

IMMIGRATION NEWS

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Global College Forced to Close Its Doors



16th February 2008

Dear Students

Welcome to the new subscribers of IMMIGRATION NEWS. This service is brought to you by Australian Immigration Law Services.

Please feel free to e-mail this newsletter to any of your friends.

Global College forced to close its doors to students

The NSW Government has rejected Global College's registration renewal to be able to operate as an Australian Educational Institution. All schools need this registration in order to be able to offer places to international students so they can obtain their student visa's.

Following our newsletter about the enrolment scam at Global College many students have left the college and many education agents are furious at the college's management for trying to blame them for what occurred.

On education agent we spoke to said he had placed 60 students to Global College to start the Cooking course based on the offer letters issued by the college and none of them were able to start their course. He said they were persuaded into the business course on the promise of Global College management they could transfer later. Since that promise was never realised all of these students left the school and they are angry having paid \$2500 for a course they never wanted.

But it is now obvious that the problems at Global College ran much deeper than the over-enrolment issues. The Sydney Morning Herald (SMH) today has run a prominent article about the plight of about 1000 students who may have no where to go when Global College is expected to be forced to close its doors this Monday. This article is reproduced below.

The SMH cites other major problems at the college the NSW Vocational Education and Training Board (VETAB) have been investigating such as insufficient stoves per student in their cooking classrooms.

One has to wonder how the current problems at Global College and recent situations at Sydney International College of Business were permitted to fester for so long where in the long run it is the students are the ones who end up

suffering?

It is about time that both the NSW State and Commonwealth governments came up with an answer to this.

Next?

A look at Western Australia sponsorship as it becoming the Accountant's haven for those who cannot reach 7.0 on each IELTS section.

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Kind regards

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<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/hundreds-cast-out-as-college-closes/2008/02/15/1202760599522.html>

Hundreds cast out as college closes



Harriet Alexander Higher Education Reporter
February 16, 2008 Sydney Morning Herald P.9

ALMOST 1000 international students face losing thousands of dollars and being forced home on Monday because the private college they attended has been shut by the NSW Government.

Global College, which is well known for offering courses that help international students get permanent visas, will lock its doors to students in its business, hairdressing and commercial cookery courses after failing to renew its registration with the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board.

It is alleged to have significantly overenrolled its classes and failed to provide enough stoves per student in its kitchen.

The training accreditation board told the college last week that it would not be allowed to resume classes when it re-opens from the summer break on Monday until its registration has been renewed, which will take between three and 18 months.

With commercial cookery and hairdressing classes across the city at full capacity, government and industry authorities will face a logistical nightmare trying to accommodate the large number of outcast students.

The scandal comes a week after the higher education recruitment body, IDP Australia, boasted that education had replaced tourism as Australia's third biggest services export for the first time, with a total value of \$12.5 billion, trailing only coal and iron ore.

The seemingly unusual combination of commercial cookery and hairdressing courses that Global College offers owe their popularity to their position on the Federal Government's "migration occupations in demand list", which means students get more points towards permanent residency if they study those courses.

Global College was mounting a last-ditch attempt to stay open yesterday, saying the students' welfare was at stake if the NSW Government did not extend its registration while it prepared the necessary documents.

The Administrative Decisions Tribunal rejected the college's bid for a review of the decision on Thursday.

"Nine hundred students on the street, that's what's going to happen," said the college's administrations officer, Ben Lee.

The college will be legally obliged to refund the students and its industry association, the Australian Council for Private Education and Training [ACPET], will need to place them in courses with its other member colleges.

If there are not enough places, the Federal Government will have to foot the bill, but the students will still lose their airfares and the months or years they have spent in the course.

But Global College's operations manager, Omar Hong, said it could scarcely afford to refund its 900 students.

"We would be financially crippled. We may as well just fold," Mr Hong said.

"ACPET said it's going to be very difficult if not impossible to find places for them."

Mr Hong said the college had spent \$1 million complying with health and safety regulations and cut its student numbers by 300 after the accreditation board identified breaches last year.

The trouble has also netted the college's high school and English school, which are still registered, but will lose their accreditation to teach their 460 students when the rest of the institution does.

The accreditation board has allowed them to continue operating until April.

Global College was required to submit a registration and approval form to the accreditation board like all other institutions that delivered courses to overseas students, a NSW Education Department spokesman said. If places could not be found for them in other courses, they were entitled to a full refund from the Federal Government.

Andrew Smith, the chief executive of the Australian Council for Private Education and Training, said he could not guarantee he would be able to find places for all the students. "Everybody's going to need to put their heads together," Mr Smith said. "We will work to ensure that the welfare of the students is looked after."

Course goes against Sikh students' religion

February 16, 2008 Sydney Morning Herald P.9

JATINDER BIR SINGH'S parents mortgaged their home and land to pay for him to study at Global College, but he had brave hopes that he could earn it back and pay for his siblings to study in Australia too.

The Punjab student had chosen to study commercial cookery because it was a skills shortage area so it would give him a better chance of obtaining permanent residency.

But when he arrived in Australia he was dismayed to discover that he could not study commercial cookery as planned but was locked into hairdressing - the worst possible course, because Mr Singh is a Sikh.

Not only is he forbidden to cut his own hair, but the religion bans him from cutting anybody else's, on pain of being expelled from his community.

Mr Singh said the college had promised him in India that if he agreed to accept a place in hairdressing he would be given a spot in commercial cookery once he arrived on

Australian soil. Now they were telling him he was stuck in hairdressing.

"When I said, 'This is against my religion. I want a refund', they said no," Mr Singh said.

Mr Singh's story is repeated by Shantinder Jit Kaur, who says she hocked her jewellery to afford the airfare and \$22,000 course fee, only to be told by Global College on arrival that she could not switch to commercial cookery and must study business.

"I sold my jewellery. You can't imagine," Ms Kaur said.

"I took a bank loan. In all the statements I put 'commercial cookery'."

The college's operations manager, Omar Hong, said the students were all told that their switch to a place in commercial cookery was contingent on space becoming available.

"We've never tried to mislead students," Mr Hong said.

"It's hard to believe what students say. We've had a few difficult students."

They would only be entitled to a refund if they cancelled more than 28 days before the course started, he said.

Amit Baijal, the director of the education agency Visna Info, has lent several students money to apply to different colleges because he felt sorry for them.

If the students had known there would be no space in commercial cookery at Global College they would have enrolled in many of the other hundreds of colleges around the country, he said.

Harriet Alexander

End Stories

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