

## **Admissions Policy on Student Immigration**

### **1. Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this document is to set out Queen Mary's for the issue of Certificates of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) statements to applicants. This policy is specific to Queen Mary and does not necessarily set out the full requirements of the UK Immigration Rules. The University is entitled to revise its policies or procedures relating to compliance with its Tier 4 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).

### **2 Key Responsibilities**

- 2.1 The Admission Policy and Compliance Manager is responsible for the management and implementation of this policy and any accompanying procedures. Admissions, Advice and Counselling, Registry Immigration Compliance Team and the Global Opportunities Office will also assist in the implementation and management of this policy.
- 2.2 All University staff, including for these purposes agents working with applicants from outside the European Economic Area ('EEA') who require a Tier 4 (General) Visa must adhere to this policy.

### **3 Tier 4 Sponsorship and CAS Assignment**

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 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 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.
- 3.4 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
- 3.5 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 date. 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.

- 3.6 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 date.
- 3.7 The university will issue a CAS for a part time course if it is RQF level 7 or above and longer than 6 months.
- 3.8 Queen Mary will not issue a CAS to an applicant whose course requires an 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 [fcorequests@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:fcorequests@qmul.ac.uk) email account.

#### **4 Academic Progression**

- 4.1 All applicants must declare any previous UK study sponsored under Tier 4.
- 4.2 The university will apply the Tier 4 academic progression rules in all cases regardless of where the applicant intends to apply for a Tier 4 visa.
- 4.3 The progression will be assessed on:
- previous UK study
  - the academic level of that previous study compared to that of the course applied for
  - the type of visa previously used to study
  - where any new visa application might be made (UK or home country)
  - number years previously spent studying in the UK
- 4.4 Details about how academic progression has been satisfied will always be included on the CAS statement.
- 4.5 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 direct to request the relevant information.
- 4.6 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.

#### **5 Visa Refusals**

- 5.1 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 Tier 4 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.
- 5.2 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.

- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 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.
- 5.5 The university reserves the right to not issue a CAS to any applicant or student who has had their visa refused.

## **6 CAS Withdrawals**

- 6.1 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 Tier 4 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 licence would be at risk.
- 6.2 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.

## **7 Joint CASs and Pre-sessional courses**

- 7.1 A joint CAS will only be issued where an applicant is holding an offer for the five, nine or 13 week pre-sessional course and the main programme of study.
- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 Overseas applicants who apply for a place on the five or nine week pre-sessional course will automatically be set up for a joint CAS.
- 7.4 For the joint CAS process to begin they must:
- Hold an unconditional offer for 9 or 5 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.
- 7.5 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, one for the pre-sessional course and one for the main programme. The applicant must hold a UKVI Secure English Language Test (SELT) in order for a CAS to be issued for the pre-sessional course.
- 7.6 At any time during the process applicants can request to have separate CAS, 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.

## **8 Adding Sponsor Notes to UKVI Sponsorship Management System (SMS)**

8.1 Sponsor notes will be added to SMS by the CAS Admissions team

8.2 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 Tier 4 visa application

8.3 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.

## **9 Terms and Conditions of Tier 4 Sponsorship**

9.1 All students sponsored by the University are expected to abide by the university's Policy for Student Immigration.

9.2 The university reserves the right to withdraw sponsorship at its discretion.

9.3 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 Tier 4 visa application.

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