

Chairs Message

Welcome to the winter edition of the AISA newsletter! We hope that both your autumn term and January inductions went well. Since our last news letter, the AISA exec has said a fond farewell to both Delphine Christie from the University of Birmingham and to Leo O'Callaghan from the Institute of Education – thank you both for your contributions to AISA. We understand that for many AISA members, PBS is creating a lot of pressure! Therefore, we have taken the opportunity to focus the 4th AISA Conference on providing a forum for ISA's to share and discuss best practice on effective caseload management and identifying innovative ways of helping students to navigate the new Tier 4 requirements. We hope to see many of you at the University of Greenwich on Monday 8th March!

Barbara Montagna and Catherine Davidson

AISA Exec – call for nominations

As mentioned in the message from the Chairs, over the past few months, two colleagues have left the AISA Exec Committee. In addition, at the AISA AGM (on Monday 8th March at the University of Greenwich), a further three committee members will be standing down as they have now completed their four year term. This means that the Exec Committee is looking for new members. The committee is made up of HE and FE practitioners who meet several times a year to plan and run the AISA conference and AISA's training events. Members of the Executive serve 2 year terms up to a maximum of 4 years (2 consecutive terms). This is a great opportunity to be part of a friendly team working at grass roots level in the field of international student support.

Members may nominate themselves or another AISA member. If you wish to nominate another member, please make sure that they are willing to stand before you do so. Nomination forms will be circulated to all AISA members and we also plan to recruit directly at the AISA AGM. If you would like more information about joining the AISA Exec, please contact either Barbara Montagna (bmontagna@bournemouth.ac.uk) or Catherine Davidson (Catherine.davidson@Ntu.ac.uk).

Welcome message from the AISA Regional Co-ordinator, Barbara Georgopoulos – International Student Adviser, Oxford Brookes University

I joined the AISA Executive Committee on 9 November 2009, taking over the role from Delphine Christie who unfortunately had to stand down.

I will be the link between the AISA Executive and the regional co-ordinators liaising on a one to one basis via email. One of the aims will be to exchange information, e.g. pass on summary of minutes from AISA Executive meetings and any other relevant information to regional co-ordinators. In return I hope to receive the minutes from regional meetings to post on the AISA website. This will ensure that information reaches all members throughout the year and not only through the publication of the AISA Newsletter. There will also be the opportunity for any items or issues raised at the regional meetings to be taken to the AISA Executive for action. All Regional Co-ordinators will be encouraged to send details of their meetings, dates, venues, agendas and minutes to be posted on the AISA website on a regular basis.

I will be looking at areas with no current provision of regional meetings and will offer assistance to any member who is considering setting up a regional group advising on the processes involved and sending out the starter pack to help get the group established. In addition to my personal contact with the regional co-ordinators I am very interested to hear from anyone who would like to express their views or queries regarding regional groups. I can be contacted at aisa@ukcisa.org.uk

With best wishes for 2010

Barbara Georgopoulos



My Office: Laura Hardman, International Advice Team, The University of Manchester

What one word best describes your office? Hectic!

What were your first impressions of your office? Our office is open plan and because it's in the Student Services Centre it holds four different teams so I was worried about learning everyone's names!

What is the strangest object you have in your office? Gerry, my manager, has lots of weird and wonderful gifts on her desk that international students have given her over the years including Chinese ornaments, statues and crystals!!

What is the funniest or weirdest thing ever to happen in your office? An international student who worked at Subway once brought in loads of sandwiches and cookies for our team which was brilliant!

Which historical character would you most like to visit your office? Jim Morrison so he could sing to us to keep us all entertained!!

What one thing in your office could you not function without? Hot drinks and snacks!



Upcoming AISA events – dates for your diary:

AISA 2010 Conference – Monday 08 March 2010 (The University of Greenwich)

Supporting the Supporters Training by Margaret Collins – Wednesday 02 June 2010 (The University of Manchester)

AISA Regional Meetings

Currently there are 5 regional AISA groups that meet throughout the year. These meetings are a really valuable way for ISAs to share best practice, exchange ideas and discuss current immigration affairs. Some groups bring in guest speakers and the meetings are hosted in turn by different institutions, which is a great way to see how others operate! For details of your nearest group visit: <http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/aisa/network.htm>

If you would like to find out more about regional groups for local HE and FE institutions or set one up in your area, please contact: Barbara Georgopoulos (bgeorgopoulos@brookes.ac.uk)

Student Articles

Do you have a student who has had an experience they would like to share? Maybe a volunteering or community project they were involved in? An account on their time at your institution? Impressions of the UK?

Please send any articles to me at RMelia@uclan.ac.uk and if we publish the article, we will send them a £20 book token to say thank you.