



ICOS PRESS STATEMENT 15/5/14

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## College closure crisis:

### ICOS calls for task force and pop-up college to meet student need

Following the closure of three private colleges in the space of a month, there are now hundreds of displaced English language students in Dublin looking desperately for a solution, all of whom have now been without classes for 2 to 4 weeks. More are yet to travel.

In view of the urgency of the situation and the limited capacity of existing language schools at their busiest time, ICOS is calling for a high level task force to take charge and ensure that a 'pop-up college' is put in place without delay to get these students back into classes.

ICOS Director Sheila Power explains: "Every day that passes is a day of studies lost. For many students who booked for short intensive programmes, their time in Ireland is fast disappearing and they risk having nothing to show for it at all. Those on the ground have been in no doubt about the seriousness of the situation since the outset; recent media coverage has now shone a light on the issues for all to see. A clear sense of urgency and practical solutions are needed from the highest level to prevent any further damage to Ireland's reputation as a destination for international students."

"Though not all affected students are language students, they represent a very large proportion of the overall numbers. Getting this group back into classes will mean that special attention can be turned to students on courses like business and nursing who need pathways to complete their studies through other placements," says Power.

"ICOS has already facilitated a meeting between INIS and student representatives which has largely resolved key immigration questions. However, the current situation is first and foremost an education matter. ICOS is only too willing to facilitate a chance for education authorities to meet with students in similar vein," concludes Power.

#### **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

*The Irish Council for International Students (ICOS) – [www.icosirl.ie](http://www.icosirl.ie) - is an independent organisation, founded in 1970, advocating for the rights of all international students in Ireland, whether studying in higher education, further education, in a language school or other setting.*

*Contrary to some reporting, neither Kavanagh College, Eden College nor Irish Business School (IBS) were closed by the Irish authorities. In each case, the owners announced the closure of the operation and - students believe - simply walked away from their responsibilities.*