

## **Students under the age of eighteen Policy**

### **1.0 Introduction and background**

- 1.1 The University considers applicants for entry onto programmes based on the principles set out in the University's Admissions Policy. Occasionally the University admits students who are under the age of eighteen years old. Whilst these students are generally only in this position for few months some may be under eighteen for a longer period of time.
- 1.2 The University is an adult environment and treats all its students as independent, mature individuals. Students who are under the age of eighteen will be treated in the same way.
- 1.3 The nature of the University environment inevitably means that students under eighteen will come into unsupervised contact with a wide variety of people (staff, students, visitors and members of the public) who are over eighteen years old during the course of their academic study, residence, campus and other activities linked with University life. There is no requirement for blanket DBS checks for University staff, students. There are certain staff roles that do require DBS checks in accordance with legislation or best practice, and there are also programmes of study that require a DBS or International police record check as a condition of enrolment.
- 1.4 Within an academic programme of study, the content of learning materials and activities are regarded as suitable for independent, mature individuals. Students who are under the age of eighteen will be treated in the same way.

### **2.0 Purpose and scope**

- 2.1 To establish the University's responsibilities in this area and to ensure that students in this position are safeguarded appropriately.
- 2.2 This policy covers students aged at least sixteen but under the age of eighteen, regardless of the amount of time they are under eighteen, from the start of their programme and enrolment through to graduation. It covers all students on University programmes of study, regardless of level, but does not apply to short courses or educational activities designed specifically for people of a younger age (where separate rules will apply).
- 2.3 Information on students under the age of sixteen can be found in Appendix 1.

- 2.4 This policy applies to all students registered on University courses on site at the University of Northampton, including those on Student Visa. It complies with the University of Northampton sponsorship obligations as required from UKVI.
- 2.5 This policy does not apply to students studying with UNIC, when those students are registered on the UNIC components of their programmes of study, because those students are covered by the UNIC Under Eighteens policy during that time. The UNIC Under Eighteens policy must mirror this policy to ensure compliance with the University of Northampton sponsorship obligations as required from UKVI.
- 2.6 This policy does not apply to students studying with Partners undertaking University of Northampton awards in the UK, because these students are covered by the Partner under Eighteens policy. The Partner Under Eighteens policy must mirror this policy to ensure compliance with the University of Northampton sponsorship obligations as required from UKVI.
- 2.7 For students studying outside of the UK with Partners, then this policy does not apply, although Partners will be required to demonstrate compliance within country legislation to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all learners, including those under the age of eighteen.

### **3.0 Definitions**

- 3.1 n/a

### **4.0 Key principles**

- 4.1 The University will not assume parental responsibility for any students under the age of eighteen.
- 4.2 The usual personal and academic support arrangements will apply to students who are under eighteen. Staff involved in supporting students under the age of eighteen are not required to undertake a DBS check unless additional factors suggest that such a check may be appropriate. Such factors may include, for example, supervision or support provided to a large number of students under the age of eighteen; or where a staff member requests a DBS/Overseas Police check. Students under the age of eighteen, or the staff who provide those students with personal and academic support, may choose to incorporate additional safeguards (e.g. the presence of additional staff/students at any individual tutorials); such arrangements are to be managed by the staff and students themselves.
- 4.3 Students who are under eighteen are admitted to appropriate programmes of study, their age status identified, and their details are circulated to relevant staff. ( see 5.1)
- 4.4 Programmes of study not suitable for students under eighteen are identified; the Head of Admissions will maintain this information and ensure that relevant applicants are made aware of this at the earliest possible opportunity in the application process. This information will also

be detailed in the Programme Specification. Only where a programme contains extensive content that is not suitable to be studied by a student under the age of eighteen, where there is a legal or professional body requirement for students to be a certain age, or where components of a programme cannot be completed by students under a certain age (e.g. placements) are such restrictions likely to be considered appropriate.

- 4.5 All parents/guardians of a student under eighteen will be asked to consider the risk assessment (see 5.1) and sign a consent form that provides clear information on the responsibilities of the University. All parents/guardians will be required to provide copies of their own passports and the student's birth certificate. The student will not be permitted to enrol or engage with any learning or other activities unless this declaration is signed and all documentation is submitted and verified.
- 4.6 The University requires that every student under the age of eighteen is supported by a parent/guardian living in the UK. Where a student's parent/guardian does not live in the UK, the University recommends that the student's parent/guardian identifies another adult over the age of eighteen living in the UK who would be considered by the University to be the student's guardian in times of urgent medical or other need. The student will not be permitted to enrol unless contact details of an adult living in the UK has been provided (see 4.5)
- 4.7 All University students, including those under the age of eighteen, are regarded by the University as understanding and able to exercise their own rights under Data Protection legislation. Unless we have a student's express signed consent we will not pass on or share their personal data with their parent/guardian or other individuals except in cases where there is a threat to the health and safety of the student or others. Any student under the age of eighteen who does wish to have the involvement of their parent/guardian will need to provide written consent that they are happy for this process to take place specifying what personal information they are willing for the University to share.
- 4.7 A report on enrolled students under eighteen will be run and made available to the Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO) at the point of enrolment. Information will be disseminated by the LSO to academic course teams and relevant professional services. This report will be run monthly and shared with Lead Safeguarding Officer to capture any changes in enrolment.
- 4.8 The Lead Safeguarding Officer or nominee and will work with other relevant individuals to ensure appropriate information has been disseminated about the approach the University takes to students under eighteen.
- 4.8 The Safeguarding Register will be updated and kept maintained of details of students under 18. The Safeguarding and Prevent Committee will provide governance oversight and receive regular reports of the volume of students under 18 and compliance with policy and process.

- 4.9 Guidance about students under eighteen on campus will be provided to the student's parent/guardian.
- 4.10 The Students' Union will employ an 'ID all' policy when legally required and will ensure that only students under eighteen with parental/guardian consent are allowed to attend trips/events.
- 4.11 Students under the age of eighteen are not normally allowed to reside in University accommodation. Any request by a student under the age of eighteen to access University accommodation will be considered by the Director of Estates and Campus Services and the Lead for Safeguarding on a case-by-case basis.

## **5.0 Risk assessment**

- 5.1 Where an applicant to a standard University programme of study is under the age of eighteen at the start of their programme, the University will undertake a full risk assessment to consider whether admittance is in the best interests of the applicants and other students. The Lead Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Safeguarding Officer will liaise with the Course Team and relevant professional services for the completion of the risk assessment.

The risk assessment will consider all aspects of student life (curriculum activities, accommodation), involving academic and professional services staff.

This will be completed when the applicant has accepted a Firm offer. This risk assessment will be shared with the student and parent/guardian so that consent is informed based on the risk management.

- 5.2 Where someone under the age of eighteen is applying to attend educational activities (e.g. summer schools, Applicant VIP residentials), [The Safety of Children on Campus Policy](#) will apply.

## **6.0 Key responsibilities**

- 6.1 Admissions staff - be briefed on the courses that have been identified as not suitable for students under the age of eighteen and flag such to prospective students who fall into this age bracket. When an applicant has accepted their offer, then Admissions staff notify Lead Safeguarding Officer
- 6.2 Lead Safeguarding Officer - coordinates completion of risk assessment with academic course team and relevant professional services. Consent form and risk assessment is provided to the parents/guardians, together with clear expectation of the University policy and provision of services for students under eighteen. After a student has enrolled, confirmation of enrolment is shared with the Lead for Safeguarding.

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- 6.3 Head of Student Administration – Only students with signed consent and relevant documentation as outlined in the policy will be able to enrol. The report on enrolled students under the age of eighteen is provided to the Lead Safeguarding Officer. Monthly enrolment update is provided.

### **7.0 Links to related UN Policies/Guidance/Regulations**

- 7.1 Safeguarding, Prevent, & Vulnerable students and other Learner's policy – a policy for dealing with children, young people and vulnerable adults
- 7.2 Students under the age of eighteen – guidance for parents, guardians and staff
- 7.3 Under 18 process, including the following documents:  
Consent form for applicants who are under eighteen  
Risk assessment for under eighteen students  
Disclaimer for applicants who do not have a nominated adult living in the UK

### **8.0 Links to related external documents**

- 8.1 n/a

### **9.0 Appendices**

- 9.1 Management of students under the age of sixteen
- 9.2 Summary Sheet

## **9.1 Management of students under the age of sixteen**

- 9.1.1 Where an applicant to a standard University programme of study is expected to be under sixteen at the age of enrolment, and where that applicant meets the academic (and where relevant English Language) entry requirements, the University will undertake a full risk assessment to consider whether admittance is in the best interests of the applicants and other students. This risk assessment will normally be undertaken by the Academic Registrar and Director of Library, Learning & Student Services or nominee.
- 9.1.2 Where this risk assessment leads to a decision that enrolment should be allowed, the University will expect the student to be accompanied by a responsible adult to all aspects of their course and student life activities until such time as the student turns sixteen. This should be made clear to the applicant at the point at which the offer is made.
- 9.1.3 Where someone under the age of sixteen is applying to attend educational activities specifically targeted at younger age groups (e.g. summer schools), separate policies and processes will apply.

## 9.2 Summary Sheet

<b>Policy Title:</b>	
Students under the age of eighteen	
<b>Purpose of Policy and to whom it applies (please specify cohorts):</b>	
<p>This policy relates to those students who commence study before their eighteenth birthday to ensure that they are properly safeguarded.</p> <p>It applies to all students registered on University courses on site at the University of Northampton, including those on Student Visas. For UNIC and Partner students studying in the UK, they will have their own Student Under 18 policies, but for the purposes of the University of Northampton sponsorship arrangements in accordance with UKVI requirements, UNIC and Partner students must mirror the requirements of this policy.</p>	
<b>Owner and Department:</b>	
Julie Martin, Interim Academic Registrar	
<b>Principal contact:</b>	
Dawn Mains, Head of Admissions	
<b>Dissemination and implementation plan:</b>	
Via SEC and SSECs Via web	
<b>Date of initial committee approval (state committee name):</b>	SEC June 2014
<b>Date of Senate approval:</b>	July 2016
<b>Date for implementation and cohorts to which it applies:</b>	September 2016 for all new and continuing students
<b>Proposed date of annual update:</b>	June 2022
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<b>Proposed date of full review:</b>	June 2025
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