

Tougher college regulation welcome – more attention also needed to students hit by closures

Following a report in The Sunday Times [“‘Beefed-up’ inspections and a new regime for foreign student visas”, 31/8/14], the Irish Council for International Students (ICOS) is anticipating a government announcement tomorrow regarding plans for a new inspection regime for Ireland’s 230 private colleges, aiming toward a ‘smaller but higher quality’ private international school sector.

ICOS Director Sheila Power comments:

“ICOS has been consistently supportive of moves to increase quality in the sector and ensure robust learner protection, whilst also highlighting the need for an extremely well managed transition from present, poorly regulated arrangements. Improved measures will be needed to deal with the inevitable fall-out for international students displaced from colleges which cease to operate.”

“The closure of six private colleges since April has created an uncertain background as we head into the new academic year. Affected students were deemed to be on ‘academic holiday’ to 1st September. With the arrival of that date, many find themselves without a clear education pathway – either due to unaffordability or a growing backlog of unanswered emails. Students who are already quite disenchanted with their educational experience in Ireland are getting increasingly frustrated.”

“The introduction of tougher college regulation policies in the coming months will be very welcome. At the same time, there is a need - right now - for more decisiveness from Government and clearer information and guidance for many of the students impacted by recent college closures.”

Notes for Editors:

The Irish Council for International Students (ICOS) is an independent organisation advocating for the rights of all international students in Ireland.

ICOS has been supporting students affected by the closures of Kavanagh College, Eden College, Irish Business School, Millennium College, Allied Irish College and BCT Institute, along with the visa suspension of National Media College and recent uncertainties surrounding English In Dublin college.

ICOS maintains a specific College Closures blog at <http://collegeclosures.icosirl.ie>

Sunday Times article - <http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/ireland/News/article1453332.ece>