

## How does border enforcement creep into the University?

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Border enforcement doesn't creep. Not at first. It is imposed. Nobody in higher education was sitting in committees saying "gosh, our students would have a much better learning experience and be secure and safe in their studies if we imposed border checks at various points in the academic year, and then made the people responsible for marking their assignments and exam grades, their border guards." Clearly, no institution with any understanding of the conditions which make for good learning – safety, trust, enjoyment, concentration, lack of pointless interruption – would come up with such a pedagogical plan. But in the Home Office, with its stated policy of creating a Hostile Environment, then the creation of hostile learning environments for international staff and students is clearly part of a strategy and to do so using systems of penalties and detentions and sanctions means that the punitive language of classroom disciplinarians joins that of penal and administrative justice. The result is the same. Fear.

The creeping comes through the good will of all those many street level bureaucrats – administrative staff, support staff and academic staff – who are all now required to make sure we comply with the hideous border enforcement which has visited us like a toxic virus, and invasive species entirely out of place in a learning context, actively interfering in the processes and practices of learning. In a context with goals and performance targets then each staff member has to do their best to 'hit' the 'targets' and 'comply.' The discourse is punitive and violent (hit/targets/comply). No one learns well whilst being beaten. Now we beat each other and beat our students with compliance and targets and hits around their immigration status in a hostile environment of our own compliant making. The result here is the same too. Fear.