC due to 'wrong grading'. While investigations are on, this is not the first time the council has faced charges of misconduct. In 2006, the media reported that exam papers were on sale on the streets of Mombasa and Nairobi.

In 2003 about 1,022 candidates had their results cancelled over cheating. The figure rose to at least 1,700 candidates from over 100 schools the following year. In 2005, the number significantly dropped to 375 cases. Last year is said to have recorded 1,875 cases of exam irregularities. The number is more than twice the 600 cheats caught in 2006.

Source: "[Kenya: Inside Story of Recalled KCSE Exam Results.](#)" [East African Standard, March 22, 2008](#)