



## Policy for students entering the University under the age of 18 years

### 1. Introduction

1.1. Our students are normally aged 18 years or above. We do, however, sometimes admit students who are under the age of 18 at the start of their programme of study. For the majority of students that status will be for a limited time period as they will usually turn 18 in the course of their first year. This policy sets out the basis on which we admit students who are under 18 years old at the start of their programme of study.

1.2. University is an adult environment and as such we treat all of our students as independent, mature individuals. Students who are under 18 years or age will be treated in the same way.

1.3. The University is not obliged, nor is it able, to take on the usual rights, responsibilities, and authority that parents/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.

1.4. The nature of the University environment does inevitably mean that students under 18 years old come into unsupervised contact with a wide variety of people who are 18 years old or older during the course of their academic studies, residence in University accommodation, or any other organised activities. This includes contact with staff and fellow students. However, this contact does not fall within the statutory requirements for criminal record checks to be undertaken and, accordingly, there is no obligation for such checks to be carried out for all University staff, including those who are assigned as personal tutors and members of staff or students working within University Residences.

1.5. The usual personal and academic support arrangements will apply to students who are under 18 years old. However, the University acknowledges that anyone under the age of 18 living in Wales is legally a child and that some legal restrictions apply to that cohort such as prohibition on the consumption of alcohol on licensed premises.

1.6. This policy should be read in conjunction with the University's [Safeguarding Policy](#).

### 2. Under 16s

2.1. On the very rare occasion a student applies who will be under the age of 16 at the point of entry, and where a Student visa is not required for the programme of study, we will consider entry on an individual basis through a Safeguarding Panel.

2.2 The safeguarding panel will include representation from the relevant School or College, Admissions, Residences, Student Support and Wellbeing, and will be chaired by the Academic Registrar in their capacity as University Safeguarding Officer or other nominated senior member of the Management Team, who will assume the role of University Safeguarding Officer for the purposes

of the panel for the University in their absence. The panel will consider safeguarding requirements and the University's ability to fulfil them in relation to the requested programme of study.

2.3 Under the terms of the University's Student Sponsor License we can only act as immigration sponsor for students who are 16 years old or over at the start of their programme of study. Due to this requirement we cannot admit any student requiring a Student visa unless they will be 16 years old on the start of their programme, as indicated in the official offer letter.

### 3. Students requiring a Student visa for study

3.1. A student aged 16 or 17 has the legal right to live independently in the UK and may make their own accommodation arrangements. However, when a 16 or 17 year old applies for a visa under the Student route, they must have their parents'/guardians' permission to both travel to the UK and to live independently. As part of the Student visa application process, students aged 16 or 17 must provide written permission from their parents/guardians (please see [Appendix 1](#)) and must also provide evidence of their relationship with their parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

3.2 Acceptable evidence includes one of the following original documents (or notarised copy):

- birth certificate showing the names of the applicants' parent(s);
- certificate of adoption showing the name(s) of the applicants' parent(s) or legal guardian(s);
- a court document naming the applicants' legal guardian(s).

3.3. We recommend that a UK-based guardian is identified who we can contact in case of an emergency and who can act in loco parentis. A UK-based guardian may be a responsible adult who is relative or friend of the family living in the UK.

### 4. Contracts

4.1. A person aged 16 or 17 has the status to enter into necessary contracts (for example, for education and accommodation), but until their 18th birthday will not be legally competent to enter into all legal contracts. In circumstances where a person must be aged 18 or over to be legally competent to enter into a contract we require a student's parents/guardians to honour all obligations (under any contracts with the University) that the student enters into prior to their 18th birthday.

### 5. Programme of study

5.1. There are some programmes of study where critical learning or placement requirements prohibit students under the age of 18 from studying the programme:

School	Programme	Age requirement
Dentistry	Bachelor of Dental Surgery, Bachelor of Dental Surgery with a preliminary year, BSc Dental Therapy and Dental Hygiene, DipHE in Dental Hygiene	Students must be 18 years of age by 31 December of year 1
Healthcare Sciences	All undergraduate programmes	Students must be 18 years of age on the first day of the programme in year 1

School	Programme	Age requirement
Medicine	MBBCh	Students must be 18 years of age by 20 September of year 1
Pharmacy	MPharm Pharmacy	Students must be 18 years of age on the first day of the programme in year 1

5.2. Excluding the list above, where there are professional training years or placement years as a full academic year the programme (e.g. BSc Psychology with a professional placement, 4-year programme), students must be 18 years old at the start of that placement/training year.

5.3. We also have programmes of study where a module of study may require viewing a film or documentary with a British Board of Film Classification of 18 years of age. Legislation prohibits persons under the age of 18 from viewing 18-rated films in licensed cinemas. The prohibition does not extend to such films being viewed as part of a lecture or tutorial. Depending on the particular circumstances and where possible, the University will offer an alternative module of study suitable for students under the age of 18. Where viewing films which are rated 18 is a compulsory/integral element of a programme, consideration will be given at the admissions stage to the ability of the student to engage with the programme, given the age-related prohibition, and a student under the age of 18 may be offered a deferred entry place or an alternative programme/route of study.

## 6. University Estates

6.1. Some campus buildings are public buildings and along with the University grounds, are open to visitors and members of the public. Individual supervision is not provided, and students may encounter members of the public who enter the premises in their normal course of their business.

## 7. University Residences

7.1. University residences are intended for the use of adults and special arrangements cannot be made for students under the age of 18 years. Individual supervision is not provided, and students in residence may also encounter members of the public who enter the premises in their normal course of their business.

7.2. We do not assume parental responsibility for a student under the age of 18. Students are expected to have the necessary skills to study and live independently alongside people from a wide variety of backgrounds. Places in University residences are offered on the understanding that the student will be able to adapt to living away from home and be responsible for themselves in all practical matters.

## 8. Social Activity

8.1. Students are treated as adults and are expected to attend teaching activity and to both live and study independently without formal supervision. The University environment provides peer groups of mixed group adults, none of whom will undergo criminal record checks, unless required for their particular programme of study, such as Medicine. Participating in social activity on and off campus is at the discretion of the students and the University is not able to take additional responsibility for a student who is under the age of 18 years in relation to such activities

## **9. Field trips and off-campus learning activity/activities**

9.1. Programmes may involve excursions, field trips, or other periods of study or activity away from the University (some of which will be residential trips). Subject to discharging the University's duties under Health and Safety law, we are not able to take any additional responsibility for a student who is under the age of 18 in relation to such activities.

## **10. Library**

10.1. It is unlawful to supply (e.g. sell or lend) an age-restricted video recording to a person under the age restriction. Consequently, library staff will not lend DVDs/Blu-ray or other video recordings classified as adult to students who are under 18.

## **11. Alcohol and tobacco**

11.1. It is illegal for alcohol and/or tobacco to be sold to or bought by students who are under the age of 18. We 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 and for complying with any restrictions on the sale or supply of alcohol to students who are under the age of 18.

## **12. Holding office**

12.1. Students who are under 18 years old are not allowed to hold office, for example, they may not be secretary or treasurer to a Students' Union club or society.

## **13. Relationships with staff**

13.1. 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.

## **14. Child protection**

14.1. As a matter of law in Wales, a person under the age of 18 is a child. We do not have statutory safeguarding duties but have a [safeguarding policy](#) 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 Academic Registrar who will contact the appropriate authorities.

## **15. Notification**

15.1. The relevant School Manager and Deputy Director (Residence & Facilities), Campus Facilities will be notified, prior to registration, of any student within their School or Residence who will be under the age of 18 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).

## **16. Parental involvement**

16.1. It is our usual policy that we deal with students (with whom we have a contractual relationship) and not with parents/guardians. This approach will also apply to students who are

under the age of 18 years. We will therefore correspond with students, not parents/guardians, unless in an emergency (see point 3 and point 18).

## **17. Data Protection**

17.1. Where consent is required, students who are under the age of 18 years are considered to be capable of consenting to the processing of their personal data and parental consent will not usually be sought.

## **18. Emergency contact**

18.1. Students under the age of 18 can have their refusal to receive medical treatment overridden by parents/guardians. Emergency contact details must therefore be provided prior to the student's arrival at the University. However, please note that a child from the age of 16 is entitled to consent to medical treatment, and that such consent cannot be overruled by parents/guardians.

## **19. Contact details**

19.1. Further information about the supporting procedure for this policy is available from:

Admissions Support Team  
Cardiff University  
McKenzie House  
30-36 Newport Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 0DE  
[admissions-advice@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:admissions-advice@cardiff.ac.uk)  
+44 (0)29 20879999

## **Appendix 1: Parental consent form for students requiring a Student visa**

Please download and complete the [parental consent form for students](#) if you require a Student visa to study in the UK. This form also provides an opportunity to appoint a UK guardian. Once completed, please return within 14 days to [admissions-advice@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:admissions-advice@cardiff.ac.uk).