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**Appendix 1.**

**International Student Visas and CAS Issuance Guidance for New Students**

This document is to provide guidance for the University of Stirling’s sponsorship of international students who require a student visa to study in the UK. It specifies the conditions that govern the issuance of Confirmation for Acceptance of Studies (CAS). The CAS is essential to obtaining a UK Student visa, and this guidance sets out the procedures for issuing CAS to new students, including eligibility requirements.

1. **CAS Issuance**

The Admissions & Access team is responsible for assigning CAS to **new students** starting at the University of Stirling. A CAS can be assigned no earlier than six months before the official course start date for new students who are outside the UK, and three months before the course start date for new students who are inside the UK.

The University will use its discretion when issuing CAS close to the start of the course, but will generally not issue CAS less than two weeks before the latest start date of each semester.

CAS can be issued to applicants if they have:

* An unconditional offer to study
* Firmly accepted the offer to study
* Provided all relevant academic and visa related information
* Paid the tuition fee deposit (where applicable)
* Provided a parental consent form is applicant is under the age of 18

The University may choose to make additional checks to ensure it only assigns a CAS to offer-holders who will be successful in obtaining their visa. This may include:

* Requesting financial documents to ensure there are sufficient funds to cover both tuition fees and living costs
* Requesting previous CAS statements relating to previous applications to study in the UK, including visa refusals
* Requesting attendance at a pre-CAS interview

The University will **not** assign a CAS in the following circumstances:

* The programme of study does not comply with current Home Office Student Policy Guidance
* An applicant has submitted fraudulent documentation or supporting documents that cannot be verified with a relevant and qualified authority
* An applicant has outstanding debt to the University of Stirling
* When further student sponsorship would lead to the applicant exceeding the maximum time limit for sponsorship (cap on time limits)
* The applicant cannot meet the academic progression requirements as set out in the Home Office Student Policy Guidance
* There is reason to believe that sponsorship will put the University’s sponsor licence at risk, including concerns about the applicant’s intention to enrol on their programme of study, complete their studies and their genuineness
* An applicant fails to obtain an ATAS certificate where it is required
* An applicant has insufficient funds
* An applicant has an adverse immigration history
* An applicant fails to provide parental consent if under the age of 18 years old

1. **CAS Allocation**

The number of CAS the University is able to issue is dependent on the number of CAS allocated to the University by, and at the discretion of, the Home Office each year. In the event that the University determines (at its sole discretion) that it is unable to issue a CAS due to insufficient CAS numbers being allocated to the University by the Home Office, the University may withdraw an offer and refund the tuition fee deposit in accordance with the Tuition Fee Deposit Refund Guidance.

1. **CAS Withdrawals**

The University reserves the right to withdraw a CAS in certain circumstances and at any point after issuing the CAS, including if any aspect of the application is found to be fraudulent or plagiarised.

1. **Breaches of Visa Conditions**

The University will not normally provide sponsorship to an applicant who has breached the conditions of a previous visa, unless there were exceptional mitigating circumstances. These will be considered on a case by case basis by Student Immigration Services.

1. **Visa Refusals**

Any offer-holder who receives a visa application refusal is required to provide all pages of the refusal notice to the University as soon as possible after the decision, and details will be reported to the Home Office. The Admissions & Access team will only assign a new CAS following a visa application refusal if 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 Student Immigration Services, which will be assessed for their eligibility to meet Home Office requirements.

A second CAS will not normally be assigned to an applicant who receives a visa application refusal due to failure to meet the credibility requirements (i.e. demonstrating a genuine intention to study). If an applicant does receive a second visa refusal, the University will not normally assign a further CAS unless there are exceptional mitigating circumstances.

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

**Admissions & Access/Student Immigration Services, April 2024**