



Home Office

Baroness Williams of Trafford
Minister of State for
Countering Extremism

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Lord Rosser
House of Lords
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10 MAY 2019

Dear Richard,

On 30 April 2019, following my repeat of the response to the Urgent Question on the cases of fraud in the Tests of English for International Communication (TOEIC), you asked about the number of appeals that have been heard against revocation, refusal or curtailment of student visas on TOEIC grounds, and how many have been successful.

Unfortunately, the way that Home Office systems and those of Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) record information does not allow us to answer this question. HMCTS do, however, publish information on appeals outcomes by broad category. The latest published information is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tribunals-and-gender-recognition-certificate-statistics-quarterly-october-to-december-2018>

Without manually checking the outcome for every appeal, the Home Office is unable to state whether TOEIC deception was part of the appeal or the reason for a particular outcome. Officials are working closely with the National Audit Office (NAO) to provide data that relates to those individuals who have been linked with a TOEIC test, however, this data will only be illustrative and will not show whether the appeal outcome specifically related to TOEIC deception.


As you know, the NAO is currently in the process of concluding an investigation into the handling of these issues; their report is expected to be published this month. It is

right that the Home Secretary has the opportunity to reflect on the report, consider its findings and come back to the House with a statement.

I should restate the Government's commitment to the principle of a fair immigration system, one which welcomes highly skilled migrants and genuine international students while guarding against any attempts of abuse. As such, we have significantly strengthened our Secure English Language Testing regime since 2014 to mitigate against this criminal fraud being repeated in future and put in place additional measures to clamp down on abuse by non-genuine students. These reforms are working, university sponsored applications have grown by 28% since 2011 and, as I said in response to Lord Hanna's question regarding the number of students overstaying their visas, over 97% of students who are required to leave the UK do so within the terms of their visa. I would like to clarify that this statistic is taken from Home Office data, not from the NAO.

I hope this letter provides more clarity on the matters raised but I would be happy to write to you again if you require any further information.

I am copying this letter to all those that spoke during the debate and will place a copy in the House Library.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan', written in a cursive style.

Baroness Williams of Trafford