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*This document is part of the Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures which govern the University's academic provision. Each document has a unique document number to indicate which section of the series it belongs to.*

## **3M - ADMISSION AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS ENTERING THE UNIVERSITY UNDER THE AGE OF 18: POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

### **1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE**

- 1.1 This policy and procedure is for BU staff and students.
- 1.2 This policy and procedure must be followed when students under the age of 18 apply for or enrol on Bournemouth University programmes of study.

### **2. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 2.1 Overall responsibility for overseeing the care and support procedures for students under 18 lies with the Director of Student Services.
- 2.2 The University's Safeguarding Policy sets out the overall framework through which the University will safeguard students under 18 and the roles and responsibilities of staff generally in that regard. This policy is made within that framework, to provide more detail on roles and responsibilities in the context of admission and course support.
- 2.3 The University's Under 18s Accommodation Policy sets out responsibilities in relation to under 18 students booking BU accommodation. Under 18 students who book into accommodation managed by a third party contracted accommodation provider will also be required to comply with that provider's policies in relation to under 18 students.
- 2.4 Admissions staff will be responsible for providing information to applicants and their parents/guardians regarding this policy and the arrangements that the University will put in place for students under 18.
- 2.5 Faculty academic and professional and support staff will be responsible for ensuring that the actions included in this policy are followed for under 18 students enrolled on Bournemouth University programmes.
- 2.6 Human Resources will be responsible for communicating with staff whose duties are classified as regulated activity with children and will undertake a Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check of relevant staff where necessary.

### **3. ACCESSING OTHER RELEVANT BU DOCUMENTS**

- 3.1 All documents can be accessed [here](#)
- 3.2 Other documents with direct relevance to this are:
  - 3A Standard Admissions Regulations: Taught programmes
  - 3B - Admission Policy (Taught Programmes)

- *3D - Fraudulent Application Policy*
- *3E - Admissions Policy for Applicants with a Criminal Record*
- *3F - Proof of Qualifications and Identification Procedures*
- *3T - Admissions Appeals and Complaints Policy*
- *Equality and Diversity Policy*
- *Safeguarding Policy*
- *Student Agreement*
- *Under 18s Accommodation Policy*

## **POLICY**

### **4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

- 4.1 Bournemouth University has a duty of care towards all its students and staff. In the case of students joining the university before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, the University considers that this duty requires additional measures to be put in place as set out in the Safeguarding Policy and this policy. It also requires a clear definition to be stated in this policy of the responsibilities of the University, the student and the student's parents/guardians.
- 4.2 Students under 18 are regarded as minors under English law and have a limited ability to enter into legally binding agreements. The University cannot assume that students under the age of 18 can be treated as adults or are able to make their own decisions to the same extent as students over the age of 18.
- 4.3 This policy will be followed to ensure that the University meets its legal obligations and safeguards the welfare of its students under the age of 18. It also protects the University's interest in terms of its ability to secure appropriate agreements or commitments and enforce the terms on which students take up their places at the University.
- 4.4 The University will not act in loco parentis (in place of a parent).
- 4.5 Individuals under 18 are able to enter into binding contracts for the provision of education. It is a condition of enrolment that a student agrees to abide by the Bournemouth University Student Agreement in force at the time of their enrolment/re-enrolment. All regulations, policies and procedures referred to within the rules are available online at <https://www1.bournemouth.ac.uk/students/help-advice/important-information>

### **5. GENERAL**

- 5.1 A person under the age of 18 does not have full legal capacity to enter into many types of contract, to give valid consent for many activities or decisions, or to hold office in student clubs or societies. This limits the scope of activities which can be undertaken by a student under 18 and/or may mean that parental/guardian consent is required for the student to participate in certain activities. It may also limit the University's ability to enforce debts directly against a student under the age of 18. Therefore parents/guardians are usually asked to accept a contractual responsibility for debts to the University incurred by a student under the age of 18, i.e. any financial obligations which have not been met directly by the student or through a third party arrangement such as a student loan.
- 5.2 The law prohibits a student under 18 from purchasing alcohol or drinking alcohol on university premises. The University expects its students to abide by the law in this respect.
- 5.3 The University requires students under 18 to provide the University with the name and contact details of a parent or legal guardian (and an additional UK-based guardian where the parent or legal guardian is not resident in the UK). The University will maintain a record of this information, which will be used to make contact in the event of an emergency, where the University requires decisions or authorisations to be given in respect of the student as

provided for in this policy, and for other purposes as set out in the Under 18s Accommodation Policy and the [student privacy notice](#). This information will be shared with any contracted private accommodation partner operating BU accommodation (i.e. where the booking was secured through the University's accommodation portal). It is the responsibility of the student and the parents/guardians to keep the University informed of up to date contact details.

- 5.4 The University will determine whether a DBS check is required for any particular role in the University in accordance with the guidelines issues by the Disclosure and Barring Service and the University's Safeguarding Policy. All staff are required to abide by BU's Safeguarding Policy.
- 5.5 The University's procedures for dealing with student complaints make specific provision for managing complaints made by students under the age of 18. This includes allowing the student's parent/guardian to act on the student's behalf and may in any case include the University's sharing information about the complaint/its management directly with the student's parent/guardian.

## PROCEDURE

### 6. PRE-ADMISSION

- 6.1 When making offers to applicants who will be under 18 when they begin their course of study, admissions staff will send an information pack at the point of offer detailing measures that will be taken by the University in order to take appropriate account of the age of the student and setting out information which needs to be considered by the student and their parent/guardian.
- 6.2 As part of the information pack, parents and guardians of these students will be informed that the University will not act in loco parentis in respect of the student. This means that their consent will be sought for the student to participate in certain student activities and to be given emergency medical treatment.
- 6.3 At the same time, the University will usually ask parents or guardians to accept a contractual liability for any debts incurred by the student to the University, i.e. any financial obligations (including fees, accommodation costs or other charges such as library fines) incurred by a student under 18 which are not met directly by the student themselves or through a third party funding arrangement such as a student loan.
- 6.4 It will be a condition of accepting students who are under 18 whose parent/legal guardian is not resident in the UK that they have a guardian in the UK who has authority to take decisions and give consent on the students' behalf.
- 6.5 The additional steps put in place for a student under 18 under this policy are limited as the University will not act in loco parentis (in place of a parent). The University is an adult environment and students, including those under the age of 18, are expected to behave appropriately. Students studying at BU should be prepared to live independently and alongside others and take responsibility for looking after themselves. Before a student who will be under the age of 18 at enrolment accepts a place at BU, they and their parents/legal guardians should be aware of this expectation and carefully consider the student's ability to meet it.
- 6.6 Parents/legal guardians should consider the Under-18s information pack and documentation relating to the student's intended course of study and the wider opportunities provided by the University. If, having read that material, parents/guardians do not wish the student to participate in activities that any student is normally expected to undertake, they must inform the University before accepting the offer of a place. If it is believed that this would have a detrimental effect on the student's experience at Bournemouth University, the decision may be taken to amend the offer so that a place is offered for deferred entry.

6.7 Admissions staff will inform the Director of Student Services, relevant academic and support staff in Faculties and any relevant professional staff of the details of Unconditional Firm applicants who will be under 18 at the start of their course, to help ensure that these students are identified and made aware of available appropriate support.

6.8 Signed copies of all the declaration, guarantee and contact information documentation within the Under-18 information pack must be received from the parents/guardians by the time of enrolment.

## **7. ON-COURSE SUPPORT**

7.1 Where appropriate and if reasonably practicable, the University will seek consent from the parent or guardian of an under-18 student for the student to participate in certain activities or to go on field trips.

7.2 As for all students, under 18 students will be allocated a member of academic staff who will act as an Academic Advisor. Time will be allocated to enable these tutors to meet with individual students to monitor and discuss their academic progress. However Academic Advisors will not be expected to allocate additional time to an under 18 student compared to the time available for supporting any other student, only on the basis of the student's age. This reflects the fact that under 18 students will have been offered a place on the basis that they are capable of meeting the full course requirements.

## **8. SOCIAL AND SPORTING NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES**

8.1 The University will ensure that relevant staff involved in social and sporting non-academic activities are made aware of any activities which involve students under 18. They will take all reasonable steps to ensure an appropriate level of care for those students and ensure their safety through agreed procedures and good practice, including application of the BU Safeguarding Policy.

8.2 For on campus activities, the provider should have systems to identify under 18 year old students, including informing the students directly of their responsibilities in respect of disclosure.

8.3 For trips off campus which involve an overnight stay, the activity provider must ensure that group leaders and/or trip organisers are aware of the attendance of under 18 year old students and take appropriate welfare and safeguarding measures.

8.4 For social activities, the provider should take reasonable steps to ensure compliance with the law.

8.5 Risk assessments will be carried out as appropriate.

## **9. WHEN THE STUDENT BECOMES 18**

9.1 On the student's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, or as soon after that as appropriate and reasonably practicable after, the additional arrangements set out in this policy will cease to apply. The student will become fully and directly responsible for their relationship with BU, including all contractual responsibilities and debts, as is the case for any student who was over the age of 18 at the date of enrolment. No specific notification of this will be sent to the student or their parent/legal guardian.

## General

### 10. FURTHER INFORMATION

- 10.1 This policy was reviewed according to the University's *Equality Analysis Procedure* in July 2019.