

CUSTOMER SERVICE AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Welcome to our occasional newsletter about customer service within Higher Education where we review topical issues of interest to the sector.

UK student fees

More company sponsorships

New College of the Humanities

S. Korean uni scraps controversial fee system

Chinese unis trying to attract international students

Australian universities are 'like their wine'

Benefaction or branding?

UK student fees

There has been a great deal of emotive press about the new undergraduate fees being proposed for domestic students in English universities from September 2012, so it is reassuring to see Martin Lewis' well analysed and objective paper about the realities of the effects: www.moneysavingexpert.com/family/student-loans-tuition-fees-changes

University outreach staff could make good use of this when visiting schools and talking with prospective students.

More company sponsorships

It used to be relatively common for large organisations to sponsor school leavers through university, give them work experience during the long vacations and, usually, offer them a job on graduation. The military also did the same.

This practice looks to be coming back for secondary schools together with more company based degrees designed between universities and employers. More opportunities for university marketing staff.

New College of the Humanities

The New College of the Humanities (NCH) will open for undergraduates in Central London in September 2012. Being a private institution, it is not tied to government funding nor financial regulations and will be charging fees of £18,000 a year. It is estimated that, with living expenses, the three year programme will cost around £84,000. The maximum intake of 375 students will be under the tutelage of fourteen of the world's top academics. Without its own charter, NCH will be preparing students for University of London degrees with a NCH diploma.

S. Korean uni scraps controversial fee system

South Korea's top science and technology university, KAIST, has stopped the incentive system where students achieving higher grades pay lower fees. This is as the result of four student suicides since January attributed to the associated stress.

Under the scheme, students with grade points below 3.0 out of 4.0 paid partial fees, whilst those scoring less than 2.0 paid the full amount.

timrussell

Chinese universities trying to attract international students

Western universities had better watch out as universities in China are now sending marketing teams around the world to recruit international students to study in China.

Currently there are 1.27 million China students studying abroad with 1,000 at Cambridge University alone.

India is also getting into the act as it plans to build between 800 and 1,000 new universities.

Teaching will be in the English language and students will be learning in the most economically dynamic part of the world

Australian universities are 'like their wine'

A critical report by the Economist magazine comparing Australian universities with Australian wine, "decent and dependable, but seldom excellent", has created a bad taste down under.

The article, which has as many supporters as opponents, suggests that the commercial side of fee income (international students currently bring in A\$10.46 billion – £7.0 billion – a year) is overriding the need for research investment.

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The fear is that the Asian Tigers that are investing heavily will outstrip the sector.

Benefaction or branding?

It is not uncommon for benefactors to have university buildings named after them in gratitude for an endowment. Many business schools are titled this way, though some have more recently changed their names back to dissociate themselves from donors, whose ethical standards have been questioned.

But in China's Tsinghua University, students are up in arms over the new Jeanswest building. Jeanswest is an Australian everyday, casual clothes brand that has not been considered prestigious enough for some people. There was no problem with Yue Yuen who make Nike and Adidas, but it seems that Jeanswest is a thong too far.

The students are concerned that their universities are more concerned with making money than maintaining standards. Tsinghua has, however, turned down an offer from Wuliangye, a popular liquor brand.

Shanghai's East China Normal University is currently deciding what to do about Song Shanmu's donation after the businessman was accused of a serious sexual offence last month.