

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

1. Introduction

Students at Cardiff University are normally aged 18 years or above. Cardiff University however sometimes admits students who are under the age of 18 years 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 University admits students who are under 18 years at the start of their programme of study.

The University is an adult environment and as such 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.

On the very rare occasion a student applies who will be under the age of 16 at the point of entry and where a Tier 4 visa is not required for the programme of study (see section on students requiring a Tier 4 visa for study below) the University will consider entry on an individual basis through a Safeguarding Panel which will include representation from the relevant School or College, Admissions, Residences, Student Support and Wellbeing, and, where appropriate (for students requiring a visa to study in the UK), Points Based Immigration Team, and will be chaired by the Academic Registrar in their capacity as University Safeguarding Officer or other nominated senior member 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.

The nature of the University environment does inevitably mean that students under 18 years of age come into unsupervised contact with a wide variety of people who are 18 years 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.

The usual personal and academic support arrangements will apply to students who are under 18 years. 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.

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

2. Students requiring a Tier 4 visa for study

Under the terms of the University's Tier 4 Sponsor License the University can only act as immigration sponsor for students who are 16 or over at the start of their programme of study. Due to this requirement the University cannot admit any student requiring a Tier 4 visa unless they will be 16 years of age on the start of their programme.

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 Tier 4 (General), they must have their parents'/guardians' permission to both travel to the UK and to live independently. As part of the Tier 4 visa application process students aged 16 or 17 must provide written permission from their parents'/guardians' and alongside this evidence of their relationship with their parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

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

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

3. Parental responsibilities

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 years.

The University recommends that a UK-based guardian is identified who the University can contact in the case of emergency and 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

A person of 16 or 17 has the status to enter into necessary contracts e.g. 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 the University requires 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

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
Medicine	MBBCh, MBBCh with a preliminary year	Students must be 18 years of ages 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

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 of age at the start of that year placement/training year.

The University also has 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

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

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.

The University does 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

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. 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

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, 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.

10. Library

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

It is illegal for alcohol and/or tobacco 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 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

Students who are under 18 years 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

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

As a matter of law in Wales, a person under the age of 18 is a child. The University does not have statutory safeguarding duties but has 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

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 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).

16. 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/guardians. This approach will also apply to students who are under the age of 18 years. The University will therefore correspond with students, not parents/guardians, unless in an emergency (see point 3 and point 18).

17. Data Protection

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

Students who have not attained the age of 18 can have their refusal to receive medical treatment overridden by parents/guardians and hence, emergency contact details must 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

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
+44 (0)29 20879999

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN IF YOU REQUIRE A TIER 4 VISA TO STUDY ONLY

Students who are aged 16 or 17 at the date of entering the University and who require a Tier 4 visa to study in the UK are required to show [proof or parental consent](#) which must be kept on record by the University.

Please ask your legal parent/guardian to complete and return the following as confirmation of their consent:

Full Name of Student:

UCAS Personal ID Number:

Cardiff ID Number:

I confirm that I have read and accept the conditions outlined in the "**Policy for students entering the University under the age of 18 years**" document provided by the University.

Name of signatory (parent/guardian):

Relationship to applicant:

Date:

Signed:

Please only complete this section if you are a non-UK based parent/guardian appointing a UK guardian.

It is recommended that you consider appointing a UK based guardian who the University can contact in the case of emergency and 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.

The Association of Educational Guardians for International Students (AEGIS) inspects and provides accreditation to guardianship organisations in the UK. Further details are available on their website. **Please be aware that these agencies will charge a fee.**

If you decide to appoint a UK guardian, please provide the details below:

Name of UK legal guardian:

Address:

Telephone:

Please ensure that you have discussed with the UK based guardian the responsibilities outlined in our Policy for Students under the Age of 18 Years and have their full consent before providing the University with their contact details.

Please complete and return **within 14 working days** to: admissions@cardiff.ac.uk

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN IF YOU ARE APPOINTING A UK GUARDIAN

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