

Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) Administrative 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.

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 this policy must ensure the policy is adhered to accordingly.

2. ATAS Clearance Certificates

2.1. Students requiring ATAS clearance are identified by Admissions and the Student Immigration Compliance Team.

The Admissions office is responsible for:

- Identifying students requiring ATAS clearance at the point of admission to the University, including:
 - Visiting research students whose stay will be coming to the UK for periods of 6 months or less
 - Existing students switching into the Student route (formerly Tier 4)
 - All non-EEA national students aged 18 or over, who have time-limited leave to stay in the UK.

The Student Immigration Compliance Team is responsible for

- Identifying if ATAS is required for any existing students who are:
 - Changing courses
 - Changing modules/research projects (or project titles)
 - Extending their course completion date by 3 months or more.

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 Appendix A of the University's Sponsored Student Record Keeping Policy.

2.4. The University will not issue a CAS to a student requiring a Student visa unless they have provided a copy of their approved ATAS clearance certificate. In extenuating circumstances SICT will accept proof of an application made within a reasonable timeframe.

2.5. In accordance with the Immigration Rules non-sponsored visa holders studying specific subjects will require 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 a 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 the Student route 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 teams responsible for updating IS systems, are responsible for ensuring course codes remain up-to-date on KentVision. Admissions is also required to ensure students requiring ATAS clearance obtain ATAS certificates prior to offering a place and issuing a CAS. Both Admissions and the Student Immigration Compliance Teams are responsible for checking whether students require ATAS based on their CAH3 (Common Aggregate Hierarchy) code, part of The Higher Education Classification of Subjects (HeCOS) which replaced the JACS system.

3.2. Schools are responsible for ensuring ATAS research statements or modules are provided to the Admissions Team, Student Immigration Compliance Team or directly to the student to facilitate them applying for ATAS. Schools are also responsible for informing the Student Immigration Compliance Team if a research student with time-limited leave wishes to change their research project/title, if the project varies from the project for which ATAS was originally granted.

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

4. Procedure Review

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

Version	Effective Date	Activity	Previous Version
1.0	17/01/2014	Initial version	N/A
2.0	23/10/2015	Updated by former Compliance Manager (Overseas Students)	1.0
3.0	29/04/2016	Updated by former Compliance Manager (Overseas Students)	2.0
3.1	12/02/2019	Updated by former Head of Student Immigration Compliance	3.0
4.0	19/12/2022	Updated by Student Immigration Compliance Manager	3.1
5.0	02/01/2025	Updated by Student Immigration Compliance Manager	4.0
6.0	03/08/2026	Updated by Student Immigration Compliance Manager	5.0