

Neil Hughes  
Level 2,  
Vulcan House (Steel)  
Sheffield  
S3 8NU

Email: [PBS Communications](mailto:PBS.Communications@ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk)  
Web: [www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk)

22<sup>nd</sup> January 2010

Dear Tier 4 Sponsor

We are writing to inform you; on **Monday 22 February 2010** the final phase of Tier 4 of the Points Based System (PBS) will be implemented.

**What this means for Tier 4 Sponsors:**

- **Visa Letters become obsolete** – from 22 February 2010 it will be mandatory for all Tier 4 Sponsors to use the Sponsorship Management System (SMS) to issue Confirmations of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) to potential students applying from inside or outside the United Kingdom. Applications from potential students for leave that do not contain a CAS number after the 22 February will fall for refusal.
- **Reporting via the SMS becomes mandatory** for students who have used a CAS in an application for leave. Please see our guidance at:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/employers/points/sponsoringmigrants/sponsorshipduties/tierspecificduties/studentspecificduties/>

- If you became a licensed Tier 4 sponsor before 5 October 2009 then you must have performed the transition exercise on the SMS before you can issue CAS. This is an activity allowing you to split your CAS allocation between the two Tier 4 Categories; Tier 4 General and Tier 4 Child. If you have not yet performed the transition exercise, full details on how to do so can be found using the following link -

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/employers/points/sponsoringmigrants/sms/transition/> or by searching 'transition exercise' on the UK Border Agency website.

- **You will need to provide potential students with a CAS number** and your sponsor licence number. You should also provide the potential student with the following information:
  - Course title
  - Course start and end date
  - Details of any financial sponsorship/deposits taken

- Documents that should be included as part of an application to prove qualifications

**What this means for Tier 4 potential students:**

- From 22 February 2010 potential students must be in possession of a CAS number from their prospective Tier 4 sponsor in support of their application for leave
- Potential students in possession of a Visa Letter from their sponsor can only use it if they apply for leave before 22 February 2010, irrespective of whether the decision on that application is made after 22 February 2010.
- Any application submitted on or after 22 February 2010 that does not contain a supporting CAS number will be refused.

**Enhancements to the Sponsorship Management System**

- A facility allowing the sponsor SMS user to input the details of a CAS within a batch based on the details of the previous CAS within the batch. This will pull through some of the data from the previous CAS thereby reducing the amount of data that needs to be entered.
- The main site study address will be mandatory for the assignment of a CAS.

For information on using the SMS please view the SMS User Guides on the UK Border Agency website:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/employersandsponsors/sms-user-manual-t4/>

Kind regards

Neil Hughes  
Director of Temporary Migration Programme