



**UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION  
BAHADUR SHAH ZAFAR MARG  
NEW DELHI-110002**

No.F. [III-17(2)/04 (NIC) IC-I]

May, 2009

The Registrar  
All the Indian Universities

Subject: Welfare of Foreign Students in India

Sir/Madam,

The Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Higher Education, New Delhi has forwarded a copy of the letter D.O.No.F.13-2/2008-U.4 dated 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2009 to consider the report of the Inter-ministerial Committee on the Welfare of Foreign students in India submitted by DG, ICCR and suggestions to improve the current practices. The relevant points are as under:

2. It is mandatory for each university and educational institution enrolling foreign students to organize familiarization sessions for freshly enrolled students for at least three weeks prior to the commencement of the academic session. This session should provide interaction with FRO/FRRO and other authorities and also include inputs on specific and relevant information about the region, city and suburbs, local customs, culture, language, civil facilities etc.
3. The UGC would provide financial assistance to institutions for developing websites, with contents relevant to the information needed by foreign students. It should also given special funds to establish and maintain International Students Centre, which would serve as an Intermediary between foreign students and all other stake holders such as FRRO/FRO, banks, landlords of private housing accommodation and other educational institutions.
6. The universities are requested to constantly monitor colleges affiliated to them. These affiliated colleges and institutes should be directed to send periodic reports about their functioning with regard to foreign students to the concerned universities. The colleges should send their reports directly to the central universities of the affiliation. In the case of State universities or deemed universities, the reports should be sent to the concerned State Education Department.

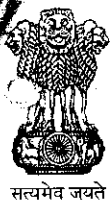
Yours faithfully,

(Ashok Mahajan)

Under Secretary

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Anupama Bhatnagar  
Director  
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S.N. 36 (FR)

Dy 41/09 (IC-1)

भारत सरकार  
मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय  
उच्चतर शिक्षा विभाग  
शास्त्री भवन  
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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION  
SHASTRI BHAVAN  
NEW DELHI-110 115

D.O.No.F.13-2/2008-U.4

28<sup>th</sup> January, 2009

Dear Dr. Swarup,

Please find enclosed a copy of PMO ID No.870/11/P/24/008-Pol. dated 16.01.2009 alongwith a copy of the minutes of the meeting convened by the Principal Secretary to PM on December 10, 2008 to consider the report of the Inter-ministerial Committee on the Welfare of Foreign Students in India submitted by DG, ICCR. It is requested that the portion relevant to UGC may kindly be pursued and action <sup>may be</sup> taken accordingly. A copy of the action points to be implemented by the University/Educational Institutions may be brought to their knowledge for taking further necessary action.

2. It is also requested that this Ministry may please be provided a list of the State Universities, Deemed Universities and other Institutions of Higher Learning recognized by the UGC. The same has to be sent to Ministry of External Affairs for onward transmission to Indian Missions abroad.

3. I shall be grateful if the action taken in the matter is communicated to this Ministry so as to enable us to submit a report in the matter to the ICCR who is the nodal agency in this regard.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

*Anupama*  
(Anupama Bhatnagar)

*Relly.*

02/02/09

Dr. Dev Swarup,  
Joint Secretary  
University Grants Commission  
Bahadurshah Zafar Marg,  
New Delhi

03/1/09

*Adh*  
*sumant*

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**PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE**  
**NEW DELHI-110 101**



**Minutes of the meeting convened by**  
**Principal Secretary to PM on December 10, 2008**

**Sub: Welfare of Foreign Students in India.**

Principal Secretary to PM convened a meeting on December 10, 2008 to consider the Report of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on the welfare of Foreign Students in India submitted by DG, ICCR.

2. Principal Secretary to PM noted that the Report had been prepared on the directions of the Prime Minister and invited representatives of universities to make their comments on the general question of welfare of foreign students in India.

3. The observations made by the representatives of the universities are enclosed at Annexure-1.

4. Based on the above, and views expressed by the representatives of Ministries and Departments, the recommendations as contained in Annexure-2 were approved for implementation by the following :-

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- (1) Ministry of External Affairs/Missions Abroad
  - (2) Ministry of Home Affairs/FRO/FRRO
  - (3) Ministry of Human Resource Development
  - (4) Universities/Educational Institutions
  - (5) Ministry of Finance
  - (6) ICCR

5. It was further decided that the Report in its entirety would be circulated by the ICCR to the concerned universities/educational institutions.

6. ICCR would monitor the implementation of these recommendations on an ongoing basis.

7. The list of those present is at Annexure-3.

  
(Pankaj Saran)  
Joint Secretary to PM

Foreign Secretary  
✓ Secretary, Department of Higher Education  
Home Secretary  
Secretary, Department of Science & Technology  
Secretary, Department of Information Technology  
Secretary, Financial Services  
DG, ICCR

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PMO ID NO. 870/11/P/24/008-Pol.

Dt. 16.01.2009

**Minutes of the meeting at PMO regarding the**

**Report on the Welfare of Foreign Students**

The following were the basic issues brought up by all University representatives:

- i) The need to utilize India's potential as an emerging low cost, high quality educational hub for foreign students;
- ii) The need for a fully-equipped International Students Centre in each University for resolving difficulties faced by foreign students and providing essential assistance in areas such as completion of admission formalities, finding transit/hotel accommodation, interacting with FRRO/FRO, opening of Bank Accounts, counseling/orientation with regards to local conditions and facilities offered by the University etc.;
- iii) The need to address linguistic deficiencies of non-English speaking foreign students, which results in poor academic performance and other adjustment problems. While several universities are already providing special English language courses to foreign students, others have been unable to do so due to shortage of funds. Several universities suggested the introduction of English proficiency tests patterned on TOEFL;
- iv) The need to address the problem of accommodation for foreign students. Accommodation of international standards with multi-cuisine facilities would go a long way in enhancing the comfort level of foreign students; and
- v) The need to streamline the process of the issue of visa to foreign students, including the grant of multi-entry visas to students admitted to

long-term (2-3 years) courses in India. Processing by the Police and Registration Authorities also needs to be expedited. 148

2. Specific observations/suggestions by different universities were as follows:

**University of Madras (Prof. S. Ramachandran, VC)**

- Does not have an International Students Centre – depends on locally resident foreign nationals for counseling students from the respective countries. Would require additional funds for a Centre.

**University of Pune (Dr. Pandit Vidyasagar, Dr. Vasudha Garde)**

- Has been facing problems of irregular practices during the registration and visa extension of foreign students. Suggested streamlining of admission procedure, introduction of online admission facility, campus recruitment of foreign students, and University being made a referral point for visa extension and exit visa. Suggested compulsory monthly reporting by every foreign student at the International Students Centre, the compiled data from which would then be forwarded to appropriate authorities.

**The English and Foreign Language University, Hyderabad (Prof. Abhay Maurya, VC)**

- Suggested grant of industry status to education -universities to be allowed to market their educational facilities abroad (as done by foreign universities in India). Enhancement of stipend and HRA rates for ICCR scholars; Health Insurance to foreign students at discounted rates.

**Osmania University (Prof. T. Tirupati Rao, VC)**

- Suggested designing of separate courses/sections for foreign students, as per their requirements.

**Delhi University (Dr. Nayan Jyoti Lahiri, Dean of College)**

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- Underlined the low inflow of PG/Research students from other countries as compared to the Under-Graduate level. Faces difficulties while dealing with Afghan students, who register themselves with a particular College and then simply disappear.

**University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore (Shri P.G. Chingappa, VC)**

Suggested issue of multi-entry visas of at least three years duration to Ph.D scholars, and the offer of add-on courses such as Computer Sciences etc. to foreign students. Need to discourage role of agents acting on behalf of foreign students.

**Jawaharlal Nehru University [Prof. K.C. Upadhyay, Director (Admissions)]**

- Suggested separate hostel facilities for foreign students to make education in India more attractive.

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## Ministry of Human Resource Development

1. The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) will, as part of its assessment, ensure that minimal facilities and standards are in place in universities in order to maintain standards of education imparted to foreign students. Guidance of the UGC will be sought for this whenever required.
2. The UGC should make it mandatory for each university and educational institution enrolling foreign students to organize familiarization sessions for freshly enrolled students for at least three weeks prior to the commencement of the academic session. This session should provide interaction with FRO/FRRO and other authorities and also include inputs on specific and relevant information about the region, city and suburbs, local customs, culture, language, civil facilities etc.
3. The UGC should provide financial assistance to institutions for developing websites, with contents relevant to the information needed by foreign students. It should also give special funds to establish and maintain International Students Centre, which would serve as the Intermediary between foreign students and all other stakeholders such as FRRO/FRO, banks, landlords of private housing accommodation and other educational institutions.
4. The MHRD/ICCR in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of External Affairs should prepare an informative Foreign Students Manual, with proper checklists incorporating all the procedures, dos and don'ts including those recommended by this Committee for the information of foreign students. Copies of this Manual should be distributed to all Indian Missions and should be mailed to newly admitted students by the concerned university or educational institution along with other documents and literature. Contents of this Manual should also be available on the internet hyper-linked to all relevant websites, including those of the UGC, AIU, universities/educational institutions, ICCR and concerned Ministries. The services of Ed.CIL could be hired for preparing the Foreign Students Manual.
5. The MHRD in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs should jointly work out a scheme, and possibly, a regulatory framework in respect of "student agents". The services of Ed.CIL could be hired for empanelling agents, who are at

present unregulated, so that unauthorized student agents do not bring a bad name to Indian higher education. (S)

6.

MHRD/UGC should issue directives to the universities to constantly monitor colleges affiliated to them. These affiliated colleges and institutes should be directed to send periodic reports about their functioning with regard to foreign students to the concerned universities. The colleges should send their reports directly to the central universities of their affiliation. In the case of State universities or deemed universities, the reports should be sent to the concerned State Education Department.

## Universities/Educational Institutions

1. Should allocate a part of the revenue generated through foreign students for their welfare by way of development of infrastructure, raising the standard of hostel facilities, construction of new hostels, conducting orientation courses, etc.
2. While dealing with foreign students at various levels, the universities and educational institutions should make all possible efforts to create a feeling of belongingness among foreign students.
3. Each university should establish and strengthen an International Students Centre and depute an appropriate number of officials there – according to the number of foreign students studying with them – so that each foreign student is promptly assisted. A full-time senior officer or faculty member should head the Centre. Keeping in view the significance of his responsibility, the Director of the International Students' Centre should be granted an additional monitory allowance.
4. Universities should streamline their admission process so as to plan it one year in advance to enable foreign students to have sufficient time to complete various admission and other formalities and interact with the universities, especially through e-mail.
5. Should create an interactive and informative website that displays the details of all the courses and their specified duration, the contact details of important officials, an on-line admission procedure, the background of the university, the infrastructure available at the university, details of hostel facilities, details of other accommodation options available for foreign students in the vicinity of the university or college, the formalities that the foreign students are required to complete before their arrival, and the formalities that are to be completed after their arrival, and all other important or relevant details.
6. Should maintain regular coordination and interaction with the FRO/FRRO to facilitate the registration and renewal of residential permits of foreign students studying in various colleges of the university. Universities and colleges should function as a nodal point in this regard and pursue matters with the FRO/FRRO on behalf of foreign students, as and when required.

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7. Should ensure that they circulate a list of their affiliated colleges to the FRO/FRRO and the local police on a half-yearly basis. Any addition or deletion in these lists should be communicated immediately to all the concerned authorities.
  8. Should provide the list of foreign students on their rolls along with passport details, name of the college, name of the course with duration, attendance, residential address etc. to the FRO/FRRO and the local police in the beginning of each semester. Cases of regular absentees should be immediately brought to the notice of the concerned FRO/FRRO and police authorities.
  9. Should provide detailed guidelines on its website to make it convenient for the foreign student to arrive on their own at the university or institute from the airport or railway station and, where feasible, arrange to have the student received on his or her arrival in India.
  10. Should issue detailed guidelines to facilitate transit accommodation for each foreign student on his or her arrival.
  11. Should maintain regular interaction with the Indian Missions abroad and circulate details of their courses, admission procedures, eligibility criteria, available facilities, and other details.
  12. The universities should address the problem of lack of proficiency in the English language among the foreign students from non-English speaking countries by introducing mandatory remedial courses on payment basis either before pursuing the regular course or on an installment basis during the course. If an orientation course in English language is required, the university should conduct it for a period not more than six months prior to the regular course. The guidelines in this regard should be displayed on the websites and communicated to all the Indian Missions abroad for the information of the foreign students and for issuance of Student Visa accordingly.
  13. Should conduct counseling, familiarization and orientation sessions for foreign students in order to make them adapt smoothly to Indian conditions with regard to academics, society, language, culture, cuisine, weather etc.

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14. Should charge a fee from the foreign students on an annual basis in advance and also advise the foreign students to carry sufficient funds while coming to India.
  15. Should tie up with banks (Indian or Foreign Banks with operations in India) having online/internet banking facility, where foreign students could open a zero-balance bank account and deposit funds even in home country with temporary address of the university. Deposits in their accounts could be utilized to scrutinize the financial status of foreign students.
  16. Each university should form a Coordination Committee for the Welfare of Foreign Students headed by the Director, International Students Centre, and comprising officials from the FRO/FRRO, local police, banks and the concerned Regional Head of the ICCR.
  17. Should arrange regular recreational activities or get-togethers to celebrate the International Students Day, important Indian festival, sports and academic competitions etc. in collaboration, where feasible, with ICCR.
  18. Depending on the country of origin, Universities should call for foreign students to submit authentic medical reports before their arrival in India.
  19. Should introduce mandatory Health Insurance Policy for foreign students either in home country or in India in order for them to avoid financial hardships in case of medical emergencies. If the Health Insurance Policy is subscribed to in India, the fee charged by the universities should include the medical insurance premium and all documentation in this regard should be processed and completed through the International Students Centre.
  20. Should communicate the names and other contact details of the Guides to research scholars while confirming their admission.
  21. Should guide the Ph.D. scholars to seek necessary clarifications from the Indian Missions abroad about the Visa formalities to be completed with respect to their family members.
  22. Should ensure that their laboratories, libraries and departments should be well equipped and in a position to provide research

and reference material and equipments to all its research scholars.

23. The system of pre-Ph.D. examinations introduced by some of the universities should be reviewed and replaced with appropriate and well-crafted bridge courses.
24. Should fix maximum time limit by which the research scholars must complete their research work.
25. Should devise a mechanism to schedule the viva-voce for foreign students in a timely manner and with the possibility of conducting it on-line or through video-conferencing.
26. Should work out a speedy system for evaluating the thesis of a foreign student and fix a time limit in this regard as the extension of a visa in the case of inordinate delays creates numerous problems.