



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

Doctorate Extension Scheme (DES) Policy

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Student Administration**

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Author	Summary of changes	Version	Authorised & Date
Dr Richard Melia	<i>Confirmation of the policy regarding the Doctorate Extension Scheme at the University of Salford</i>	V 1.0	Research & Enterprise Committee: 21/06/2017
Policy Management and Responsibilities:			
Owner: Head of Home Office Compliance	This Policy is issued by the Head of Home Office Compliance, who has the authority to issue and communicate policy on the Doctorate Extension Scheme and has delegated day to day management and communication of the policy to the Home Office Compliance Team.		
Others with responsibilities (please specify): Home Office Compliance Team; Research & Enterprise	All subjects of the Policy will be responsible for engaging with and adhering to this policy.		
Author to complete formal assessment with the following advisory teams:			
Equality Analysis (E&D, HR) Equality Assessment form	1. <i>This is mandatory. Submitted to Equality 4th July 2017</i>		
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The owner and author are responsible for publicising this policy document.			

1.0 Purpose

The Doctorate Extension Scheme (DES) is an addendum to the Tier 4 student visa route that came into effect on 6 April 2013. It is designed to give students who have almost finished their PhD (or other doctorate qualification) an additional 12 months of Tier 4 (General) immigration permission in which to look for and start work in the UK. The student can, however, only begin to work on a less restricted basis once they have been officially notified that they have been awarded their PhD.

2.0 Scope

The applicant **MUST** be a doctoral candidate (studying for a PhD qualification or for one of the doctorate qualifications listed in the Tier 4 policy guidance).¹

3.0 Sponsoring students on the Doctorate Extension Scheme (DES)

- 3.1 The University of Salford (UoS) will sponsor doctoral graduates under the DES only in situations where the University is satisfied the student is eligible for the DES and intends to gain further experience in their chosen field, seek skilled work, or develop plans to set up as an entrepreneur.
- 3.2 Requests for sponsorship under the DES will be considered on an individual basis and the University reserves the right to refuse sponsorship in certain situations including, but not limited to, the following:
- The student has outstanding debts to the University
 - The student has a history of prior visa refusals
 - The student has had poor engagement throughout their doctoral studies
 - The University is aware of information that could result in the student's visa being refused, for example insufficient maintenance funds
 - The student is in breach of their current visa conditions
 - The University believes the student is using deception
- 3.3 There is an administrative fee of £100 charged by the University to process the DES CAS. A CAS application will not be considered as valid unless this fee has been paid via the University's on-line shop and all other documentation requested in the application form on Salford Advantage is provided.
- 3.4 In the event a student's current Tier 4 leave expires before their course completion date and the student has to leave the UK, then they will not be eligible for DES.

4.0 Assigning a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) under DES

- 4.1 The Home Office Compliance Team (HOCT) cannot assign a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) for the DES until the student is within 60 days of the 'expected end date' of their course under Home Office guidelines.

¹ The research Master's degrees listed in the same annex are NOT acceptable for the Doctorate Extension Scheme (DES). It should be noted that applicants can only apply from within the UK for the DES.

- 4.2 UoS has defined the 'expected end date' as the relevant Postgraduate Research Awards Board (PRAB) that the student would be awarded their doctorate at.
- 4.3 A DES CAS cannot be assigned after it has been officially confirmed that the student has been awarded their doctorate. It is essential, therefore, that once the relevant PRAB for the student has been agreed, the student applies for the DES no earlier than 60 days before this date and, thus, before the 'expected end date'.
- 4.4 It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they make a valid application for their CAS in good time before their 'expected end date'. The University does not accept responsibility for students making invalid applications (without all the correct documentation listed on the CAS application form on Salford Advantage) and cannot guarantee that a CAS application submitted less than five working days before the PRAB will be processed in time.
- 4.5 Once the DES CAS has been assigned to a student, they are expected to use the University's Check and Send scheme to make their visa application to the Home Office.
- 4.6 Once a DES CAS has been assigned, the University is required to notify the Home Office when the student has been officially awarded their doctorate. This should be done within 10 working days of the official notification being issued by the PRAB.

5.0 Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)

- 5.1 A student does not need to hold or apply for an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) Clearance Certificate to cover their time spent on the DES.
- 5.2 If, however, the student is currently studying a course (or period of research) that requires an ATAS Clearance Certificate, and their course end date given on their original CAS (issued to study that particular course) is postponed for a period of more than three calendar months (or any other changes outlined in the ATAS section of the Tier 4 Sponsor Guidance apply), the student must apply for a new ATAS Clearance certificate to cover the rest of their time on that course.

6.0 Graduates who obtain a Tier 4 visa under the DES

- 6.1 As with other Tier 4 students, HOCT require sight of Tier 4 visas granted under the DES for Tier 4 sponsorship purposes.
- 6.2 A DES migrant is not required to stay in the Salford area and can move anywhere in the UK. However, as the migrant is sponsored by the UoS they must maintain contact with the University. HOCT will contact the DES migrant on at least two occasions during their 12-month leave period. This meeting can be in person, via telephone or by email. The DES migrant will be expected to reply to the contact made by the University within 10 working days.
- 6.3 To enable the activity in 6.2 above to occur, it is essential that applicants to the DES keep their contact details up-to-date.
- 6.4 If a DES migrant misses or fails to respond to a scheduled contact without providing a satisfactory explanation, the UoS is obliged to report this to the Home Office. The Home Office can then take action to curtail their immigration permission.

- 6.5 A DES migrant should also let the UoS know if they leave the UK and do not intend to return before the DES leave expires or if they are granted immigration permission under a different category.
- 6.6 DES migrants are expected to fully cooperate with the University. Any DES migrant who hinders the University's ability to comply with its record keeping and reporting duties under the Tier 4 Sponsor Guidance, or who puts the University at risk, may have their sponsorship withdrawn.
- 6.7 Similarly, if the University becomes aware that the DES migrant is breaching the terms and conditions of their visa – or if the University has evidence that the student has not disclosed all relevant information at the time of issuing the CAS or has not acted honestly or in good faith – they may withdraw sponsorship of their visa.

7.0 Related documentation

- Tier 4 policy guidance (including Annex 4) available on [Government webpages](http://www.gov.uk) www.gov.uk