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UK axes quarter of student visas

http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1103/110323-student_visas.html

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23rd March, 2011

THE ARTICLE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1103/110323-student_visas.html

The British government has announced an overhaul in its system of issuing student visas. U.K. Home Secretary Theresa May has said the rules for student visas into Britain need to be much tougher. This means a reduction of 25 per cent in the number of visas given to overseas students. Ms. May said new rules are being introduced to stop people trying to gain entry into the country for dishonest reasons. She said student visas were being abused and "too many were here to work and not to study". She told the British government that the misuse of student visas was a "symbol of a broken and abused immigration system," and that tightening the rules would be "in the best interests of legitimate students."

Many in politics, education and business have condemned the new law. Opposition Home Secretary Yvette Cooper said it would damage Britain's economy. She pointed out that the teaching English industry was worth \$9 billion a year. Ms. Cooper warned the government was trying to keep political promises about cutting immigration numbers, rather than to improve the visa system. In a fiery exchange, she said that Ms. May should act "in the interests of a sensible, controlled migration policy, rather than taking risks with an important export industry". University spokeswoman Sally Hunt said: "The government's student visa plans are short-sighted and risk sending out the worrying message that the UK is closed for business."

WARM-UPS

1. IMMIGRATION: Walk around the class and talk to other students about immigration. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

overhaul / student visas / tougher / overseas students / dishonest reasons / abused / politics / opposition / political promises / immigration / fiery / short-sighted / risk

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. VISA: What should foreigners require to get a visa for your country? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote. Change and share again.

	Requirements	Why?
Tourist		
Student/Study		
Permanent residence		
Investment		
Working holiday		
On-arrival		

4. TOUGH: Students A **strongly** believe countries should be tougher on immigration; Students B **strongly** believe the opposite. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. REQUIREMENTS: What are the most important requirements to give foreigners student visas in the U.K.? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the most important at the top. Change partners and share your rankings again.

- English level
- Age
- Number of dependents
- Money
- Previous qualifications
- Nationality
- No criminal record
- Health record

6. VISAS: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'visas'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1103/110323-student_visas.html

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| a. Britain is refusing to let a quarter of its students study overseas. | T / F |
| b. A British politician wants to stop people getting visas dishonestly. | T / F |
| c. The politician said many people got student visas to work, not study. | T / F |
| d. The politician said new rules would help proper students. | T / F |
| e. The opposition politician agreed with the new rules. | T / F |
| f. The English industry is worth nine billion British pounds in the U.K. | T / F |
| g. The politician and her opposite number had heated words. | T / F |
| h. Another woman said British politicians couldn't see very well. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article.

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. announced | a. indicated |
| 2. overhaul | b. stricter |
| 3. tougher | c. giving |
| 4. abused | d. attacked |
| 5. legitimate | e. heated |
| 6. condemned | f. update |
| 7. pointed out | g. argument |
| 8. fiery | h. misused |
| 9. exchange | i. declared |
| 10. sending out | j. legal |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. its system of issuing | a. into the country |
| 2. need to be much | b. risks |
| 3. trying to gain entry | c. of legitimate students |
| 4. a broken and abused | d. short-sighted |
| 5. in the best interests | e. promises |
| 6. Yvette Cooper said it would damage | f. student visas |
| 7. trying to keep political | g. for business |
| 8. taking | h. tougher |
| 9. visa plans are | i. Britain's economy |
| 10. the UK is closed | j. immigration system |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1103/110323-student_visas.html

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

The British government has announced an (1) _____ in its system of (2) _____ student visas. U.K. Home Secretary Theresa May has said the (3) _____ for student visas into Britain need to be much tougher. This means a reduction of 25 per cent in the number of visas given to (4) _____ students. Ms. May said new rules are being introduced to stop people trying to (5) _____ entry into the country for dishonest reasons. She said student visas were being abused and "too many were here to work and not to study". She told the British government that the misuse of student visas was a (6) "_____ of a broken and abused immigration system," and that (7) _____ the rules would be "in the best (8) _____ of legitimate students."

symbol
rules
gain
interests
overhaul
tightening
issuing
overseas

Many in politics, education and business have (9) _____ the new law. Opposition Home Secretary Yvette Cooper said it would (10) _____ Britain's economy. She pointed out that the teaching English industry was worth \$9 billion a year. Ms. Cooper (11) _____ the government was trying to keep political promises about (12) _____ immigration numbers, rather than to improve the visa system. In a fiery exchange, she said that Ms. May should act "in the interests of a (13) _____, controlled migration policy, rather than taking risks with an important (14) _____ industry". University spokeswoman Sally Hunt said: "The government's student visa plans are short-(15) _____ and risk sending out the worrying message that the UK is (16) _____ for business."

sighted
warned
sensible
closed
condemned
damage
export
cutting

LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1103/110323-student_visas.html

The British government has announced an overhaul _____ issuing student visas. U.K. Home Secretary Theresa May has said the rules for student visas into Britain need _____. This means a reduction of 25 per cent in the number of visas given to overseas students. Ms. May said new rules are being introduced to stop people trying _____ the country for dishonest reasons. She said student visas were being abused and "too many were _____ not to study". She told the British government that the misuse of student visas was a "_____ and abused immigration system," and that tightening the rules would be "in _____ legitimate students."

Many in politics, education and business _____ new law. Opposition Home Secretary Yvette Cooper said it would damage Britain's economy. She _____ the teaching English industry was worth \$9 billion a year. Ms. Cooper warned the government was trying to _____ about cutting immigration numbers, rather than to improve the visa system. In a fiery exchange, she said that Ms. May should act "in the _____, controlled migration policy, rather than taking risks with an important export industry". University spokeswoman Sally Hunt said: "The government's student _____ -sighted and risk sending _____ that the UK is closed for business."

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1103/110323-student_visas.html

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'student' and 'visa'.

student	visa
----------------	-------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• announced• rules• number• gain• symbol• best	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• opposition• damage• warned• exchange• sensible• closed
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

STUDENT IMMIGRATION SURVEY

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1103/110323-student_visas.html

Write five GOOD questions about immigration in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.
When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

IMMIGRATION DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'visa'?
- c) What do you think of the visa system?
- d) Have you ever had a difficult time getting a visa?
- e) What do you think of Britain cutting back on student visas?
- f) Do you think visa rules need to be tougher?
- g) What should governments do if people try to get visas dishonestly?
- h) Would you like to study in Britain or another country?
- i) Are you concerned about immigration in your country?
- j) How would you feel if you were refused a visa?

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IMMIGRATION DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Why do you think some British politicians are against the new student visa restrictions?
- c) Do you think keeping of political promises could be at play here?
- d) Should your country increase or decrease immigration?
- e) What are the benefits of immigration?
- f) Where in the world would you like to study?
- g) What is a "a sensible, controlled migration policy"?
- h) When was the last time you had a 'fiery exchange'?
- i) Do you think the UK government is really sending out the message that it is "closed for business"?
- j) What questions would you like to ask U.K. Home Secretary Theresa May?

LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1103/110323-student_visas.html

The British government has announced an (1) _____ in its system of issuing student visas. U.K. Home Secretary Theresa May has said the rules for student visas into Britain need to be much (2) _____. This means a reduction of 25 per cent in the number of visas given to overseas students. Ms. May said new rules are being introduced to stop people trying to (3) _____ entry into the country for (4) _____ reasons. She said student visas were (5) _____ abused and "too many were here to work and not to study". She told the British government that the misuse of student visas was a "symbol of a broken and abused immigration system," and that tightening the rules would be "in the (6) _____ interests of legitimate students."

Many in politics, education and business have (7) _____ the new law. Opposition Home Secretary Yvette Cooper said it would damage Britain's economy. She pointed (8) _____ that the teaching English industry was worth \$9 billion a year. Ms. Cooper warned the government was trying to (9) _____ political promises about cutting immigration numbers, rather than to improve the visa system. In a (10) _____ exchange, she said that Ms. May should act "in the interests of a sensible, controlled migration policy, rather than (11) _____ risks with an important export industry". University spokeswoman Sally Hunt said: "The government's student visa plans are short-(12) _____ and risk sending out the worrying message that the UK is closed for business."

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1. | (a) short haul | (b) haulage | (c) long haul | (d) overhaul |
| 2. | (a) tougher | (b) toughen | (c) toughening | (d) toughs |
| 3. | (a) main | (b) pain | (c) gain | (d) vain |
| 4. | (a) dishonesty | (b) dishonest | (c) honesty | (d) honest |
| 5. | (a) doing | (b) being | (c) done | (d) been |
| 6. | (a) good | (b) bright | (c) best | (d) light |
| 7. | (a) condemned | (b) commanded | (c) commandeered | (d) commending |
| 8. | (a) in | (b) up | (c) down | (d) out |
| 9. | (a) sweep | (b) heap | (c) weep | (d) keep |
| 10. | (a) fire | (b) fiery | (c) afire | (d) fires |
| 11. | (a) taking | (b) faking | (c) making | (d) baking |
| 12. | (a) seeing | (b) vision | (c) sighted | (d) visionary |

HOMework

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out more about your country's immigration policy. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. IMMIGRATION: Make a poster about immigration – the pros and cons. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. NO ENTRY: Write a magazine article about a student who cannot enter Britain to study under new immigration laws. Include imaginary interviews with him/her and Britain's Home Secretary Theresa May.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to Britain's Home Secretary Theresa May. Ask her three questions about immigration. Give her three reasons why she should relax the policy. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F b. F c. F d. F e. F f. F g. F h. F

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. announced | a. declared |
| 2. overhaul | b. update |
| 3. tougher | c. stricter |
| 4. abused | d. misused |
| 5. legitimate | e. legal |
| 6. condemned | f. attacked |
| 7. pointed out | g. indicated |
| 8. fiery | h. heated |
| 9. exchange | i. argument |
| 10. sending out | j. giving |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. its system of issuing | a. student visas |
| 2. need to be much | b. tougher |
| 3. trying to gain entry | c. into the country |
| 4. a broken and abused | d. immigration system |
| 5. in the best interests | e. of legitimate students |
| 6. Yvette Cooper said it would damage | f. Britain's economy |
| 7. trying to keep political | g. promises |
| 8. taking | h. risks |
| 9. visa plans are | i. short-sighted |
| 10. the UK is closed | j. for business |

GAP FILL:

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Many in politics, education and business have (9) **condemned** the new law. Opposition Home Secretary Yvette Cooper said it would (10) **damage** Britain's economy. She pointed out that the teaching English industry was worth \$9 billion a year. Ms. Cooper (11) **warned** the government was trying to keep political promises about (12) **cutting** immigration numbers, rather than to improve the visa system. In a fiery exchange, she said that Ms. May should act "in the interests of a (13) **sensible**, controlled migration policy, rather than taking risks with an important (14) **export** industry". University spokeswoman Sally Hunt said: "The government's student visa plans are short-(15) **sighted** and risk sending out the worrying message that the UK is (16) **closed** for business."

LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - d 2 - a 3 - c 4 - b 5 - b 6 - c 7 - a 8 - d 9 - d 10 - b 11 - a 12 - c

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