

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION FORUM (IEF)

Despite a challenging year, members of the IEF gave positive feedback at their latest meeting, generally reporting a good year to date with a particularly good 2009 summer season – read here for more news from the education sector.

Several language schools reported a bumper summer with student numbers up as much as 40%. One school had reported a year-on-year increase of 14% for the first 8 months over 2008 which itself had been a record year. One school reported that Junior Course numbers were extremely positive and another that teacher training numbers had increased as a direct result of the recession. Some schools reported bookings into the autumn were predicted to be lower than last year, this is due to a number of factors: the new points based visa system which continues to be established; concerns over some economies still in recession, which has a knock-on effect with potential student's travel plans and finally any possible recurrence of swine flu in the coming autumn/ winter months.

The Arts University College has had a hectic few months with re-branding and promoting their new university status and programmes; on-going visits are in progress to Japan, Korea, China, Taiwan and the USA. Bournemouth University has now completed the UCAS clearing process and new undergraduate students have arrived.

Meanwhile the International Department also continues on a punishing travel schedule including visits to Turkey, Nigeria, Ghana, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia and Japan. In addition the international team continues to work closely with many of the Bournemouth and Poole language schools whose students, once they have achieved the required university entry level for their chosen course, often choose to stay in the area and move on to the university's under or postgraduate degree programmes.