

Arrangements for Students Under the Age of 18 Years

**Introduction**

Occasionally the University admits students who are under the age of 18 years. In most cases this will be a very temporary situation, as the student will be approaching their eighteenth birthday. The University treats all its students as independent, mature individuals and students who are under the age of 18 years will be treated in the same way. The usual personal and academic support arrangements will apply to students who are under 18 years. This normally includes the allocation of a personal tutor and a comprehensive range of specialist student services. If the student is resident in University owned or leased accommodation, a Warden will be allocated. The University acknowledges that anyone under the age of 18 is legally a child and recognises that students under the age of 18 may therefore have additional needs in relation to their support and welfare. There may also be additional needs for those under 16 and such cases will be considered on an individual basis.

## Parental responsibilities

The University is not able to take on the usual rights, responsibilities and authority which parents or guardians have in relation to a child, and it will not act in *loco parentis* in relation to students who are under the age of 18 years.

## Contracts

As a student who is under the age of 18 years may not be able to enter into legal contracts, the University requires a student’s parents to honour all obligations under any contracts that the student enters into with the University prior to his or her eighteenth birthday (eg payment of fees due to the University). By signing the enclosed pro-forma, the student’s parent or guardian agrees to this.

## Student Accommodation

Parents and guardians should recognise that residential accommodation offered by the University is generally intended for the use of adults and special arrangements cannot usually be made for students who are under the age of 18 years.

## Field Trips

Courses may involve compulsory or optional field trips, excursions or other periods of study away from the University. The University is not able to take any additional responsibility for a student who is under the age of 18 years in relation to such activities. Unless indicated otherwise, by signing the enclosed pro‑forma, parents or guardians give consent for the student to take part in these activities on that basis.

## Alcohol

It is illegal for alcohol to be sold to or bought by students who are under the age of 18 years. The University will take reasonable steps to seek to ensure that the law is not broken in relation to licensed premises under the University’s control but cannot undertake to supervise any individual student. The Students’ Union is responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place for its own licensed premises.

## Relationships with staff

Under the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000, it is a criminal offence for any person in a position of trust (which may include members of University staff) to engage in sexual activity with someone who is under 18 years.

## Child Protection

As a matter of law, a person under the age of 18 years is a child. The University has a responsibility to protect those under the age of 18 years from abuse and will report any suspicions or allegations of abuse of children to the appropriate Social Services officer. Any such suspicions or allegations will be reported to the Chief Operating Officer who will contact the appropriate authorities. Wardens, the student’s personal tutor and any other appropriate staff will be CRB checked.

## Notification

The relevant Head of Department and Warden will be notified, prior to registration, of any student within their School or Hall who will be under the age of 18 years on entry to the University. The personal tutor will also be notified. Teaching and other staff will not routinely be made aware of a student’s age.

## Parental involvement

It is the University’s usual policy that it deals with students (with whom it has a contractual relationship) and not with parents or guardians and this approach will apply equally to students who are under the age of 18 years. The University will therefore correspond with students, not parents or guardians.

## Emergency Contact

It is particularly important that emergency contact details are provided for students under the age of 18 years. If a medical emergency arises and it is not possible for the University to contact the named individuals, a senior member of the University will, on behalf of the student’s parent or guardian, give such consent to treatment as is in the best interests of the student. By signing the enclosed pro-forma, the student’s parent or guardian indicates their consent to this.