

POLICY ON OPERATING TIER 4 OF THE POINTS BASED SYSTEM (PBS) FOR IMMIGRATION

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1.2	Policy on Operating Tier 4 of the Points Based System (PBS) for Immigration	Student Experience and Enhancement Services (SEES)	Executive Team (June 2014)	June 2014

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Version 1.2

Policy on Operating Tier 4 of the Points Based System for Immigration

Purpose

1. The University's continued recruitment and admission of non EEA international students is reliant upon us maintaining relevant Home Office licences.
2. The purpose of this policy is to outline the University's commitment and overall approach to working effectively and efficiently within Tier 4 of the Points Based System for Immigration (PBS) to support the recruitment, admission and teaching of international students who require a visa to study in the UK. The policy and procedures are mandatory and apply to the work of all existing staff within academic departments and professional services involved in the recruitment, admission, and/or teaching of students and the administration of their studies.

Definitions

3. *Points Based System for Immigration*

The Points Based System (PBS) regulates entry to and stay in the UK for those subject to immigration control who come to the UK to work or study. The 5 tiers of the system are:

- Tier 1 visa for highly skilled individuals
- Tier 2 visa for skilled workers
- (Tier 3 visa for low skilled workers) – currently not in use
- Tier 4 visa for students
- Tier 5 visa for temporary workers and youth mobility scheme

This policy and the associated procedures are intended to ensure that the University meets its obligations as a Tier 4 license holder.

4. *Sponsorship Management System (SMS)*

SMS is a secure IT system which enables licensed sponsors to manage their licence and perform sponsor functions.

5. *Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies*

A confirmation of acceptance for studies (CAS) is a 'virtual document' similar to a database record which Tier 4 sponsors assign to applicants when an unconditional offer of a place on a course is being made. Each CAS has a unique reference

number, and contains information about the course of study and the applicant's personal details. A valid CAS is needed to make a Tier 4 visa application.

Key Principles

6. The University is pleased to have achieved and maintained its Tier 4 sponsor status and takes its responsibilities as a Sponsor seriously. Maintenance of this status is essential to the continued recruitment and retention of international students.
7. The University acknowledges its role as a Tier 4 sponsor and the obligations this entails including but not limited to the responsible recruitment, admission and administration of Tier 4 students, engaging with the SMS and appropriate co-operation with the Home Office.
8. The University makes arrangements to renew its licences with the Home Office within the appropriate timescales.

University Systems and Procedures

9. The University has systems and processes to support and facilitate effective and appropriate admission and enrolment of students and monitoring, record keeping, and reporting of information to Home Office as required. These systems are kept under review and development to respond to changing requirements and anticipated need.
10. The University's Admissions procedures incorporate provisions that deal with relevant Tier 4 requirements such as English language competency and academic progression. These procedures will continue to develop in response to changes in the Tier 4 system to ensure that they continue to safeguard our Tier 4 license status.
11. The University ensures an appropriate number of suitable Level 1 and Level 2 users are in place to support the day-to-day administration of the SMS. These users will most often be members of administrative staff within the Student Experience area. A current list of Level 1 and Level 2 users is maintained by the Information and Advice Team on behalf of the Authorising Officer.
12. The University provides and facilitates relevant training for staff members to support them in effectively undertaking work associated with Home Office Tier 4 systems and procedures.

Student Registration and Administration

13. Registering and teaching students who do not have appropriate immigration permission poses a serious risk to the University's Tier 4 license. The University may suspend or refuse registration to a student or withdraw a student from a programme of study if the student does not have appropriate immigration permission to study in the UK. A decision on whether a student should be withdrawn or registration refused will normally be taken by Student Lifecycle staff in consultation with the Information and Advice Team and/or Student Support and Wellbeing Manager and reported to the Head of Student Experience.

14. The University may also suspend or withdraw the registration and/or Tier 4 sponsorship of a Tier 4 student who has been identified through procedures for monitoring the engagement of Tier 4 students as failing to engage adequately with their course. The authority to withdraw or suspend registration on this basis lies with Senate and will normally be exercised by the appropriate Vice Dean Academic or their deputy within the relevant department. The decision to withdraw Tier 4 sponsorship rests with the Head of Student Experience who will normally delegate this responsibility to the Student Support and Wellbeing Manager and/or the Information and Advice Team.
15. The University may also refuse registration or withdraw a student, and cease Tier 4 sponsorship of a student if the students' circumstances are such that sponsorship is not appropriate under the requirements of current guidance and legislation relating to Tier 4 of the Points Based System. A decision on whether a student should be withdrawn or registration refused will normally be taken by Student Experience staff in consultation with the Information and Advice Team and/or Student Support and Wellbeing Manager and reported to the Head of Student Experience.

Responsibilities

16. The Chief Operating Officer is the University's designated Authorising Officer for Tier 4 and as such has overall responsibility for the University's compliance with Tier 4 requirements.
17. The Head of Student Experience is the University's Key Contact for Tier 4 and as such is responsible for ensuring that information received from the Home Office is appropriately dealt with and/or forwarded within the University. The Head of Student Experience also has strategic responsibility for the operation and staffing of the Admissions, Student Business and Information and Advice Teams, all of which work directly with the SMS and internal systems relevant to the admission and on-going support of international students requiring a visa under Tier 4.
18. The Student Lifecycle Services Manager, Student Support and Wellbeing Manager and relevant members of their staff teams have key operational responsibility in relation to the effective and efficient operating and development of systems and processes relevant to Tier 4.
19. The Executive Deans of the four University Faculties have strategic responsibility for the effective implementation and operation of the University's policies and procedures relevant to the sponsorship, admission, recruitment and on-going monitoring of students.
20. All staff who are involved in University processes associated with the recruitment, admission, teaching, supervision and administration of students who hold a Tier 4 visa have a responsibility to work within relevant policy and procedures and in support of the University's compliance with Home Office and relevant legal requirements. Since a wide range of both academic and professional services teams have key roles in the University's work in this area, it is essential that all staff involved work collaboratively with relevant colleagues across the institution.

Linked Policies and Procedures

Admissions Policy

Procedure for Admitting and Monitoring Students within the Points Based System of Immigration

Relevant Legislation or Guidance

[Home Office Tier 4 Sponsor Guidance](#)

[Home Office Tier 4 Policy Guidance](#)

[Statement of Changes to Immigration Rules 23 May 1994 \(HC395\), as amended](#)

September 2013