

minutes	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 5 March 2009, from 11.30 – 4pm at Hotel Hyatt Regency, New Delhi</p>
PRESENT	<p>Attended By:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aims Global Education, Chandigarh - Canable Immigration, Ludhiana - Counsel One, Ambala - Indopacific Education Services, New Delhi - Johar Education Centre, New Delhi - Kangaroo Studies Pvt Ltd, New Delhi - Liz Batra's IEGC, Chandigarh - Studywel Education, Karnal - The Chopras, New Delhi - Global Reach, Kolkata - AR Overseas, Hyderabad - Array Consulting, Hyderabad - Atlas Consulting, Hyderabad - Dilinger Consultants, Chennai - OES Consultants, Bangalore - Jubeerich Consultancy Pvt Ltd, Cochin - Olive Consulting, Cochin - Edwise, Mumbai - GeeBee Education Pvt Ltd, Mumbai - NZ Education Services, Mumbai - NZ Gateway, Ahmedabad
APOLOGIES	<p>Regrets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NIL
IN ATTENDANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cliff Fuller, Trade Commissioner - Jugnu Roy, Business Development Manager - Kerry Greig, Branch Manager - Tanuva Majumdar, Manager – Student Team - Rakhi Gupta, Technical Advisor - Ranjan Kochharr, Technical Advisor

1 UPDATE ON APRIL FAIRS

The list of participating institutions was shared with the NZIER members. All the members were unanimously concerned about the fact that none of the NZ universities (except AUT) are participating at the fairs. Agents feel that the presence of universities is extremely essential for profile building and

success of the fairs. They suggested having presence of at least 2-3 universities at the fairs, without which the events should not go ahead.

The agents were upset to see participation of PTE's who have been poaching their students in NZ. They also were concerned about the overall quality of NZ participants. A lot PTE's participating at the fairs have approached the NZIER members for representation, however the agents did not wish to recruit for them as they were low quality and now having them participate at the fair totally defeated the purpose. The agents suggested that we could explore the option of promoting the fairs as undergraduate or postgraduate specific based on the kind of NZ participation we get.

Many agents felt that the universities were disassociating themselves with the fairs, they preferred to do their own promotional activity in India. Five of the universities organised a joint promotional trip to India in February along with agents. The agents also felt that the universities did not have enough budget to undertake promotional activities. They had partnered with the local agents and ratio of money spent was 1:3 between the universities and NZIER members.

Cochin agents were rather upset that their city had been dropped off the fair circuit even after having such good turnouts at the previous events. Other agents from South India were also disappointed that one by one their cities were also being dropped off the fair radar and not being substituted with any other promotional activity. They felt that with the job market going through a slump currently young professionals are looking at engaging their next couple of years in obtaining some kind of overseas qualifications. With the NZ\$ being so low at the moment, it is the best time to attract these people/students to NZ.

Once again the universities turn around time was discussed and compared with universities from UK & Australia. The agents felt that was one reason they were not able to promote the NZ universities with a lot of conviction and enthusiasm. Although some of them have brought their time down it is far from what the competitors are offering i.e. less than a week.

Action points

- NZ participation for the fairs – ENZ to action
- City identification for future fairs – ENZ, NZTE & NZIER to action
- NZ universities: fair participation, turn around time & marketing budget – ENZ & NZTE to raise

2 BLOGGERS TOUR

The concept of the activity was discussed with all the NZIER members. There was a divided view on the concept, apparently when the idea was initially floated (at the last meeting) there was a trip for 4 journalists, one from each region. Although they were happy that ENZ was looking at additional promotional activity in India, but had some concerns:

- how does the campaign identify that only students will be blogging, will there be a mechanism to filter age, occupation status and authenticity
- There is no guarantee that the people blogging are looking at an option of overseas education now or in the future
- There is no assurance that the student would come back from the trip and choose NZ as his future education destination

NZIER agents felt that they should have been consulted through the process of fine tuning this activity. They felt that sending 4 journos who come back and write couple of nice articles on NZ education might be a more beneficial option. There was a suggestion that the contest could still run online but the prizes for students could be ipods or mobile phones, etc instead of the trip to NZ.

Action points

Any changes in the bloggers tour final prizes – ENZ & NZTE to discuss

3 EDUCATION LOANS

There have been ongoing talks with HDFC bank for the last couple of months and it was finally decided that we would look at going ahead with an engagement with them on a complimentary basis for the first year. That would include participation at the fair and sharing of database with them via the NZIER members. In return HDFC would put all NZ universities, ITP's & couple of popular PTE's on their panel, which would enable students quick loan processing and repayment to start after completion of course. However the agents felt that HDFC should be contributing something to the cause and should not be offered everything on FOC basis.

At the last NZIER meeting a sponsorship group was formed, it was felt that we should work closely on these issues.

Recognition letters for bank loans to be issued to agents, this would help streamline loan process for diploma programmes.

Action points

Discuss the arrangement with HDFC – NZTE & Sponsorship committee to action

NZTE to issue recognition letters to all the NZIER members with list of all universities, ITP's and couple of PTE's

4 WAKA JUMPING

Still remains a big cause of concern for all our NZIER members. We collected some data from all the NZIER members which reflected about 65 such cases, however INZ seems to be aware of 206 such cases in the last 8 months. The students are being converted the moment reach NZ and route being adopted is by using existing students as agents or via gifts, cash back, etc. The students are mainly moving to small PTE's based in and around Auckland.

The NZIER agents suggested that institutions with a history of being involved in waka jumping should be excluded from participating at PACE fairs as they are acting as poachers of the hard work of other institutions and their agents. It is hard on the victims of waka jumping (both NZ institutions & agents) to see their beneficiaries exhibiting side by side at PACE events.

There was overall a negative view of the PTE's and the way they operate in the market. It was felt that the influx of low quality PTE recruiters were responsible for waka jumping reaching its current proportion and part withdrawal of the universities from the fairs.

Action points

Initiate discussions at NZ end for some kind of either policy change or relaxation – ENZ to action

5 NZIER THRESHOLD

There was a strong view that the NZIER membership is in itself like a quality accreditation. Its criteria for membership should therefore also be based on quality, not just number of students sent to NZ. At the same time there is also a concern that the group needs to limit its size in order to remain effective. The following suggestions came:

- Agency should represent at least 1 NZ university
- Recommendation letter by 1 existing NZIER member
- Agency should have been in operation for at least 3-5 years
- Third party integrity check
- Site visit to check infrastructure and quality of staff
- Weighted average based on the level of course and category of institution

We have asked the agents to vote for their top 3 preferences from the above, the same will be collected and sent across to ENZ for review. It would be ideal to have these measures in place before the next review.

There was also a view that NZ education fairs should be limited to those institutions who work with NZIER agents. This would enhance the quality of the event, though the hind side is it would not encourage new entrants.

A case of poaching students was discussed by one NZIER member from another (no names mentioned), the code of conduct has a disputes committee in place, but there seemed to be a reservation of using them.

Action points

Finalise the additional quality measure before the next review – ENZ & NZTE to action

6 PROMOTIONAL IDEAS & SUGGESTIONS

There was a relatively big discussion around the 2 fair series that are held under PACE. There was a view that the April fairs are too late for Indian students, February might be a better time if we need a bigger and better impact. The agents are still in the process of getting back to us on suggestions, some of the initial ideas shared till now are:

1. One series of education fairs in India with good attendance from universities & ITP's
2. Round the year PR activity
3. Seminars covering 2-3 cities in every region
4. Presentations at schools and colleges
5. Outdoor campaign on an annual basis
6. Promotions through online medium using forum sites like ibibo, orkut, etc

7. UPDATE FROM IMMIGRATION NZ

The student visa numbers have increased substantially, the latest update is 4697 student visas issued between 1 April 08 – 31 January 09. They are currently witnessing a 50% increase in student applications as compared to same time last year and are estimating an overall 70% increase for this year. INZ had concerns about the quality of applications being submitted by both NZIER & non NZIER agents due to which the overall approval rate has gone down from 77% to 70%.

The agents did take this opportunity to discuss some of their individual cases and some policy related issues with INZ team.

Next meeting – Friday, 31 July in Mumbai (TBC)