

Feedback from the International Agents Fair 2016

Thank you for offering me the opportunity to attend the British Council International Agents Fair for Boarding Schools and Sixth Form Colleges which took place the week Sunday 24 April to Saturday 30 April 2016.

Overall , it was a very enjoyable educational trip which gave me the opportunity to visit some of the best boarding schools in Scotland and greater London. Our day visits to Strathallan School and Glenalmond College in Scotland provided firsthand experience of the academic, sporting and boarding facilities. We were given a warm welcome by the headmasters of the schools and the Academic Directors, who delivered useful speeches about the history and philosophical principles of the independent (day and boarding) coeducational schools, their educational aims and academic achievements. I found particularly enjoyable the tours with the pupil ambassadors who accompanied us and showed us the boarding facilities, sports centers, art workshops and science laboratories. They shared their experiences as some of them have been boarding for several years. We were given the opportunity to discuss with pupils about their career aspirations and benefits of boarding in an independent school especially for the ones attending the Sixth Form college and are getting prepared for their A-Level examinations. Pupils welcomed us to their study rooms and took us to all the boarding premises. During lunch, the host schools had prepared a meal which was served in the refectory of the colleges so we got a genuine taste of how pupils are catered in their daily routine.

The two networking dinners that the British Council organized in Edinburgh and London were particularly interesting because we met the representatives from all the schools who participated in the fairs and had friendly discussions about the opportunities offered by UK schools and colleges to international students. This will hopefully help build stronger relations and pave the way for prospective collaborations in the near future. The fairs on 26th April at Loretto School in Scotland and on 28th April at DLD in London were scheduled for all agents to meet in person with school representatives and exchange information about the services that our agency offers in Athens and the prospects of expanding our educational services to prospective students who wish to attend a Sixth Form College so as to be academically prepared to gain entry in renown higher education institutions in the UK as well as English speaking universities in Europe. Visiting the Scottish boarding schools and right after the Chelsea independent College and DLD in London I was able to compare and contrast the merits and some limitations of studying in a campus with plenty of extracurricular activities, sports centers and outdoor affairs and the of studying in London a vibrant metropolitan city but probably ideal for older students for example, for sixth form ones.

Moreover, in the welcome meeting on Sunday 24th April, the British Council hosts gave valuable updated information and fact sheets about the UK Visa and immigration policy and useful online resources to students and advisors to seek additional assistance.

It is worth mentioning that both the organizers of this Fair as well as the Agents were all friendly and inspiring. Throughout the week, we exchanged ideas and beliefs in educational

aspects sharing experiences from our cultures. Undoubtedly it is valuable to highlight that whenever I have been offered the chance to attend an international educational fair, I come to realize the importance of transmitting students the respect of cultural diversity and the benefits of cultural exchange.

Overall, I feel that this fair for boarding schools and sixth form colleges comprised some of the most renowned schools and colleges across the UK and enriched my knowledge and broadened my professional horizons.

Best regards,

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