Policy 072
CAS Issuing Policy

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CAS Issuing Policy.

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1. Purpose

1.1. This document sets out the Academy of Contemporary Music's (ACM) policy for the issuance of Confirmation for Acceptance for Studies (CAS) statements to applicants and students. CAS is an electronic record that confirms to the Home Office that ACM wishes to sponsor an individual to study in the UK.
1.2. This policy is specific to ACM and does not have to cover all requirements of the Immigration Rules. ACM reserves the right to revise its policies or procedures related to Student visa sponsor duties at any time, particularly in response to changes in sponsorship requirements made by UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI). This policy is a part of Student Route documents created to ensure compliance with current legislation. It should be reviewed alongside the ACM Student Visa Compliance Policy, Student Sponsor Guidance, and the Immigration Rules; in case of changes, the current version applies regardless of when the CAS is issued. The obligation outlined in the Immigration Rules and associated UKVI guidance documents will remain the primary source of ACM's responsibilities, regardless of any coverage in this policy. ACM is not legally obligated to issue a CAS statement and will exercise caution to ensure compliance with duties as a licensed sponsor under the Points-Based Immigration ('PBI') system.

2. Key Responsibilities

2.1. The Head of International Student Affairs is responsible for managing and implementing this policy, with support from the Admissions team. All ACM staff working with applicants/students requiring a Student Visa must adhere to the policy.

2.2. In case an applicant or a student fails to adhere to this policy, ACM is not liable for any consequences of declining to issue a CAS.

2.3. The Head of International Student Affairs assigns CAS to a new applicant and continuing students extending their visas.

3. Applicant and Student Responsibilities

3.1. CAS statements will only be sent electronically via email. ACM will not provide the statement in any other format. ACM will not share any CAS information with a third party without the applicant's or student's written consent.
3.2. All applicants and continuing students, must complete CAS Request Form and submit all requested documents. Even applicants and continuing students from 'low-risk' countries must provide necessary documents before a CAS is issued, as outlined in section 6 of this document.
3.3. It is the responsibility of an applicant or a student to ensure that all provided documents and information before the CAS assignment are correct and up to date. Any amendments should be emailed to international@acm.ac.uk within 2 working days.
3.4. Issuing a CAS does not guarantee that a visa application will be successful and it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all Home Office requirements are met. ACM are not responsible for any Home Office decisions or any losses (financial or otherwise) of an unsuccessful outcome.
3.5. It is the responsibility of a student to inform ACM about any changes in circumstances after a CAS has been issued. This is crucial to maintaining Student visa status.

4. CAS Issuance Criteria

4.1. ACM will only issue a CAS to applicants who:
- 4.1.1. Have been offered a place without conditions to study a full-time course;
- 4.1.2. Accepted the unconditional offer;
- 4.1.3. Have met the Home Office English Language ability requirements, or are exempt from this condition;
- 4.1.4. Paid any applicable tuition fee deposits;
- 4.1.5. Completed the CAS request form satisfactorily;
- 4.1.6. Passed ACM's compliance check, under the Home Office's UKVI approach in managing associated risk with any overseas national entering the UK;
- 4.1.7. Provided all requested academic and visa-related documents;
- 4.1.8. Will not exceed a maximum time limit ('cap') on studying with a Student route.

4.2. ACM will only issue a CAS to continuing students who:
- 4.2.1. Have a current leave under the Student Route;
- 4.2.2. Are not an ACM debtor;
- 4.2.3. Meet the 'Academic Progression' requirement, or are exempt from this condition;
- 4.2.4. Will not exceed a maximum time limit ('cap') on studying with a Student route;

4.2.5. Provide evidence that they left the UK, if they are required to submit their application from outside the country.
4.2.6. Provided all requested academic and visa-related documents;
4.2.7. Will not exceed a maximum time limit ('cap') on studying with a Student route;
4.2.8. Passed ACM's compliance check, under the Home Office's UKVI approach in managing associated risk with any overseas national remaining in the UK.

4.3. CAS issuance timing is at ACM's discretion, with a general guideline of not less than one calendar month before the latest course start date.

4.4 A CAS will not be assigned more than 6 months before the official start date for applicants, or students applying from outside the UK, and not more than 3 months for applicants or students applying from inside the UK.
4.5. Additional checks may include Student Eligibility Checks, financial document reviews, checks for previous immigration history, and other relevant information.
4.6. The issuing of a CAS by ACM is subject to careful evaluation, and it will be withheld in the following circumstances:

4.6.1. In instances where the intended course of study does not align with the stipulations outlined in the Student visa requirements;
4.6.2. If there is reason to believe that an applicant or student may not adhere to the conditions of their visa upon approval. This includes situations where ACM is aware of previous breaches of visa conditions, such as unauthorised employment or historic overstaying;
4.6.3. When an applicant submits documents that are proven to be fraudulent or there is a reasonable suspicion of fraudulent activity. ACM is committed to reporting such cases to UKVI;
4.6.4. If the proposed course duration would lead the applicant or student to exceed any relevant study cap outlined by UKVI in their published guidance;
4.6.5. Where the assignment of a CAS is deemed to jeopardise ACM's sponsor licence, particularly in cases where concerns arise regarding the sincerity of the intention to study and overall genuineness;
4.6.6. If there is an indication that an applicant or student is unlikely to obtain a visa in time to commence their studies;
4.6.7. When an applicant or student, who makes their application inside the UK, fails to demonstrate academic progression, as defined in the Student and Child Student guidance and outlined in part 8 of the policy;
4.6.8. In cases where an applicant or student has a negative immigration history, including a record of visa refusals;
4.6.9. If an applicant or student has a history of non-engagement with their studies at ACM, particularly if the student has been withdrawn for lack of engagement;
4.6.10. When an applicant or student is unable to demonstrate compliance with Student visa financial requirements, including any outstanding debts to ACM;
4.6.11. If an applicant or student has undisclosed criminal convictions, which will be reviewed under the Criminal Convictions policy. If convictions come to light after an offer is made, ACM reserves the right to withdraw a CAS;
4.6.12 when an applicant or student has been involved in terrorist activities;

4.6.13. If an applicant or student intends to apply for Leave to Remain and has overstayed, consideration will be given to exceptional circumstances, such as severe illness preventing an in-time application;
4.6.14. If a student applies for an extension of the original Student visa but is no longer expected to be actively engaged with their studies;
4.6.15. If a student applies for an extension of their original Student visa to complete a dissertation. Such students will be advised to complete their dissertation from outside the UK;
4.6.16. If an applicant fails to meet the relevant English language requirements, either for visa purposes or academically.

5. Resits and repeats

5.1. Issuing a CAS for re-assessments and module repeats will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be subject to CAS availability. Applying for a Visitor visa might be advised in these circumstances.

6. Differentiation Arrangements

6.1. Under 'differentiation arrangements', 'low-risk applicants' with passports issued by one of the countries or territories listed in paragraph ST 22.1 of Appendix Student of the Immigration Rules do not need to submit evidence of their qualifications or evidence of meeting the 'Financial Requirements' with their Student visa application.
6.2. Applicants or students assessed as 'low-risk applicants' are required to submit evidence of their qualifications and evidence of meeting the 'Financial Requirements' for their Student visa when requesting a CAS from ACM.

7. Withdrawal of CAS

7.1. ACM reserves the right to withdraw a CAS if subsequent information reveals it should not have been issued or if concerns arise about the applicant's ability to meet Student visa requirements.

8. Academic Progression

8.1. ACM applies Student visa 'Academic Progression' rules in cases where a student applies for a new Student visa inside the UK.
8.2. CAS will not be issued to applicants who have failed to successfully complete a UK study programme unless exceptional mitigating circumstances exist.
8.3. 'Academic Progression' cases will be considered by a panel consisting of designated ACM staff members.

9. Visa Refusals

9.1. ACM may consider issuing one additional CAS following a visa refusal, provided the applicant demonstrates minimal or no chance of subsequent refusal.
9.2. Further CAS issuance after a refusal due to a credibility interview will be considered only under exceptional circumstances.
9.3. All applicants and students who have a Student visa refused must inform ACM and provide a copy of the refusal letter.
9.4. ACM reports all refusals to the Home Office, following procedures.

10. Terms and conditions

10.1. All students sponsored by ACM are expected to abide by the ACM's Student Visa Compliance Policy. ACM reserves the right to withdraw sponsorship at its discretion.
10.2. All students sponsored by ACM are expected to understand the immigration rules that apply to them and keep up to date with changes throughout the duration of their visa.

11. Policy Review

11.1. The policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it remains compliant with the Student Sponsor Guidance and Immigration Rules as well as good sector practice.

Version	Created By	Approved By
1.0	Student Visa Compliance Officer	Academic Board / 18 April 2024
1.1	Head of International Student Affairs	Academic Board / 20 Feb 2025