

## **Policy 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, if the student is resident in University owned or leased accommodation, the allocation of resident tutors and a Warden as well as a comprehensive range of specialist student services. However, 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.

### **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 enclosed pro-forma, 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 Nottingham, and who will be accessible to the child and to the University should the need arise.

### **Contracts**

As a student who is under the age of 18 years may not be able to enter into legal contracts, the University require a student's parents to honour all obligations under any contracts with the University that the student enters into prior to his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. By signing the enclosed pro-forma, the parent agrees to this.

### **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.

### **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 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.

### **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 sports club or other students' association.

### **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 Registrar who will contact the appropriate authorities.

### **Notification**

The relevant Head of School 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 and residential tutors (if any) 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 and this approach will also apply to students who are under the age of 18 years. The University will therefore correspond with students, not parents.

### **Emergency Contact**

It is particularly important that emergency contact details are provided for students under the age of 18 years and such students and/or their parents are required to supply this information prior to their arrival at the University. 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 parents or guardians give such consent to treatment as is in the best interests of the student. By signing the enclosed pro-forma, the student's parents or guardians indicate their consent to this

