

# Admissions Policy on Student Immigration

## 1. Introduction

The admissions policy on student immigration outlines the university's guidelines for accepting international applicants who require a student visa to study in the UK, detailing the necessary steps applicants must take to demonstrate their eligibility for admission, including meeting academic requirements, proving sufficient funds, and complying with relevant immigration rules and regulations set by the governing body, ensuring they are considered a "genuine student" with the intention to fully engage in their chosen course of study.

It is essential that applicants not only demonstrate access to sufficient funds at the outset of their studies but also retain adequate financial resources throughout the entire duration of their academic programme. This includes the ability to fully cover tuition fees as well as all living expenses, ensuring they can support themselves independently and without financial hardship while studying.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1. **CAS** - Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) is an electronic record produced by the University and shared with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). A CAS is required for a Student Visa application. A CAS will be generated by the University for students who meet the eligibility requirements and need to apply for a Student Visa. This statement includes the information sent by the University to the UKVI, which an applicant will need for their Student Visa application.
- 2.2. **Student Route** - The Student route is a points-based visa system for all international students, including EU, EEA, and Swiss students, who want to study in the UK.
- 2.3. **ATAS** - The Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) applies to certain foreign students and researchers who want to study or conduct research in specific sensitive technology-related fields in the UK. The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) administers the scheme and issues ATAS certificates
- 2.4. **UKVI** - UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) is responsible for making millions of decisions every year about who has the right to visit or stay in the country, this

includes students.

- 2.5. **SELT** - A SELT is a Secure English Language Test – a term used by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) to describe the English language tests they'll accept as evidence of an applicant's English Language level for their visa application. There are only a handful of approved SELT test providers. The most popular is UKVI IELTS, but there are several others including [LanguageCert](#), [Trinity College London](#), [Pearson](#) and [PSI Services](#). At Queen Mary a SELT is required for a CAS if an applicant is studying a course that is lower than RQF level 6.
- 2.6. **RQF** - The Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) level indicates the difficulty of a qualification in the UK

### 3. Purpose

- 3.1. The purpose of this document is to set out the Queen Mary policy for the issue of a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) statement to applicants. This policy is specific to Queen Mary and does not necessarily set out the full requirements of the Immigration Rules. The University is entitled to revise its policies or procedures relating to compliance with its Student Route sponsor duties at any time and will usually do so where there have been any applicable changes to sponsorship requirements made by UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI).

### 4. Legislation

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

### 5. Key Responsibilities

- 5.1. The Admission Policy and Compliance Manager is responsible for the management and implementation of this policy and any accompanying procedures. Admissions, Queen Mary Advice and Counselling, Academic Registry Immigration Compliance Team and Global Opportunities Team will also assist in the implementation and management of this policy.
- 5.2. All University staff including agents working with applicants from overseas and including those in the European Economic Area ('EEA'), requiring a Student Route Visa must ensure that this policy is adhered to.
- 5.3. All applicants/students requiring a student route visa are responsible for adhering to this policy.

### 6. Student Route Sponsorship and CAS Assignment

- 6.1. The Admissions team is responsible for assigning a CAS to applicants starting a new course at the university. This applies to anyone who has not yet enrolled on their course. Once enrolled they are classified as a student and any immigration-related queries are dealt with by the student enquiry team and

immigration compliance team.

- 6.2. Queen Mary will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that offers of admission are only made to applicants who are likely to be eligible for a CAS statement.
- 6.3. An offer on a course of study is not a guarantee that the university will issue a CAS. The CAS will only be issued after a full assessment of an applicant's eligibility, including academic and English language qualifications, any previous UK study, and assessment of genuine intention to study. The Admissions team may request an immigration history check from the Home Office in some cases.
- 6.4. CAS can be issued to applicants if they have:
  - An unconditional offer to study
  - Firmly accepted that offer
  - Paid any tuition fee deposits, where required
  - Completed the CAS request
  - Provided all requested academic and visa-related documentation
- 6.5. Applicants will not be issued a CAS if Queen Mary's Admissions team is not satisfied that they will be able to arrive in time for their required enrolment slot. Queen Mary reserves the right to issue a CAS to late applicants on a case-by-case basis. Applicants may be given an extension to the enrolment date or required to choose a priority/fast track visa service.
- 6.6. Queen Mary reserves the right to ask for certain conditions to be met before issuing a CAS or after a CAS has been assigned. These could include:
  - Evidence the applicant has left the UK;
  - Evidence the applicant has booked a visa appointment (e.g. priority service);
  - Evidence the deposit/course fees have been paid;
  - Any other request Queen Mary deems necessary to issue a CAS and ensure the applicant makes their enrolment slot.
- 6.7. The university will issue a CAS for a part-time course if it is RQF level 7 or above and longer than 6 months. We are unable to issue a CAS to part-time applicants if the course has a work-based element or a break in study of more than 60 days.
- 6.8. Queen Mary will not issue a CAS to applicants whose course requires an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate until the University has received a copy of the ATAS certificate. The applicant will be informed if they require an ATAS certificate during their application process. CAS issue will be put on hold until Queen Mary receives a valid ATAS certificate. These can be supplied by the applicant or will be sent to Queen Mary via the [fcarequests@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:fcarequests@qmul.ac.uk) email account.

## **7. Academic Progression**

- 7.1. All applicants must declare any previous UK study sponsored under Student Route.
- 7.2. The University will apply the Student Route academic progression rules in all cases regardless of where the applicant intends to apply for a Student Route visa.
- 7.3. The progression will be assessed on:
  - a) Previous UK study
  - b) the academic level of that previous study compared to that of the course applied for
  - c) the type of visa previously used to study
  - d) where any new visa application might be made (UK or home country)
  - e) number years previously spent studying in the UK
- 7.4. Details about how academic progression has been satisfied will always be included on the CAS statement.
- 7.5. The CAS process can be put on hold if Queen Mary requires additional information or evidence from the applicant that allows academic progression to be assessed. Queen Mary will contact the applicant directly to request the relevant information.
- 7.6. If academic progression requirements cannot be satisfied, Queen Mary will not issue a CAS if we believe this would result in a possible visa refusal.

## **8. Visa Refusals**

- 8.1. The University will only consider assigning one additional CAS following a visa refusal and only if the applicant or student can provide evidence to show the risk of their second visa application being refused is minimal. Applicants requesting a second CAS must provide all pages of their refusal notice. For example, if the refusal was due to not meeting the financial requirements of a Student visa application, we will require evidence that these can now be met. This would be in the form of new bank statements evidencing the requirements are now met.
- 8.2. Further CAS will not normally be assigned where an applicant or student has received a refusal due to failing a credibility interview for any current or future studies at Queen Mary unless under exceptional circumstances. In such cases the decision to issue a second CAS will be made by the Academic Registrar or their nominee.
- 8.3. Any applicant or student with a visa refusal must provide all pages of their

Home Office refusal notice to the University regardless of whether they wish to be issued with a subsequent CAS.

- 8.4. The university will issue one additional CAS following a visa refusal. If a visa is refused a second time the university will not issue a further CAS for any current or future studies at Queen Mary.
- 8.5. The university reserves the right to not issue a CAS to any applicant or student who has had their visa refused.

## **9. CAS Withdrawals**

- 9.1. The university reserves the right to withdraw a CAS for an applicant or student if subsequent information comes to light which shows that a CAS should not have been issued, or if there are concerns that the applicant or student is no longer able to meet Student Route visa requirements. This may include:
  - Issues relating to genuine intention to study and credibility;
  - Financial reasons;
  - Lack of ATAS, or evidence of incorrect information submitted to the FCO when obtaining ATAS clearance;
  - Other incorrect or invalid information on the CAS that cannot be corrected and requires a new CAS being issued. This could include changes in the course start or end date or significant changes in the course's details;
  - Where the University believes its sponsor license would be at risk.
- 9.2. If a CAS is withdrawn as a result of an error on Queen Mary's part, we will endeavour to issue a new CAS with the correct information.
- 9.3. Should evidence or information come to light that the documents supplied and used during the offer making process are fraudulent, the university will withdraw the issued CAS with immediate effect.
- 9.4. If at the time of the CAS withdrawn the applicant's CAS is still assigned (not yet been used by the UKVI for the visa application), the CAS withdrawal will be processed by the QMUL Admissions CAS team. If, however, the CAS has been used for the visa application by the UKVI, then the CAS withdrawal will be processed by the QMUL Academic Registry and/or the Immigration Compliance Team.

## **10. Joint CASes and Pre-sessional courses**

- 10.1. A joint CAS will only be issued where an applicant is holding an offer for the 5- or 9-week pre-sessional course and the main programme of study.
- 10.2. To obtain a joint CAS applicants must demonstrate they meet the UKVI English requirement of a minimum B2 score in each component of their English test.

- 10.3. Any applicant who has met the English language requirements and any academic conditions of their offer and who is attending the pre-sessional course optionally, is eligible for a joint CAS.
- 10.4. Overseas applicants who apply for a place on the 5- or 9-week pre-sessional course will automatically be set up for a joint CAS.
- 10.5. For the joint CAS process to begin they must:
- Hold an unconditional offer for 5- or 9-week pre-sessional course;
  - Hold an offer for a degree programme at Queen Mary starting in September;
  - Have met the academic conditions of offer for the degree programme, by the given deadline;
  - Have met their deposit requirement for the main course;
  - Meet the conditions of this policy;
- 10.6. Any applicant who has missed the deadline to confirm they have met their academic conditions for the main programme will be issued with two separate CAS statements, one for the pre-sessional course and one for the main programme. The applicant must hold a UKVI Secure English Language Test (SELT) before a CAS can be issued for the pre-sessional course.
- 10.7. At any time during the process applicants can request to have separate CAS statements, one covering the pre-sessional course and one for the main programme. Applicants should discuss this with the Admissions team and provide a reason for the request.

## **11. Adding Sponsor Notes to SMS**

- 11.1. Sponsor notes will be added to SMS by the CAS Admissions team
- 11.2. Sponsor notes will be added for the following reason:
- Change/correction to any payments made by applicant, including sponsors;
  - Changes/corrections to English or academic qualifications used in the CAS;
  - Changes/corrections to a course's details; this may include start or end dates and course title;
  - Changes/corrections to an enrolment deadline;
  - Any other information that Queen Mary deems necessary to support an applicant's Student Route visa application.
- 11.3. Queen Mary has the right to decide whether a CAS should have a sponsor note added or whether the CAS concerned should be withdrawn and a new CAS potentially re-issued.

## 12. Terms and Conditions of Student Route Sponsorship

- 12.1. All students sponsored by the University are expected to abide by the University's Student Route Institutional Policy. The University reserves the right to withdraw sponsorship at its discretion.
- 12.2. Queen Mary reserves the right not to issue a CAS to an applicant if we feel the applicant is not able to make a successful Student Route visa application, leading to a visa application refusal.
- 12.3. Any applicant can be subject to a credibility interview as part of the admissions process, this can take place before or after the CAS has been issued. If Queen Mary are fully satisfied by the results of the credibility interview we reserve the right not to issue the CAS or withdraw and CAS that has already been issued.

### Policy Information and Document Control

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|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Policy title</b>                    | <i>Admissions Policy on Student Immigration</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Version number</b>                  | V6                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Related policies and procedures</b> | <i>Admission Policy<br/>English Language Policy for courses delivered onsite at any Queen Mary campus<br/>English language Policy for courses delivered by Distance Learning mode and Short Courses<br/>English language Policy for Postgraduate Research Associate Students enrolling for less than 6 months</i> |
| <b>Approval level</b>                  | <i>PSG/Education Quality and Standards Board</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Approval date</b>                   | <i>March 2027</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Effective date</b>                  | <i>September 2027 for academic year 2027/28</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Next review due</b>                 | <i>March 2030 (and every 3 years thereafter)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Policy owner</b>                    | <i>Chris Sleeman, Director of Admissions &amp; Jason Juul – Admissions Policy and Compliance Manager</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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### Version Control

| <b>Version</b> | <b>Date</b>       | <b>Reason for updates/Summary of key changes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>V6</b>      | <i>11/02/2025</i> | <i>Brought document in line with QMUL policy document guidance. Some minor changes to remove reference to Tier 4 as no longer needed. Also clarified process for withdrawing assigned CASs and who processes Used CASs. Added 10.3 to cover applicant credibility interviews.</i> |
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