

# OVERSEAS, OVERWHELMED

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## Abroad Perspective

There is a wide spectrum in quality when it comes to engineering education in India. The quality of education ranges from scores of mediocre colleges, to the brilliant half dozen campuses of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) which graduate some of the world's finest engineers. This is why each year about 220,000 Indian students write entrance exams in the dream of securing one of the precious few thousand seats available at an IIT.

*The Chronicle of Higher Education* reports that the World Bank is attempting to address the gap between IIT and the rest of India by offering a \$250-million loan to revamp the country's engineering colleges, technical universities, and polytechnic institutes. The money will be used to modernize facilities, upgrade curriculums, and train faculty members. More than 100,000 students attend the colleges that will benefit from the funds.

"There is an urgent need to upgrade the quality of technical and engineering education in India to provide students with a virtuous cycle of opportunities," said Shashi Shrivastava, a World Bank senior education specialist who manages the modernization program.

The money is not a 100% handout. Grants will be available only to institutions that are willing to revamp how they are administered and financed. One of the goals is to encourage greater autonomy and independence of state-run institutions, which are seen as hobbled by a centrally administered bureaucracy. ♦

## Let's Go Canada

In the face of rapid increases in the number of its foreign students, the New Zealand government is becoming concerned that it is ill-prepared to deal with such an influx.

Proposed changes in the form of a legislative bill expected to be passed in 2003 are an effort to ensure that abuses in the arena of international student recruitment, student care, teacher training and visa issuance are curbed. Changes don't come cheap however, and the government is planning on introducing a levy of 0.5% on international student tuition fees. The question is, will foreign applicants still see New Zealand as a desirable choice if such increases are introduced? What delicate balance will the government have to realize in order to provide quality services and ensure an adherence to visa regulations, while continuing to journey uphill with its international student numbers?

New Zealand currently has approximately the same ratio as Canada for its number of foreign students in post-secondary institutions. ♦

Source: <http://education.guardian.co.uk/tefl/story/0,5500,843960,00.html>

## Over the Counter

It appears that educational institutions are increasingly prepared to bend the truth in the pursuit of increased revenues.

A report printed earlier this year in the Wall Street Journal highlights the dubious recruitment efforts of certain institutions who are printing false promises of easy transfer into Ivy-League institutions such as Harvard. Another tactic used to inflate students' expectations consists in working with agents who assure applicants that they will be placed in higher-level ESL classes than their fluency merits.

It appears that there are increasing accounts of questionable marketing practices in international student recruitment, not only amongst the unregulated segments of the industry but even amongst those institutions licensed by governmental and other bodies. Contact Dani Zaretsky ([dani@higher-edge.com](mailto:dani@higher-edge.com)), our Chief Ideas Officer, to find out how we may assist in investigating overseas practices of impact to your institution. ♦

Source: [http://www.bc.edu/bc\\_org/avp/soe/cihe/newsletter/News29/text004.htm](http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/soe/cihe/newsletter/News29/text004.htm)

## Globe Tipping

A new wave of miniature digital cameras is on the horizon, and travellers not wishing to be encumbered by an extra accoutrement can count on these neat accessories. Some of the more "wearable" models (at times the size of a business card) include the Logitech Pocket Digital, Casio Ex-S1 Exilim, Canon Digital IXUS, and the Sony Cybershot U10.

Miniature cameras on the market today generally have low picture quality and a resolution of two megapixels or less. They also feature a more limited array of special features and may have minimal zoom capabilities and few exposure settings. In addition, their size may create a difficulty for those who are more used to standard camera sizes. On the other hand, low-resolution cameras capture images that take up less space on a memory card and use up less power.

Ultimately, it might be helpful to think of digital and, in particular, miniature cameras as a "daily accessory", something like the cellular phone in both its portability and utility. For example, taking a quick snapshot of new contacts might prove useful in the future. ♦

Source: <http://asia.cnet.com/reviews/digitalcameras/0,39001469,39069005,00.htm>

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