

## Tier 4 CAS Issuing Policy

This document sets out UCL's policy regarding the sponsorship of students who require a Tier 4 visa and is subject to change at any time in order to comply with Tier 4 sponsorship duties. Please note that UCL is under no legal obligation to provide sponsorship and is committed to meeting all duties under its licence in order to prevent risk to its status as a Tier 4 sponsor. The Immigration Rules and Tier 4 guidance override the content of UCL's CAS policy.

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it remains compliant with the Tier 4 Sponsor Guidance and Immigration Rules.

### Assigning a CAS

The UCL Admissions Team is responsible for assigning CASs to applicants starting a new programme at UCL. The Student Immigration Compliance Team is responsible for assigning CASs to continuing UCL students who wish to extend their leave in order to complete their programme, this includes those returning from a period of interruption. The Centre for Languages and International Education (CLIE) is responsible for assigning CASs to those who wish to register on a pre-sessional English programme.

CASs are only assigned to those who have met all conditions of their offer and the conditions of this policy.

UCL may carry out checks to ensure that sponsorship is only provided to those who it deems to be genuine students who will successfully obtain a visa. Checks may include an immigration status check with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI).

Continuing UCL students must have a registration status of 'enrolled' or 'expected to enrol' to receive a CAS.

Please note that continuing UCL students with a registration status of 'enrolled-debtor' are not eligible for a CAS until their debt has been cleared.

CASs are assigned no more than three months prior to the start of a new programme and for those returning from interruption, a CAS is assigned 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, CASs that are requested earlier are assigned at the discretion of the Student Immigration Compliance Team.

UCL will carry out the relevant checks to ensure that any individual who is already in the UK has valid permission to do so prior to assigning a CAS. Checks include an immigration status check with UK Visas and Immigration. If an individual is not eligible to apply for further Tier 4 sponsorship from within the UK, UCL will not assign a CAS until evidence has been received which shows that the student has left the UK, such as a flight boarding ticket.

UCL will not provide Tier 4 sponsorship to those with the following circumstances:

- The programme of study does not comply with Tier 4 requirements.
- An applicant or student has submitted documents which are proven or suspected to be fraudulent.
- An applicant or student has outstanding UCL debts, such as tuition or library fees.
- Any further Tier 4 sponsorship would lead the applicant or student to exceed the maximum limit for Tier 4 sponsorship.
- The applicant or student is not able to meet UKVI academic progression requirements set out in the Tier 4 Policy Guidance:  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/606685/T4\\_Migrant\\_Guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/606685/T4_Migrant_Guidance.pdf)
- There is reason to believe that sponsorship will put UCL's Tier 4 sponsor licence at risk, this includes concerns about the individual's intention to study, their genuineness, if there is reason to believe the applicant or student will not comply with the conditions of their Tier 4 leave (e.g. intention to work or past history of working more than 20 hours per week) or if a student is in breach of their visa conditions.
- If a PhD student is submitting their thesis as a non-registered student
- If a student is on interrupting-resitting status

UCL 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. These cases will be assessed on an individual basis by the Student Immigration Compliance Team.

### **CAS Request Form for continuing UCL students**

Continuing UCL students must apply for a new CAS using the [CAS Request Form](#). Once a completed form is submitted, the Student Immigration Compliance Team aim to assign the CAS in 5 working days, subject to the checks set out in this policy.

### **Sponsorship**

UCL will sponsor a student for the duration of their programme, subject to any compliance requirements of the University or UKVI which would result in sponsorship being withdrawn. UCL 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 date on the student's registration.

If a student meets the conditions to extend their Tier 4 visa to complete their programme, UCL will only provide sponsorship for the remaining duration of the programme.

The duration of a CAS for MPhil/PhD programmes will be from the programme start date and covers the registration period where the student is undertaking full-time study as a registered student including the writing up, viva and corrections period. Tier 4 sponsorship will be withdrawn if a student successfully obtains their award earlier than expected 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 'Interruption-Re-sitting' or 'Left-Re-sitting'. Those who are required to re-sit an exam at UCL will be expected to obtain a Short-term Study visa.

If a student requires sponsorship to repeat modules, a CAS will be assigned if continued participation is required within 60 days of the start of the next academic period. For example, if a student is required to repeat in term 1 only and write exams in May then sponsorship would cease at the end of term 1. Therefore the student would be required to leave the UK and return for their exams in May on a Short-term Study visa.

## **Pre-sessional Programmes**

UCL 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.

## **Doctorate Extension Scheme**

If you are a PhD student who is about to submit their final thesis, then you are eligible to apply for the Doctorate Extension Scheme. You must apply for a CAS using the [DES CAS Request Form](#).

Please note that the earliest that UCL is able to assign a CAS is 60 days before the expected award date of your degree. Please note that you will also need to submit your DES application before the expected award date stated on your CAS form.

## **Visa Refusals**

Any applicant or student who receives a visa application refusal is required to provide all pages of the refusal notice to UCL and will be reported to UK Visas and Immigration.

UCL will only assign a new CAS following a visa application refusal once UCL 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 Student Immigration Compliance Team which will be assessed for their eligibility to meet Tier 4 requirements.

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

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

UCL 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 Tier 4 visa from within the UK, you must ensure that you submit your visa application before your current visa expires. If you do not submit your application in-time, you will become an overstayer.

Overstaying means allowing your visa to expire and staying in the UK, which is a criminal offence.

If you have become an overstayer, you will need to depart the UK immediately. Any further visa application you make will need to be submitted from outside the UK. Please note that we 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.

UCL 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. These cases will be assessed on an individual basis by the Student Immigration Compliance Team.

### **Switching Immigration Category**

If you are looking to switch into Tier 4 from another immigration category, please note that UCL will be required to assess your eligibility for Tier 4 Sponsorship in line with the aforementioned policy.

Please note that, in the vast majority of cases, it will be necessary for you to apply for a new Tier 4 visa from overseas. As such you will need to provide evidence of your departure from the UK to the Student Immigration Compliance Team. This evidence of your departure will be saved to your student record.

### **Terms and Conditions**

To maintain Tier 4 sponsorship, students are required to meet the terms and conditions of their visa and are encouraged to review UCL's Tier 4 Responsibilities Guide:

[https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/sites/students/files/2018-tier4-responsibilities-guide-a5\\_0.pdf](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/sites/students/files/2018-tier4-responsibilities-guide-a5_0.pdf)

Tier 4 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.

UK Visas and Immigration requirements change frequently and therefore Tier 4 visa holders are advised to check the UKVI website for the most up to date information: <https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa>