

### **Student Compliance Team**

[visas@rau.ac.uk](mailto:visas@rau.ac.uk)

Registry Services

### **CAS Issuing Policy**

This document explains the RAU's policy regarding Student visa sponsorship. This policy is subject to change to ensure the University complies with all its duties as a Student Visa Sponsor. Please note that the RAU is not legally obliged to sponsor applicants or students. The University is committed to meeting all its duties in order to prevent any risks to its status as a Student Visa Sponsor with a Track Record. The Immigration Rules and Student route guidance provided by the UKVI and the Home Office override the content of the RAU's CAS issuing policy.

This policy is reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with the Student Sponsor Guidance and Immigration Rules.

### **Assigning a CAS**

The RAU Immigration Compliance Team is responsible for assigning CASs:

- to applicants starting a new programme at the RAU
- RAU students who wish to extend their leave in order to complete their programme, incl. those returning from a period of interruption.

CASs are only assigned to those who have met all conditions of their offer and the conditions of this policy. The RAU may carry out checks to ensure that sponsorship is provided only to those students it deems as genuine and those assessed by the particular process that they would successfully obtain a visa. Checks may include an immigration status check with UKVI.

Continuing RAU students must be 'Registered' or 'Self-registered' to receive a CAS.

Please note that continuing RAU students who are 'ON STOP' due to a financial debt to the University are not eligible for a CAS until their debt has been paid.

CASs are assigned as follows:

- no more than six months prior to the start of the new course
- for those students returning from interruption, no more than three months prior to the return start date.
- For continuing students, CASs are usually only assigned no more than three months before their current visa expiry date.

N.B. CASs that are requested earlier are assigned at the discretion of the Immigration Compliance Team.

The RAU will initiate all required checks to ensure that any applicant/student who is already in the UK has a valid permit to do so before assigning a CAS. Checks include an immigration status check with UKVI. If an individual is not eligible to apply for further Student Visa sponsorship from within

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the UK, the RAU will not issue a CAS until we have received evidence that shows the student has left the UK, e.g. a boarding card, exit/entry visas etc.

RAU will not sponsor applicants/students with the following circumstances:

- The programme of study does not meet the Student Visa requirements.
- An applicant/ student has submitted suspicious or fraudulent documents
- An applicant or student has outstanding debts to the University e.g. outstanding tuition fees etc.
- By assigning a CAS the student/applicant would exceed the maximum limit allowed for undergraduate study.
- The applicant/student does not meet the UKVI academic progression requirements
- There is reason to believe that sponsorship will put RAU's Student Visa sponsor licence at risk. This includes concerns about the individual's intention to study, if there is reason to believe the applicant or student will not comply with the conditions of their Student visa (e.g. intention to work or past immigration history of working more than 20 hours per week) or if a student is in breach of their visa conditions.
- If a student is on interrupting/resitting status
- The RAU will not normally provide sponsorship to an applicant or student who has overstayed their visa, unless there were exceptional circumstances which prevented the student from making an in-time visa application (e.g. serious health condition, hospitalisation etc.). These cases will be assessed on an individual basis by the Immigration Compliance Team.

**CAS Request Form for continuing RAU students**

Continuing RAU students need to apply for a new CAS using the CAS Request Form. Once a completed form is submitted, the Immigration Compliance Team will aim to assign the CAS in 5 working days, subject to checks mentioned in this policy.

**Sponsorship**

The RAU will sponsor a student for the duration of their programme, subject to any University or UKVI compliance requirements which would result in sponsorship being withdrawn. The RAU may withdraw sponsorship if it is not necessary to continue sponsorship or if the University cannot comply with its sponsor duties.

The duration of a CAS will correspond with the programme start and end dates.

If a student meets the conditions to extend their Student visa in order to complete his/her programme, the RAU will only provide sponsorship for the remainder of the programme.

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The duration of a CAS for PhD programmes will be from the programme start date and will cover the period where the student is undertaking full-time study as a registered student, incl. the writing up, viva and corrections. Sponsorship will be withdrawn if a student successfully obtains his/her award earlier than the expected end date showing on the CAS.

### **Re-sits, Repeats and Interruptions**

Those who are returning from a period of interruption will only be assigned a CAS if they meet the conditions of this policy.

Sponsorship will not be provided to those whose registration status is at 'Interruption/Re-sitting'. Those who are required to re-sit an exam at the RAU will be expected to obtain a Standard Visitor Visa.

### **Study visa**

If a student requires sponsorship to repeat modules, a CAS will be assigned if attendance is required within 60 days of the start of the next academic period.

For example, if a student is required to repeat in Semester 1 only and write exams in May then sponsorship would end at the end of Semester 1. Therefore, the student would be required to leave the UK and return for their exams in May on a Standard Visitor visa.

### **Pre-sessional Programmes**

The RAU will only assign one CAS to cover both a pre-sessional English programme and a main programme of study if the applicant has obtained an unconditional offer for their main programme of study and the pre-sessional programme is less than 3 months in duration.

In other circumstances, a separate CAS will be issued for the pre-sessional course and a new CAS will be assigned for the main programme of study when the applicant successfully completes the pre-sessional, meets all conditions of their offer and the conditions set out in this policy.

### **Visa Refusals**

Any applicant or student who receives a visa application refusal is required to provide the full refusal notice document received by the Home Office to the Student Compliance Team. The Student Compliance Team will submit relevant report to the UKVI.

The RAU will only issue a new CAS following a visa application refusal once the university is confident that 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 the [Immigration Compliance Team](#) which will be assessed for their eligibility to meet the Student visa requirements.

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If an applicant does receive a second visa refusal, the RAU will not normally assign a further CAS unless there are exceptional circumstances.

A second CAS cannot be assigned to an applicant or student who receives a visa application refusal due to failure to meet the credibility requirements.

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

### **Overstaying**

If you are eligible to extend your Student visa from within the UK, you must ensure that you submit your visa application before your current visa expires. If you do not apply for your Student visa in time, you will become an *over stayer*.

Overstaying means allowing your visa to expire and staying in the UK, which is a criminal offence. If you have become an over stayer you will need to leave the UK immediately. Any further visa application you make will need to be submitted from outside the UK. Please note that the University may also be required to interrupt your registration whilst your case is resolved. You will be required to provide evidence to show that you have left the UK before we can consider assigning a new CAS.

The RAU will not normally provide sponsorship to an applicant or student who has overstayed their visa, unless there were exceptional circumstances that prevented the student from making an in-time visa application. These cases will be assessed on an individual basis by the Immigration Compliance Team.

### **Switching Immigration Category**

If you are looking to switch into a Student Visa from another immigration category, please note that the university will be required to assess your eligibility for Student Visa Sponsorship in line with this policy.

Please note that in most cases it will be necessary for you to apply for a new Student visa from overseas. As such you will need to provide evidence of your departure from the UK to the Student Compliance Team. This evidence of your departure will be saved to your student record.

### **Terms and Conditions**

To maintain Student Visa sponsorship, students are required to meet the terms and conditions of their visa and are encouraged to review RAU's Tier 4 and Student Visa Compliance Requirements <https://www.rau.ac.uk/university-life/support-and-wellbeing/student-handbook>. Visa students should ensure that they understand the immigration rules that apply to them and keep up to date with changes throughout the duration of their visa.



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UK Visas and Immigration requirements change frequently and therefore Student visa holders are advised to check the UKVI website for the most up to date information:

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