

Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) Issuance Guidance

This document sets out the University of Edinburgh's (the University) position on the sponsorship of students who require a Student route visa and is subject to change at any time to comply with United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI) Student Route sponsorship duties. Please note that the University is under no legal obligation to issue a CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Study) or provide sponsorship and is committed to meeting all duties under its licence to prevent risk to its status as a UKVI sponsor with a track record of compliance. The Immigration Rules and sponsor guidance override the content of this CAS guidance. This guidance will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it remains compliant with current and emerging Sponsor Guidance and Immigration Rules.

Issuing a CAS does not guarantee that a student will be successful in securing a visa. The University is not responsible for any decisions made by UKVI and cannot accept liability for any student failing to obtain a visa or consequent losses (whether financial or otherwise) of such failure.

Assigning a CAS

The University Student Immigration Service is responsible for assigning CAS to:

- Applicants starting a new programme
- Continuing students who wish to extend their Student Route permission to complete their programme (this includes those returning from a period of interruption).

A CAS can be assigned no earlier than:

- 6 months before programme start date, for new or interrupted students applying outside the UK
- 3 months before programme start date, for new or interrupted students applying inside the UK

For Postgraduate Research students requiring an ATAS, the University will not issue a CAS until the ATAS has been granted.

CAS are only assigned to those who have met all conditions of their offer and the conditions of this guidance. The University may carry out checks to ensure that sponsorship is only provided to those who it considers genuine students who will successfully obtain a visa. Depending on individual circumstances, this may include asking for evidence of current UK immigration status, an immigration history check with UKVI, and/or verification of successful completion of study for which current permission was granted.

If an individual is not eligible to apply for further Student Route permission from within the UK, the University will not assign a CAS until evidence has been received which shows that the student has left the UK, such as a flight boarding ticket or passport stamp.

The University will **not** provide student route sponsorship to those with the following circumstances:

- If a student is not required to engage in attendance.
- The programme of study does not comply with Student route requirements.
- The programme of study is part-time, with the exception of the Executive MBA
- An applicant or student has submitted documents which are proven or suspected to be fraudulent.
- An applicant or student is currently subject to a UKVI entry ban, for example because of overstaying or criminal convictions.
- An applicant or student has outstanding debt, such as tuition or accommodation fees.
- Any further Student route sponsorship would lead the applicant or student to exceed the maximum period of permission that can be granted under this route unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- The applicant or student is not able to meet UKVI academic progression requirements set out in the immigration rules: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/appendix-student>
- There is reason to believe that sponsorship will put the University's sponsor licence at risk; this includes concerns about the individual's intention to study, their genuineness, if there is reason to believe the applicant or student will not comply with the conditions of their leave (e.g. intention to work or history of working more than 20 hours per week) or if a student is in breach of their visa conditions.

This list is not exhaustive, and the University has complete discretion over whether to issue a CAS or not.

The University will not normally provide sponsorship to an applicant or student who has overstayed their visa and did not leave the UK within 30 days of their visa expiring, unless there were exceptional circumstances which prevented the student from making an in-time visa application. These cases will be assessed on an individual basis by the Student Immigration Service.

Checking your CAS

The University will provide you with a draft CAS to check for accuracy. If you confirm that the CAS is correct the University does not accept liability for any visa refusals or associated costs due to errors on your CAS.

Withdrawing a CAS

Withdrawing the CAS means that the reference number is no longer valid, and any application made where this CAS number is used will be refused by UKVI as the CAS will have been deleted from their system.

The University does not accept liability for any visa refusals or associated costs due to CAS withdrawal.

Where a CAS has already been issued and information is later made available to us that falls into any of the categories where a CAS would not normally be issued or where sponsorship of the applicant or student would be inappropriate or otherwise contrary to the University's duties as a Student Sponsor, or where the applicant or student is no longer able to meet the requirements for Student Visa Route sponsorship, the University reserves the right to withdraw the CAS at any time.

Where a student does not declare all relevant information at the point of application to the University and/or point of CAS Request about their previous immigration history or planned location when making their Student Route visa application, the University reserves the right to withdraw the CAS.

CAS Request Form for continuing University of Edinburgh students

Continuing students must apply for a new CAS using the Enquiry Form. Completion of this form does not guarantee that a CAS will be issued. Once a completed form is submitted, the Student Immigration Service aim to assign the CAS in 15 working days, subject to the checks set out in this guidance.

Sponsorship

The University will sponsor a student for the duration of their programme, subject to any compliance requirements of the University or UKVI which would result in sponsorship being withdrawn. The University may withdraw sponsorship if it is not necessary to continue sponsorship or if the University cannot comply with its sponsor duties.

The duration of a CAS will correspond with the programme start and end date on the student's record, provided the student is required to engage in attendance for the duration.

If a student meets the conditions to extend their Student route visa to complete their programme, the University will only provide sponsorship for the remaining duration of the programme and where academic engagement is required.

The duration of a CAS for MPhil/PhD programmes will be from the programme start date and covers the period where the student is undertaking full-time study as a registered student including the writing up, viva and corrections period. Sponsorship will be withdrawn if a student successfully obtains their award earlier than expected course end date on the CAS.

Re-sits or Repeats and Interruptions

Those who are returning from a period of interruption will only be assigned a CAS if they meet the conditions of this guidance.

Sponsorship will not be provided to those who are repeating on an exam only basis.

If a student requires sponsorship to repeat in attendance, a CAS will be assigned if continued participation is required within 60 days of the start of the next academic period. For example,

if a student is required to repeat in Semester 1 only and would then be undertaking exams only in Semester 2, then sponsorship would cease at the end of Semester 1.

Pre-sessional Programmes

The University will only assign one CAS to cover both a Pre-sessional English programme and a main programme of study if the applicant has obtained an unconditional offer for their main programme of study, and the Pre-sessional programme is less than 3 months in duration, and where the level of English required on the offer letter is less than 7.0.

In other circumstances, a separate CAS will be issued for the Pre-sessional course and a new CAS will be assigned for the main programme of study when the applicant successfully completes the Pre-sessional, meets all conditions of their offer and the conditions set out in this guidance.

Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)

Where an ATAS clearance is required, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they complete their ATAS application with accurate course information to avoid any delays because of the incorrect information on the ATAS certificate. Guidance on how to complete the ATAS application is available at:

www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/immigration/applying-for-visa/student-visa/requirements/academic-technology-approval-scheme/applying

Visa Refusals

Any applicant or student who receives a visa application refusal is required to provide all pages of the refusal notice to The University and the refusal will be reported to UK Visas and Immigration. The University will only assign a new CAS following a visa application refusal once The University is confident that there is little to no risk of a second visa refusal. To obtain a new CAS, the applicant is required to submit new supporting documents to the Student Immigration Team which will be assessed for their eligibility to meet Student Route requirements.

If an applicant does receive a second visa refusal, the University will not normally assign a further CAS unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The University reserves the right to withhold issuing a CAS to any applicant or student who has received a visa application refusal.

Overstaying

Students who are eligible to extend their Student Route visa from within the UK must ensure that they submit their visa application before their current visa expires. Students who do not submit their application in-time will become overstayers. Overstaying means allowing your visa to expire and staying in the UK, which is a criminal offence. Students who have become

over stayers will need to leave the UK immediately. Any further visa application made will need to be submitted from outside the UK.

Please note that the university may also have to suspend the studies of an over stayer whilst the case is resolved.

Students will have to provide evidence to show they have left the UK within 30 days of the expiry of their visa before we can consider assigning a new CAS, unless there were exceptional circumstances which prevented them from making an in-time visa application. These cases will be assessed on an individual basis by the Student Immigration Service.

Terms and Conditions

To maintain Student Route sponsorship, students are required to meet the terms and conditions of their visa and are encouraged to review the University's Student Route Responsibilities Guide here <https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/immigration/while-you-are-here/rights-responsibilities-and-restrictions>

Student visa holders are responsible for understanding the immigration rules that apply to them and for keeping up to date with changes throughout the duration of their visa. UK Visas and Immigration requirements change often and therefore Student visa holders are recommended seek immigration advice in a timely manner from the Student Immigration Service. They should also ensure they check the UKVI website for the most up to date information <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa>

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