

CONFIRMATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF STUDIES (CAS) ISSUING POLICY

Purpose and Context

UK Home Office rules require the University to sponsor an international student's application for a student visa as part of our sponsor licence for the Student route. Full policies and procedures relating to our sponsor licence are outlined in the Immigration and Sponsor Licence Policy

An integral part of sponsoring a Student under the Student route is providing a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) number. This confirms the University is satisfied that the student presents no risk to the University's licence to sponsor international students.

In some cases, the University may not provide sponsorship through the issue of a CAS whereby the student could present a risk to the University sponsor licence. This policy seeks to clarify the evidence base and consideration of these cases.

For the purposes of this policy, an overseas applicant is one classed as anyone who will require a visa through the Student route to study with the University. This policy also applies to students who will require a CAS to extend their studies if the University requires evidence that a student has complied with the terms of their student visa when sponsored by the University.

For both new students, and those extending their studies, the University must be satisfied that there is no risk to the sponsor licence of the institution. The International Office will make this decision in the first instance.

Scope

This policy applies to all new and returning students who require a CAS to obtain a visa and undertake their studies at the University.

1 Evidence to Make a Decision

The International Office will be responsible for the collection and review of all evidence relating to a decision to issue a CAS. Any questions relating to this should be referred to the Immigration and Compliance Manager. Decisions will be made using the following means:

- 1.1. Overseas applicants or current students must be able to demonstrate compliance with UK immigration regulations in order for the University to make an offer for a degree course or to issue a CAS which is mandatory for a visa application. To support a decision, the University evidence of compliance which may include, but is not limited to:

- Details and evidence of previous UK study
- Details and evidence of previously issued UK visas
- Evidence of academic progression
- Bank statements
- Permission for a Home Office immigration history check
- Evidence of current or previous immigration status
- Length of time spent in the UK to calculate time available under UK Home Office regulations to complete a degree course
- Information/evidence relating to previous academic failure

1.2. The University may request an interview to determine if the applicant/student's intent to study is genuine, so far as can be reasonably ascertained.

1.3. Any ambiguity around the evidence provided or failure to demonstrate beyond reasonable doubt that the applicant is compliant with University and Home Office requirements may result in an application being withdrawn or refusal to issue a CAS. This may result in the applicant being unable to continue with their application to the University or to apply for a student visa to continue with their studies.

1.4. Previous visa refusals, irrespective of category, may also result in the University refusing to issue a CAS for an applicant.

1.5. For students who are already in the UK and require an extension to their visa, the University will take into consideration their previous attendance record and study record. The University reserves the right to refuse further CAS' to students who have failed to demonstrate a genuine intention to study, either through low attendance (as determined by the International Office) or any other relevant breach of University and/or Home Office requirements.

2. Withheld Information & Visa Refusals

2.1. In the case of an initial visa refusal for an applicant, the University reserves the right to refuse to issue a subsequent CAS to an applicant to allow them to reapply for a visa if the refusal is due to the non-disclosure of any information outlined in point 1, and/or if an applicant refuses to provide information as outlined in point 1 to satisfy the University that they are compliant before issuing a new CAS

2.2. In addition, where a CAS has been issued for an applicant or student, and the Home Office refuse to grant a visa based on information submitted on a technical failure, for example, evidence of bank statements for maintenance, the University cannot guarantee that a new CAS will be issued until it is assured that the reasons for the failure of the previous visa application have been addressed.

3. Fraudulent Applications

3.1. In the event of a fraudulent application, either through documentation or misrepresentation, the University reserves the right to withdraw all applications and ban any future applications, including retaining the non-refundable deposit.

4. Visa Applications

In the event of a student or applicant submitting a visa application (in any category) the University reserves the right to refuse a CAS if that application is considered not genuine.

4.1. Examples where this would apply include;

4.1.1. Fee waiver applications¹

4.1.2. Further Leave to Remain (FLR) or asylum applications

4.1.3. Invalid student applications, i.e., reusing a previously used CAS number

4.1.4. Any other invalid visa application, submitted in the knowledge that the basic requirements of the application have not been met and with the intention of extending an applicant's stay in the UK

4.2. Please note that this list is not exhaustive. If such an application is submitted, the University may refuse to issue a CAS to any student or applicant who submits or has submitted an application that compromises the University's duty to help prevent abuse of the immigration system.

4.3. If a student presents with section 3C leave² as a result of submitting a spurious immigration application, the University reserves the right to forcibly interrupt a student until such time as their immigration leave application is granted and they have the required permissions to study

¹ You can apply for a fee waiver if you're applying for permission to stay in the UK. This means you will not have to pay a visa application fee if you are eligible. The main requirement for a fee waiver application is for you to credibly demonstrate that you cannot afford to pay the immigration application fee.

² Section 3C of the Immigration Act 1971 extends a person's leave in order to preserve their lawful status and entitlements (i.e., right to study) until they get a decision on their new application from the Home Office. This is often referred to as 'section 3C leave'.

- 4.4. If a student has an application refused or rejected which breaks their section 3C leave, they will be forcibly interrupted with immediate effect until such time as they have the required permissions to study.

5. Consideration of Cases and Dispute

- 5.1. The judgement of whether a student is compliant with Home Office regulations and the decision to issue a CAS where applicants are required to provide more evidence in line with this process will be taken by the Immigration & Compliance Manager.
- 5.2. In the event of a dispute the final decision will rest with the Pro-Vice Chancellor (International) and will be non-negotiable.

6. Application Processing and Withdrawal

- 6.1. Whilst the University strives to ensure that all applications are processed in a timely manner, it reserves the right to conduct any additional immigration checks that it deems necessary. This may result in a delay to any offer and the University will accept no liability for any issues which arise from this. Failure to comply with these additional checks will result in an application being withdrawn.
- 6.2. The University will take all reasonable steps to establish that an applicant meets the criteria of a course, including but not limited to pre-CAS interviews and additional documentation, for example bank statements. Failure to meet these requirements will result in no CAS being issued.
- 6.3. The University reserves the right to include additional compliance checks in line with Home Office policy.
- 6.4. In exceptional cases, the University reserves the right to reject an application and ban them from further applications if the applicant has not complied with the requirements in this policy or where, in the University's opinion, the circumstances may otherwise compromise or pose a risk to the University's licence for sponsoring students.

POLICY SIGN-OFF AND OWNERSHIP DETAILS

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V1.1	Nov. 2023	12-month policy review. No changes.	Director of International Development
V1.2	Nov. 2024	Addition of section 4 – Visa Applications	Head of International Operations & Immigration & Compliance Manager