[More training and jobs for UK citizens](#)

Sir Iain Duncan Smith gave a good paper to the Seminar on Friday about controlling our borders and doing more to promote better paid work for people already legally settled in the UK.

He told us that when he was Work and Pensions Secretary he drew attention to the large numbers of people in the UK in entry level jobs who do not go on to receive training and promotion as we would like. He highlighted the way for example we have been importing people to be lorry drivers. It is a short course to convert a car licence into a truck permit. This qualification opens up better paid jobs for those who try it from having no formal qualifications. He asked his department to buy up training places and making them available to UK residents. They told him no-one would want to do it. He bought 100 places for a pilot and there was plenty of demand. His officials told him it would be wasted money as they would not stay the course. 85% successfully completed it. He proved that we can train our own lorry drivers at home.

He then turned his mind to the shortage of nurses, where the UK has been raiding the health services of other, often poorer nations, to find us the nurses we need. It of course takes a lot longer to train a nurse. The same experience repeated. There were plenty of UK volunteers to train as a nurse. We need a system where the state pays if the person undergoing the training pledges to work for the NHS for a stated period after training. If they wish to avoid working for the NHS then they should have to repay the training cost.

Some UK companies are great at training and growing their own talent. The public sector and the other private companies need to get better at it. It is high time we ended the cheap labour from abroad model, and spent more time and money on nurturing talent and encouraging qualifications at home. I understand why big business think free movement of labour to scoop people from low pay countries is a good idea, but it is more difficult to grasp why the Lib Dems are so keen on it.

Iain recommended requiring everyone advertising a job here to advertise in the UK first. He backed the principles of the government's points based system for migration, saying we would need to monitor levels. He supported ending right to benefits until someone has worked here for a number of years or become a citizen. He used Migration Watch figures to demonstrate the net cost to the UK of inviting in people to do poorly paid jobs.