

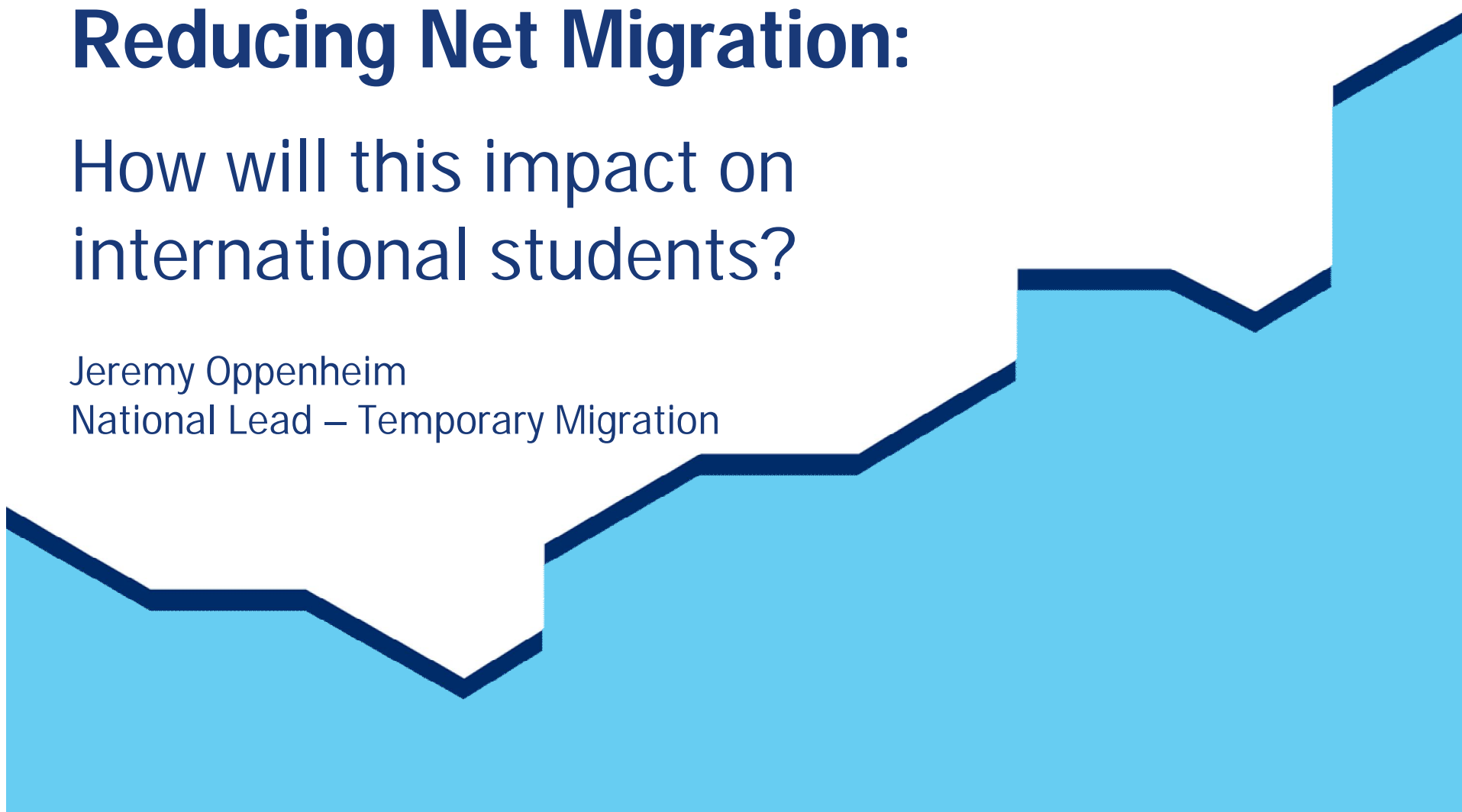


SECURING  
OUR BORDER  
CONTROLLING  
MIGRATION

# Reducing Net Migration:

## How will this impact on international students?

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## CONTEXT: The challenge

**Reducing net migration and protecting economic growth.**

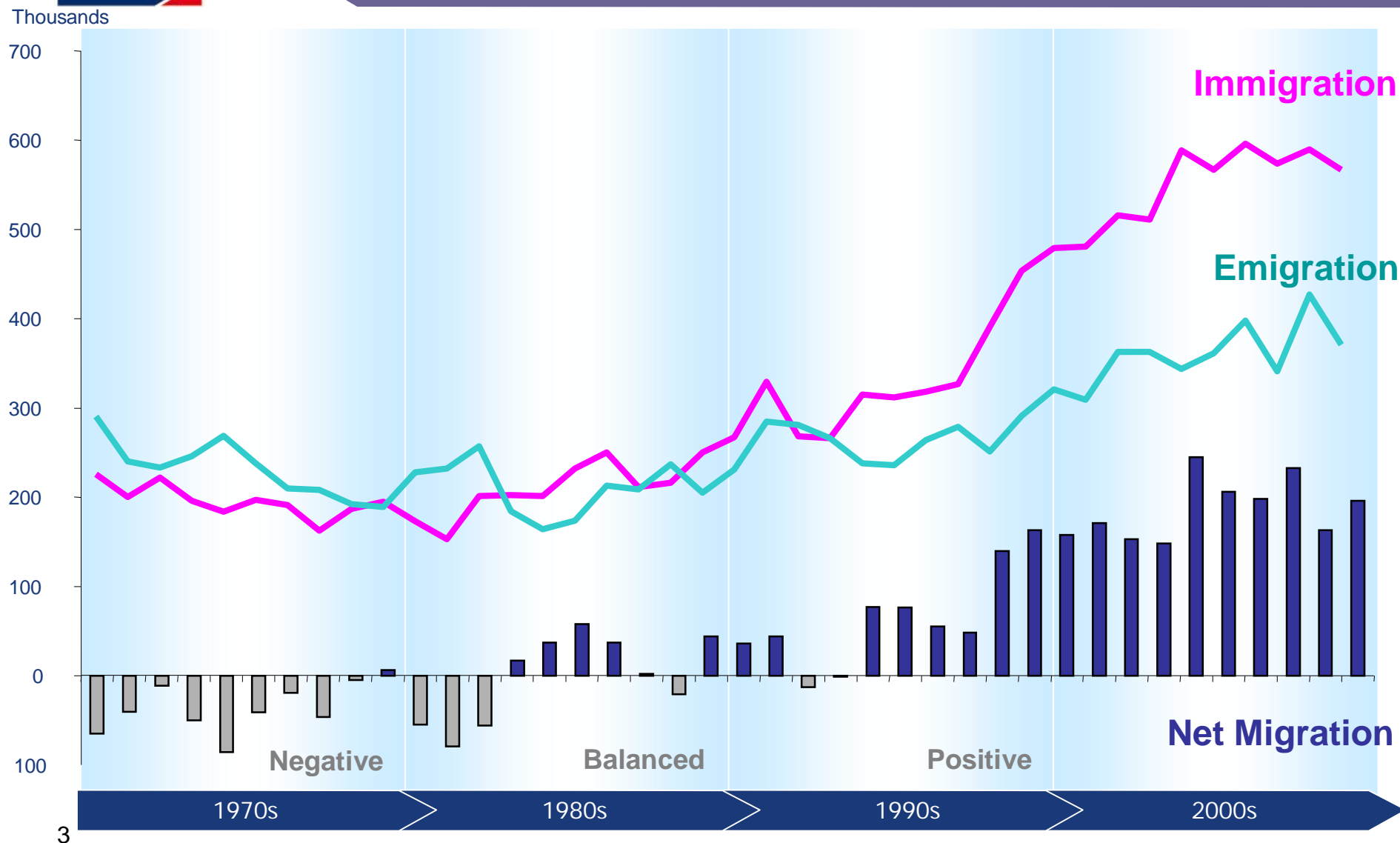
**Building confidence in the immigration system.**

**Selecting the best and the brightest to work and study here.**

**Bearing down on abuse; easier routes for those who are low risk.**

**Less automatic settlement; discouraging sequential applications.**

# HISTORICAL NET MIGRATION: Recent levels of net migration have been unprecedented – with a fourfold increase between the mid-1990s and mid-2000s



Source: Office of National Statistics, Long-Term International Migration Series (LTIM)

## PUBLIC OPINION: Public concern has risen in line with immigration

Thousands

600

500

400

300

200

*Public concern from MORI polling over time: reflects the percentage of people citing race/immigration/immigrants as the most important issue facing Britain today.*

Immigration

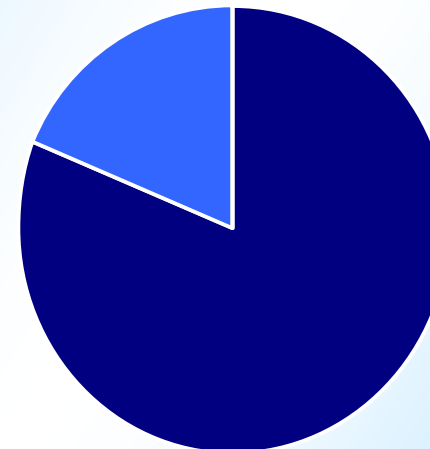
Public concern

1980s

1990s

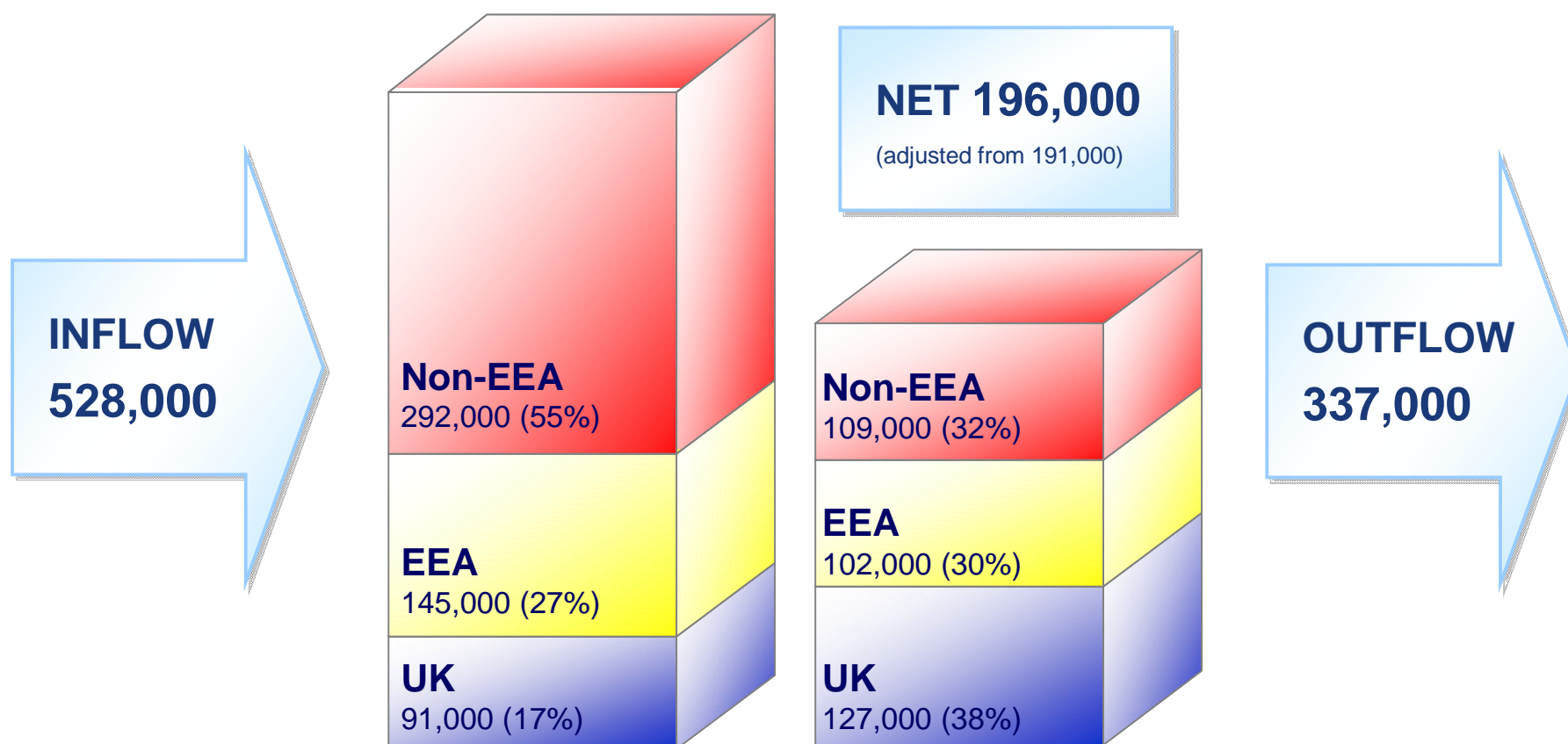
2000s

**81% of people think there should be a limit on the number of immigrants allowed into the UK each year**



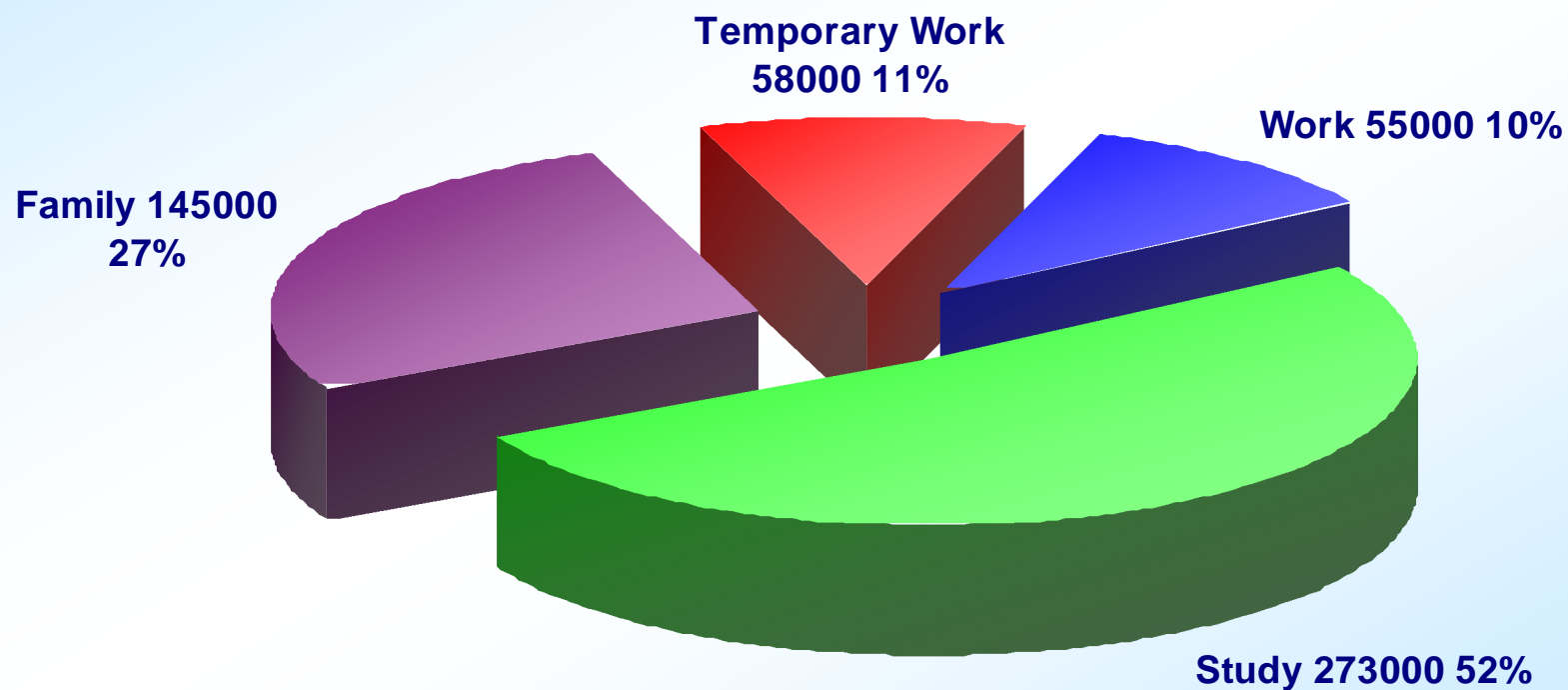
Source: YouGov polling for Migrationwatch UK – November 2010.

## NET MIGRATION 2009: UK and EEA inflows and outflows almost cancel out – the surplus is nearly all non-EEA



## Visas issued in 2009

■ Temporary Work<sup>\*</sup>   ■ Work<sup>\*</sup>  
■ Study<sup>\*</sup>   ■ Family<sup>\*\*</sup>



\* Main applicants only

\*\* Includes all dependents association with main applicants + main and dependent applications for family and settlement routes.



## **SUMMARY:** Our student consultation proposals are part of a wider programme of change across the work, study, family and settlement routes

**Reduce net migration** across all routes, **protect economic growth** and **tackle abuse** in the education sector.

**Work:** Significantly narrow Tier 1. Protect but restrict Tier 2. Exempt ICTs.

**Study:** Restrict Tier 4 to degree level and the highly trusted.

**Family and Settlement:** Develop wider proposals in the longer term.



## **EVIDENCE: We remain the global destination of choice for higher education students studying abroad – second only to the US**

**We recognise the significant contribution of international students to the UK economy, with the tuition fees they pay and their wider personal spending.**

We also recognise the contribution that international students make on a personal level, in establishing and maintaining relationships with those they meet whilst in the UK.

**We must ensure that the UK continues to attract the brightest and best students to our educational institutions.**



## EVIDENCE: We estimate that around two-fifths of students are studying below degree level

**NQF 7**  
Postgraduate  
**34%**

**NQF 6**  
Undergraduate  
**25%**

**NQF 5**  
Diploma  
**13%**

**NQF 4**  
Cert.  
**9%**

**NQF 3**  
A-Level and below  
**19%**

A recent study found that **up to 26% of students investigated at private FE and HE colleges were shown to be potentially non-compliant**, that is they did not have a valid reason to remain and had not been recorded as leaving the UK. A separate study for Universities showed potential non-compliance rates (calculated on a different basis) of around 2%.

Of the adults using the Tier 4 (General) category for study below degree level\*, **more than half are studying at private FE and HE institutions** – the group of institutions we estimate to have the least compliant students.

*\* excluding those studying at independent schools*



## EVIDENCE: Large numbers stay beyond the expiry of their initial grant of leave

**More than one-fifth of students granted visas in 2004 were still here in 2009.** Certain nationalities are more likely to stay in the UK for longer periods than others.

UK Border Agency caseworkers report **significant proportions of those seeking to extend their student visas showing limited evidence of academic progression.**

**13% of those granted settlement in 2009 were originally admitted as a student.** That was 23,000 grants of settlement in one year to former students.



## PROPOSALS: We will focus on six key areas of concern

**1. Raising the level of courses** that students can study.

**2. Introducing tougher entry criteria** for students.

**3. Ensuring students return overseas** after their course.

**4. Limiting entitlements** on student routes.

**5. Simpler procedures** for checking low-risk applications.

**6. Stricter accreditation procedures** for education providers in the private sector.



## PROPOSAL 1: Raising the level of courses that students can study

**Restrict Tier 4 (General) largely to degree level** courses and child students, with only Highly Trusted Sponsors permitted to offer courses below degree level to adults.

**Lower level courses of up to 6 months will continue to be permitted** outside the Points Based System, through the student visitor route.

We invite views on the **phasing** of such an approach.

We propose **no tightening of the Tier 4 (Child) route**; this is a relatively small part of the Tier 4 composition and one which poses us least risk.



## PROPOSAL 2: Introducing tougher entry criteria for students

**Raise the Tier 4 language bar** as a key indicator of quality and fitness to complete a higher level course.

All Tier 4 (General) applicants including degree level and English language students will be subject to **a secure English language test** showing competence at level B2.



## PROPOSAL 3: Ensuring students return overseas after their course

**Stop students from remaining in the UK** after their initial course and extending their studies **without clear evidence of academic progression.**

**Students wishing to extend their stay** in order to study a new course **will have to** (a) **leave the UK** and apply for a new visa **and** (b) **show evidence of progression** to a higher course.

**Close the Tier 1 Post Study Work route.**



## PROPOSAL 4: Limiting the entitlements on student routes

Students should only be allowed to **work at weekends and during vacation periods**, with an exception permitting work on-campus during the week.

Where a course includes a work placement, **raise the minimum ratio of study to work placement** from 50:50 to 66:33, to make them less attractive as a way to gain access to the UK employment market.

**Remove permission to work for all dependants** of Tier 4 students, except where they qualify in their own right under Tier 1 or Tier 2 of the PBS.

**Only those Tier 4 students studying for more than 12 months to be allowed to bring their dependants** to the UK.





## PROPOSAL 5: Simpler procedures for checking low-risk applications

Impose different requirements as regards evidence of maintenance and previous qualifications in order to **lighten the burden on lower risk students**.

We also need to ensure that evidence of funds shows they are genuinely available to the student – as we are aware of agents in some countries passing funds from applicant to applicant to meet the Tier 4 funds requirement.

High and low risk are likely to be defined according to nationality, based on an assessment of evidence of risk posed (e.g. the use of forged documents), or according to whether the sponsor is Highly Trusted or not.





## PROPOSAL 6: Stricter accreditation procedures for education providers in the private sector

**Raise the quality of accredited education providers** operating within the private further and higher education sector.

Work with the education departments, BIS and DfE, to ensure there is **robust inspection of education provision within private institutions** of further and higher education for Tier 4 purposes.



## SUMMARY: We think it is right to focus on attracting the brightest and the best students, whilst tackling abuse in high risk institutions

The **significant majority of non-EEA migrants are students**, so to reduce overall net migration we cannot delay in taking decisive action on this route.

We propose **a more selective approach**, attracting the brightest and best students, but reducing numbers by weeding out those who abuse the system and do not deserve to be allowed in.

But we will do nothing to prevent those coming here to study degree level courses and will **protect our world class academic institutions**, both above and below degree level.

## A REMINDER OF OUR SIX PROPOSED AREAS FOR REFORM

**1. Raising the level of courses** that students can study.

**2. Introducing tougher entry criteria** for students.

**3. Ensuring students return overseas** after their course.

**4. Limiting entitlements** on student routes.

**5. Simpler procedures** for checking low-risk applications.

**6. Stricter accreditation procedures** for education providers in the private sector.