



University of
St Andrews

Policy on Certificate of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) Issuing

Document type	Policy
Scope (applies to)	All students
Applicability date	31/07/2023
Review / Expiry date	30/07/2024
Approved date	28/11/2023
Approver	Deputy Academic Registrar
Document owner	Unit Administrator
School / unit	Academic Registry
Document status	Published
Information classification	Public
Equality impact assessment	None
Key terms	Student administration/Conditions of study
Purpose	This policy sets out the governance for the issue of certificate of acceptance for studies.

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
1.3	Policy published for the new academic year (2023/24).	Published	Heather McNeill, Deputy Academic Registrar	28/11/23

1. PRINCIPLES

- i. In this document the word “Sponsor” refers to The University of St Andrews, and the University holds a Student Sponsor Licence. A Student Sponsor licence is required to enrol students from outside the United Kingdom. A Student Sponsor is an education provider that offers courses of study to full time students within the UK.
- ii. Sponsorship is a privilege and not a right. Sponsors benefit directly from migration and are expected to play a part in ensuring that the system is not abused. Sponsors must therefore fulfil certain duties, in order to ensure that immigration control is maintained. Sponsors must be able to show that they can fulfil, and are fulfilling, these sponsor duties in order to gain and retain a Student Sponsor licence.
- iii. Sponsors have responsibilities in respect of their Student visa students from the moment they assign a CAS to the student until:
 - they withdraw sponsorship from the student;
 - the student leaves the UK; or
 - the student is given permission to stay in the UK with a different sponsor or in another immigration category
- iv. A CAS is not a paper certificate or document but a virtual document. Sponsors should follow all the rules set out in the guidance so that they are ready to sponsor a student. Under the Student Route a CAS must be assigned to the student using the SMS account. For more information on how many CAS sponsors will be able to assign please see the section titled ‘Confirmations of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) allocations’ in the ‘Applying for a Student sponsor licence’ sponsor guidance.
- v. All the information entered will be electronically stored in the University SITS System, for the duration of a student’s studies plus six years or until an Audit has been undertaken by the UKVI. A CAS can only be assigned by a person who has access to the UKVI SMS as a Level 1 or Level 2 user.
- vi. The University of St Andrews is fully responsible for the actions of anyone who has permission and assigns CAS on their behalf. If any of the UKVI rules on assigning CAS are broken action will be taken against the sponsor. If the UKVI find that the sponsor has employed an illegal worker because of negligent staff recruitment practices, the UKVI may also issue the sponsor with a civil penalty. If the UKVI find that the sponsor has knowingly employed an illegal worker the UKVI will refer the case for prosecution.
- vii. Assigning a CAS does not guarantee that the student will succeed in being granted entry clearance or leave to remain. They must meet all the criteria for the Student leave they are applying for. As a sponsor, the University of St Andrews will only assign a CAS where it reasonably believes the student will meet the requirements for the visa or permission to extend their stay, and that the student will comply with the conditions of their permission to stay in the UK.

2. CAS POLICY – UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

- i. The University of St Andrews will issue a CAS for study at the University to any visa national student who meets the following conditions:

- Is holding an Unconditional Offer to study at the University of St Andrews

OR

- Is a current student of the University of St Andrews

OR

- Is reengaging from period of leave of absence

And

- Has not had a previous visa application refused – unless they meet the criteria in line with our visa refusal policy
- Has provided copies of the relevant documents where required
- Has fully engaged with the CAS issuing procedure using My Visa Matters container which is located in the students' MySaint account.
- Has current valid leave to remain and study in the UK
- Meets all relevant UKVI requirements
- Is a Pre-Sessional Student

- ii. Prior to issuing a CAS the status of the visa applicant will be checked with Registry to ensure they meet the conditions outlined in the policy statement.
- iii. The University must complete all the relevant details in SITS and import into the SMS, for example the student's personal details, course level, start and end dates, and information about fees. All the relevant details (e.g. the student's personal details, course level, start and end dates and fee information) must be entered into the University system. This includes
 - a. Stating how the University assessed the student's English language ability, when this is required.
 - b. Explaining how the University assessed the student's ability to follow the course.
 - c. Explaining how the course represents academic progression when this is required.
 - d. Stating the course fees and how much the student has paid towards their fees and accommodation fees where applicable.
 - e. Giving the required details for gifted university students.
- iv. The CAS number must be treated as a secure and confidential document. Staff must make sure it is sent securely and directly to the student personally.
- v. When assigning a CAS, the University must give the unique reference number to the student to use when they apply to the UKVI. The student should be given the CAS details too, such as information on the qualifications assessed. This will help them with their application for a visa. The CAS is valid for six months from the date assigned. It does not however guarantee that the UKVI will grant the student a visa following any application.
- vi. The student may ask for other information that was part of the process of generating the reference number. The University can give the student a copy of their CAS and there is a function within the SMS account to print any CAS that has been assigned. This can be done by using the 'view CAS' function, where the CAS can be printed by choosing 'print'. More information on how to use this function can be found in the SMS user guide available on the UKVI pages.
- vii. Once a CAS has been assigned it is used by the student to support their visa application at any time during the six month period from the date it was assigned. If the student

does not use the CAS within this period it will expire and show as 'expired' in the SMS account. A CAS can only be used to support one application, whether or not that application is successful. If the student's application is refused and they wish to reapply, a new CAS must be assigned to them to send in with their new application. They will not need a new CAS if their original application was rejected or withdrawn.

- viii. If the student's application is rejected as invalid or withdrawn by the student, the CAS will still show in the SMS account as 'assigned' which means it can be used again to support a further application.
- ix. Where an applicant indicates they will not be attending the University, or where they fail to enrol for their studies, the University will withdraw the CAS using the UKVI SMS.

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
1.0	Current policy placed into Governance Zone template.	Published	Heather Dudek, Unit Administrator, Registry	21/04/21
1.1	Policy approved for the new academic year (2021/22).	Published	Heather Dudek, Unit Administrator, Registry	02/08/21
1.2	Policy approved for the new academic year (2022/23).	Published	Heather Dudek, Unit Administrator, Registry	28/09/22
1.3	Policy approved for the new academic year (2023/24).	Published	Heather McNeill, Deputy Academic Registrar	28/11/23