

NEWSLETTER December 2007

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LOOKING FORWARD: THE NEW BAC LOGO AND WEBSITE

The British Accreditation Council is pleased to unveil our new logo, which will feature on all new publications from the BAC. It is part of the wider implementation of a new design philosophy which extends notably to our brand new website which was launched last month.

The new logo and design scheme reflect a fresh, modern and approachable BAC, oriented towards the needs of both colleges and students, while mindful of our responsibilities to government, the education sector and the public at large.

Please visit us at www.the-bac.org and let us know your thoughts on the website and the redesign as a whole. All feedback can be emailed to webmaster@the-bac.org and will be gratefully received.

National Database of Accredited Qualifications®

The National Database of Accredited Qualifications (NDAQ) contains detail of qualifications that are accredited by the government's regulatory organisations in England (QCA), Wales (DCELLS) and Northern Ireland (CCEA). Users can search for details on current and expired accredited qualifications. Visit the database online at www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk

CONGRATULATIONS TO NEWLY ACCREDITED COLLEGES

The following colleges have received BAC accreditation. We are pleased to welcome them to the growing family of accredited institutions.

- » **7City Learning**
www.7city.com
- » **BPP College of Professional Studies**
www.bpplawschool.com
- » **City Business College**
www.citybusinesscollege.com
- » **Finance and Business Training**
www.fbt-global.com
- » **Glasgow International College**
www.gla.ac.uk/gic
- » **London School of Business and Computing**
www.lsbcb.org.uk
- » **New London College**
www.newlondoncollege.co.uk
- » **Queensland College London (Reading branch)**
www.qcol.co.uk

ACCREDITED INSTITUTION PROFILE: GLASGOW INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

Glasgow International College is one of a series of joint partnerships between top British universities and Kaplan International Colleges (KIC), providing both undergraduate and postgraduate academic preparation programmes designed specifically for international students. KIC is a new initiative from Kaplan Inc., one of the world's largest private education providers, providing education and training to over a million students in 3,000 classroom locations worldwide.

Glasgow International College provides academic programmes preparing international students for undergraduate and postgraduate degrees at the University of Glasgow. The first college of its kind in Scotland, it is located on the University of Glasgow's main campus in Glasgow's West End.

Students at Glasgow International College will study their chosen academic subject alongside key academic skills and, where required, additional English language. Upon successful completion



*Anderson College building (built 1889),
Glasgow University*

at the required level of their programme at Glasgow International College, students are guaranteed admission to diploma-level studies or to an undergraduate or postgraduate degree at an appropriate level in the University of Glasgow.

The college's undergraduate programmes offer Foundation Certificates in: Business; Social Sciences; Science; and Engineering. Also available are postgraduate programmes offering Pre-Masters courses for Business; Social Sciences and Law; and Science and Engineering.

www.gla.ac.uk/gic

NEW IMMIGRATION CATEGORY: 'STUDENT VISITOR'

The Home Office has provided clarification of certain issues surrounding the new 'student visitor' immigration category. Among the important points to note are the following:

- » *'Student visitor' entry clearance will not be available long term, nor will visitors be given multiple-entry entry clearance.*
- » *Overseas-based students enrolled on distance-learning courses who are required to come to the UK for a short period will need to seek leave to enter (LTE) for each visit or, in the case of visa nationals, will need to obtain a student visitor visa for each visit.*

- » *Students who already have long-term 'visit' entry clearance, which they have been using to come to the UK once or more per year as required by their course, will need to apply for a student visitor visa (if a visa national) or seek leave to enter as a student visitor if they are not.*
- » *Most student visitors will be landed Code 5N (VST).*
- » *These visas can be applied for at any Entry Clearance Issuing Post.*

This information was circulated by UKCISA. We will pass on any further clarification we receive.

ADVICE FROM THE UK COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AFFAIRS

UKCISA – the UK Council for International Student Affairs – is the new name for the body previously called UKCOSA: The Council for International Education. News and advice from UKCOSA has previously featured in the BAC newsletter, and we will continue to highlight their significant role in the systematic promotion of further and higher educational opportunities. UKCISA is the UK's national advisory body serving the interests of international students and those who work with them. UKCISA's purpose is to promote and facilitate international student mobility, to and from the UK, to help students (and others involved in international education) develop a global perspective and to contribute to human development, political stability, economic prosperity and greater intercultural understanding.

INTERNATIONAL GRADUATES SCHEME: IMPORTANT QUESTIONS ANSWERED

UKCISA has informed us that the Home Office's Border & Immigration Agency (BIA, now part of the UK Borders Agency) has answered two significant questions concerning the International Graduates Scheme (IGS). The first question was whether students who obtain a qualification awarded by a UK institution qualify for IGS if their study has taken place entirely outside the UK. BIA's response is that they do – at present. The letter from BIA states, "Provided that the applicant's qualification has been awarded by a recognised or listed body, the fact that *some or all* [emphasis in original] of the study took place on the overseas campus of a UK education institution will not make the qualification ineligible." The letter continues, describing how this situation will change when the Points-Based System for managed migration is rolled out from 2008: "Tier 1 (Post Study) of the PBS will subsume both the International Graduate Scheme and the Fresh Talent: Working in Scotland Scheme. Whilst the final policy is not yet settled, it is likely that having completed at least some study in the UK will become a requirement". So, for the time being, institutions can still advise students to whom they are awarding relevant qualifications that they qualify for IGS, despite their never having studied in the UK. This situation is unlikely to continue for long; those who apply from early 2008, will probably be required to have undertaken at least part of their study in the UK. In response to another question concerning Doctorates that are not PhDs, BIA stated that all Doctorates will be treated on the same terms as PhDs for the purposes of IGS. The Immigration Directorates' Instruction will be amended as necessary to make this clear for caseworkers and users. The full text of this letter (from Joe Barker of BIA's Managed Migration Policy section) is available for download from the members' area of the UKCISA website. It would be sensible for applicants who are relying on either of these two policies to include a copy of this letter with their applications.

WORKING WHILE WAITING FOR AN IGS DECISION

The Home Office have also written to UKCISA confirming that if someone applies for the International Graduates Scheme (IGS) before their immigration permission to be in the UK as a student expires, they can work full-time while they wait for the decision on their IGS application. They can carry on working full-time even after their student permission expires, if they are still waiting for the decision at that stage (there is no four-month limit to this - they can carry on working full-time all the way through until a decision is made on their IGS application). However, they must not engage in business, self-employment or provide services as a professional sportsperson or entertainer; neither must they pursue a career by filling a permanent full-time vacancy. A copy of the Home Office letter (dated 31 August 2007) is available in the public area of the UKCISA website under 'News for students'.

www.ukcisa.org.uk

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BAC STAFF PROFILE - GINA HOBSON

Dr Gina Hobson, BAC's Accreditation Manager, has been working with the Council since September 2005. She oversees the inspection and accreditation process from application through to accreditation. She represents and promotes BAC's interests on a number of groups, including the College Compliance Partnership Group (see the article below for further information) and the Charities Safety Group. Gina has recently completed her NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Safety and Health and is responsible for BAC's health and safety.

Gina's education background is in Sport Science and Psychology. She completed her undergraduate degree in Sport Science and followed this with a PhD in Sport Psychology, specifically studying one of the causes of anxiety in competitive athletes, both degrees being completed at University College Chichester (now the University of Chichester). Whilst studying for her PhD, Gina completed a Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and lectured PE and Sport Science students on both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

Away from work, Gina swims competitively for Otter Swimming Club. She recently attended the European Masters Championships in Slovenia and came away with two individual bronze medals, plus relay gold and silver, which were won in British Record times. She is now training for the World Masters Championship which will be taking place in Perth, Western Australia, in April 2008. Gina also likes to surf, preferably in warm water, but as there's not too much of that around the UK, she has to make do with the beaches of north Devon and Cornwall and a thick wetsuit.



*Dr Gina Hobson,
BAC's Accreditation Manager*

COLLEGE COMPLIANCE PARTNERSHIP GROUP

Various bodies within the UK are directly or indirectly involved in accreditation and regulation of the private college sector, including BAC, Trading Standards, the UK Borders Agency (UKBA) at the Home Office, and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS). Until recently, there has been relatively patchy and uncoordinated collaboration between these many agencies in bringing to justice dishonest operators within the sector. In order to raise the standard of provision within the private education sector, the BAC has been a key player in the establishment of the College Compliance Partnership Group. This comprises representatives from several London Borough Trading Standards offices; the UKBA; the DIUS; the Metropolitan Police; the University

of London External Programme; and BAC. While initially focused on providers operating in London, it is hoped that this approach can be applied across the country. The group has met several times since May 2007, and has been integral in the planning and operation of joint raids on a number of colleges who, it is alleged, have been committing a variety of offences. The BAC hopes that this partnership will continue to prove productive by investigating and removing disreputable colleges from operation, raising standards and safeguarding the reputation of honest colleges and UK education as a whole. If you would like further information about the group, please contact Dr Gina Hobson (gina.hobson@the-bac.org).



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