SMS GUIDE 4A – CREATING A CAS – GUIDE FOR EDUCATION SPONSORS

SPONSOR HELP DOCUMENT

CONTENTS

TIER 4 CONFIRMATION OF ACCEPTANCE FOR STUDIES (CAS)

A CAS is not an actual certificate or paper document, but is a virtual document, similar to a database record.

You will need to use the SMS to create a CAS for an individual. The system will generate a unique reference number (URN). Once you have assigned the CAS, you must give the URN to the sponsored student, so that they can quote the URN on their application for leave to study in the UK.

CREATING A CAS ON THE SPONSORSHIP MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (SMS)

The following table provides guidance on how to populate the relevant fields when creating a CAS. All references to higher education institutions in this document are defined as follows:
A higher education institution (HEI) is a 'recognised body' (meaning that it has its own UK degree-awarding powers), or a body in receipt of public funding as a HEI.

Institutions (including further education colleges) which receive some public funding to deliver higher education courses do not fall within this definition of a HEI.

You can find a list of designated bodies on the Department for Business Innovation & Skills website which can be found at the following link: www.gov.uk/recognised-uk-degrees

You can find a list of bodies in receipt of public funding as HEIs on the following organisations' websites:

Department for Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland
www.delni.gov.uk/index/further-and-higher-education/higher-education/role-structure-he-division

Higher Education Funding Council for England
www.hefce.ac.uk/unicoll/he

Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
www.hefcw.ac.uk/about_he_in_wales/higher_education_institutions/he_institutions.aspx

Scottish Funding Council
www.sfc.ac.uk/about_the_council/council_funded_institutions/council_funded_institutions.aspx

On the website the entry fields marked * are mandatory. However the selection of some optional fields will make other fields mandatory.

If you need to exit the CAS and have not finished completing all of the fields, as long as you enter the family name you can save it and complete it another time. When you return to complete the CAS you will be able to find it again by searching for the family name.

You should note that the system will log you out after 20 minutes of inactivity; therefore you are advised to save any information entered at regular intervals to prevent you losing any data.

Note: Once you have sponsored overseas nationals to study with you, you are required to use the SMS to report on their activities. More detailed information regarding the reporting of these activities can be found in the sponsor guidance on the following link; www.gov.uk/government/collections/sponsorship-information-for-employers-and-educators

Section	Field Name	Help text
Tier and category		Tier 4 (General) Tier 4 (Child)
Student details	Family or last name *	Enter details as shown in the student"s passport. Very rarely there may be a student"s passport that does not show a „family name". The „family name" field is mandatory but the „given name(s)" field is not. The „family name" field should be used for whatever name is in the passport on such occasions.
	Given name(s) *	
	Other names	
	Date of Birth *	
	Gender *	
	Nationality *	
	Place of birth	
	Country of birth *	
	Passport number *	
	Applicant number	Your system ID for an applicant (i.e. – for a student on a course).
	UCAS ID number	UCAS unique identifier for a student (if relevant).

Section	Field Name	Help text
Course details	Application number	Your reference for a student's request to be admitted to a particular course
	Course title *	The course title should reflect the details that are stated in your institution prospectus or course guide. Where a student will be studying a portfolio of A-Levels, GCSEs or International Baccalaureate Diplomas or programme the name of the portfolio should be provided. For example "A-Levels". Where a student will be a sabbatical officer the title of the post should be included here instead of a course title. Where a student will be re-sitting/resubmitting, this must be specified in the 'sponsor note' section
	Course ID	Your course ID can be entered here, but this is optional. You should enter it if there is a course identifier specified in a prospectus or course guide.
	Course level *	You must select a course level from the drop down list.
	Secondary course level	Enter the level of course where a secondary qualification is being studied alongside the principal course.
	Course start date *	This is the date that the course will start. • **The date must not be in the past.** If the student is starting the course late, put the date that the CAS is created and enter the actual date in the 'sponsor note' section • If you are sponsoring a student to extend their current studies, you should NOT enter the date the course previously started, but the date from which you need to continue sponsoring them from. This could be the next day after their leave runs out, if a student will be in continuing study. • If the student will be studying a pre-sessional course with an unconditional offer onto the main course, this should be the start of the pre-sessional course. • If you are sponsoring a student under the Doctorate Extension Scheme you should NOT enter the date the course previously started. You can select any date provided it is both in the future and before the course end date.

Section	Field Name	Help text
Course details continued	Course end date *	You should enter the actual end date of the course the sponsored student will be studying. If you are sponsoring a student under the Doctorate Extension Scheme you should enter the date you expect to formally confirm that their PhD is completed to the standard required for the award of a PhD. Please note, you cannot assign a CAS for a student to extend their stay under the Doctorate Extension Scheme more than 60 days in advance of the end of their PHD.
	Latest date a student can be accepted on to the course	You should enter the latest date that the sponsored student can be accepted on to the course in this field.
	Tick if the course is full time	This box must be used to confirm that the course you are offering is full time.
	Hours per week *	This field is mandatory and specifies the number of course hours per week. • If the student is a General student and is studying for a full-time degree course that leads to a United Kingdom recognised bachelor or postgraduate degree, please enter '0'. • If the student is a General student and is undertaking a period of study which forms part of an overseas degree course (which is equivalent to a United Kingdom degree course), please enter '0'. • If the student is a Child student please enter '0'. • If the course of study is below degree level (NQF level 6 / QCF level 6 / SCQF level 9) and not in the category of `Child', then the number of course hours per week must be entered.

Section	Field Name	Help text
Course details continued	Tick if the course requires an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate	Where the course requires an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate, please note that the student must provide their certificate in support of their application. You should also keep either a copy of the certificate, or the electronic approval notice you received from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO).
	Tick if the course requires a certificate from the Postgraduate Dean (for postgraduate doctor and dentist courses only)	This is only for postgraduate doctors and dentists on recognised foundation courses. Please note that we are aware that a letter, rather than a certificate, is provided by the Foundation Programme Office.
	Pre-stored address	This is used to enter the main study address. If you have previously supplied an address you can select an address from the „Pre stored address" drop down field. If not, then you should manually add an address using the „Provide address" button. These fields are not marked as mandatory with a red asterisk *. However the system will not let you assign the CAS until you enter an address using the „Add" button.

Section	Field Name	Help text
Course details continued	Is SELT required	List of evidence you used to assess the academic ability to finish the course which **must** include: **English Language Requirements** • When assigning a CAS to students studying courses at QCF/NQF Level 6 (SCQF 9 in Scotland) you must ensure that they are competent in English language at a minimum CEFR level B2. Depending on whether you are a Higher Education Institution (HEI) or not, we require you to assess your student"s English language competence as follows: • If you are a HEI you can choose your own method of assessing the English language competence of your students as being at CEFR level B2 in each of the four components (speaking, listening, reading and writing). You must confirm here that you have made this assessment, and you must retain details of how you have made this assessment which may be inspected by our visiting officers. • If you are not a HEI you must ensure that students demonstrate their English language competence by showing you a valid Secure English Language Test (SELT), from one of a limited number of UKBA approved test providers, where they have achieved at least CEFR level B2 in each of the four components. You need to provide the name of the test provider and a breakdown of the test result for each component. • When assigning a CAS to students studying courses at QCF/NQF Level 3, 4 or 5 (SCQF 6, 7 or 8 in Scotland) you ensure that your students are competent in English language at a minimum CEFR level B1. Regardless of whether you are a HEI or not, you must assess your students" English language competence through the provision of a valid SELT which confirms that they have achieved at least CEFR level B1 in all four components. You need to provide the name of the test provider and a breakdown of the test result for each component. • If you are a HEI and you are assigning a CAS to „gifted students", who will be studying at degree level or above, you may waive the English language requirement. Your Academic Registrar or institution"s equivalent will need to personally authorise the issue of the CAS and this must be confirmed in this text box.

Section	Field Name	Help text
Course details continued	Is SELT required (continued)	**Note:** The Academic Registrar or the institution"s equivalent must provide the student with an original letter which they must have in their possession when they arrive in the UK. In addition, the Academic Registrar or the institution"s equivalent must provide their name and contact details on the CAS in case further enquiries are required. Please see the Tier 4 sponsor guidance for further information on this concession, and for what details are required in the letter: www.gov. uk/government/collections/sponsorship-information-for-employers-and-educators#sponsorship-policy-guidance This field is optional however if you decide not to complete this section you must provide all details as to how the student meets the English language requirements in the „Evidence used to obtain offer" free text field. If you do decide to complete this section you should use the radio buttons to select an option. If you have selected an option here, you must complete the further fields within this section.
	Reason not required	If you have indicated that a SELT is not required above you must select an option from the drop down list.
	Required	These fields are optional however if you have selected that a SELT is required the fields marked with + become mandatory. English language level attained+ • You should select an option from the drop down list. SELT – Speaking • You should enter the score achieved by the student in this component area of their English language test. SELT – Listening • You should enter the score achieved by the student in this component area of their English language test. SELT – Reading • You should enter the score achieved by the student in this component area of their English language test. SELT – Writing • You should enter the score achieved by the student in this component area of their English language test. English Language Test Provider+ • You should select an option from the drop down list

Section	Field Name	Help text
Course details continued	Tick if previously a UK student	**Academic Progression** When assigning a CAS for a student who has previously studied in the UK under Tier 4 (General) or as a student prior to the introduction of the points based system you must give details of academic progression. You must ensure that the CAS you are issuing is for a course that represents academic progress from the previous study that the student undertook during their last period of leave as a student. The only exceptions to this are where you are assigning a CAS: • to a student to re-sit examinations or to repeat a module; or • to a student who will make a first application to complete a course with you where they commenced the course with another Tier 4 sponsor; or • to a student under the Doctorate Extension Scheme; or • to a Tier 4 (Child) Student. This field is optional, however if you decide not to complete this section you must provide all details as to how the student meets the Academic Progression requirements in the 'Evidence used to obtain offer' free text field. If you do decide to complete this section you should tick the box if the student has previously been a student in the UK.
	If answer to above was 'Yes' complete the following:	If you ticked the 'Tick if previously a UK student' box, you must complete the following two fields.
	Previous course level	This box is not marked as being mandatory but if you ticked the 'Tick if previously a UK student' box you must select an option from the drop down list in order for us to consider whether the new course is academic progression from the previous course.
	Is current course higher, lower or the same level as the previous course	This box is not marked as being mandatory but if you ticked the 'Tick if previously a UK student' box you must select an option using the radio buttons.

Section	Field Name	Help text
Course details continued	If the same or lower supply justification text	If you selected either the 'Same' or 'Lower' option on the previous question, you must enter details here why the course level of the student is to remain either the same, or is lower than the previous course studied, and how the new course represents academic progression from the previous course. If you are sponsoring a student under the Doctorate Extension Scheme you should confirm this here. You are not required to show that the course represents academic progression. For more information on academic progression, please see the section titled 'Academic Progression in the Assigning a CAS and Sponsoring Students guidance document which is available on our pages on the Gov.UK website using the following link: www.gov.uk/government/ collections/sponsorship-information-for-employers-and-educators#sponsorship-policy-guidance
	Evidence used to obtain offer	This is a free text box. If you have chosen not to complete the new optional fields in relation to 'English Language Qualification', 'Progression Details' and 'Work Placement Details', you must provide all relevant details for these sections in this field. If you are sponsoring a student under the Doctorate Extension Scheme you must confirm that: • you are sponsoring the student under the Doctorate Extension Scheme; and • you expect the student to complete their course and gain a PhD Qualification on approximately the stated course end date; and • you will continue to sponsor the student for the 12 months after their course is complete; and • the student is aware of their responsibility to abide by the conditions of their Tier 4 leave, including that they will leave the UK when their visa expires unless they have obtained further valid leave You should also enter any additional information that you feel necessary in this box.

Section	Field Name	Help text
Accommodation and fees	Tick if you will be providing accommodation or leave blank if unknown	Tick this box if relevant
	Tick if the course fee for the first year includes accommodation or boarding costs	Tick this box if relevant
	Course fees charged for the first year of the course (in pounds sterling) *	This is the fees that you will charge the student for his/her first period of study for example the first academic year of their study or, if the student is continuing a course, for the next period of study.
		If you are sponsoring a student to extend their current studies, you should NOT enter the amount of fees charged previously, but the amount for the next period of study that the student must pay to continue their course. For a student who is continuing on an existing course and is applying for an extension to complete the course, the tier 4 sponsor should give either;
		• the fees that the student still needs to pay – if the student is part way through the year; or
		• the fees that the student needs to pay for the next academic year, if the student will continue the course at the start of the next academic year.
		Please enter the amount without the £ sign, for example if the fees are £5,000 then you should enter 5000.
		If there are no fees to pay, enter 0 in this field.
		Note: Please do not include bursary"s / official financial sponsor payments in this field.

Section	Field Name	Help text
Accommodation and fees continued	Course fees paid to date	This value can equal but cannot exceed the value of 'Course fees charged for the first year of the course' field.
	Boarding or accommodation fees charged for the first year (in pounds sterling) *	For Tier 4 (General) students this figure should be for accommodation/lodging fees ONLY, and must not contain any course fees.

For Tier 4 (child) students, where a single boarding/lodging fee is charged (including both the students course fees and accommodation), this figure should be given here, with a 0 placed in the „course fees charged for first year of course" box above.

Where the student will be paying their course and accommodation fees separately, only the accommodation fee should be given here. |
| | Accommodation fees paid to date (in pounds sterling) | Enter the accommodation fee amount that has already been paid. Enter the amount without the £ sign, for example if the amount is £5,000 then you should enter 5000.

If no accommodation fees have been paid to date, enter 0 in this field.

Please note that when calculating the maintenance requirement for Tier 4 (General) students the maximum amount of accommodation fees paid that we will offset/deduct is £1000. |
| | Boarding fees paid to date | This field only applies to a Child CAS but is included in a General CAS. This cannot be populated and should, therefore, be left blank when creating a General CAS. |

Section	Field Name	Help text
Work placement details	Tick if the applicant is undertaking a work placement as part of the course	The course of study for Tier 4 (General) students (or child students aged 16 or above) may include a work placement if it is an integral and assessed part of the course, but it must not be more than 33 per cent of the total length of the course in the UK. The only exceptions to this 33 per cent rule are: • where the course is at NQF/QCF 6 or SCQF 9 or above and is studied at a higher education institution. In these circumstances the work placement must not be more than 50 per cent of the total length of the course. • where the course forms part of a study abroad programme.In these circumstances the work placement must not be more than 50 percent of the total length of the course. • where there is a UK statutory requirement for the course to contain a specific period of work placement which exceeds this limit. The work placement must also be an integral and assessed part of the course. Does the course have a work placement? If so, this box must be ticked.
	Percentage of course undertaken as work placement	This field is optional however if you decide not to complete this section you must provide all details as to how the student meets the Work Placement requirements in the „Evidence used to obtain offer" free text field. If you do decide to complete this section you should select an option from the drop down list.
	If the percentage of work is more than the permitted level then supply justification text	If you selected more than 33% in the previous question you must enter details in this box as to why the percentage of work is more than 33% of the course being undertaken.
	Address of work placement (if known)	If you have previously supplied an address you can select an address from the „Pre stored address" drop down field. If not then you should manually add an address using the „Provide address" button. The address required is the one that the student will be working on during their work placement (if known). If the address is not yet known, the details should be provided via SMS as soon as they are known. You should also add details in the „sponsor note" stating the following required details: • work placement start and end dates; and • hours worked per week.

Section	Field Name	Help text
Partner institution details	Partner institution name	There are two instances where you can name a „partner" institution on the CAS: 1) If the CAS is being assigned to cover both a main course and a pre-sessional course, and where the pre-sessional course is being delivered by a partner institution that is named as a "partner" institution on your licence. Please note a CAS can only be assigned to cover both a pre-sessional and main course where: **a.** the student"s offer of a place on the main course is unconditional, and **b.** the main course provider is either a HEI or an Independent School, and **c.** if the HEI is the main course provider, the pre-sessional course may be no longer than three months in duration, and there must be a gap of no more than one month between the end date of the pre-sessional course and the start date of the main course (for Independent Schools the pre-sessional can be more than three months in duration, but the pre-sessional course plus main course should be no longer than the maximum period of leave that can be granted to the student). 2) If the CAS is being assigned to cover a course being provided by another education provider, where there is a contractual partnership agreement between you and the other education provider, and where the other education provider is named as a "partner" institution on your licence. Please see the section of the Assigning CAS and Sponsoring Students guidance called „Partner institutions" for further information. In either instance you must provide the name of the partner institution here.
	Partner institution sponsor licence number	If your partner institution has their own sponsor licence, please enter their sponsor licence number here. Please note that in instance 2) given in the previous section the 'Partner' institution must have their own sponsor licence (and have HTS status and meet the educational oversight requirements).
	Pre-stored address	Please enter the main study address. If you have previously supplied an address you can select an address from the „Pre stored address" drop down field. If not then you should manually add an address using the „Provide address" button.

Section	Field Name	Help text
Overseas institution details	Overseas higher education institution name	If this period of study in the UK forms part of a short term study abroad programme of an overseas higher education course then the name and address of the overseas higher education institution at which the student is enrolled must be given.
	Pre-stored address	Please enter the main study address. If you have previously supplied an address you can select an address from the 'Pre stored address' drop down field. If not then you should manually add an address using the 'Provide address' button.

HINTS AND TIPS ON CREATING A CAS

- You can use the 'sponsor note' field to amend minor errors identified after a CAS has been created. Examples of acceptable amendments are corrections to a mistyped name or date of birth. You can also use the 'sponsor note' field if there is any additional information that you need to state with regard to the student and/or the CAS. Please note that a 'sponsor note' can only be added to a live CAS (which is when the CAS is in the assigned state).

- If the main details are wrong, you must cancel the CAS, pay for, and assign a new one if needed to ensure that the details are the same as those in the student"s application for leave. For example;

    - tier/category is incorrect; or

    - if you have given incorrect details for more than one of the following:

        - the student's nationality

        - the student's date of birth

        - the student's surname.

- You must inform the student of any documents that have been used to assess their ability to complete the course. The student must produce the documents specified in the CAS when they make their application for leave. We do not have a prescribed format for providing this information to the student; you are free to incorporate it into your own communications.

- The system does not verify information entered against policy guidelines. You should be familiar with the relevant policy and ensure that the information you have entered will support a successful student application. Policy is explained on our website, and contact details are at the end of this document.

- When creating a Tier 4 (Child) CAS, two mandatory boxes on maintenance (one for boarding fees and the other for course fees) are displayed. If only one of the fields is relevant, that should be populated with the fees information. The other field should be populated with a zero.

- If you have provided a bursary/official financial sponsorship then this can be deducted from the fees owed and the remainder that the student must pay can be shown in the course fee section. For example: if a student's course fees are £10,000 and you will be giving the student £3,000 in bursary or official financial sponsorship for course fees, you can list the balance of course fees required as £7,000.

- If a Government or official financial sponsor that is not you (the Tier 4 sponsor), has agreed to cover part of the fees, the balance that the student must pay should be given in the fees section.

- If a Government or official financial sponsor that is not you (the Tier 4 sponsor) has agreed to cover all of the student"s fees, you (the Tier 4 sponsor) should enter the fees required as normal. We will get the information on official financial sponsorship from the student"s application to us.

- Where a student is undertaking a course of study towards a professional qualification, a separate CAS must be issued for each stage of the course which leads to a recognised qualification in its own right. (For example where a series of 'modules' leads to a 'Certificate' or a 'Diploma' which is a recognised qualification in its own right).

- It is recognised that some sponsors for example language schools may not be in a position to populate the 'Accommodation fees for first year' field, due to the length of many courses being less than a year in duration. In this instance, you should enter the accommodation

fees for the duration of the course on which the student has enrolled.

CONTACT POINTS

For general sponsorship enquiries, SMS issues, User IDs and passwords, confirmation of receipt of payments (for a sponsor licence, Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) or Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) applications only) and ongoing sponsor licence applications queries please call:-

Sponsorship and Employers" Helpline: 0300 123 4699 (Monday to Friday 0900 – 1700) or alternatively please email: sponsorshipPBSenquiries@ukba.gsi.gov.uk

IMPORTANT

This document reflects our current policy, but may be subject to change at any time. The Tier 4guidance for sponsors is available on our pages on the Gov.UK website using the following link: www.gov.uk/government/collections/sponsorship-information-for-employers-and-educators#sponsorship-policy-guidance