

OVERSEAS OVERWHELMED

HIGHER
EDGE

Issue 8.09
February 8, 2006

A Bulletin for
Canadian International
Education Professionals

LET'S GO CANADA

Toronto TOEFL Testing Boosted to Combat Crowding

More international students appear to be having trouble writing the all-important TOEFL in time for university application deadlines—this time in Canada. Students of at least one ESL school in Toronto—the International Language Academy of Canada—have reportedly been very anxious in recent weeks because many have been unable to book a slot for the test.

Admitting it is “very concerned” about crowding at its Toronto test sites, the company that provides the TOEFL says it’s taking measures to increase its capacity there. In an e-mail interview this week with *Overseas, Overwhelmed*, TOEFL associate director Eileen Tyson confirmed that ETS’s Toronto test centers have been “very full”, but added, “the shortfall is temporary as we bring the testing network up to full strength.”

ETS, Ms. Tyson said, anticipates having 190 new seats by March. She added that TOEFL has begun offering a paper-based TOEFL in Toronto in addition to the computer-based one it now offers, and is also providing more test dates.

Technical glitches and a dearth of testing slots for the TOEFL in Europe last fall angered many teachers and students, who said delays were hurting students’ chances of admission to American universities.

Source: “[Europeans Say Online Version of English Test Is Shutting Out Students](#),” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 6, 2006

GLOBE TIPPING

Who Wants to be a Crorepati?

Plan on traveling to South Asia? You should know that people in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh (and, until a few decades ago, Iran) differ from Westerners in the terms they use to describe large numbers. Instead of thousands, millions and billions—or sometimes alongside of them—expect to see lakhs and crore. A lakh is equal to 100,000, and a crore is 100 lakhs, or 10 million.

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

Visa Law Will Block Foreign Students: Universities U.K.

British universities could lose out on the tuition fees of hundreds of thousands of international students if the U.K. government goes ahead with a bill on visas, British university and business leaders warned this week.

The proposed law would limit foreign applicants’ rights to appeal the British government’s decisions on their visas. Nearly a quarter of those whose applications initially fail succeed in winning their appeals under the current system, according to Sir Digby Jones, director-general of the CBI employers organisation, and Professor Drummond Bone, president of Universities U.K. The bill is now before the House of Lords.

The U.K. brings in roughly £ 1.25 billion in fees from foreign students each year.

Source: “[Warning that Visa Shake-up Will Cost Colleges](#),” *Financial Times*, February 6, 2006

OVER THE COUNTER

Australia Wants Fewer IT Work- ers, U.S. More

In the wake of lobbying by Australia’s information technology sector, the country’s immigration minister is now planning to make it harder for foreign students studying IT in Australia to get work visas, with a plan for tightening the points system used in assessing foreign IT students’ work visas. A study published last month found that Australia’s IT industry suffered from high unemployment among recent graduates—and pointed the finger at the awarding of work visas to many international students on their graduation from Australian universities.

Meanwhile, U.S. president George Bush said he would ask Congress to approve a plan allowing more technology workers into the country.

Sources: “[Vanstone to Cut Back Skill Visas](#),” *Australian IT*, February 7, 2006; “[Bush Urges More Visas for Tech Workers](#),” *The Seattle Times*, February 6, 2006