

Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) Policy

1. Scope and Purpose

- 1.1. This document outlines the University's policy regarding its duty to retain Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) clearance certificates under Tier 4 of the points based system of immigration.
- 1.2. This policy is designed for use by staff responsible for issuing a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) for applicants and current students at the University. All staff working with students covered by the UK's points based immigration system must ensure the policy is adhered to accordingly.

2. ATAS Clearance Certificates

- 2.1. Students requiring ATAS clearance are identified by Admissions and the Visa Compliance Team. The Admissions office is responsible for identifying students requiring ATAS clearance at the point of admission to the University and for existing students switching into Tier 4. The Visa Compliance Team is responsible for identifying if ATAS is required for any existing students who are changing courses, changing modules/research projects or extending their stay in the UK.
- 2.2. Approved ATAS clearance certificates are sent directly to atas@kent.ac.uk by the Foreign Commonwealth Office. Students will receive a copy of their ATAS clearance certificate and may be requested to submit this to the University.
- 2.3. ATAS clearance certificates will be filed electronically in accordance with the Appendix A of the University's Tier 4 Record Keeping Policy.
- 2.4. The University will not issue a CAS to a student requiring a Tier 4 visa unless they have provided a copy of their approved ATAS clearance certificate.
- 2.5. In accordance with the Immigration Rules non-Tier 4 visa holders studying specific subjects will be required ATAS clearance. Therefore any non-EEA student with time limited leave will not formally be offered a place at the University until they have provided to the University a copy of a valid ATAS clearance certificate.
- 2.6. If a student's ATAS clearance is refused at the time of admission to the University the student may make another application to the University for either the same or different programme so long as the University does not have any cause for concern or have suspicion about the student's genuineness or intention for coming to the UK. In all cases where an ATAS clearance certificate is refused the University reserves the right to not sponsor a student on a subsequent occasion.

2.7. If a student's ATAS clearance is refused at the point of a visa extension or when switching into Tier 4 from a different immigration category then the University will not continue to sponsor the student and the student will be deregistered from the University.

3. ATAS Clearance Certificates

3.1. The Admissions Team, Student Records and supporting teams responsible for updating IS systems, are responsible for ensuring JACS codes remain up-to-date on KentVision and SDS. Admissions is also required to ensure students requiring ATAS clearance obtain ATAS certificates prior to offering a place and issuing a CAS.

3.2. Schools are responsible for ensuring ATAS research statements or modules are provided to either the Admissions Team or Visa Compliance Team, who can pass along the relevant information to students enabling them to apply for ATAS. Schools are also responsible for informing the Visa Compliance Team if a research student with time-limited leave wishes to change their research project, if the project varies from the project for which ATAS was originally granted.

3.3. The Visa Compliance Team are responsible for checking whether ATAS is required for any student requiring a visa extension and for students who switch course or change research projects.

3.4. Students are required to ensure they obtain ATAS clearance where required.

4. Policy Review

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

Policy approved by: Jon Pink, Academic Registrar (Home Office Authorising Officer)

Date approved: 29 April 2016

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