

## **EUHOFA Round Table June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

- **Marketing and recruitment of prospective students**
- **Managing requests for financial assistance**

These minutes have been prepared to record the feedback from 13 Hotel Schools who participated in the Round Table held on June 30. There were two sessions covering both topics- one covering Australia, Asia, Africa and Europe, one covering Africa, Europe and Americas.

At the end of the minutes is a list of schools with the names of the contacts, and the abbreviation used for each school. Note TARC did not participate in the Round Table, but sent comments by email. Similarly, EHG participated for half the time, and send their comments by email for inclusion.

Lluis Serra, President of EUHOFA International opened the Zoom session, welcoming all the participants, and giving background to the Round Table series. He then introduced Ms Ikerne Azpilicueta from EHL as moderator.

Each participant introduced themselves. EHL then commenced their discussion, followed by each participant, in alphabetical order of their country. For purposes of Minutes, the two topics are separated, although hotel schools gave their responses together.

### **Marketing and recruitment of prospective students**

- EHL opened with comments that had everyone nodding. They closed on March 13, and commenced delivering on line. They had four days to get organised, but managed to achieve would usually take 12 months.
- No travel, no face to face meetings. They started with Webinars and had to innovate as they went forward. They had to work hard answering questions- and in many cases they had to “make up the answers”. Student does not have high school examinations, student cannot undertake English test.
- They set up WhatsApp (and other social media) groups with actual students and prospective students.
- But they discovered that all this was significantly cheaper than old-fashioned marketing with exhibitions, travel etc. Marketing used to be 70% physical, and 30% online. April-June 2020 it might have been 90% online, and they can foresee in the future it would be 60% online, and 40% physical.
- HS students are 40% Australian, 60% international. They have a number of intakes each year, and getting international students into Australia since February has been impossible.
- Marketing has moved online- webinars with agents, schools etc. But they quickly saw “Webinar Fatigue”, and this also got nodding of heads.
- They have been delivering short master classes to international students.
- In Australia they have suddenly got a new target market- taking students from industry who had been laid off. Around the world there has been a desire from the furloughed and unemployed to improve themselves through education, and HS has seen a niche.
- In responding to a later question on how these students could pay the fees, HS said that Australian students could access government loans/
- HS see the domestic market as growing- High School students will not take a gap year in 2021- meaning more will go straight from school to post-secondary studies, and HS hope to pick up a fair share.
- HS hope they can enrol students into online subjects initially, and later move to Australia when the borders open.
- In India AIMS recruits students from India and 15 other countries. They were quick to move their admissions to totally online.
- Until 2020 the Indian Government did not permit online study- so Covid forced the Government to change their rules.
- Parents and prospective students have been very nervous, and it is difficult to encourage them to enrol. Indian students do not like online, they prefer face to face.

- Starex pointed out two new Indian issues with the move to online- Electricity and Bandwidth. Online studies rely on both of them to be able to complete the course- and neither is particularly successful.
- Like HS in Australia, Starex have started post-graduate programs for hospitality industry workers.
- Barga were able to set up online courses in a one-week period. Not perfect, but adequate. The difficulty is with practical courses... the subject of a later Round Table.
- If the lockdown extends for more than 3 months, the problems will become more severe. The Tuscany region relies extensively on tourism and hospitality, and they see problems in employment of graduates, and part time jobs for students.
- In Nairobi the lockdown has not as extensive as some other places, and IHTI has delivered classes face-to-face. Students do not like online, and there is a major problem with bandwidth in Kenya.
- But marketing has been by social media, Twitter, Instagram, etc.
- Berjaya suffered a significant problem in their May-June intake, as they usually count on a good number of Chinese students- and they could not get them in the lockdown.
- In Malaysia there has been a broad concern on the Covid risks involved in education. Berjaya emphasised their smaller classes and social distancing, and this was successful in allowing them to meet budget.
- While the Malaysian Government were quick to permit online learning, students do not like online.
- TARC reported Recruitment drop significantly due to the uncertainties for existing semester. There are number of cases of deferring to further academic year as well.
- Gateway reported that the strict lockdown prevented both their own exams, as well as High School exams, that are necessary to enrol in further studies.
- They are delivering online subjects, but hope to top-up with face-to-face later. They reported that their vocational courses, with more practical are a real problem.
- Like others, Gateway try to use social media and Webinars, but bandwidth is an issue.
- MV have focussed on digital marketing and have updated their website.
- They have merged their senior high school program ("Plus Two") with a vocational program.
- They have delivered a Japanese program online via Zoom.
- As their students have gone home, out of the Kathmandu Valley, MV worry that the students will come back to Kathmandu to continue their studies.
- SM reported that while the Nepal lockdown had been 85 days, their college was still not open for face-to-face classes.
- They have problems with exam results- Year 10 seems to be resolved, but Year 12 is an issue.
- SM report that marketing is an issue. Travel is impossible.
- He repeated the problems reported by others- consistent electricity, and bandwidth.
- But they were grateful that at last the Government had approved online education- it had been forbidden up to now.
- UST also said that bandwidth is a problem- but not only for students but also for the lecturers. They have started delivery with LMS system Blackboard.
- He said that They have a special problem with culinary delivery, as online is not possible.
- Practicum (internships) are a problem- The Philippines Government has outlawed in the period August December.
- UST is a highly sought after university in Philippines, so it was not a surprise that they got a good intake in June, but they worry about retaining Year 2-4.
- EHG are 80% local, and they moved to online in record time. Their students were happy with the Learning Management System and online delivery. This is somewhat unique for the schools in the Round Table.
- EHG used social media for marketing, and did online interviews.
- DT said that like other colleges, the economic issues were a concern. Both internships and jobs for graduates.
- DT say online marketing is a problem, they have to be innovative.
- Because the adjacent DT hotel is closed to tourists, it has been used as a student dormitory.
- DT made the point that they have to create trust with parents and students, and she highlighted reliable information, consistent message, and stress safe facilities from a Covid aspect.

## Managing requests for financial assistance

- EHL have established a special Covid Fund of Assistance.
- Support must be justified and supported by evidence. (But we were told that many students parents are in the hospitality industry, and have lost their jobs.)
- They are prepared to give loans to their students, 0% interest, with five year term. They expect this will be applicable in both 2020 and 2021.
- HS will grant Hardship Scholarships to assist students.
- AIMS work to introduce their students to banks so the banks can fund students' studies.
- Starex have given 30% scholarships to female students, and smaller reductions to other students.
- IHTI in Nairobi have given a 10% fee reduction across the board.
- Berjaya have given monthly payment plans to both local and international students.
- They have given both scholarships and bursaries, and have looked to limit add-on's to standard fees.
- TARC is also providing instalment plans.
- Gateway are giving payment plans, but not reducing fees. They worry about the impact of fees in the future.
- MV mentioned the usual assistance we heard before- payment plans, discounts for needy students, and introduction to banks who will make education loans.
- EHG also give scholarships for new applications.
- DT have a fund to assist students, and have provided a) discounts, b) loans, and c) insurance. All three have been used. But they are also worried about returning students and drop-out.

## Names of Participating schools, and contacts

	Full Name	Email Address	Schoolname	Country	Abbrev'n
1	Sue Bakir & Georgina Evans	sbakir@mulpha.com.au	The Hotel School	Australia	HS
2	Priyanandan Reddy	priyanandan@theaims.ac.in	AIMS School of Hospitality and Tourism	India	AIMS
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