

Professional Services International Compliance

CAS Policy for applicants joining a new course of study

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Introduction

Manchester Met has written this policy to provide applicants joining a new course of study at Manchester Met information and guidance as to who can receive a Confirmation of Acceptance to Study (CAS) number. The CAS supports a Student visa application. This policy provides a brief overview of what the University expects from applicants that have been assigned a CAS and what applicants can expect from the University.

Changes to this policy since last update

The following table provides a summary of changes since the last policy:

Section(s)	Summary of section	Summary of changes
N/A	All sections	References to CAS Request Toolkit removed
10	Enrolling at Manchester Met	References to COVID-19 concessions removed
11	COVID-19 related concessions	Section deleted
Appendix One	Combined CAS Scenarios	Section added

CAS Policy for applicants joining a new course of study

1. Overview of Manchester Met CAS Policy

- 1.1. Any applicants who request a CAS from Manchester Met to apply for Entry Clearance or Leave to Remain to begin a new course under the 'Student' visa route of the Points Based System, must first satisfy Manchester Met that they meet the requirements of the immigration category before a CAS will be issued.
- 1.2. As of 05 October 2020, this policy applies to students who hold a non-UK nationality, inclusive of EEA, EU and Swiss nationals (where applicable).

2. General requirements

- 2.1. To receive a CAS an applicant must:
 - a. have received and accepted an unconditional offer to study at Manchester Met; and
 - b. have completed a CAS request and provided any supporting documents (where applicable) where requested from casrequest@mmu.ac.uk; and

- c. have paid the tuition fee deposit for their course, **or provided a copy of an official financial sponsorship letter¹; and**
- d. where applying for a CAS six weeks or less before the start of their intended programme of study, they provide evidence showing they meet UKVI's maintenance (funds) requirement; **or**
- e. where applying for a CAS more than six weeks before the start date of their intended programme of study, they confirm that they are aware of UKVI's requirements on financial evidence.

3. Applications made from overseas (Entry Clearance)

- 3.1. Applicants applying from their country of residence will receive a CAS:
 - a. where UKVI's [processing times](#) indicate that Entry Clearance can be issued before the latest date of acceptance for the course; and
 - b. where applicants have previously held a visa to visit, study or work in the UK, proof is provided that they left the UK before the visa expiry date or voluntarily within 30 days of the visa expiring. This can be demonstrated by submitting scanned copies of flight tickets along with copies of visa(s).
- 3.2. Manchester Met will detail the latest date an applicant is able to arrive on campus by in the 'Latest Acceptance' date on their CAS.
- 3.3. Applicants unable to arrive on campus by the date indicated in the 'Latest Acceptance' date indicated on their CAS must contact VisaCompliance@mmu.ac.uk.
- 3.4. Manchester Met will aim to permit late arrivals where it can; however, these are subject to authorisation from the relevant faculty.
- 3.5. Any refunds of tuition fees are subject to Manchester Met's refund policy.

4. Applications made from within the UK

- 4.1. The University will issue a CAS to applicants currently with Student Visa permission applying from within the UK, provided the student is permitted to apply from within the UK by meeting UKVI's academic progression requirements, as per Appendix ST of the Immigration Rules.
- 4.2. The University will issue a CAS to students without Student Visa permission who are applying from within the UK, if their current immigration permission is ongoing and they are permitted, as per UKVI's rules, to switch to a Student Visa from within the UK.

¹ Information on what UKVI consider to be suitable evidence of Official Financial Sponsorship is available within the their finance guidance for caseworkers:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/963273/financial-requirement-v3.0ext.pdf

5. UKVI 'Genuine Student' Test

- 5.1. Manchester Met is required to only issue CAS statements to genuine students and retains the right to conduct additional checks to ensure this.
- 5.2. For example, in regions where UKVI reports high visa refusal rates, Manchester Met may require an interview to take place prior to CAS issuance.
- 5.3. If an interview is necessary, applicants will be informed of this interview after receipt of their CAS Request Toolkit and a suitable date will be arranged with a member of the [International Compliance team](#).

6. Instances where CAS will not be issued

- 6.1. Manchester Met reserves the right not to issue CAS where UKVI's Student Route policies deem the application may result in a visa refusal. This includes (**but not exhaustively**) where:
 - a. an applicant has, or will, exceed [the maximum time allowed for degree-level study](#)
 - b. an applicant has previously studied at a higher academic level in the UK under Student or Tier 4 visa routes, meaning academic progress cannot be demonstrated to UKVI
 - c. an applicant is unable to demonstrate that they have enough funds to pay for their tuition fees and living costs whilst in the UK
 - d. there is a risk that the applicant will not pass an interview with UKVI
 - e. an applicant has not completed their previous course for which they were granted a Student or Tier 4 visa

7. Instances where sponsorship can be withdrawn

- 7.1. Manchester Met reserves the right to withdraw a CAS or withdraw sponsorship of a visa in certain instances. This includes (**but not exhaustively**) where:
 - a. it is clear an applicant is unable to arrive by the 'Latest Acceptance' date detailed on their CAS and this date cannot be extended.
 - b. following enrolment, an applicant is withdrawn from their course.
 - c. following enrolment, an applicant is not engaging sufficiently with key elements of their course such as lectures, tutorials, assignment submissions and online learning opportunities.
 - d. following enrolment, an applicant fails to provide Manchester Met with a copy of their immigration permission to be in the UK or later fails to provide an update to their immigration permission if it has since expired.

- e. following enrolment, an applicant decides to suspend or withdraw their study at Manchester Met.
 - f. following enrolment, the [International Compliance Team](#) receives information following an examination board that an applicant has not been able to progress onto the next stage of their course, is required to repeat an element of the course without attendance or is only required to repeat part of the academic year with attendance.
 - g. Manchester Met finds any documents submitted in support of an applicant to study to be fraudulent.
 - h. an applicant fails to present original versions of documents used to obtain their offer, where requested.
- 7.2. Applicants and students can refer to the University's [Your Visa Your Responsibility](#) guide for further information on how changes of circumstance affect visa sponsorship.
- 7.3. Any refunds of tuition fees are subject Manchester Met's refund policy.

8. Visa Refusals and Applications Rejected as 'Invalid'

- 8.1. If UKVI have refused an application, or rejected an application as 'invalid', applicants should contact the [International Compliance Team](#) **immediately** with a copy of their refusal or rejection notice to discuss their options.
- 8.2. If, after discussion with the [International Compliance Team](#), a decision is made to make a new Student visa application, applicants will need to request a new CAS.
- 8.3. A second CAS can only be issued if applicants are able to demonstrate that their chances of being refused for the same reason again are low, as well as meeting the conditions set out in sections 1-6 of this policy. Where an applicant has made an in-country application, a new CAS will only be issued if the applicant still has leave to remain in the UK.
- 8.4. To avoid an application being rejected as 'invalid', applicants are encouraged to contact the [International Compliance Team](#) immediately if UKVI requests further information.
- 8.5. Where an applicant has enrolled for their course, and an application is returned as refused or rejected as 'invalid', a decision on whether the applicant can continue with their course will be made by the [International Compliance Team](#).
- 8.6. The team will consult with colleagues across the International Office, Faculty and Admissions before a final decision is made.
- 8.7. All available options will be given to an applicant before a student's enrolment record is suspended or withdrawn.
- 8.8. Any refunds of tuition fees are subject to Manchester Met's refund policy.

9. Overstaying

- 9.1. Where an applicant has overstayed their most recent immigration permission and wishes to make an application in the UK, Manchester Met may issue a CAS.
- 9.2. However, the issuance of a CAS will be subject to the condition that a Super-Priority visa application can be submitted within 14 days of start of the period of overstay.
- 9.3. The applicant must also demonstrate there was a good reason beyond their control for overstaying. Whilst each case would be decided on its merits, examples include:
 - a. the applicant was admitted to hospital for emergency treatment (evidenced by an official letter verifying the admission and discharge from medical care).
 - b. the applicant has had a close family bereavement
 - c. the applicant has an application for a course with another sponsor (i.e. not Manchester Met) underway and the sponsor was not prompt in issuing them with a CAS
- 9.4. The applicant must provide proof that they have submitted their Super-Priority Student visa application within five working days of receiving the CAS.
- 9.5. If applicants fail to submit proof that they have submitted a Super-Priority visa application, or evidence that they have booked flight tickets to return to their country of residence to make an application from there if no appointments are available, Manchester Met may withdraw the CAS.
- 9.6. If an applicant has become an overstayer after enrolling, the [International Compliance Team](#) will take the necessary steps to protect the applicant's student record. This may include a temporary suspension of studies while new immigration permission is applied for until the point the new permission is received.
- 9.7. If a temporary suspension is agreed, this may only be for a short period. As such, your options will be to submit your new Super-Priority visa application within 14 days of your overstay beginning or to return to your country of residence to apply for Entry Clearance.
- 9.8. To re-join their course, applicants will need to provide the [International Compliance Team](#) with a new visa that permits them to study in the UK.

10. Enrolling at Manchester Met

- 10.1. Applicants are required to provide evidence of their immigration permission to be in the UK **before** enrolling online at Manchester Met. This is known as a Right to Study check.
- 10.2. Applicants will be required to make an in-time visa application if they wish to start their course from within the UK whilst waiting a decision on their application. They must provide evidence of this before they enrol for their course.
- 10.3. Applicants will be required to demonstrate to the [International Compliance Team](#) that an in-time application has been made by way of providing:

- a. a copy of their previous visa or immigration permission;
 - b. a copy of their application 'checklist'; **and**
 - c. proof of payment from their visa application
- 10.4. Where an applicant has enrolled for their course and they are unable to provide evidence of an in-time application or their immigration permission, a decision on whether the applicant can continue with their course will be made by the [International Compliance Team](#).
- 10.5. If an applicant is later refused, the guidance within sections 8 and 9 of this policy will apply.
- 10.6. Applicants cannot enrol for the course they are intending to apply for a visa for with a visa sponsored by another Higher Education Provider (HEP)

11. Graduate Visas

- 11.1. UK Visas and Immigration introduced the Graduate Visa on 07 July 2021.
- 11.2. Students may be eligible to apply upon successful completion of their course of study.
- 11.3. Manchester Met confirms this upon award of the degree following an examinations board, **not** upon publication of provisional marks prior to board.
- 11.4. Whilst Manchester Met will aim to ensure applicants are able to apply for the route following enrolment, every CAS is issued on the basis that the applicant is coming to study at the University, **not** based on applying for a job in the UK later.
- 11.5. There may be some circumstances where applicants will not be eligible following enrolment, particularly if their academic circumstances change.

Appendix One: Combined CAS Routes

Route:	A. Applicant is already unconditional for main course	B. Applicant is going from B1 to B2	C. Applicant is 0.5 below the main course overall IELTS requirement
Main course level	All UGT, PGT, PGR	All UGT, PGT, PGR	PGT only
Which Pre-sessional course?	5- or 10-week course	5- or 10-week course N.B. 5-week only eligible on case-by-case basis if no more than one component is 0.5 less than entry requirements for course.	5-week course (case by case basis and dependent on individual components)
IELTS scores needed	As per main course requirement	The applicant must have minimum B1 level and must achieve B2 at end of the Pre-sessional course. PGT & PGR 10-week course; Pre-Sessional entry requirement 5.5 (no component less than 5.0) UG 10 week; pre-sessional entry requirement 5.0 (no component less than 5.0)	B2, but the overall score cannot be more than 0.5 below the overall main course requirement
SELT needed?	No	Yes	No
Main course status	Unconditional	Only conditional on English but eligible for combined CAS.	Only conditional on English. However, main course will be made UF once applicant has accepted Pre-sessional offer, paid course fee and requested a combined CAS
Explanation	The applicant is already UF for their main course but wants to take a Pre-sessional course so	The applicant is at minimum B1 level and needs the Pre-sessional course to reach B2 level and meet UKVI and Manchester Met requirements for their main course.	The applicant meets UKVI requirements as they are at B2 level but needs the Pre-sessional course as they are slightly short of Manchester Met requirements.

	they can arrive earlier and adjust to UK life and study.	UKVI consider an applicant's level to be at B1 if any of the components of their IELTS test is at 5.0 or below.	If all criteria are met in this specific set of circumstances, we will consider the applicant UF for their main course, but they must complete the Pre-sessional with 100% attendance.
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Scenarios below are examples of PGT students applying for a combined CAS

Details of the Pre-sessional English programmes are available [here](#)

Successful for Route B:

IELTS scores	Overall band score	Comment	Type of IELTS needed
Listening = 5.5 Reading = 5.0 Writing = 5.5 Speaking = 6.5	5.5 CEFR level B2	Applicant is going from B1 to B2 i.e. has 5.0 for reading which is B1. All other skills above 5.5 and meets the UKVI entry requirements	UKVI IELTS B1, but no more than one component can be at 5.0

NOT successful for Route B:

IELTS scores	Overall band score	Comment	Type of IELTS needed
Listening = 5.0 Reading = 7.5 Writing = 5.0 Speaking = 5.0	5.5 CEFR level B2	Applicant is going from B1 to B2 but has three language components at 5.0 , which is B1 (listening, writing, and speaking). Although B1, to qualify for a combined CAS, no more than one component can be at 5.0	UKVI IELTS B1, but no more than one component can be at 5.0

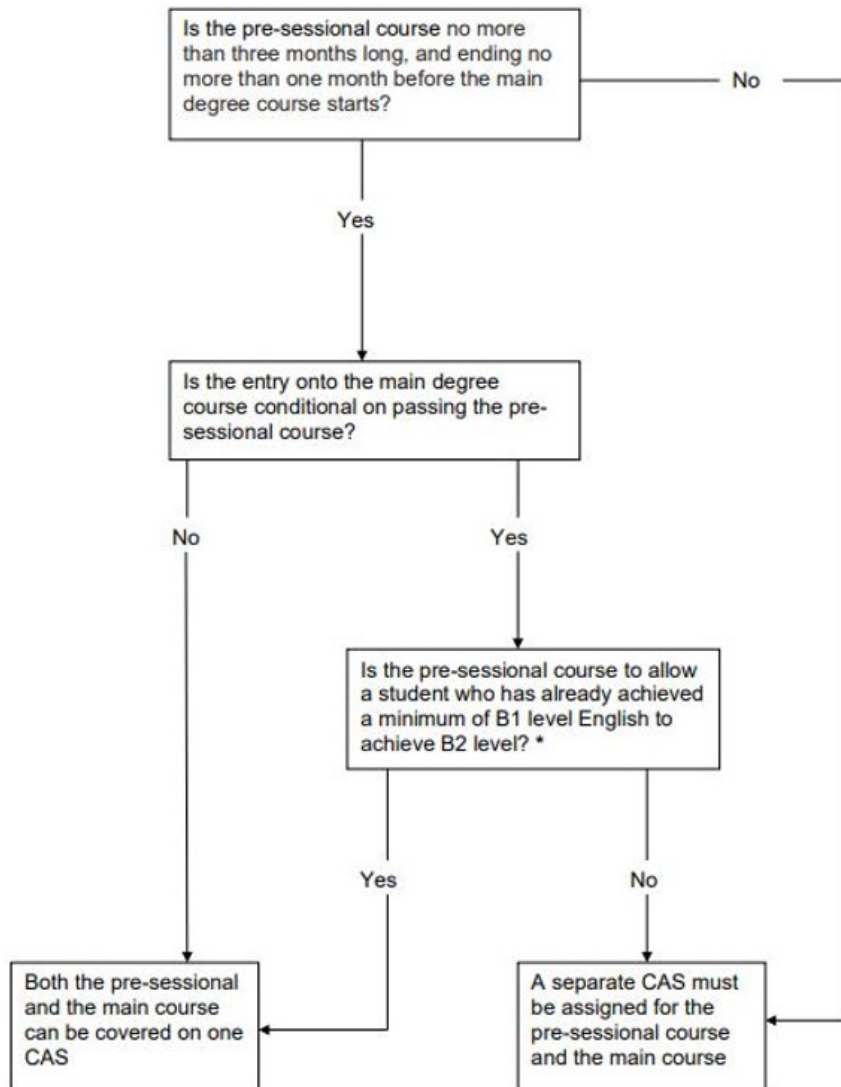
Successful for Route C:

IELTS scores	Overall band score	Comment	Type of IELTS
Listening = 5.5 Reading = 6.5 Writing = 5.5 Speaking = 6.0	6.0 CEFR level B2	Applicant is 0.5 below the main course overall IELTS requirement, i.e., has 6.0 overall but needs 6.5 to meet English language requirements for the course	Academic IELTS

		Listening skill and writing skill at 5.5 , which is low B2. All skills must be above 5.5 to meet the UKVI language entry requirements. Our entry requirements are higher, this route will allow students to move from Lower B2 to Higher B2	
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NOT Successful for Route C:

IELTS scores	Overall band score	Comment	Type of IELTS
Listening = 7.0 Reading = 6.5 Writing = 7.0 Speaking = 7.0	7.0 CEFR level B1	Reading is at 6.5. which is a higher B2, Overall score is C1. Unfortunately, one component is classed as B2 because of the reading component. For some courses the entry requirements are higher, example set at 7.0. Student cannot move from B1, B2 lower or B2 higher to C1.	Academic IELTS



IELTS	9
	8.5
	8
	7.5
	7
	6.5
	6
	5.5
	5
	4.5
4	

* This provision only covers students moving from courses that require a minimum of B1 level to courses that require B2 level, or a higher B2 level, and does not include any other moves between levels. For example a student holds B2 level English but needs C1 level to enter their course, the answer to this question is 'no'.