

Immigration Sponsorship for Students Policy and Procedure

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Immigration Sponsorship for Students Policy and Procedure is in place to ensure that the University is compliant with its duties as a Student Sponsor, according to the Home Office Student Sponsor Guidance and the immigration rules.
- 1.2 The University's sponsor obligations begin from the moment a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) is assigned to a student. These obligations, including but not limited to record keeping, attendance monitoring and reporting changes to student circumstances, continue until sponsorship is no longer in place either because it has been withdrawn or the student visa has expired.
- 1.3 The success of this policy's implementation depends on the collaboration of all relevant business units within the University.
- 1.4 If a student fails to comply with this policy and it is deemed that a withdrawal or suspension is necessary, the University has a duty to the Home Office to report this at the earliest opportunity, and within 10 days of the final decision being made. A withdrawal or suspension can be deemed necessary when a student shows evidence of breaking their conditions for permission to study in the UK, where they have failed to support the University in its obligations as their Student sponsor, or where other University processes apply

2. Key Responsibilities

- 2.1 Responsibility for the management and implementation of this policy and procedure lies with the Academic Registrar.
- 2.2 The UKVI Compliance Manager acts as the main point of contact with regards to the implementation of this policy.
- 2.3 Registry teams are responsible for identifying any students with immigration sponsorship who have not progressed/completed as expected following assessment boards or who have not met the requirements of academic engagement as detailed in the Student Academic Engagement Policy. Details of these students are passed to the UKVI Compliance Manager for follow up action.
- 2.4 The UKVI Compliance Manager is responsible for reporting any changes of circumstance for individual Student visa holders, including withdrawals and non-attenders to the Home Office through the SMS system, or delegating this to any other authorised user as appropriate.
- 2.5 Under this policy and associated procedures any University role or officeholder may act through her or his appointed nominee.

3. Policy

- 3.1 Students with immigration sponsorship are expected to comply with the engagement requirements outlined in the Student Academic Engagement Policy.
- 3.2 Aside from the expected level of academic engagement, students must attend all enrolment and re-enrolment sessions. These are compulsory contact points.
- 3.3 If a student does not attend enrolment within the stipulated time-period, this will account for one missed contact.
- 3.4 Students with immigration sponsorship must provide original copies of immigration documents at enrolment as required. Failure to provide documents will delay full enrolment.
- 3.5 When issuing a Confirmation of Acceptance to Study (CAS) to new students, the University will state the latest date to enrol onto a course, which is usually 4 weeks from the start of the course. If a student does not enrol by this stated date, their non- enrolment will be reported to the Home Office and their sponsorship withdrawn.
- 3.6 Students studying on a student visa must advise the University of any changes to their UK address, e-

mail address and mobile telephone number throughout the duration of their course. These details are normally confirmed at enrolment and re-enrolment but can also be requested at any time by the University and students should inform the institution of any changes to their details immediately.

- 3.7 If staff have any concerns about the engagement of a student being sponsored by the University, they should raise this via studentvisas@aecc.ac.uk. **Due to the strict reporting deadlines of the Home Office, it is vital that there are no delays in staff concerns being raised.**
- 3.8 If a student with immigration sponsorship is withdrawn from their course by the University for lack of engagement as stipulated in the Student Academic Engagement Policy, the student will be reported as a non-attender to the Home Office and their sponsorship withdrawn through the SMS system.
- 3.9 Students sponsored by the University may choose to defer or suspend their studies due to personal or medical reasons. Students must apply for this option, via the relevant form from Registry, and follow the normal study break procedure.- The University will support students who defer their studies but must report this to the Home Office.
- 3.10 On deferral or suspension of a course of study, a Student visa is curtailed by the Home Office and when the student wishes to return to study, a new Student visa must be applied for.
- 3.11 The University will normally support this student in their return; however, each request will be assessed to ensure eligibility for immigration sponsorship. This assessment will take into account the student's attendance and engagement history, and whether the reason for the study break is likely to cause ongoing difficulties once the student returns to their course. The UKVI Compliance Manager will work with each student and where necessary their course lead to gather information.
- 3.12 If a student elects to finish a course early, either taking an exit award, or leaving the course, this will also be reported to the Home Office. The student's sponsorship will then be withdrawn by the University, and the Home Office will take action to curtail the student's visa.

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