

Student Visa CAS Policy

Policy Category:	Governance
Subject:	Student visa sponsorship and UKVI reporting requirements
Approving Authority:	College Education Committee (CEC)
Responsible Officer:	Vice President (Education & Student Success) and Executive Director (Education and Students)
Responsible Office:	Visa Compliance Service Student Administrative Services Student Operations
Related Procedures:	N/A
Related College Policies:	N/A
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I. Purpose & Scope

This policy document outlines the guidelines for King's sponsorship of international students who require a Student visa. It specifies the conditions that govern the issuance of Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS). The CAS is essential for obtaining a UK Student visa, and this policy sets out the procedures for issuing CAS for both applicants and continuing students.

Furthermore, this policy specifies the circumstances under which certain categories of report will be made to UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI)ⁱ, in accordance with the university's sponsorship duties. These reports are necessary to ensure that university remains compliant with all relevant UK Immigration Rules.

II. Definitions

CAS (*Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies*) - a unique electronic document issued by the university from its limited, annual allocation.

III. Policy

1. Responsibilities

Responsibility for the management and implementation of this policy and any related procedures is collectively held by the Visa Compliance Service, King's Admissions, and Student Records. This policy outlines the specific responsibilities of each department regarding CAS issuance and compliance with Student visa requirements. Additionally, it outlines the responsibilities of both applicants and continuing students in ensuring compliance with the visa requirements.

2. CAS Application Process

Requests

2.1 All applicants are prompted to self-declare their requirement for a CAS through [King's Apply Portal](#)ⁱⁱ. It is the responsibility of each applicant to determine their own immigration status and whether they need a Student visa. This information can be found on the UK government's official website: [Study in the UK](#)ⁱⁱⁱ.

2.2 For continuing students who need to extend their leave under the Student route, it is important to be aware of the expiry date of their current leave. These students will be required to submit a valid and timely request for a CAS through [Student Services Online](#)^{iv}, preferably at least three months in advance of the expiry date of their current grant of leave.

2.3 Upon receipt of the completed CAS request by a continuing student, the Visa Compliance Service will aim to create the CAS within 10 working days, subject to mandatory checks. However, if a student requests a CAS within 10 working days of the expiry of their visa, the Visa Compliance Service cannot guarantee the issuance of a CAS. It is therefore essential for students to submit their request for a CAS as early as possible to avoid any potential delay in their visa application process.

2.4 To ensure the prompt issuance of CAS, applicants and continuing students must provide accurate and truthful information and any relevant documentation required for the CAS process. The relevant information and documentation will be requested on the [King's Apply Portal](#) or [Student Services Online](#) once the applicant or continuing student has submitted their request for a CAS. It is their responsibility to provide this in a timely manner through the relevant platform.

CAS Validation

2.5 Validating a CAS involves verifying information against its original source, which may include details submitted via [King's Apply Portal](#), SITS, or by Student Records or an Academic Department. Validation may also involve verifying official documentation, such as a passport copy.

2.6 The Visa Compliance Service is responsible for validating the information entered onto the CAS by cross-checking it against the original source, as described in section 2.5, with the exception of the *statement of evidence* for applicants' CAS. This statement confirms the document(s) (physical copies or verified online) used to meet the university's entry requirements and is provided and entered by Admissions.

2.7 To ensure accurate and timely issuance of the CAS, Student Records plays a critical role in maintaining key records that are necessary for the CAS process for continuing students, post-enrolment. This includes confirming the student's fee liability and expected end date. In addition, for students returning from an interruption, Student Records must provide confirmation of the expected date of resumption of studies, which is required for the issuance of the CAS.

2.8 Academic Departments may be consulted by the Visa Compliance Service to confirm a continuing student's attendance/engagement requirements on the programme of study and, where applicable, the relevant coursework submission date for students who require a CAS extension.

Issuance

2.9 A CAS will only be issued if the intended programme of study meets the Immigration Rules for Student visa sponsorship, and if the applicant or continuing student meets all [UKVI eligibility requirements for a CAS](#)^v. Additionally, a CAS will not be issued more than six months in advance of the programme start date.

2.10 The CAS will only be issued for the UK-based part of a blended or combined programme. For joint degree programmes with an overseas partner institution, and where UK study begins later than

the official course start date, applicants must request a CAS via [Student Services Online](#) approximately three months before their UK start date.

2.11 The CAS will be issued directly to the applicant or continuing student. In cases where an agent is representing the applicant, the CAS may also be shared with the agent, subject to the applicant's prior consent.

2.12 A CAS will not be issued to applicants or continuing students in the following circumstances:

2.12.1 The university has reason to believe that sponsoring the applicant or continuing student would pose a risk to its Student Sponsorship Licence; *or*

2.12.2 The applicant (or continuing student):

- i. will not be able to start their studies by the respective enrolment deadline; *or*
- ii. does not meet the academic progression requirements outlined in the Student Sponsor Guidance or Section 3 of this policy; *or*
- iii. has failed to provide key information or documentation required for the production of their CAS; *or*
- iv. has failed to obtain ATAS clearance where it is required based on the programme of study; *or*

2.12.3 The intended programme of study:

- i. is not eligible under the Student visa requirements; *or*
- ii. would cause the applicant or continuing student to exceed the maximum time limit allowed under the Student route; *or*
- iii. does not require Student visa sponsorship and can be pursued under the Standard Visitor route; *or*

2.12.4 Where there is a risk that the applicant or continuing student's visa application may be unsuccessful, and this may negatively impact the university's Student Sponsorship Licence. Such cases may include, but are not limited to, those where the applicant or continuing student has:

- i. general grounds for a Student visa refusal;
- ii. been refused a Student visa on the grounds of genuineness or credibility;
- iii. insufficient funds for maintenance;
- iv. an adverse immigration history;
- v. provided false or fraudulent documentation to the university;
- vi. overstayed their immigration permission;
- vii. breached the conditions of their Student leave;

3. Academic Progression

Context

3.1 UKVI's academic progression requirements state that in order for a valid Student visa application to be made from within the UK, the applicant must meet specific academic criteria that show they have made satisfactory academic progress on their current programme of study. This allows them to avoid the usual requirement of applying for a visa from outside the UK through the entry clearance process.

Academic Progression Assessment

3.2 For applicants who are studying at the *same* level as their intended programme of study and plan to apply for their Student visa from within the UK, in order to issue their CAS the Visa Compliance Service requires a written statement from them, justifying their *academic progression*, aligned to UKVI regulations. This statement must emphasise the connection between *both* programmes of study, and how their combination will enable the applicant to achieve a *deeper specialisation* in a particular field or their *genuine career aspirations*^{vi}.

3.3 The Visa Compliance Service will assess the applicant's academic progression statement against UKVI requirements. If approved, a tailored justification statement will be added to the CAS indicating that the academic progression requirements have been met, enabling a UK-based visa application.

3.4 The Visa Compliance Service may seek the expertise of a relevant academic member of staff if it is unable to make an adequate assessment.

3.5 If the applicant's academic progression statement is not approved, the applicant may submit a newly written statement. The Visa Compliance Service will accept no more than three written statements from the same applicant to the same programme of study.

3.6 If the academic progression requirements cannot be met, the applicant will need to apply for their Student visa via entry clearance, which means that the visa application must be made from outside of the UK. The CAS will indicate this requirement.

Incomplete UK Study

3.7 When an applicant applies to a new programme of study and has an incomplete UK degree i.e. one that has not yet been conferred, they must provide a letter from their current Student sponsor. The letter must confirm that the applicant is *highly likely to complete their course successfully*^{vii}, based on their academic performance to date. If the applicant cannot provide such a letter, they will not fulfil UKVI's academic progression requirements, and must apply for their Student visa via entry clearance. The CAS will reflect this requirement.

3.8 Once the student's last degree is conferred, they must provide evidence of their award to the Visa Compliance Service within the normal timeline of the awarding institution, which is expected to occur within the student's last grant of leave under the Student route.

3.9 The Visa Compliance Service will request evidence of the award via their King's and personal registered email address, typically within the first 3 months of their course start date. Failure to provide evidence or complete the qualification for which the last Student sponsor's CAS was granted, will result in cessation of sponsorship and curtailment of the Student visa, requiring the student to leave the UK.

4. CAS Extensions

Re-sit/Repeat Study (Taught Students)

4.1 In all circumstances outlined below, UKVI requirements oblige the university to ensure that there are no periods of 60 days or more (excluding recognised vacation periods) during which a student is not required to be in-attendance (in classes or by contact) on their programme of study. If a student's continued participation on their programme of study is not required for 60 days or more, a CAS will not be issued.

4.2 Where a continuing student requires a Student visa to cover a re-sit or repeat study period, the programme of study's expected end date, which is required for the CAS, will be determined by the following circumstances:

4.2.1 **final examinations only:** the end of the examination period will be used as the expected end date for the CAS;

4.2.2 **the submission of a final piece of coursework:** the coursework submission date will be used as the expected end date for the CAS;

4.2.3 **examinations and, subject to passing those examinations, the student is expected to progress onto their next year of study from the start of the next academic period:** the programme's standard expected end date, as per the corresponding record in SITS will be used as the expected end date for the CAS;

Doctoral Students

4.3 Doctoral students who are required to extend their Student visa prior to their thesis submission deadline will be given the option by the Visa Compliance Service to receive an additional leave period of up to six months to cover their viva and the possibility of a minor correction period to their thesis.

5. Visa Refusals

5.1 Applicants or continuing students who have been refused a Student visa may request one further CAS, provided they can evidence that a further visa application is likely to be successful. In such cases, they must submit their full visa refusal notice to the [Visa & International Student Advice Service](#)^{viii} before they can be considered by the Visa Compliance Service for further CAS issuance.

5.2 The Visa Compliance Service reserves the right to decline any request for a subsequent CAS following a visa refusal.

6. Graduate Route

6.1 The Visa Compliance Service will notify UKVI of students on a Student visa who have successfully completed a qualifying course that meets the eligibility requirements of the Graduate Route visa. Eligibility will be confirmed in two circumstances:

6.1.1 The student has been awarded an eligible qualification under the Graduate Route, meaning that the award is conferred; *or*

6.1.2 The student has completed all required elements of their program of study, and their degree has been ratified;

6.2 The Visa Compliance Service will only accept written confirmation from the respective Academic Department that the student *will be awarded*^{ix} an eligible qualification under the Graduate Route before reporting successful completion to UKVI, in keeping with the Immigration Rules.

6.3 The Visa Compliance Service will inform students via their King's and personal registered email address once a notification has been made to UKVI regarding successful completion of an eligible award.

7. Cessation of Sponsorship

Context

7.1 As part of its reporting duties as a Student sponsor, the university must notify UKVI of cessation of sponsorship when a student has been disengaged from their programme of study for 60 or more consecutive days, excluding recognised vacation periods.

Notifying UKVI

7.2 The Visa Compliance Service will make a cessation of sponsorship notification to UKVI for students in the following circumstances:

7.2.1 Students with re-sit or repeat study requirements will be subject to cessation of sponsorship if their academic engagement is not required on their programme of study for 60 or more consecutive days.

7.2.2 Students whose financial clearance status with the university is *Debtor Suspend* and who have been disengaged from their programme of study for 60 or more consecutive days will be subject to cessation of sponsorship.

7.2.3 Students whose enrolment status is suspended, and who have been disengaged from their programme of study for a period of 60 or more consecutive days, will be subject to cessation of sponsorship. This includes cases where the student is on temporary suspension, or where the suspension is due to disciplinary action or any other reason.

7.2.4 Students who have interrupted their study or who have been subject to a mandatory interruption for 60 or more consecutive days, and are unable to complete their programme of study within the current grant of leave on their Student visa will be subject to cessation of sponsorship.

7.3 In the event that a student's enrolment record, as maintained by Student Records, suggests that they may meet the criteria for cessation of sponsorship under the circumstances described in sections 7.2.1 to 7.2.4 above, the Visa Compliance Service will provide the student with a notification via their King's and personal registered email address. This notification will serve as a preliminary warning, preceding any notification that may be sent to UKVI after a change in the student's enrolment status has been recorded by Student Records.

7.4 If a student is engaged with a relevant appeal process by the deadline provided, the Visa Compliance Service will delay any notification to UKVI for up to 60 days from the date on which the enrolment status is changed. During this period, the student's sponsorship status will remain unaffected. However, if the appeal process concludes without overturning the decision that affects the student's enrolment status, the Visa Compliance Service will notify the student via their King's and personal registered email address and proceed with a cessation of sponsorship notification to UKVI, in accordance with sections 7.2.1 to 7.2.4 above.

7.5 Where a student completes their programme of study early, i.e. before the expected end date originally specified in their CAS, the Visa Compliance Service will make a curtailment notification to UKVI.

Withdrawal of CAS

7.6 In cases where the university becomes aware that an applicant or a current student is no longer eligible to apply for a Student visa, and has been issued a CAS but has not yet submitted a visa application, the Visa Compliance Service will withdraw the CAS. The withdrawal of the CAS will be communicated in writing to the student via their King's and personal registered email address.

ⁱ <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration>

ⁱⁱ <https://apply.kcl.ac.uk>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/student-visas>

^{iv} <https://self-service.kcl.ac.uk>

^v <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa>

^{vi} Immigration Rules Appendix: Student | Section: ST14.3.c.iv (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/appendix-student>)

^{vii} UK Visas & Immigration *Student Sponsorship Guidance Document 2 (Sponsorship Duties)* | Section 5.33

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/student-sponsor-guidance>)

^{viii} <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/campuslife/services/student-advice-support/how/international-student-support/immigration-and-visas/student-visas/help-my-student-visa-has-been-refused>

^{ix} Immigration Rules Appendix: Graduate | Section: GR 5.1 (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-appendix-graduate>)