

# **Ravensbourne University London Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) Issuance Policy**

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## **1. Governing Principles**

**1.1.** When an international student who requires a visa to study in the UK accepts an offer of a place to study at Ravensbourne, they are considered to be requesting a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS). Any new applicant or student applying to begin a new course, who requests a CAS from Ravensbourne in order to apply for Entry Clearance (EC) or Leave to Remain (LTR) under Tier 4 of the Points Based System, must satisfy Ravensbourne that they meet the Home Office/UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) and Ravensbourne's requirements before a CAS will be issued.

**1.2.** The International Admissions Officers, Tier 4 Compliance Manager and Head of Admissions (or other authorised staff) (who are Level 1 or 2 users on the institution's sponsor licence) are authorised to issue CASs, to students starting a new course at Ravensbourne as well as existing students switching into Tier 4 during their studies. CASs assigned to Tier 4 students currently studying at Ravensbourne who wish to further extend their leave in order to complete a course will be issued by the Tier 4 Compliance or alternate. All CASs must be approved/signed off by either the Tier 4 Manager or Head of admissions (where applicable) or their alternate before being issued to an incoming/current student.

**1.3.** As part of its responsibilities as a Tier 4 sponsor Ravensbourne will only issue a CAS to a student who to the best of its knowledge meet the requirements under Tier 4 and will be able to make a successful visa/leave to remain application and will not fall for refusal. Authorised staff may require applicants requesting a CAS to provide further information and documentary evidence to enable Ravensbourne to properly evaluate the case and fulfil its sponsor duties before issuing a CAS.

**1.4.** Authorised staff will issue a CAS only where the applicant:

- has met all conditions for the course they intend to study at Ravensbourne;
- has paid the required non-refundable CAS deposit and/or provided proof of financial sponsorship and ability to meet the financial requirements for their visa/LTR application;
- is seeking to study a course that is deemed to be 'progression' from previous study in accordance with published UKVI guidance, unless exempt;
- has demonstrated that they are a genuine student; and
- has a complete application, including passport and previous study details and have provided Ravensbourne with all required documents.

**1.5.** Ravensbourne can only sponsor students for a Tier 4 General visa who will be studying a programme at RQF Level 3 or above on a full time basis (part time also for postgraduate study if applicable).

## **2. Issuing Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CASs)**

**2.1.** Authorised staff should refer to the **Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) Issuance Process Manual** before drafting/issuing a CAS.

**2.2.** For incoming students, only applicants who have been given and formally accepted an unconditional offer for a place to study on a full time course (part-time also for relevant postgraduate studies) at Ravensbourne (i.e. fulfilled all academic, Tier 4 and general conditions of entry), submitted all outstanding required documentation (including a completed Immigration History and CAS Request Form) and have paid at least the £5,000 non-refundable CAS deposit (unless exempt) will be issued with a CAS. **US applicants receiving US Federal Student Loans are not required to pay the £5,000 non-refundable CAS deposit.** The CAS will be issued no more than six months prior to the course start date however as an applicant cannot apply for their Tier 4 visa more than three months before the start date of their course Ravensbourne will usually only issue a CAS three months before the applicant's course start date as a matter of precaution.

**2.3.** All documents (academic, financial, etc) required for CAS issuance must be submitted in English, where the applicant's/student's documents have not been issued in English s/he must provide Ravensbourne with the original along with a fully certified translation prepared by a professional translator or translation company.

**2.4.** Applicants holding an unconditional offer who have opted to attend a pre-sessional English language, course, which is not a requirement of their offer, will be issued a single CAS to cover both the pre-sessional and the main course of study (degree programme).

Applicants' with CEFR B1 English language ability in 1 or more of the four sub-components of language learning are to be assigned a separate CAS to enable them attend the English language pre-sessional course. If at the end of the pre-sessional course the student successfully achieves English Language CEFR level B2 in each component or provide us with an IELTS or equivalent English language qualification demonstrating CEFR B2 level in each component Ravensbourne shall assign a second CAS for their main academic course of study, providing they continue to

meet all Tier 4 and other eligibility requirements, which would enable the student to make a Tier 4 visa extension application from inside the UK.

**2.5.** Receipt of an academic admission offer from Ravensbourne does not guarantee that a CAS will be assigned to the applicant. The applicant's immigration history, previous UK study and status will need to be assessed in accordance with the Tier 4 requirements and UK Immigration Rules.

**2.6.** Ravensbourne reserves the right to refuse to issue a CAS even if the applicant meets all of its academic entry requirements. Where the Tier 4 Compliance Manager/Head of Admissions or alternate declines to issue a CAS to an applicant/student, applicants/students may seek a review of this decision by the Authorising Officer (AO) of Ravensbourne's sponsor licence or Director of relevant team. Applicants can do so by writing to the AO or Director within 10 days of being informed, explaining the reasons why they consider the decision to be incorrect.

**2.7.** Ravensbourne may make any additional checks it deems necessary to ensure it only sponsors genuine students who are likely to make a successful immigration application. These checks may include, but are not limited to, reviewing bank statements and financial documents or requesting previous immigration history (from student and UKVI) and CASs from previous institutions of study.

**2.8.** Ravensbourne will not issue a CAS in the following situations:

- Where the course the student intends to study will not comply with Tier 4 requirements.
- If there is any reason to believe a student will not comply with the conditions of their Tier 4 leave (e.g. intention to work or past history of working more than 20/10 hours per week) or if a student is in breach of their visa conditions.
- The applicant/student is unable to demonstrate that s/he meets the requirements for a Tier 4 visa and, where applicable, is in breach of any of Ravensbourne's regulations.
- If an applicant/student has submitted documents which are proven or suspected to be fraudulent.
- Where a student has outstanding tuition or other debts with Ravensbourne and Ravensbourne has concerns about the student's ability to pay tuition and/or other fees.
- If the duration of an applicant/student's course will result in them exceeding the maximum allowable time studying as a Tier 4 student. Likewise, Ravensbourne will not issue a CAS to any student wishing to extend their course if the

extension would result in the student exceeding the maximum length of study permitted by the Immigration Rules and [Tier 4 Policy Guidance](#).

- If Ravensbourne decides that sponsoring an applicant/student will put its sponsor licence at risk or has concerns about the applicant's/student's intention to study and genuineness.
- The student is not making satisfactory academic progress in accordance with Ravensbourne's Academic Regulations or has failed to engage with their course during their studies at Ravensbourne.
- The course does not represent academic progression in accordance with the Tier 4 Sponsor Guidance and Immigration Rules.
- Where sponsorship has been withdrawn by Ravensbourne previously and the student's visa has since expired unless the student provides evidence to Ravensbourne to confirm that they have left the UK and intend to apply for new entry clearance from overseas to return to their studies.

**2.9.** Ravensbourne reserves the right to not issue a CAS if there are reasonable grounds to believe that an applicant's visa/leave to remain application will be unsuccessful due to:

- A history of visa refusals.
- Insufficient funds (tuition and maintenance).
- Criminal convictions or involvement with terrorist activity.
- Any behaviour or evidence which would lead Ravensbourne to believe the applicant/student is not a genuine student.
- Any evidence to suggest an applicant/a student has broken immigration laws or conditions of any previously held UK immigration permission.
- The applicant/student has overstayed their UK immigration permission as defined in the Immigration Rules and tier 4 guidance (e.g. by more than 14 days).
- The applicant/student is in the UK and does not hold valid immigration permission to be in the country or they are in the UK in an immigration category, which does permit them to switch into Tier 4.
- The applicant/student's course does not represent academic progression.
- if the applicant has failed a course of study at another institution in the UK, unless due to medical conditional or serious personal circumstance (to be reviewed on a case by case basis).
- Poor English language ability.
- The applicant/student has provided false information to the Ravensbourne or presented fraudulent documentation.
- There are less than 5 working days before the latest start date for an applicant's course.
- An applicant/a student will not arrive in time for their course's latest start date.

**2.10.** Ravensbourne reserves the right to charge applicants where a CAS needs to be reissued due to a mistake on the applicant's part.

### **3. Financial requirements for CAS issuance**

**3.1.** All applicants (except those receiving a US Federal Student Loan or otherwise exempt) must provide evidence that they have the required funds to cover the remainder of their tuition fees (less the £5,000 non-refundable CAS deposit they are required to pay in order to receive a CAS from Ravensbourne) if they have not paid their tuition fees in full, plus the amount required to cover their 'living expenses/maintenance costs' for the first nine months of their study in the UK (currently £11,385). Students must provide this evidence in the form of official bank statement(s)/bank letter/official financial sponsorship letter/loan letter to show that the required amounts are available to them.

**3.2.** Bank statement(s) or other evidence of finances submitted must show the full required amount has been held by the applicant/parent(s)/legal guardian(s) for 28 consecutive days from the closing balance of the bank statement(s)/financial documents and has not fallen below the required amount at any point during the 28 days.

**3.3.** Scanned copies of bank statement(s) or other financial documents submitted must be signed and stamped by the issuing bank and must show the address of the bank or issuing authority.

**3.4.** The banks statement(s)/bank letter/loan letters or official financial sponsorship letter provided by the applicant must be dated no earlier than 31 days before the intended date of their Tier 4 visa application, if applicable.

**3.5.** If the applicant is relying on money held in their parent's or legal guardian's bank account, the applicant must provide Ravensbourne with a signed and dated letter from their parent/legal guardian confirming their relationship to the applicant and that they have given the applicant full use of the available funds for their studies. In addition, the applicant must provide relevant evidence as proof of the relationship, such as a birth certificate or family register.

**3.6.** Applicants should normally submit the same bank statement(s)/other evidence of financial ability they provided to Ravensbourne to evidence their finances with their Tier 4 visa application. If the applicant submits a bank statement that is different from the one that was assessed by Ravensbourne, and is detailed on their CAS, their visa application could be refused if it fails to meet UKVI requirements. Applicants are therefore advised to provide Ravensbourne with a scanned copy of

the bank statement/financial document, if different from the one used to obtain their CAS, prior to submitting their visa application to the UKVI (VAC/UK Diplomatic Post).

#### **4. Financial Documentary Requirements for Eligible ‘differentiation arrangements’ nationals**

**4.1.** Nationals of certain countries (please refer to [Appendix H](#) for a full list) are not required by UKVI to submit their financial or educational documentation with their Tier 4 visa application because they qualify for a ‘differentiation arrangements’. **This exemption applies where the national of an eligible country is applying for UK entry clearance in his/her country of nationality or legal residence or leave to remain in the UK, otherwise they will be required to submit all required documentation with their Tier 4 visa application. Where an applicant is a dual national, and only one of their nationalities is considered eligible for different documentary requirements, s/he will be able to apply using the different documentary requirements that apply to these nationals, provided s/he is applying either for entry clearance in his/her country of nationality or legal residence or for leave to remain in the UK.**

**4.2.** Whilst applicants who are nationals of eligible ‘differentiation arrangements’ countries are not currently required to submit academic and financial documents with their Tier 4 visa application, they are required by UKVI to confirm that they hold the documents in the required manner and must therefore be able to provide UKVI with the documents immediately if requested. If an applicant is unable to provide the documentation when requested, their application could be refused.

**4.3.** As a matter of precaution, Ravensbourne currently requires nationals from eligible ‘differentiation arrangement’ countries to provide financial documents in line with UKVI requirements before a CAS is issued. However, to facilitate and speed up the process eligible applicants may submit online/screenshots of their bank statement(s)/financial documents to meet the financial documentary requirement. Ravensbourne shall issue a CAS to such applicants on the basis of an online bank statement(s)/scanned bank letter provided they it meets the other UKVI requirements (i.e. money has been held for 28 days, clearly states the account holder etc.).

**4.4.** Applicants who are eligible for differentiation arrangements are strongly advised to note the information related to the financial and educational documents detailed in their CAS letter issued by Ravensbourne and have them ready to hand before they submit their Tier 4 visa application however they **must** not submit the documents with their visa application.

#### **5. Tier 4 students requiring immigration permission extensions (leave to remain (LTR))**

**5.1.** Ravensbourne will assess the academic performance/progression for any applicant/student who has previously held or currently holds Tier 4 (General) or pre-Tier 4 leave and has studied in the UK. To receive a CAS an applicant/student must normally be applying for a course which is at a higher RQF level than the previous course studied under Tier 4 (General). Where an applicant/student has previously studied on a course in the UK at the same level or a lower level than the course he or she intends to study at Ravensbourne, Ravensbourne will only consider issuing a CAS if:

- The new course is connected to, is part of the same subject group as, or involves deeper specialisation of the previous course for which Tier 4 (General) or 'pre-2009' student leave was granted; or
- The previous course and new course together support a student's genuine career aspirations.
- The applicant is otherwise exempt from showing academic progression.

If the Tier 4 Compliance Manager in consultation with the relevant staff where necessary, determines that academic progression can be justified then Ravensbourne will issue a CAS. However, in such cases Ravensbourne will not normally issue a CAS for an in-country Tier 4 application and the applicant/student will be advised to make a fresh Tier 4 visa application from overseas.

**5.2.** Ravensbourne will only provide a CAS to an existing Ravensbourne student to extend their leave if it is satisfied the student intends to and is able to follow the course of study as evidenced by previous academic performance.

**5.3.** For the purposes of applying for a visa extension in the UK, a CAS will only be issued to an applicant/student whose current visa permits for an extension of, or switching to the Tier 4 general student category.

**5.4.** Any student wishing to extend their leave under Tier 4 to study at Ravensbourne must complete an Immigration History Form, which should be received at least 10 working days before the expiry date of their Tier 4 visa/leave. A CAS extension will be considered once an applicant/student has signed and submitted these documents as well as any other required documentation.

**5.5.** Applicants/Students will only be issued a CAS after agreeing to Ravensbourne's Terms and Conditions of Tier 4 Sponsorship.

## **6. Length of Sponsorship**

**6.1** Ravensbourne will sponsor an incoming student for the duration of the student's course, subject to any compliance requirements of the institution, which would result in sponsorship being withdrawn.

**6.2.** The course start date detailed on the CAS should normally correspond with the official start/term date for their specific course as published by Ravensbourne.

**6.3.** The course end date on the CAS should normally correspond with the course end date of the incoming student's programme of study and is the date by which a student is expected to have completed all academic elements of the course including taught sessions, examinations, assessments and writing and submitting dissertations/theses unless these can be completed from overseas and there is no substantial reason to remain on campus/in the UK.

**6.4.** If a student meets the conditions to have their leave extended to continue their course, Ravensbourne will only assign a CAS for the remaining duration of the course.

## **7. Visa/leave to remain refusals**

**7.1.** If an incoming student's visa application is refused, Ravensbourne may consider issuing **only one** additional CAS during the academic year if the student can provide evidence to show there is minimal or no chance of their visa being refused a subsequent time. Students deferring their place on a course due to a visa refusal will be permitted to defer their place for one academic year only.

**7.2.** Further CASs will not normally be assigned where an incoming student/current student has had a refusal due to failing a credibility interview.

**7.3.** Any incoming/current student whose visa/ leave to remain application, or where an administrative review request was refused, is to be reported to UKVI and Tier 4 sponsorship is to be withdrawn.

**7.4.** Any incoming/current student with a visa/leave to remain application refusal who requests a new CAS must provide Ravensbourne with a full copy of their Home Office/UKVI refusal notice and any other relevant information.

**7.5.** Provided the conditions of paragraph 7.1 are met, Ravensbourne may issue one additional CAS to a student following a visa refusal/leave to remain application. However, if the visa/LTR application is refused a second time Ravensbourne will not issue a further CAS.

**7.6.** Ravensbourne reserves the right to not issue a CAS to any incoming/current student who has had their visa/leave to remain application refused, particularly if as a result of failing a UKVI credibility interview.

## **8. Deferrals and CAS issuance**

**8.1.** Incoming Students who are unable to enrol by the agreed enrolment deadline and would like to defer their place on the course for longer than the two weeks late enrolment period allowed must contact their specific admissions officer/Compliance team immediately. The decision to allow an incoming student to enrol after the deadline shall be made in consultation with the course/subject leader for the incoming student's academic course. Incoming students who wish to defer their place for the next academic year will have their current CAS withdrawn and be shall be issued with a new CAS, subject to satisfying the admission and Tier 4 requirements at the time, which must be used prior to enrolling on the deferred course.

## **9. Sending a CAS to a Student**

**9.1.** A CAS will normally be provided directly to an incoming/returning student. A CAS should not be sent to any other party without the student's consent. In all cases where a student has provided consent to send their CAS to another party, such as an agent, the student must be copied into the email.

**9.2.** When a CAS is emailed to an incoming student Ravensbourne will provide the student with information on the qualifications and information that were used to make the admission offer and issue their CAS.

## **10. Intermissions, Re-sits and Repeats**

**10.1.** When a student wish to return to their studies following a period of intermission, Ravensbourne will only sponsor the student if they meet the relevant conditions for CAS issuance as detailed in this policy including:

- meeting the requirement to provide valid documentary evidence of English language ability at CEFR level B2 for courses at RQF 6 and above in accordance with UKVI's requirement and Ravensbourne's English language policy unless exempt.;
- obtaining academic approval for extending their programme;
- demonstrating academic progression in accordance with published Home Office/UKVI Rules and Ravensbourne's institutional requirements;
- is no more than two years behind their original completion date for the programme;
- has no outstanding financial obligations to the Ravensbourne, whether for tuition or other fees;

- has paid the relevant CAS deposit (see above) and has or will pay all tuition fees on or before re-enrolment;
- has not breached any UK Immigration Rules during their studies and/or during the period of their deferral/intermission; and
- providing Ravensbourne with any documentation requested such as updated immigration history details, evidence of departure from the UK and evidence of finances etc. The Compliance team may require returning students requesting a CAS to provide further information and documentary evidence to enable Ravensbourne to properly evaluate the case and fulfil its sponsor duties before issuing a CAS.
- Providing relevant evidence if intermission was taken on the basis of a medical reason.

It is the responsibility of the returning student to provide any required information and to fulfil any conditions identified by Ravensbourne.

**10.2.** If a Tier 4 student is outside the UK and is required to re-sit an exam Ravensbourne will not normally assign a CAS to that student if there is no further participation or intention to study after the exam. The student will be expected to obtain a short- term study visa which will allow them to enter the UK to re-sit the exam.

**10.3.** If a student is required to repeat modules then a CAS will be assigned where there is a demonstrated requirement for the student to remain in the UK to complete repeat the module(s)/ unit(s) and complete their programme and the student's continued participation is required within 60 days of the start of Ravensbourne's next academic period.

**10.4.** If a student's continued participation on campus is not required within 60 days of the start of the next academic period and or/their current Tier 4 visa will expire, s/she will be required to leave the UK and make a fresh Tier 4 visa application from overseas.

**10.5.** Only the Tier 4 Compliance Manager and/or their alternate are currently authorised to issue CAS for current/returning students extending their programme or applying for further leave to remain. The Tier 4 Compliance Manager may require students requesting a CAS to provide further information and documentary evidence to enable Ravensbourne to properly evaluate the case and fulfil its sponsor duties before issuing a CAS.

## **11. Writing Up, dissertations and Revisions**

**11.1.** Ravensbourne will not normally issue a CAS to a postgraduate student who has already submitted their dissertation but requires an extension to their immigration permission in order to attend their final presentation or complete revisions.

**11.2.** In the event a student's continued participation on campus and use of Ravensbourne facilities is required for the purposes of carrying out revisions Ravensbourne may consider issuing a CAS, provided Ravensbourne can continue to meet its sponsorship duties. For example, a student may require the use of specialist equipment for the purpose of completing major revisions. These cases will be rare and Ravensbourne will consider requests on a case-by-case basis and reserves the right to refuse any request to issue a CAS to a student in such circumstances.

**11.3.** If a postgraduate student is currently outside the UK and is required to return to campus to attend their final presentation, the Ravensbourne will not normally assign a CAS and will expect the student to obtain a visitor or short-term study visa.

## **12. Pre-sessional Courses and Foundation to degree course progression**

**12.1.** Ravensbourne will issue one CAS to cover a pre-sessional course and main course of study if the incoming student has received an unconditional offer for their main course of study.

**12.2.** Applicants' with CEFR B1 English language ability in 1 or more of the four sub-components of language learning are to be assigned a separate CAS to enable them attend the English language pre-sessional course. Before a CAS can be issued they must provide Ravensbourne with a SELT confirming that they are at CEFR B1 level in each component of language learning (reading writing, speaking and listening).

**12.3.** If an incoming student is will be studying a course on a stand-alone Foundation Education programme, Ravensbourne will issue a single CAS to cover the year for the foundation course. Progression to any degree course and the issue of any further CAS is subject to the satisfactory completion of the Foundation Education programme and any specific conditions of undergraduate entry as required by Ravensbourne.

### 13. Key CAS contacts

Name	Contact Details	Area of Work
Gail Bumbury, <b>Tier 4 Compliance Manager</b>	g.bumbury@rave.ac.uk Telephone: 07730618744 Room 103	Day to day operational management of Tier 4 Compliance; SMS Level 1 user; issues with student attendance and engagement; problems with CAS;
Alex White, <b>Head of Admissions</b>	a.white@rave.ac.uk	Responsible for all admissions operations at Ravensbourne.
Gulnoza Alimova, <b>International Admissions Officer</b>	g.alimova@rave.ac.uk +44(0)203 040 3665 Room 103	Responsible for Tier 4 students applying for Non-Fashion courses and Foundation course (Design and Media and Media Production. SMS Level 2 user
Stefania Lombardo <b>International Admissions Officer</b>	s.lombardo@rave.ac.uk +44(0)203 040 3662 Room 103	Responsible for Tier 4 students applying for Fashion courses and Foundation course (Fashion and Textile). SMS Level 2 user.
Jennifer Kumpelis <b>Postgraduate Admissions Officer</b>	j.kumpelis@rave.ac.uk +44(0)20 3040 3674 Room 103	Responsible for Tier 4 students applying to postgraduate courses at Ravensbourne. SMS Level 2 user.