

## Home Affairs Committee Report on Bogus Colleges

News Release

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More needs to be done to prevent bogus colleges from continuing to operate and to deport former students who used them to enter the UK illegally, according to a new report by a Parliamentary committee.

The [Home Affairs Committee's](#) list of recommendations includes a requirement that all private English colleges and language schools should be compulsorily regulated, and that the use of the word "college" should be restricted by the Government to fully accredited institutions.

The Committee is also concerned that the UK Border Agency warns up to 85 per cent of the schools it inspects that it is about to do so. "This is unacceptable and does not give us any confidence in the rigour of the inspection regime in combating bogus colleges," says the report.

The recommendations were welcomed by English UK, whose chief executive Tony Millns gave extensive evidence to the committee. He said: "We support all the suggestions which would make it difficult for bogus colleges to operate. No organisation should be able to trade as an educational institution unless it has some quality assurance from independent accreditation."

While it found no evidence of a link between bogus colleges and terrorist activity, the committee was concerned about the "tens of thousands" of illegal immigrants who might already have entered the UK on fraudulent student visas.

"Firm enforcement action must be taken against any individual whose student visa has expired to ensure that they leave the country, as well as against those who have set up bogus colleges to perpetrate visa fraud. We have received no evidence that the Home Office has made adequate preparations to deal with this issue," said the report.

Committee chairman Keith Vaz said: "Bogus colleges may have allowed tens of thousands of foreign nationals to enter the country illegally: the Government has been aware of their existence for ten years and done nothing to stop them. This is totally unacceptable and frankly, quite unbelievable. This should not be allowed to continue and action must be taken immediately."

"The Government must restrict the term 'college' to prevent any premises above a fish and chip shop from being able to claim it is a reputed educational institution. The term 'college' should only be given to accredited institutions."

The Committee welcomed the new points-based system for student visas but warned that it would continue to monitor sponsorship arrangements as it "remained cautious" about the Border Agency's ability to deal with the issue. It wanted the Department of Business, Enterprise and Skills to make better use of information supplied by existing legitimate networks about potentially bogus institutions, and promised to look again at this recommendation once Tier 4 is fully recommended.