STAFF HANDBOOK FOR DEPARTMENTS, DEGREE COMMITTEES AND COLLEGES

A GUIDE TO GRADUATE ADMISSIONS
A Guide to Graduate Admissions

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Introduction:

The Graduate Admissions Office (GAO) is responsible for administering applications for graduate programmes at the University of Cambridge (excluding the MBA, EMBA, MST, MFIN and PGCE), and acts on behalf of the Board of Graduate Studies (BGS).

We use a web-based application process and applications are made online via the Applicant Portal. Help and guidance can be found via the following link: http://www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/applicant-portal

The standard online application costs £50. Applicants can also apply on paper, which has an increased cost of £100 due to the extra administration required.

The Graduate Admissions Office processes applications from initial application, to conditional offer, to confirmed admission, and the key office responsibilities are as follows:

1. **Initial Application** – GAO manages the Applicant Portal and maintains an online course directory which provides relevant information to applicants. GAO is the key contact for applicants during the initial application stages.

2. **Conditional Offer** - Once both the Department and Degree Committee have agreed to recommend the applicant for admission, it is GAO’s responsibility to make the formal offer, on behalf of BGS, setting the appropriate conditions to ensure that the applicant meets the minimum requirements of the University (as determined by BGS) before admission, including any additional conditions required by the Department/Degree Committee.

3. **Meeting Offer Conditions and Confirming Admission** - GAO processes all documentation received to meet the conditions of the offer (known internally as Spot Post), and confirms the applicant’s admission once all conditions have been met. They also produce the Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) if the applicant requires a Tier 4 visa in order to study in the UK.

The GAO answers applicant and internal queries, and offers advice where necessary throughout the application process.

Other GAO responsibilities include:
- Issuing guidance on international qualification equivalencies
- Co-ordinating applications for disabled applicants with the DRC
- Provision of admissions statistics for management information
- Liaising with Departments, Colleges and central bodies on funding
- Providing training graduate admissions administration to those who require it
- Establishing fee status for applicants (including complex cases)
- Liaising with CamSIS to improve admissions technology and procedures

The GAO deals with 16,000+ applications every year. Of those 16,000 around 6,500 receive conditional offers of admission and 3,500 are confirmed and matriculate on to the course (about 1/5 of the total number of applications received).

A guide to the student journey for Graduate Admissions can be found here.
Staff of the Graduate Admissions Team:

Please contact your School contact with general enquiries. If your enquiry falls under any of the specialisms (in italics) then please contact the specialist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Specialisms</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alex Drury</td>
<td>Head of Graduate Admissions</td>
<td>complaints and appeals, projects</td>
<td>01223 (3)38386</td>
<td><a href="mailto:alex.drury@admin.cam.ac.uk">alex.drury@admin.cam.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy Davnall</td>
<td>Deputy Head of Graduate Admissions</td>
<td>Fee Status, Financial Tracker, Academic cases</td>
<td>01223 (3)37937</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tracy.davnall@admin.cam.ac.uk">tracy.davnall@admin.cam.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liam Boote</td>
<td>Information Systems Officer</td>
<td></td>
<td>01223 (3)34744</td>
<td><a href="mailto:liam.boote@admin.cam.ac.uk">liam.boote@admin.cam.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holly Kavanagh</td>
<td>Graduate Events, Marketing and Recruitment Co-ordinator</td>
<td></td>
<td>01223 (3)38394</td>
<td><a href="mailto:holly.kavanagh@admin.cam.ac.uk">holly.kavanagh@admin.cam.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>01223 (3)65813</td>
<td><a href="mailto:stephen.schwab@admin.cam.ac.uk">stephen.schwab@admin.cam.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Graduate Admissions Administrator</td>
<td>Disability, Part-Time Students, International Qualifications and International Scholarships</td>
<td>01223 (7)65984</td>
<td><a href="mailto:clare.impey@admin.cam.ac.uk">clare.impey@admin.cam.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Sellens</td>
<td>Graduate Admissions Administrator</td>
<td>Database and Statistics, CamSIS, worklists</td>
<td>01223 (3)38391</td>
<td><a href="mailto:richard.sellens@admin.cam.ac.uk">richard.sellens@admin.cam.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy Williams</td>
<td>Graduate Admissions Administrator</td>
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<td>01223 (7)66774</td>
<td><a href="mailto:wendy.williams@admin.cam.ac.uk">wendy.williams@admin.cam.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>P/T Graduate Admissions Administrator</td>
<td>English Language</td>
<td>01223 (7)64851</td>
<td><a href="mailto:inna.cherevach@admin.cam.ac.uk">inna.cherevach@admin.cam.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Graduate Admissions Clerk</td>
<td>English Language, Deferrals</td>
<td>01223 (7)64854</td>
<td><a href="mailto:haofei.yu@admin.cam.ac.uk">haofei.yu@admin.cam.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
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<td>website and course database – Mon &amp; Tues</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:ryan.cronin@admin.cam.ac.uk">ryan.cronin@admin.cam.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Deadlines to observe:

Throughout the year there are several deadlines that Departments must observe in order for the GAO to be able to process offers of admission, confirmations and CAS statements in a timely manner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Applicant Deadline for Submitting an Application</th>
<th>Degree Committee Deadline for Recording a Decision on CamSIS (i.e. offer of admission or rejection)</th>
<th>Applicant Deadline for Meeting Offer Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michaelmas</td>
<td>30th June (unless the Department has specified otherwise in which case the deadline will be stated in the course directory)</td>
<td>31st July</td>
<td>31st July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lent</td>
<td>4th October</td>
<td>4th November</td>
<td>1st December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter</td>
<td>14th January</td>
<td>21st February</td>
<td>17th March</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important to note that we would expect an academic decision on an application to be made within 8 weeks of receipt of the complete application or by the deadlines indicated above (whichever is earlier).

Recommendations for offers received after the latest date indicated above will not be considered unless there are exceptional circumstances that have been approved in advance by the Head of Graduate Admissions.

For further information on relevant deadlines please see the Graduate Admissions Information for Staff web pages.

Communications sent out to applicants by GAO:

The GAO sends out communications by email to applicants at various stages of the admissions process. Please see the table below for a summary of these communications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Timeline/Frequency of sending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Service log in details</td>
<td>Provides the applicant with their log in details to access their self-service account and begin to upload their documentation</td>
<td>Within 36 hours of submission of the application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incomplete materials – withdrawal of application warning</td>
<td>Notifies the applicant that they have not provided all of the mandatory documents for their application to progress to the Department for consideration, and that if they do not do so their application will be withdrawn</td>
<td>If all relevant documents have not been uploaded within 7 days of submitting the application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incomplete documents – withdrawal</td>
<td>Following the communication above, notifies the applicant that their application has been withdrawn as the mandatory documents have still not been uploaded and the applicant is still not under consideration by the Department</td>
<td>If all relevant documents have not been uploaded within 35 days of the issue of the email above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rejection</td>
<td>Communicates to the applicant the Department/Degree Committees decision to not recommend the applicant for an offer of admission</td>
<td>When the DENY/DEPT row has been added by the Dept./Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer</td>
<td>Communicates the formal offer of admission</td>
<td>When the COND offer row has been added on CamSIS by GAO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation</td>
<td>Communicates the formal confirmation of the offer</td>
<td>When all offer conditions have been met and the MATR confirmation row has been added on CamSIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic condition not met</td>
<td>Notifies the applicant that they have not met the standard required in their academic condition of their conditional offer of admission and confirms the withdrawal of their application as a result</td>
<td>Manually sent by GAO. Report run at least once per week (daily in peak periods)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the main communications listed above we also have the **D19 communication** which withdraws applicants who have not met their conditions by the start of the term. This is covered in detail later in this document.

Communications are also issued to applicants and referees according to which stage of the reference process they are at (i.e. requesting references, confirming receipt of references).

**Possible worklist items available:**

The BGS/ICE Worklist, and its accompanying notification emails, are used to notify administrators of each stage in the progression of an application from receipt of materials through to confirmation of offer.

Below is a list of the worklist rules that administrators will normally receive.

Note that if you have a new member of staff starting, and you have requested CamSIS access for them from the CamSIS helpdesk, **you will also need to contact the Graduate Admissions Office** to request the relevant worklist set up. We need the CRSid of the staff member, and if possible the CRSid of an existing staff member whose worklist set up we can copy.

Please also note that when a worklist is set up for a new member of staff, only items that trigger the worklist after the set up date will appear on the worklist. The new worklist will not pick up items retrospectively.
To see your current set up go to Main Menu > People Tools > Utilities > CamSIS Utilities > EDM Workflow > EDM Worklist User Setup.

If you want to amend your set up please contact GAO.

**Default rules for Department administrators:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worklist Item Name</th>
<th>Rule ID</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application Received</td>
<td>BGS RULE01</td>
<td>New application with supporting documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Received</td>
<td>BGS RULE02</td>
<td>Continuation application with supporting documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transferred App</td>
<td>BGS RULE07</td>
<td>Application has been transferred from another Department/Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under Consideration</td>
<td>BGS RULE08</td>
<td>Generated when the GDPD/GDU row is added</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferral Request</td>
<td>BGS RULE10</td>
<td>Applicant has requested deferral please consider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Received</td>
<td>BGS RULE13</td>
<td>Reinstated application with supporting documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Received</td>
<td>BGS RULE14</td>
<td>Reinstated continuation application with supporting documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acad case Required</td>
<td>BGS RULE17</td>
<td>Applicant does not meet the minimum academic requirement and an academic case is requested by GAO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acad cond Not Met</td>
<td>BGS RULE21</td>
<td>Academic condition not met, decision from Department/Faculty is required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Default rules for Degree Committee administrators:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worklist Item Name</th>
<th>Rule ID</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under consideration</td>
<td>BGS RULE09</td>
<td>You will receive this notification when you add the GDCD/GDU row to the application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acad case submitted</td>
<td>BGS RULE18</td>
<td>Academic case has been submitted by the Dept and requires DC approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept accepted app</td>
<td>BGS RULE25</td>
<td>Application accepted by Department/Faculty. Please consider and either accept or reject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acad cond failed - app</td>
<td>BGS RULE46</td>
<td>Academic condition not met – approved by Dept. Decision from DC is required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept Aprvd Deferral</td>
<td>BGS RULE79</td>
<td>Department has approved a deferral request. Please accept or reject</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Default rules for College administrators:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worklist Item Name</th>
<th>Rule ID</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application received</td>
<td>BGS RULE33</td>
<td>Conditional offer has been made and the application is ready to be considered for membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under consideration</td>
<td>BGS RULE34</td>
<td>Generated when the GCLD/GCU row is added</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC Aprvd Deferral</td>
<td>BGS RULE80</td>
<td>Department and DC have approved a deferral request. Please accept or reject</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The user can also receive an email notification for the default worklist items list above. Please notify Graduate Admissions if required.

Below is a list of additional rules that administrators can choose to receive by email only (these items do not generate notifications in the worklist).
Optional Rules available EMAIL ONLY:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rule ID</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deferral approved</td>
<td>BGS RULE11</td>
<td>Deferral has been accepted by Dept., DC and College and has been approved by GAO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferral declines</td>
<td>BGS RULE12</td>
<td>Deferral has been declined by one of Dept., DC or College and applicant has been rejected by GAO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cond Offer Set</td>
<td>BGS RULE22</td>
<td>Conditional offer has been made to the applicant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>App withdrawn</td>
<td>BGS RULE23</td>
<td>Application has been withdrawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions Confirmed</td>
<td>BGS RULE24</td>
<td>Admission has been confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept rejected app</td>
<td>BGS RULE26</td>
<td>Department/Faculty has rejected application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lang Assmt Request</td>
<td>BGS RULE27</td>
<td>Language Centre assessment is required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAP In-sess support</td>
<td>BGS RULE28</td>
<td>Language Centre has recommended a further test on arrival which may lead to in-sessional support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAP pre-sess support</td>
<td>BGS RULE29</td>
<td>Language Centre has recommended ADTIS pre-sessional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lang cond stands</td>
<td>BGS RULE30</td>
<td>Language Centre has recommended that the applicant’s level of academic English is not to a sufficient standard and the language conditions stands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lang cond waived</td>
<td>BGS RULE31</td>
<td>After internal assessment the Language Centre has recommended the language condition has been met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance cond met</td>
<td>BGS RULE 32</td>
<td>Finance condition has been met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC rejected app</td>
<td>BGS RULE70</td>
<td>Degree Committee has rejected application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langcondmet - InSessOp</td>
<td>BGS RULE 82</td>
<td>Language Centre has recommended that the language condition has been met however they suggest the applicant consider attending in-sessional classes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alternatively, you may wish to run the following CamSIS query, rather than receive emails:
DEP_GRDADM_NOTIFICATIONS

Please note, worklists are shared by Department, Degree Committee or College staff and if one person removes an item from the worklist it will disappear from other users’ worklists.
Using CamSIS to process applications

Using CamSIS

There are three main areas that graduate administrators will be dealing with regarding an application and the worklists:

- Processing the application - the decision of whether to accept, reject, or recommend to another Department.
- Academic case requests
- Deferral requests.

Below please find the list of actions that you will need to perform in CamSIS in order to progress these applications.

These processes all involve making a change to the application stack via the Maintain Applications page (see below) on CamSIS (Student Admissions>Application Maintenance>Maintain Applications). You can also access this page via the Maintain Applications button on the Admissions tab of the 360 Degree View page.

To make a change to an application on CamSIS is to add a new row to the Programme Data stack:

1. Click on the plus button on the programme data section. Notice that this adds a blank row with today's date in the Effective Date box.
2. Add the appropriate Programme Action
3. Add the appropriate Action Reason.
4. SAVE
### Processing an APPLICATION: Department administrator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application scenario</th>
<th>Programme Action</th>
<th>Action Reason</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We have received an application via the worklist – what is the <strong>first thing</strong> I should I do with it?</td>
<td>GDPD</td>
<td>GDU</td>
<td>This marks the application as ‘Under Consideration’, and generates a new worklist item in the “under consideration” category. You can delete the “Application received” worklist item as this has been dealt with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Adding this row also provides an update to the applicant via their self service page.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have considered this application and we would like to <strong>REJECT</strong> them</td>
<td>DENY</td>
<td>DEPT</td>
<td>This sends an email notification to the applicant letting them know that their application was unsuccessful. It also amends the status of the application to “cancelled”. You can delete the “Application received” worklist item as this has been dealt with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have received an application via the worklist but they are <strong>MORE SUITABLE</strong> for another Department.</td>
<td>GDPD</td>
<td>GDT</td>
<td>You will also need to add a comment (Category GBG544) stating which Department and course code the applicant is more suitable for. To add a comment go to the Application Data tab and click on the speech bubble at the top right of the page. Add the comment category and type your comment into the box. Please provide the Department and course code where possible. You do not need to add the Department code. <strong>Please do not change the course code in CamSIS. The GAO will do this when we are notified of the request.</strong> This generates a worklist item for the GAO, who will then transfer the application for you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have considered this application and we would like to <strong>ACCEPT</strong> them</td>
<td>GDPD</td>
<td>GDA</td>
<td>When adding this row you will also need to complete the Graduate Application Coversheet (see next page). Adding this row generates a worklist item for your Degree Committee, you may now delete the “under consideration” worklist item, as this has been dealt with. When the Degree Committee row has been added this creates a worklist item for the GAO and we will then add the offer details and officially make the offer to the applicant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please note that Departments should processes decisions within 8 weeks of receiving a complete application

### Processing an APPLICATION: Degree Committee administrator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Required</th>
<th>Programme Action</th>
<th>Action Reason</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have received a notification via the worklist that the Department have accepted an offer.</td>
<td>GDCD</td>
<td>GDU</td>
<td>This marks the application as ‘Under Consideration’, and generates a new worklist item in the “under consideration” category. You can delete the “Application received” worklist item as this has been dealt with. Adding this row also provides an update to the applicant via their self service page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have considered this application and we would like to ACCEPT them</td>
<td>GDCD</td>
<td>GDA</td>
<td>When adding this row you will also need to sign off the Graduate Application Coversheet (see next page). Adding this row generates a worklist item for GAO, you may now delete the “under consideration” worklist item, as this has been dealt with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have considered this application and we would like to REJECT them</td>
<td>DENY</td>
<td>DEPT</td>
<td>This sends an email notification to the applicant letting them know that their application was unsuccessful. It also amends the status of the application to “cancelled”. You can delete the “Application received” worklist item as this has been dealt with.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note that Degree Committees should processes decisions within 5 working days of receiving the application

### Processing an APPLICATION: College administrator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Required</th>
<th>Programme Action</th>
<th>Action Reason</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have received a notification via the worklist that my College has received a new application</td>
<td>GCLA</td>
<td>GCU</td>
<td>This marks the application as ‘Under Consideration’, and generates a new worklist item in the “under consideration” category. You can delete the “Application received” worklist item as this has been dealt with. Adding this row also provides an update to the applicant via their self service page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have considered this application and we would like to ACCEPT them as a member of our College</td>
<td>GCLD</td>
<td>GCA</td>
<td>Adding this row accepts the applicant as a member of your College.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have considered this</td>
<td>GCLD</td>
<td>GCR</td>
<td>Adding this row rejects the applicant and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
application and we would like to REJECT them sends their application either to their next College preference or to a randomly allocated College.

Please note that Colleges should processes decisions within 10 working days of receiving the application.

When accepting an offer the Department and Degree Committee will need to complete and sign the CamSIS offer coversheet. You can find the link to the coversheet link just above the save button on the Application Data Tab of the Maintain Applications page.

Graduate Application Coversheet

Applicant Name: [Redacted]
Department: Dept of Geography
Degree Committee: Earth Sciences and Geography
Course Description: MPhil in Conservation Leadership
Application Number/USN: 03/12/2015
Application Date: MT 2016
Term Applied For: Full-Time
Study Method: Online App

This form should only be completed once the Head of Department, or another authorised person, has approved the recommendation of an offer for the applicant.

If either the mode of study (full or part-time) or course that you wish to offer differ from those shown in the header, please change them in the ‘Maintain Applications’ page first, and then complete and save this form.

You can edit the form after you have saved it. When you save it, a ‘Degree Committee’ section will appear at the bottom. This should be completed by the Degree Committee’s authorised signatory or a nominee, before the form is submitted to the Graduate Admissions Office.

The section above will already be filled in when you open the coversheet.

Please provide the information requested below. Those fields marked with an asterisk are required. Please suggest a supervisor and subject of research for all PhD and CPGS applicants. Where possible, do this for MPhil applicants, too.

*Select Start Term
*Select Degree
*Select Subject
Enter Subject of Research
Enter Suggested Supervisor
Enter Supervisor USN

Although the applicant will have specified a term and degree course when they applied you may feel they are more suited to a different course in your Department or to start earlier/later. You are free to make a conditional offer for any term/course you wish. GAO will set the offer based on the information you provide on the coversheet.

Supervisors
A principal supervisor should be added to the coversheet. Where a supervisor is not entered we will add a note to the condition offer saying ‘your principal supervisor will be confirmed at a later date’.

For taught courses, if a supervisor will not be known until a later date then a suitable academic should be
entered as the supervisor for the time being (e.g. the Course Director).

Where an offer holder has more than one supervisor please list them in the suggested supervisor box but make sure you indicate which supervisor will be the principal supervisor.

Please make sure you enter the USN for all supervisors – it can be difficult for us to locate the correct supervisor without the USN number and this can lead to mistakes being made.

Please also make sure you check that the principal supervisors/supervisors are set up with the correct roles on CamSIS otherwise we won’t be able to link them to the offer holder.

The Department may wish to specify an academic condition for admission. If no condition is listed, the GAO will set the University minimum entry requirement (UK 2:1 or equivalent). For continuing students the default condition is a Pass in the current MPhil. Departments should also list any other conditions above.

These boxes above collect any additional information/offer conditions that may be required.

- **DBS** – Please confirm whether the applicant will require a standard or enhanced DBS check and write any further information in the ‘The details are’ box.
- **Staff Fees** - Please ensure a signed staff fee application form has been uploaded by the applicant AND the Department. The Department form must be stamped and signed. ([http://www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/finance/fees/staff-fees](http://www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/finance/fees/staff-fees))
A Guide to Graduate Admissions

- IP – tick the box if IP arrangements will apply to the applicant
- Additional costs – Please list any additional costs associated with the course and indicate whether these are mandatory or optional.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please tick the box below if you do not want the applicant to be referred to the Language Centre for an assessment, if they narrowly fail to meet their language condition.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ The applicant should not be referred to the Cambridge Language Centre for assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If this applicant’s first language is not English, BGS may set the condition that they take an English language test and achieve a particular score. If the applicant marginally fails to achieve the required score their case will be referred to the Cambridge Language Centre for assessment. They might then be expected to attend the pre-sessional English for Academic Purposes course (providing all other conditions are met first). BGS will provide advice on the acceptable scores needed to gain admission to the EAP course.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All applicants must meet the University minimum language entry requirements. Where an applicant narrowly misses these requirements, applicants may be recommended for an assessment with the University Language Centre. Please tick this box if you do not wish the applicant to have an assessment and instead wish to insist the applicant provides a new language test that meets the minimum requirements.

*Head of Departments Signature

Date 04/12/2015

Please sign the coversheet with your name. GAO cannot process an offer unless this is completed. After this is signed by the Department and extra box will appear requiring signing off by a representative of the Degree Committee. The coversheet must be signed by both Department and Degree Committee administrators before a conditional offer can be processed.
Processing an ACADEMIC CASE (Departments and Degree Committees):

BGS requires the Department to provide an academic case of support for all Graduate students who have not met the minimum academic requirement of a UK 2:1 Undergraduate degree (or overseas equivalent).

The academic case will usually be composed by one or more academic members of staff who are involved in the assessment process (e.g. Principal Supervisor, Course Director, interview panel).

There is no standardised format for an academic case of support, although many Departments do use their own standard templates. The purpose of the document is to show that the applicant can be expected to successfully complete the intended course of studies.

The following areas should always be commented on:

- The interview (all applicants requiring academic cases should be interviewed, even if this is not part of the standard assessment for the course)
- The reference documents
- The academic history and results obtained

In addition to this some common areas that may need to be incorporated are:

- Any mitigating circumstances
- Relevant work or research experience
- Performance in particularly relevant modules or research components / thesis

This list is not exhaustive and many other areas can be included depending on the particular case.

BGS also requires an academic case in support of any applicants who have failed to successfully complete a programme of degree level study (e.g. when an applicant has withdrawn from or failed a previous degree). Academic cases in these scenarios can be brief and should include information on:

- the reason for previously failing to complete degree level study
- the discussion of this at interview
- a statement confirming that the applicant can be expected to successfully complete the intended course of study at Cambridge.

The academic case process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Action required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRE-OFFER – ACADEMIC CASE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| I have received a request for an academic case pre offer and we still want to give the applicant an offer of admission. | **Department:** Upload Case onto the applicant’s record using the document category ‘Academic Case’.

**Degree Committee:** Add the GDCD/GSA row to CamSIS. Adding the row above will generate the worklist item for GAO. This will then be considered by the head of GAO and either upheld or rejected. |
I have received a request for an academic case pre offer but we do not wish to provide one and instead want to **REJECT** the applicant.

| Either Department or Degree Committee can add DENY/DEPT |

### POST-OFFER – ACADEMIC CASE

| I have received a request for an academic case where the applicant has not met the University minimum academic condition and we still want the applicant to study on the course. |
| Department and Degree Committee, please follow the same instructions above as for pre-offer academic case requests. |

| I have received a request for an academic case where the applicant has not met the University academic condition and we wish to **REJECT** them now. |
| Add the WADM/FAIL row. |

### Processing an ACDMIC CONDITION NOT MET:

Sometimes an offer-holder will provide evidence of their academic qualification which **meets the BGS minimum but does not meet the higher academic condition set by the Department**. In this case, GAO will send the application back to the Department for consideration via a worklist notification. The Department must then decide whether to accept or withdraw the application, as shown below.

| **POST-OFFER – ACADEMIC CONDITION NOT MET** |
| The applicant has not met the academic condition set by the Department but we still wish to **ACCEPT** them. |
| Add the GDPD/ACA to the stack. This will inform GAO that you are happy with their academic achievement and GAO will complete the relevant offer condition. |

| The applicant has not met the academic condition set by the Department we requested and we wish to **REJECT** them. |
| Add the WADM/FAIL to the stack. This will cancel the application. GAO will run a report to pick these up and email them to pass on the information. |

### DEFERRALS
The deferral process now runs consecutively so the request will first go to the Department, then to the Degree Committee and finally to the College. Once all three parties have approved the request, GAO will complete the deferral process. You can see the reason a deferral has been requested either via 360 or by running the query ALL_PGD_ADM_DEFERRAL_TERM. If you find you do to have DEF as a programme action please contact the CamSIS helpdesk (camsishelpdesk@admin.cam.ac.uk) for assistance.

### Processing DEFERRALS: Department administrator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Programme Action</th>
<th>Action Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have received a request for a deferral and we wish to ACCEPT this request</td>
<td>DEFR</td>
<td>DPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have received a request for a deferral but we wish to REJECT this request.</td>
<td>DEFR</td>
<td>DPR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Processing DEFERRALS: Degree Committee administrator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Programme Action</th>
<th>Action Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have received a request for a deferral and we wish to ACCEPT this request</td>
<td>DEFR</td>
<td>DCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have received a request for a deferral but we wish to REJECT this request.</td>
<td>DEFR</td>
<td>DCR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Processing DEFERRALS: College administrator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Programme Action</th>
<th>Action Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have received a request for a deferral and we wish to ACCEPT this request</td>
<td>DEFR</td>
<td>CLA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have received a request for a deferral but we wish to REJECT this request.</td>
<td>DEFR</td>
<td>CLR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Deferrals can only be requested to another term within the same academic year and for courses where the Department allows deferrals. Deadlines for applicants to request deferrals can be found here: [http://www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/after-applying/deferring-my-application](http://www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/after-applying/deferring-my-application)

### Change course for offer: Department administrator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Required</th>
<th>Programme Action</th>
<th>Action Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have received an application via the worklist and we would like to ACCEPT them but for a different course in the same Department.</td>
<td>GDPD</td>
<td>GDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Department will need to input the new course code on CamSIS before saving. Please contact GAO for assistance if required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Continuation:

Applicants apply as continuing students if they are currently, or have previously been, registered as a graduate student at Cambridge on a PhD, MPhil, MRes, MST, MAST, LLM, MCL, MMus, MEd, Graduate Diploma.

Although the admission process for continuers is very similar to new admissions, there is a difference at the point of confirmation for students currently studying for a Master’s Degree and continuing onto further graduate course.

As the examination process for the Masters can be a lengthy procedure, it is possible for the relevant Degree Committee to advise the GAO that they are happy that the applicant will meet the academic condition prior to the formal approval of the degree, and before the official result is announced. The GAO can then ‘provisionally’ confirm an applicant, providing all other conditions of the offer have been completed, by adding the ‘GMTP’ row to their application stack.

This process allows the student to start their course, and for overseas students to receive their CAS and arrange their visa, and also for the College to allocate accommodation. If you have any questions about this process please contact Wendy Williams.

Termly withdrawal exercise (D19):

Around 6 weeks before the start of term, the GAO send out a notification to all applicants who have not yet met their offer conditions alerting them that they must meet their conditions or their offer will be withdrawn before the start of term. It also offers the option of applicants withdrawing themselves if they do not intend to study at Cambridge or to defer their term of admission (if possible) if they do not believe that they will be able to fulfil their offer conditions in time.

The GAO has the ability to extend the withdrawal deadline where the applicant is not able to meet the deadline but still intends to come (particularly PhD students who are not necessarily required to attend at the very start of term). Applicants will be instructed in the communication to contact GAO if they still attend to attend and require an extension. Departments can also contact us on behalf of applicants to request this.

Applicants withdrawn in error can be reinstated up until the division of term (if the last date to enrol for their course has not passed - this generally only applies to PhD students who may be admitted up to the division of term), however any applicants who have then not met all the conditions for admission will be withdrawn again and cannot be reinstated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Warning sent out</th>
<th>Withdrawal (unless requested otherwise)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LT 16</td>
<td>5th December 2016</td>
<td>19th December 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ET 16</td>
<td>20th March 2017</td>
<td>3rd April 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT 17</td>
<td>TBC (likely late August)</td>
<td>TBC (likely mid-September)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The division of term dates are:
Lent: 13th February  
Easter: 14th May (if term starts 10th April) / 21st May (if term starts 17th April)  
Michaelmas: 9th November

**ATAS:**

It is the Department’s responsibility to add an ATAS statement on CamSIS before the Department and Degree Committee accept rows are added. The Graduate Admissions Office will not process the offer of acceptance if the ATAS statement is missing.

All applicants applying for a PhD/Masters level course in a listed science/technology subject and who will be studying in the UK on a visa will also need an ATAS (Academic Technology Approval Scheme) clearance certificate. Applicants with indefinite leave to remain are exempt as are those who hold a visa (e.g. Tier 1, Tier 2, Ancestry) which was issued before 6 April 2015 and does not expire until after the end of the intended course.

The requirement for ATAS clearance includes visiting students coming to the UK for six months or more. The ATAS application is free and we provide applicants with ATAS application instructions at the point of offer. Successfully obtaining ATAS clearance is one of the offer conditions.

You can check whether a programme requires ATAS clearance [here](http://www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/international-students/immigration/atas). To upload the ATAS statement, please add a ‘Basis of Admission’ ‘GATAS’ in CamSIS with the statement entered into ‘Comments’. Basis of admission can be found via the CamSIS main menu (Main Menu > Student Admissions > Application Maintenance > Maintain Applications > Basis of Admission) or via the link in ‘Maintain Applications’ (‘Application Programme Data’ tab).

N.B. This process should only be used for new applicants and continuers – there is a different process for current students who need further time and these are handled by the International Student Team)

**ATAS statement criteria**

**Research programmes:** the statement is normally composed by the supervisor and should be a brief but detailed description of the research to be undertaken.

**Taught programmes:** all the core and elective modules for the programme should be listed.

The maximum length is 1800 characters (including spaces). Please do not exceed this limit to ensure that the statement can be entered into the ATAS application form. There is no minimum character limit but the FCO website indicates that statements should be at least 5 sentences long.

For further information on ATAS please see the following web pages:

- **GAO website:** [http://www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/international-students/immigration/atas](http://www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/international-students/immigration/atas)
- **International Student Team:** [http://www.ist.admin.cam.ac.uk/guidance-staff/atas](http://www.ist.admin.cam.ac.uk/guidance-staff/atas)
- **Foreign & Commonwealth Office:** [https://www.gov.uk/academic-technology-approval-scheme](https://www.gov.uk/academic-technology-approval-scheme)
College Allocator:

A brief explanation of the College allocator

All Colleges have been assigned to category A, B or C depending on their stated capacity and number of applications received, to assist the fair distributions of applications across the Colleges. Applicants are divided amongst the groups of Colleges according to a fixed ratio (currently 60:30:10). A College in category A is 6 times more likely to receive an application via the College allocator than a College in category C.

An application that is not accepted at by its first or second choice College will be sent on to up to three further Colleges; an Open application will also be sent to up to three Colleges. The final allocation in each case will be to an ‘Accept All’ College, which ensures that every applicant is offered membership of a College within a reasonable time.

Updating and amending the College allocator

College administrators are responsible for maintaining and updating the information in the College Characteristics Table on CamSIS. This information is key to the allocator process. Administrators should check this information at regularly to make sure it is correct for that particular time. Please note if the information in the College Characteristics Table is incorrect the allocator may not work as expected and your College could miss out on applications.

What is the College Characteristics Table?
The College characteristics table controls the routing of applicants to Colleges once they have been made an offer by the Board of Graduate Studies. It allows you to specify broad rules under which applicants will not be sent to you, either as a result of a preference expressed on the application form or through the random College allocator.

What rules are available?
A number of rules are available to set, but it is important to remember they may not be combined to create more complex rules – e.g. if you wish not to consider any part-time applicants you may not make an exception for a specific course. An applicant must pass all five of the following rules in order not to be automatically bounced.

1. Gender
Female-only Colleges will wish to select ‘Female’, everyone else will select ‘Both’.

2. Part-time
Un-ticking this box will automatically bounce part-time applicants.

3. Admit term
This section allows control of the type of applicant allowed on a term by term basis. Four options are available for each term:
    a. All applications: All incoming applications will be allowed

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1 If you do wish to make an exception for one student, you will need to inform the Graduate Admissions Office so the application can be manually processed.
b. Members only: Only applicants who have declared membership of your College will be routed through to you, all others will be bounced

c. Members and Nominators Only: Only applicants who have declared membership of your College or who specified you as a College choice on their application form will be routed through to you, all others will be bounced

d. College full: All applications will be bounced

If a term is not listed then the default (‘All applications’) will be applied. Therefore it is not necessary to add a new set of terms each year until you wish to limit your intake.

4. Programme Exclusions
List here any programmes (MPhil, PGCE &c.) from which you wish to receive no applicants from the random College allocator. You will still receive applicants if they have nominated you directly. Please note that admissions for PhDs are made under the code NOTAF.

5. Degree Committee Exclusions
List here any Degree Committees (Architecture and History of Art, Physics and Chemistry etc.) from which you wish to receive no applicants from the random College allocator. You will still receive applicants if they have nominated you directly. Generally the Degree Committee code may be found by looking at the first two characters of the course code. E.g. for the PhD in Geography (EAGG22), the Degree Committee code is DCEA. For each Degree Committee you are able to select whether to exclude research, non-research (taught) or both types of applicant.

How do I update my Admit Term rules?
Navigate to: Main menu > Set up SACR > Product Related > Recruiting and Admissions > Allocations > College characteristics table.
Select your College either by putting the College code e.g. T, CLH, W etc. into the College field or typing the name of the College into the Description field.

Before making any changes add a new effective date by clicking on the plus highlighted below. You should never backdate rules as this will not achieve anything; whilst it is possible to postdate rules we do not recommend it.
You now need to add in the new admit terms and choose your required setting for each one. To do this click on the plus button just below the Accept Apps by Admit Term heading.

You should add in three new terms to cover the next academic year. E.g. the three terms might be:
- 3341 (Michaelmas 2017)
- 3346 (Lent 2018)
- 3351 (Easter 2018)

For each of the three terms please choose the applicant type you want to admit (default is all applications). See Section 3 Admit Term above for full details.

You may then modify your rules as necessary before clicking save. All new applications routed to you will be processed by the new set of rules from then on.

Later in the year when your admissions focus changes (e.g. when you nearing capacity) you will need to come back to the College Characteristics Table and update the type of applicant you want to admit to suit your plans.

**How do I update other rules?**

You can follow the same principal as above (creating a new effective date first). The types of rules you are able to amend are explained at the start of this document.
Useful searches:

CamSIS Search (Main Menu>CamSIS Search) is a useful tool for keeping tabs on your applications and quickly producing data lists. You can change a number of parameters and show different fields to tailor the search to your needs. You can save searches so they be can run again. CamSIS run CamSIS Search training courses at various times during the year. See their website for details.

Query viewer (Main Menu>Reporting Tools>Query>Query Viewer) is a library of complex searches that have already been set up to look for specific information.

Here are some useful queries:

ALL_PGD_ADM_DEFERRAL_TERM - The query should be used in conjunction with the 'deferral Request' worklist notifications that you receive, and will include the date that the applicant has requested to defer to and the reason for deferring.

ALL_PGD_ADM_USER_WORKLIST – This query shows items which are in (or have been in) a user’s worklist. Option 0 returns items that are on a user’s worklist, Option 2 shows items that were in the worklist but have been deleted by the user; Option 4 shows items that were removed by CamSIS due to security changes. The Query is run by crsid.

Useful links:

http://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/graduate-information-university-staff/graduate-admissions-information-staff Graduate Admissions information for staff including guidance on data protection, interviews, deadlines, language conditions etc.

http://www.camsis.cam.ac.uk/cam-only/support_and_training/ - Camsis training information.

FAQs:

*We have a new administrator starting in our Department; they will need to be setup with the same worklist items as their predecessor. Who should I contact to have this set up?*

First, you will need to contact the CamSIS helpdesk to have the appropriate CamSIS security settings applied to the new administrators account and to ensure that they have access to the required screens, and the required Departments/courses.

Next, please contact Richard Sellens at Graduate Admissions (richard.sellens@admin.cam.ac.uk) to set up the access for the worklist. You will need to give him:

- The CRSID of the previous employee
- The CRSID of the new employee
- Whether you would prefer a direct copy of the items in the previous employees worklist or whether there are any specific additions you would prefer and whether these should be notifications via the worklist, via email or both)

Upon receipt of this information, the Deputy Head of Graduate Admissions will coordinate the worklist set-up and inform you when this is complete.
A Guide to Graduate Admissions

Our new administrator would benefit from some CamSIS specific training, who would administer this?

The GAO offers one on one training for new members of staff or if you simply feel that you need a refresher in a particular aspect of the admissions process. Please contact Richard Sellens to discuss this further.

We have an international applicant, how do we set the academic entry requirements and conditions?

The GAO has produced a comprehensive list to help Departments in determining the correct academic condition for international applicants. The International Qualifications list is available via our website at the following link:

http://www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/international-students/international-qualifications

This is also available in pdf format. Please contact Clare Impey for further information:

clare.impey@admin.cam.ac.uk

Please note that this does not apply for continuing students.

We have an applicant who wants to defer their offer, how will this be processed by GAO?

An applicant can make a request to defer (if deferral is available for their chosen course of study) via their self-service account. The GAO will run a query to identify those who have requested a deferral and change the admit term accordingly. This will generate a worklist item for the Department who will then either accept or reject the request. If the Department accept the deferral request and add the DEFR/DPA row then a notification will be sent to the Degree Committee. Once they accept a notification will be sent to the College. Once all responses have been received the GAO will complete the process in CamSIS and the candidate will have moved term to the newly requested term. If an application to defer is rejected by any of the Department, Degree Committee or the College, the applicant’s application will be withdrawn by GAO.

We have an applicant who cannot meet the academic condition of their offer in time, what do we do?

If an applicant is unlikely to meet the academic condition of their offer in time for our 31st July deadline, the following FAQ on our website may provide suitable advice:

http://www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/faqs/applicant/i-will-be-unable-meet-my-offer-conditions-31-july-what-do-i-do

Applicants can meet offer conditions up until the start of term, however this is not advisable as the GAO will not issue a CAS Statement (required for visa applications) until an applicant is confirmed, and many Colleges will not arrange accommodation or other arrangements while an applicant still has outstanding conditions.

If an applicant is unlikely to meet their academic condition in time to obtain a visa or arrive in Cambridge, there are two conditions that the GAO may use.

- If the applicant has already met the University minimum academic requirement (2:1 equivalent) with a previous degree the condition can be lowered to submitting evidence of
having withdrawn, completed or intermitted that course of study before they commence their study at Cambridge.

- If the applicant has not met the University minimum academic requirement we cannot remove the academic condition. If the applicant has a previous degree that narrowly misses the University minimum entry requirement the Department could make an academic case for admission to admit the applicant based on their Bachelor’s. If this is the applicant’s first degree it is unlikely a case would be approved and the applicant would likely need to withdraw and reapply for the next academic year.

Please note that this does not apply for continuing students.

*We want to let an applicant apply for a certain term but the closing date for applications has already passed. Can they still apply?*

You will need to get permission from the Head of Graduate Admissions (alex.drury@admin.cam.ac.uk) to be able to allow a late application, and this is only approved in exceptional cases (e.g. late funding was provided by a Research Council and the scholarships have only just been advertised), otherwise we would expect applicants to adhere to the deadlines. This ensures that the application process is equitable and transparent. Late applicants will usually be required to submit their application on paper at a cost of £100. However, applicants may apply for a later term, and the Dept can then recommend admission for the earlier term (provided this recommendation is received within the stated deadlines).

*We want to make an offer for an applicant but the deadline for making offers has passed. Can we still make the offer?*

Permission to make late offers is only granted in very exceptional cases (e.g. late funding schemes) and will not be granted in situations where the supervisor was unable to make a decision by the deadline. This helps to ensure a fair and transparent application process, allows applicants sufficient time to meet their conditions and acquire a visa, and enables the GAO to effectively plan their work. July and August is an extremely busy time for the GAO meeting conditions of offers, and the team has no capacity to make new offers at this time.

You will need to obtain permission from the Head of Graduate Admissions (alex.drury@admin.cam.ac.uk) to be able to make an exceptional late offer.

*How do we make an offer for a visiting student?*

A small number of students each year come to Cambridge as ‘visiting students’ for up to one year, to undertake a period of study or supervised research. These are students who do not intend to become candidates for any Cambridge qualification, and are in many cases, are registered students at another institution either in the UK or abroad. Visiting students are not normally be permitted to continue for more than one year without registering for a Cambridge qualification.

Candidates are generally invited directly by a Department or a Faculty, and do not need to be admitted by the Board of Graduate Studies, therefore no application is required through the Applicant Portal. Please note that this means that visiting students will not have College affiliation, unless the Department is able to arrange this.
Some visiting students may want to apply via the Applicant Portal. Some reasons for this may be because the applicant:

- requires College affiliation
- is transferring with a supervisor from another institution and are required to remain registered at their previous institution, but want formal recognition that they are visiting at Cambridge (rather than the informal Department registration).
- is receiving a scholarship as a visiting student (e.g. Commonwealth Scholarship Council (CSC)) and therefore require more formal registration as a visiting student so that the funding can be provided.
- would like a formal transcript at end of their period of visiting study.
- wishes to be a visiting student for more than 3 terms.

When applying via the Applicant Portal, the admissions process is similar to that for all other new graduate applicants.

Interested applicants should apply using the Applicant Portal, choosing the relevant PhD course, but then stating in section A12 that they wish to be considered as a visiting student and for how long. Departments should then change the code to the relevant NTBR code when recommending admission (or putting under consideration). If there is no relevant NTBR code, please contact the Graduate Admissions Office.

Visiting students who apply through the Board of Graduate Studies will have the same financial liability as all other graduate applicants.

Further information can be found here: [http://www.ist.admin.cam.ac.uk/guidance-staff/visiting-students](http://www.ist.admin.cam.ac.uk/guidance-staff/visiting-students)

Please note that ERASMUS students should not be processed this way. Please contact the International Students Team in the first instance if you have any queries about ERASMUS.