

Policy for the Admission of Students Under the Age of 18 on Entry

Document Title: Policy for the Admission of Students Under the Age of 18 on Entry			
Version No.	2.0	Policy Owner	SRM
Superseded version	1.0	Author Role Title	SRM
Approval Date	6 July 2022	Approved by	Academic Board
Effective Date	6 July 2022	Review Date	April 2024

POLICY FOR THE ADMISSION OF STUDENTS UNDER THE AGE OF 18 ON ENTRY

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this Policy is to safeguard the welfare of students who are under the age of 18 when they commence their studies at the University until they turn 18 (referred to below as “Under-18s”).
- 1.2 This Policy is directly related to and should be read in conjunction with the University’s Safeguarding Policy. It is also based upon elements of legislation and guidance including (but not limited to):
- a) The Children Act 2004
 - b) The Protection of Children Act 1999
 - c) The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
 - d) The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
 - e) The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
 - f) The Equality Act 2010
- 1.3 Most students will be 18 or over when they commence their studies at the University or turn 18 soon after they start. The University is an adult environment and treats all students as independent, mature individuals. Students who are under the age of 18 years will be treated in the same way.
- 1.4 This Policy sets out the University’s approach to under-18s studying at the University in respect of their welfare.
- 1.5 Although the University acknowledges that anyone under-18 is legally a child and may have additional needs for their support and welfare, the University is not able to take on the usual rights, responsibilities and authority that parents have in relation to a child and will not act in ‘loco parentis’ in relation to students who are under-18.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This Policy applies to all University employees, people applying to be students, third party employees (e.g. agency employees), associates and students who in the course of their duties (organised activities and services for under-18s) may have contact with under-18s. All University employees are in a position of trust, in particular those employees who teach, support, and guide or in any way interact with students. It is the

responsibility of all employees and students to be aware of this and to act appropriately at all times.

2.2 The University has a responsibility for safeguarding and the University Secretary and Executive Director of Legal and Governance Services is the Lead Safeguarding Officer (“the LSO”). The LSO is supported by the Safeguarding Coordinator and there are a number of Designated Safeguarding Officers (“DSOs”) who have a responsibility to report any allegations or cases of abuse to the appropriate authorities. For further information, please refer to the University’s Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy (“the Safeguarding Policy”).

3. Key Principles

3.1 All students under-18 at their study start date, who are not normally resident in the UK, must have a guardian residing in the UK.

3.2 Offers of admission to applicants who will be under-18 at point of enrolment will only be made where the University is satisfied that the student satisfies the Under 18 policy requirements. There may be exceptions where professional body age restrictions apply. Applicants under-18 will be notified of this Policy and the Safeguarding Policy and will agree to comply with any arrangements to support and safeguard under-18s.

3.3 Parental Responsibilities

The University is not able to take on the usual rights, responsibilities and authority that parents 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. It is a condition of admission to the University that the parent or guardian of any student who is under the age of 18 years confirms, by signing and returning the pro-forma (Parental Consent Form) and relevant supporting evidence via the Applicant Portal, their acceptance of the arrangements set out in this document. Where a student is from overseas and the parents remain abroad, the University requires details of a guardian for the child, who is in the UK, and preferably in or near to Teesside, and who will be accessible to the child and to the University should the need arise.

3.4 Admissions

Upon receipt of an application to study at the University by an applicant under-18, the University will adhere to the following process:

- (i) An application is received by Teesside University (to include SRM, Schools, TUCP, TNE partners and Regional Offices) from an under-18 applicant. The processing department/School determines that the applicant satisfies the entry requirements and that there are no age restrictions by professional bodies or programme requirements.
- (ii) The department/School process the application in the same way as other applicants and where appropriate the applicant receives a

conditional offer. The department/School include the under-18 process completion as a condition of the offer.

- (iii) All applicants who will be under 18 on the day that their programme of study commences will have a clearance check appear in their Applicant Portal stating that as part of the University's Admission of Students Under the Age of 18 on Entry Policy, they are required to have their parents/guardian complete a consent form. A link to the policy will also be included. Departments and Schools also have access to an SQL report which provides details of who is under 18 at point of application and for how long they will be under 18 after the course start date.
- (iv) Overseas applicants will be required to also provide the name and contact details for a UK based guardian. They will be referred to guardianship companies should they not have a UK based friend or family member.
- (v) Upon completion and return of the Parental Consent Form, the processing department/School will record that the consent forms have been returned and pass the clearance check in SITS.
- (vi) The application will then follow the University's standard admissions process.
- (vii) The clearance check will prompt an automated email to the Designated Safeguarding Officer/School Registrar in the relevant School to inform them of the application by the under-18.
- (viii) *The School Registrar will notify the relevant Programme Leader who will complete a Risk Assessment. This risk assessment should include an assessment of those personnel with whom the student may have regular, unsupervised contact and indicate the need for a DBS check. Compliance with this assessment is the responsibility of any staff who would routinely interact with each student. It is the responsibility of the School Registrar to keep the master copy of the risk assessment.*
- (ix) The School Registrar is responsible for informing the relevant School staff of the arrival of an under 18.
- (x) The School Registrar is also responsible for informing relevant central departments such as Students' Union, Student & Library Services etc.

3.5 Safer Recruitment and Selection Procedures

Some employees within the University will be in regular or significant occasional contact with under-18s in the course of their employment, or will be in a position of particular trust, e.g. Student Support staff, security employees. Although there is no expectation that employees teaching in Higher Education should be Disclosure and Barring Service DBS checked, the University may be considered negligent if it fails to make appropriate safeguarding arrangements. Where employees are teaching a student who is under the age of 18, it is a University requirement that any school staff with one to one contact will be identified and DBS checked (as per the process set out at paragraph (3.4 above). Please refer to the University's Policy statement on the secure handling, use, retention and disposal of DBS Certificates and certificate information for further details.

3.6 Safeguarding Concerns

Legally, a person under the age of 18 years is a child. In line with the Safeguarding Policy, there is a network of Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO's) who will act as the points of contact within the University for receiving safeguarding concerns and referring onwards to the appropriate person or authority. Employees and Students have a responsibility to be alert to the possibility that an individual under 18 may have been abused or be at risk of abuse or radicalisation. Such concerns should never be left unreported. The DSOs will have received training and be aware of what further reporting (to the Safeguarding Coordinator or LSO, etc.) and any actions that may need to be taken. For full information please consult the Safeguarding Policy.

3.7 Contracts

As a student who is under the age of 18 years may not be able to enter into legal contracts, the University may require a student's parents to honour obligations under any contracts with the University that the student enters into prior to his or her 18th birthday. By signing the pro-forma at Appendix A – Parental Consent Form, the parent agrees to this.

3.8 Student Accommodation

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

Arrangements with private accommodation providers is the responsibility of parents/guardians.

3.9 Record Keeping and Confidentiality

It is the University's usual policy to deal directly with students and not their parents. This approach will also usually apply for under 18s. Under the Data Protection Act 2018, the University is not able to give information to parents or guardians about the student without the student's consent. An exception to this, however, is where a student fails to pay any fees owed to the University and it becomes necessary to disclose this to any parent/guardian who is acting as guarantor.

It should be noted that consent is still required from under 18s in the same way as for adults with regard to matters of Data Protection (e.g. how the University will process personal data such as academic records).

In accordance with statutory requirements, where safeguarding issues are involved, the priority is the safety of the individual who may be at risk. There may be occasions where a safeguarding issue is reported without obtaining the student's consent.

3.10 Field trips

Programmes may involve compulsory or optional field trips, excursions or other periods of study away from the University. Subject to the University's

duties under health & safety law, 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 give consent for the student to take part in these activities on that basis.

3.11 Internet Access

It is not possible for the University to limit access to any particular sites or categories of information. Students under 18 are required to comply with the Universities General Regulations including regulations regarding acceptable internet use.

3.12 Alcohol

It is illegal for alcohol to be sold to or bought by individuals 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.

3.13 Students' Union/ Holding Office

Students under the age of 18 are eligible to be a member of the Students' Union and to access its services and activities. However, certain restrictions apply:

- (i) Under 18s are able to fully take part in all Students' Union activities but they are not eligible to hold positions of responsibility, such as office or act as a student trustee. Membership of a student activity group will be at the discretion of the Students' Union to ensure that the appropriate safeguarding conditions can be put in place and that the activities are suitable for those aged under 18.
- (ii) Membership of certain societies may be refused due to age restrictions, e.g. gambling activity.
- (iii) The Students' Union has a licensed venue which sells alcohol and although under 18s are able to use the venue, it is illegal for the student to buy (or consume) alcohol or for anyone to sell it to them. The Students' Union is responsible for its licensed premises.

3.14 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. Staff members found to have engaged in sexual activity with a student under the age of 18 may face disciplinary action under the University's Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

3.15 Notification

Relevant staff will be notified of any student who will be under the age of 18 years on entry to the University. Routine notification will be made to the

School Dean, Head of Student Services and the staff warden in University campus accommodation.

3.16 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 (in line with the University's Safeguarding Policy). Any such suspicions or allegations will be reported to the LSO who will contact the appropriate authorities.

3.17 Medical Treatment

Students who are 16 or over generally have the legal capacity to consent to their medical treatment. Parents and guardians should be aware that in these cases the student is entitled to make his/her own decisions about giving consent for medical treatment. However, for all students under 18 years of age, parents will be asked before studies begin, for UK guardian contact details in the event of a medical emergency. Even with such consent, the child's view must also be taken into account. If a medical emergency arises and it is not possible to contact the parent/guardian using the contact details supplied, the University will, on behalf of the student's parent/guardian, give such consent to treatment where it is in the best interests of the student.



**Under 18 Years of Age
Parent/Legal Guardian Consent Form**

This form should be completed by the parent* of an Applicant to Teesside University (“the University”) who will be aged 16 or 17 years old at the time they commence their studies.

Please note that applicants will be asked for this form at conditional offer stage and it must be returned before an unconditional offer will be made.

The specific expectations that the University has of UK-based parents, UK Guardians and Guardianship Agencies will cease on the student's 18th birthday, as will the specific support for students under the age of 18. Please refer to the University's 'Policy for the Admission of Students Under the Age of 18 on Entry'.

If you have any queries about this form or would like to convey additional information to the University, please email the Admissions team at admissions@tees.ac.uk.

*For the purposes of this form, the term 'parent' refers to parent or legal guardian.

If you are 16 or 17 years old you must provide confirmation from your parent(s) or legal guardian(s), stating:

UK applicants

- the relationship between you and your parent(s) or legal guardian(s);
- that your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) have given their consent to you living independently.

International applicants

- the relationship between you and your parent(s) or legal guardian(s);
- that your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) have given their consent to you living independently in the UK;
- that your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) have given their consent to your Student Visa application;
- that your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) have given their consent to your independent travel to the UK.

Please arrange for your parent(s) or guardians(s) to complete the below form.

Part 1: Student Details

Applicant ID Number:	
Applicant Name:	
Date of Birth:	
Course Title:	
Course Start Date:	

Part 2: Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s) Details

Please note that **all** persons with legal responsibility for the above named student must complete and sign this form.

Name:	
Relationship to Applicant:	
Full postal address of parent(s)/legal guardian(s)	
Telephone number	
Email address	
Name:	
Relationship to Applicant:	
Full postal address of parent(s)/legal guardian(s)	
Telephone number	
Email address	

UK Guardian

If you are the parent of a student under the age of 18, and you reside outside of the UK, you will need to appoint a Guardian who resides in the UK. If you are the parent of a student under the age of 18, and you reside in the UK, you are classed as the UK Guardian so please input your personal details again.

Part 3: UK Guardian(s) Details (international applicants only)	
Name (and name of Guardianship Agency if appropriate):	
UK Guardian's relationship to the Applicant (e.g. Guardianship Agency, Aunt, family friend)	
UK Guardian's date of birth (must be over the age of 18)	
Full postal address of Guardian (must be in the UK)	
Guardian's telephone number	
Guardian's email address	

CONSENT - Please read carefully

If the above named Applicant takes up a place to study at Teesside University, as their parent I confirm that I understand and agree to the following statements:

1. Parental Responsibility

The University does not assume any parental responsibility in relation to students, including those under the age of 18. The University is an adult environment and courses are designed for students who are aged 18 or over. All students are

expected to study, socialise and live independently alongside adults from a wide variety of backgrounds. All students have free choice about how they spend their spare time and there is no direct supervision outside of contact hours with their academic schools. By returning this form, you confirm that you understand and accept this is the environment in which your child will be studying.

2. Contracts

As a general rule under UK law, a minor is unable to enter into a contract. However, current legal advice states that this does not apply to the provision of education or accommodation, and therefore, a student over the age of 16 and under the age of 18 will be able to register personally with the University and apply and enter into a legal contract for accommodation in the same way as an adult student. Should any future occasion arise which the student needs to enter into any contract with the University which may not be legally binding due to age, the University may request that a parent act as a guarantor for that particular contract.

3. Legal Restrictions

Under UK law, minors are unable to purchase alcohol, tobacco, solvents, fireworks and knives. They are also restricted from entering Nightclubs unless the event is specifically for under 18s. If accompanied by an adult, 16 and 17 year olds are able to drink (but not purchase) beer, wine or cider with a meal. Some pubs and bars will admit entry to minors but they will not be allowed to purchase alcohol. There are also age restrictions on certain films, video games and it is illegal for a minor to gamble online or in a gambling establishment.

4. University Residential Accommodation

Students under the age of 18 will have an opportunity to apply for University-owned accommodation. All new undergraduates irrespective of age are guaranteed the offer of accommodation providing that they meet certain conditions. Even where the required conditions are not met, the University will still try to meet any request for University-owned in the case of students who are under 18. Furthermore, the University will endeavour to ensure that the accommodation offered has 24 hour access to support staff.

5. Disclosure of Information

The Data Protection Act 2018 prohibits the University from disclosing information about a student's progress, whether academic or personal, to parents or other third

parties without the student's express consent. This applies to students of all ages including those under the age of 18.

6. Medical Emergencies

At the age of 16 patients in the UK are able to give consent for most medical or dental treatment without a parent's knowledge. Treatment is confidential. In the unlikely event of a medical emergency where a student is unable to consent and it is not possible to contact a parent or UK Guardian, the University may authorise emergency medical treatment, acting on medical advice in the best interests of the student.

7. Further requirement for parents who reside outside of the UK: Appointment of a UK Guardian

Students under the age of 18 must demonstrate that they have guardianship in the UK. If a parent resides outside of the UK they must appoint a UK Guardian who can be contacted in case of an emergency. The UK Guardian must be able to speak English, live in the UK, have a UK postal address and a UK telephone number. The UK Guardian cannot be a registered student or a member of staff at the University (unless directly related). The UK Guardian can either be an individual known to the family or the service can be hired from a Guardianship Agency.

8. Expectations of UK-based parent or UK Guardian:

To be the named contact in case of a medical emergency

To provide ongoing support to the student

To contact the student at least once a week

To contact the University if you have concerns about the student being ill and missing lectures/tutorials

To contact the University with any other concerns about the student

9. The role of UK Guardian, and the specific expectations the University has of UK-based parents of students under the age of 18, will cease on the student's 18th birthday.

By ticking this box, I confirm that I am the parent of the Applicant named above and that all the information I have provided is correct and true. If any of the information I have provided is found to be false, I accept that the registration of the Applicant could be terminated. *

Applicable to international applicants

I/we confirm that I/we give consent:

- for the student named on this form to travel to the UK to undertake study at Teesside University;
- agree to any reception arrangements made for the students' arrival in the UK;
- for the student named on this form to arrange their own accommodation and live independently whilst they are studying in the UK;
- you must provide details (and evidence of your relationship) for your legal guardian who resides in the UK who will accept parental responsibility until you turn 18. If you do not already have a legal guardian who resides in the UK, please use a Guardianship Service.

Declaration (all persons listed in Part 2 must complete this)

I confirm that I am the parent/legal guardian of the above named student and agree to provide consent to the above.

Full Name:

.....

Signature:

.....

Date:

.....

I confirm that I am the parent/legal guardian of the above named student and agree to provide consent to the above.

Full Name:

.....

Signature:

.....

Date:

.....

Please note that this completed Consent Form AND evidence must be provided and uploaded to the Applicant Portal to prove the parent/legal guardian relationship to the student, e.g. Birth Certificate, Marriage Certificate, Statutory Declaration confirming legal guardianship, etc.

The specific expectations that the University has of parents, legal guardians and Guardianship Agencies will cease on the student's 18th birthday, as will the specific support for students under the age of 18. Please refer to the University's Policy for the Admission of Students under the age of 18 on entry.

Contacts

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