

**Policy Coversheet**

<b>Name of Policy</b>	University Admissions Policy for Under 18s
<b>Purpose of Policy:</b>	Policy for the Admission of Students to the University under the age of 18
<b>Intended Audience:</b>	Potential Applicants, Applicants and Offer Holders
<b>Approval for this policy given by:</b>	Academic Board
<b>Last Review Date:</b>	November 2023
<b>Review Date Due (3 years from last review):</b>	July 2026
<b>Individual Responsible for Review:</b>	Head of Admissions & Applicant Engagement
<b>Authorising Department:</b>	Business to Markets

## Admission of Students Under the Age of 18 Policy and Procedure

### 1. Scope

- 1.1. The University treats all its students, regardless of age on entry, as independent, mature individuals. However, under 18s living in England are considered by law to be children, which means the University has additional responsibilities towards students it admits who are under the age of 18 prior to the start of their course until the date at which they turn 18, even if this period is brief.
- 1.2. Where this is the case, the University will require the applicant and their parent or guardian to sign the University's **Consent Form for Students Under the Age of 18 (Appendix 1)** and return it to the University as confirmation that both parties have read and understood the nature of the obligations which the University owes to its students under the age of 18 and the extent of the services and facilities available to them.
- 1.3. Applicants who are under 18 should be aware that they are applying to study in an adult environment and there may be a small number of restrictions applicable to them at the University while they are under 18. These are detailed below and should be read in conjunction with our [Safeguarding Policy](#).
- 1.4. No applicant under the age of 18 will be eligible to be registered as an enrolled student by the University until the Consent Form has been signed, returned, and processed.
- 1.5. For **international applicants** needing a visa to study in the UK:
  - 1.5.1 The University must comply with regulations set by the UK Visas and Immigration service of the UK's Home Office.
  - 1.5.2 As such, parents or guardians must ensure suitable care arrangements are in place for a child under the age of 18 who will study in the UK and be sponsored by the University under its Student Visa licence (see "4. UK Guardian" below).
  - 1.5.3 The consent form (**Appendix 1**) must be returned to the University prior to the issuing of a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS).
  - 1.5.4 During the Student Visa application, the Alternative Collection Location (ACL) code must be used to ensure that delivery of the Biometric Residence Permit is to the University of Staffordshire, who can store the Biometric Residence Permit securely until it can be collected.

### 2. Principles of Consent

- 2.1. The following policy and procedure seeks to ensure that the respective responsibilities of the University and parent or guardian in relation to the applicant are clear. By signing the University Parental Consent Form, it is deemed by the University that the student's parent or guardian has given their consent to the enrolment of their child in accordance with the terms of this Policy and Procedure.
- 2.2. Please note that once the student reaches the age of 18 this policy will no longer apply. At this point the student will become liable and responsible regarding all

matters relating to the relationship between the student and the University including responsibility for fees.

### **3. Parental responsibilities**

- 3.1. 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* (assuming parental responsibility) in relation to students who are under the age of 18.
- 3.2. Students who are under the age of 18 will be required to provide details of a UK-based parent or guardian who is willing to be contacted in an emergency.
- 3.3. Students who do not have a suitable relative in the UK will be required to register with and pay for a professional guardianship service. Students will be required to demonstrate that their guardianship contract covers the entire period until they become 18.
- 3.4. The University requires that students under the age of 18 confirm their travel arrangements and accommodation arrangements with the Student Life team prior to registration. All applicants under the age of 18 must complete and return the Parental Consent Form prior to enrolment.

### **4. UK Guardians of international students**

- 4.1. People under the age of 18 are classified as children under UK law. This means that their parents or legal guardians must make major decisions on their behalf and hold legal responsibility for their protection and safety while their child is in the UK. The University must therefore be able to contact a UK-based guardian who has been nominated by parents/legal guardians who can act on their behalf and be the liaison between the University and the parents if an emergency arises or there are serious concerns for the health or wellbeing of the person under 18.
- 4.2. If an adult family member or an adult friend is nominated and agrees to take on this role, the parent / legal guardian must ensure:
  - 4.2.1. That the nominated adult will be available for contact throughout the period that the child is under 18.
  - 4.2.2. That the nominated adult understands that they will be contacted in case of emergency situations where they will be expected to liaise directly with the parents/legal guardians and may be expected to attend the University or other location where the incident has occurred where this is necessary.
  - 4.2.3. That they understand that they may need to arrange for alternative accommodation at short notice should the University be closed due to an emergency or in the unlikely event that the student is suspended from the University due to breaches in regulations etc.
  - 4.2.4. That they would need to take responsibility for any travel activities that the child arranges while in the country.

4.3 In the situation where there is no family member or family friend available to take guardianship responsibilities in the UK, parents / legal guardians should use a reliable agency to provide appropriate guardianship. For example, via the AEGIS website which provides a list. The Head of Student Support (or nominee) will contact the guardian and approve prior to release of the CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies). Parents/legal guardians should ensure that the selected agency has experience of supervising University students.

## **5. Contracts**

- 5.1. The University requires a student's parents/guardians to act as guarantor of all obligations under any contracts that the student enters into with the University prior to his or her eighteenth birthday (For example: payment of tuition and accommodation fees due to the University).

## **6. Student Accommodation**

- 6.1. Parents and guardians should recognise that residential accommodation offered by the University is generally intended for the use of adults.
- 6.2. Parents and guardians should recognise that the use of private accommodation is at their own risk and is not regulated by the University of Staffordshire.

## **7. Holding Office Within Society**

- 7.1. Students who are under 18 years are not allowed to hold office, for example, they may not be secretary or treasurer to a sports club or other students' association.

## **8. Academics and Academic Course Content**

- 8.1. As part of the admission process, the relevant departmental tutor will be consulted to ensure that the senior manager in the School or Institute are satisfied that the content of any academic programme would be appropriate for students under the age of 18. This includes course content, field trips and placements, where these activities would occur at a time when the student would be under 18 years old.
- 8.2. For some programmes it may be a requirement of the relevant professional, statutory and regulatory body that students are aged 18 or above when they enrol.
- 8.3. Parents and guardians should be aware that University staff will not routinely undergo Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

## **9. Field Trips**

- 9.1. Courses may involve compulsory or optional field trips, excursions or other periods of study away from the University campus.
- 9.2. The University is not able to take any additional responsibility for a student who is under the age of 18 in relation to such activities.

9.3. Unless indicated otherwise, by signing the consent form the parent or guardian gives consent for the student to take part in these activities on that basis.

9.4. Risk assessments are carried out before all field trips and provision is made for inclusion of under 18s where possible.

9.5. Participation in some activities may be limited.

## **10. Sale of alcohol and other restricted goods and services**

10.1. It is illegal for alcohol and other restricted goods or services to be sold to, or bought by, students who are under the age of 18. Students under the age of 18 would be restricted from some on campus facilities, activities and organised events due to age restrictions in place.

## **11. Parental involvement**

11.1. The University's policy is that its relationship is with students and not with parents or guardians. This approach will apply to students who are under the age of 18. The University will therefore correspond with students, and not with parents or guardians, unless the University receives express written permission from the student or there is a medical, criminal, or similar emergency.

## **12. Emergency Contacts**

12.1. When dealing with medical or other emergencies the University will always seek to do what is in the best interests of the student. The law relating to the giving or withholding of consent to medical treatment is complex and where there is doubt or conflict about the giving or refusal of consent by persons under the age of 18 or the involvement of parents the University may seek medical and legal opinion as to the appropriate course of action depending on the circumstances. Emergency contact details must be provided by students or parents prior to the student's arrival at the University. The Parental Consent form must be completed and returned to the relevant department prior to enrolment.

## **13. Provision of IT services**

13.1. The University offers email and unregulated internet services for all its students. These services are provided on an unsupervised basis. Students are expected to act in an adult and responsible manner when using these facilities and are required to abide by the University [Library Regulations](#) and [IT regulations](#).

## **14. Data Protection**

14.1. The University data protection policy and procedures apply also to persons under 18. This means that it will not normally be possible for the University to release information about academic progress or other matters to parents without the consent of the student.

14.2. However, if the student fails to pay any sums agreed on contract (see "Contracts" above) then it may be necessary to disclose this to any guarantor and possibly to a debt collection agency.

## **PROCEDURE FOR PROCESSING APPLICATIONS WHERE APPLICANT WILL BE UNDER 18 AT THE START OF COURSE**

### **15. Procedure**

- a) When the Admissions Team receives an application from someone who is under the age of 18, the under 18 clearance check will be added automatically on to the application where applicable.
- b) If an applicant has met or predicted to meet the published entry criteria, the application would be sent to the tutor for review to confirm:
  - i. That the content of the course is suitable for applicants that are under 18 and there are no concerns about safeguarding in this regard.
  - ii. That they agree there are no academic barriers which includes any PSRB regulations which would prevent an under 18-year-old applicant from joining the course.
  - iii. That they can satisfactorily complete off-campus course related activities, including placements, that are compulsory to the course and its learning outcomes.
- c) If the reviewing tutor is happy to proceed and the applicant is under the age of 17:
  - i. The risk register (Appendix 2) would be completed by the relevant Admissions Manager.
  - ii. The completed risk register would be sent to the relevant senior manager for the School or Institute and the Head of Student Support for approval.
  - iii. The application will be processed using the standard offering route in eVision which will include a parental consent form in the applicant's University of Staffordshire portal.
  - iv. In some cases, it may be appropriate to contact the parent or guardian following submission of that form.
- d) Where approval is not given, the decision would be actioned in eVision and follow the reject review processes.
- e) If the reviewing tutor is happy to proceed and the applicant is aged 17:
  - i. The application will be processed using the standard offering route in eVision which will include a parental consent form in the applicant's University of Staffordshire portal.
  - ii. In some cases, it may be appropriate to contact the parent or guardian following submission of that form.
- f) Where approval is not given, the decision would be actioned in eVision and follow the reject review processes.
  - i. In some cases, applicants that are aged 17 may be able to defer their application to the next academic year.

## **16. Approval of UK Guardian - Parental consent form (International Students Only)**

Completed parental consent forms (**Appendix 1**) for international students will be sent to the Head of Student Support (or nominee) to liaise directly with the UK Guardian to ensure that all responsibilities are understood.

## **17. Complaints**

Where an applicant has cause for concern about the way their application has been handled, they should refer to section 11.0 of the University of Staffordshire Admissions Policy.

## Appendix 1 – Consent Form for Applicants Under the Age of 18

This form must be completed by all students who will be under the age of 18 at the date of their enrolment at the University and at least one of the under 18 student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s). The form must be fully completed and returned by email to the relevant Admissions Office at the University of Staffordshire (details below) **as soon as possible**.

Please note that:

- **All students** will not be permitted to start the enrolment process until the form has been returned and approved
- **International students** requiring a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) in order to apply for a Student Visa must submit the completed Under 18s Consent Form for approval before the CAS is issued.

Please complete this form in **BLOCK CAPITALS**

### Section 1 – Student Personal Details (to be completed by **ALL STUDENTS**)

Name of student	
Date of birth	
UCAS ID number or Student ID number	
Course	
Start date (month and year, e.g. October 2019)	
Date of arrival (if unknown please state your planned date of arrival):	
Student address in the UK (if unknown at this time please state whether you plan to live in private or on-campus accommodation):	
Student Declaration and Signature:  <i>I confirm that I have read and understood the University of Staffordshire Policy for Admissions of students under the age of 18.</i>	
Signed	Date



**Section 2 Parental Consent:** (to be completed by (at least one of) the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of **ALL STUDENTS**)

Name(s) of parent(s)/ parent(s) or legal guardian(s)	Parent 1:	Parent 2 (if applicable):
Permanent address of parent(s)/ parent(s) or legal guardian(s)		
Telephone numbers		
E-mail addresses		
Emergency Contact	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

**Section 3 – Details of Nominated Guardian in the UK** to be completed by at least one of the student's parent(s), or legal guardian(s) if different to above.

***PLEASE NOTE: Details of a guardian in the UK must be provided if the parent(s)/ or legal guardian(s) named in Section 3 (below) live outside the UK. Refer to section 4.2.5 for further guidance.***

If the nominated guardian details are the same as above, please tick here.

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Full Name of Guardian in the UK	
Full UK Address:	
Telephone number:	
E-mail address:	
Is this an emergency contact?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

**Section 4: Emergency Contacts** (to be completed by at least one of the student's parent(s), or legal guardian(s) of ALL STUDENTS if emergency contact is different to above:

Name(s)	Emergency Contact 1:	Emergency Contact 2 (if applicable):
Permanent address		

Telephone numbers		
E-mail addresses		

**Section 5: Declaration:**

**Part 1 to be read and signed by the parents(s) or legal guardian(s) of all students.**

**Part 2 to be read and signed by the parents(s) or legal guardian(s) of International students only.**

**Part 1:**

- I/we\* are the parent(s)/legal guardian(s)\* of the student named above
- I/we\* have read and agree with the Admission of Students Under the Age of 18 Policy and Procedure and agree to the Principles of Consent and the responsibilities it contains.
- I/we\* agree to inform the University of all travel plans and accommodation arrangements prior to the student travelling to the University.
- I/we\* confirm that all details provided are accurate and correct, and should any details change I/we\* will contact the University to update its records.

Signatures of parent(s) / legal guardian(s)*	Parent 1	Parent 2 (if applicable)
Date:		

**Part 2:**

- I/we\* give our consent for him/her\* to apply for and hold a Student Visa to study away from home, in the UK (where applicable for UK study);
- I/we\* will use the Alternative Collection Location (ACL) code for the University of Staffordshire in the Student Visa application.
- I/we\* consent to him/her\* travelling independently to the UK (where applicable) and University / to the reception arrangements made.
- I/we\* have read and understood section "4. UK Guardian".
- I/we\* confirm that the person named in Section 3 above is my/our\* nomination as UK Guardian (where required).
- I/we\* confirm that the nominated UK Guardian has given consent to be contacted by the University of Staffordshire, should this be necessary.
- I/we\* confirm that all details provided are accurate and correct, and should any details change I/we\* will contact the University to update its records.
- I/We confirm the understanding that I/we are liable for the payment of the tuition and accommodation fees until the child has reached the age of 18.

Signatures of parent(s) / legal guardian(s)*	Parent 1	Parent 2 (if applicable)
Date:		

Return forms to:

- International Applicants: [int-admissions@staffs.ac.uk](mailto:int-admissions@staffs.ac.uk)
- Home / EU applicants: [central-admissions@staffs.ac.uk](mailto:central-admissions@staffs.ac.uk)

## Appendix 2: Risk Register

### Risk Assessment for Applicants aged 16 and Under

<b>Applicant Name:</b>	
<b>Applicant DOB:</b>	
<b>Applicant ID</b>	
<b>Course Applied for:</b>	
<b>Assessment Completed By:</b>	<b>&lt;Home / International Admissions Manager&gt;</b>
<b>Assessment Date:</b>	

Please score the criteria below based on the information provided in the application. A scoring system of 0-3 should be used. 0 indicates that the applicant has no experience in this area and 3 is deemed to be highly competent and fully meets or exceeds the criteria.

The total score indicates the level of perceived risk (the higher the score the lower the risk) and must then be weighed against the number of months after commencing the course the student would remain a minor.

If the total liability score exceeds 0, the applicant is considered to be lower risk and should be considered for acceptance.

Evidence	Score
Work experience of 6 months or more (voluntary or paid)	
Time spent away from home (12 months or more)	
Recommendation from an academic referee	
Applicant has attended an International School	
Applicant demonstrates high competence in English language (CEFR C1 or above)	
Applicant is involved in extracurricular activities which are indicative of good team building and social skills	
Familiarity with the UK (previous visits, British family members etc...)	
Positions of responsibility or trust (voluntary or nominated positions at school etc...)	
<b>Total Perceived Risk Score:</b>	

<b>Number of months from the start of semester until the student turns 18:</b>	
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<b>Perceived Risk Score minus No. of Months = Total Liability Score</b>	
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<b>Based on the above assessment, the Admissions decision is to:</b>
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Accept	
Reject	

X

Admissions Manager

**Based on the above assessment, the Student Support decision is to:**

Accept	
Reject	

X

Head of Student Support

**Based on the above assessment, the Associate Deans decision is to:**

Accept	
Reject	

**Signed:**

**Date:**