

**BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY**  
**Document Administration**

<b>Document Title:</b>	Policy in Respect of the Admission and Welfare of Students who are under the Age of 18 at entry
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## **1. Scope and Definition**

- 1.1 This policy is informed by, and designed to give practical expression to, Bishop Grosseteste University's (BGU) commitment to value diversity and to recognise aspiration by providing equal opportunities for all individuals, regardless of their background or age to gain admission to and follow a programme of higher education suited to their abilities and interests.
- 1.2 The University recognises a number of benefits from admitting students who are under 18 years old, particularly widening participation which enables anyone who is eligible to benefit from higher education.
- 1.3 The University has an enhanced duty of care towards all students who are under the age of 18 at enrolment.
- 1.4 This policy applies to any applicant who will be under the age of 18 at the time of their enrolment onto a programme of study at the University.
- 1.5 This policy defines the admissions procedures and responsibilities for the welfare of students who are under the age of 18; ensures that the legal obligations in respect of those whom the law defines as children are recognised and discharged; and ensures that all members of the University staff are aware of their legal responsibilities in respect of admitting students under the age of 18.
- 1.6 The University is an adult environment. Students under the age of 18 are expected to behave in a mature manner and assume an adult level of responsibility. They are expected to have the skills necessary to study and live independently with people from a variety of backgrounds, to adapt to academic life and to living away from home and looking after themselves. Students under the age of 18 will be subject to the University's policies and procedures. Members of staff at the University will take all reasonable measures to minimise the risk of harm to students under the age of 18.

## **2. Principles and Protocols**

- 2.1 The University does not accept an *in loco parentis* responsibility for students under the age of 18. However, the University does recognise that it has an obligation to fulfil towards all young people and also vulnerable adults, to keep them safe from harm, regardless of their age, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, disability, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, race, religion or beliefs.
- 2.2 The University endeavours to take all reasonable steps through procedures, child protection guidelines, and good practice, to safeguard all students.
- 2.3 The University provides enhanced welfare arrangements and accommodation procedures for students under the age of 18. Upon notification from the Admissions Office, the University will carry out DBS checks on all roles that meet the eligibility criteria for regulated activity with children.

## **3. Risk Assessments**

- 3.1 The University will ensure that risk assessments are conducted on a regular basis to cover its premises; accommodation and any sites off-campus (e.g. work placements, field trips). Risk assessments will also cover situations where staff may be required to work in isolation e.g. Portering staff.

## **4. Data Protection**



- 4.1 The Data Protection Act 1988 protects those under the age of 18 and the University.
- 4.2 The University will not disclose any information about a student under the age of 18 without their consent. However, if a student under the age of 18 does not pay to the University any agreed sums of money (e.g. rent), the University is entitled to disclose this information to their parents or guardians.

## **5. Safeguarding Officer**

- 5.1 The University Safeguarding Officer will undertake appropriate training and provide guidance on training to colleagues as appropriate.

## **6. Admission**

- 6.1 The University values and is committed to equality and diversity and does not discriminate on any grounds, including age. If an offer is made to an applicant under the age of 18 the University will inform the applicant and their parents or guardians of the measures that are in place to safeguard students under the age of 18.
- 6.2 The University defines its admission requirements in terms of academic achievement. As with all applicants a strong academic rationale must be established to the relevant Head of School in order to qualify for admission to the University.
- 6.3 The University will write to the parents or guardians of successful applicants (Appendix A) who will be under the age of 18 at enrolment to inform them that the University cannot act *in loco parentis* reminding them that a University is an adult environment.
- 6.4 The University will maintain a list of emergency contact details of students under the age of 18 and in particular those of their parents or guardians. Any student under the age of 18 should have a UK-based guardian. This information will be collected as part of the admissions process.
- 6.5 Parents or guardians will have the opportunity to give their consent for the student to take part in any activities that any student would normally undertake, with the exception of those against the law.

## **7. International students**

- 7.1 The University will provide an equitable level of safeguarding toward its students who are under the age of 18, regardless of their country of origin.

## **8. Enrolment**

- 8.1 The consent form (Appendix B), signed by both the student and a parent or guardian must be received before enrolment can take place.
- 8.2 Any applicant under the age of 18 enrolling onto a course at BGU will be fully informed by letter of the enhanced arrangements and of who to contact if they have any concerns regarding their personal safety or wellbeing.

## **9. Access to inappropriate material**



- 9.1 Issues concerning the likelihood of students under the age of 18 being exposed to inappropriate material through their engagement with their academic programme will be discussed as part of the admissions process (see Appendix B).
- 9.2 All students using campus computing facilities (including wireless networks) are required to adhere to the University's IT Systems Acceptable Use Policy which is available to view on the University website.
- 9.3 The University does not routinely monitor traffic. However, should a suspected breach of the IT Systems Acceptable Use Policy be reported, the matter will be investigated. In such instances data or programs created, owned, or stored by users of University IT facilities may be subject to inspection by the Head of IT Services and/or other authorised staff members.
- 9.4 18 certificate feature films which are available for loan in the University library may not be borrowed by students under the age of 18.

## **10 Responsibilities of Academic and Support Staff**

- 10.1 Section 3 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 provides a criminal offence of 'abuse of trust'. The definition of abuse of trust would include any physical relationships between students under the age of 18 and members of the University staff, unless with the written consent of a parent or guardian.
- 10.2 The University will carry out DBS checks on all roles that meet the eligibility criteria for regulated activity with children.
- 10.3 Member of staff should consider how physical actions or activities could be misinterpreted. As such there should be an avoidance of physical contact with all students except for reasons of health and safety.

## **11 On campus**

- 11.1 It is an offence for anyone under the age of 18 to purchase alcohol or tobacco or for anyone to sell alcohol or tobacco to them. It is also an offence for anyone to purchase alcohol or tobacco on behalf of someone under the age of 18 for either private or public consumption. BG Bar takes the necessary steps to ensure that it does not sell alcohol to anyone under the age of 18. The University does not sell tobacco on campus.
- 11.2 Age restrictions are also in force on the purchase of a number of other goods and services including solvents, gas lighter refills and 18 certificate videos, DVDs and computer games.

## **12 Off Campus**

- 12.1 The University recognises the same duty of care in connection with off campus activities organised by the University as it does for on campus activities.
- 12.2 In line with University policy, risk assessments are carried out for all off campus activities, trips or placements organised or co-ordinated by the University. Where any participant is likely to be under the age of 18 the evaluation will include relevant assessment in relation to accommodation, welfare support, staff checks and guidance, health and safety and other related issues.

## **13 Student Accommodation on Campus**



- 13.1 Students under the age of 18 requiring accommodation on campus will be sensitively placed. Accommodation Officer, Senior Warden, Senior Residents and Hall Assistants will be notified that there are students under the age of 18 on the premises and will endeavour to be extra vigilant, however, they cannot supervise the daily movements of the students or be held responsible for their actions. The Senior Warden is responsible for ensuring that Student Support staff are aware of any areas of concern, or if a student under the age of 18 does not adhere to University policies and procedures. Student Support staff will discuss with students under the age of 18 and their parents or guardians if appropriate any questions or concerns they may have.

### **13 Emergencies**

- 14.1 Emergency contact information is collected for all applicants who are under the age of 18 years as part of the admissions process.
- 14.2 The parent or guardians of applicants who are under 18 are invited to indicate whether they wish to be contacted in an emergency situation (which would include medical emergencies as well as situation involving other emergency services such as the Police). The University's practice is to act in accordance with this indication until the child passes their 18th birthday at which point normal policy will apply.
- 14.3 The University notes that hospital personnel and the Police make contact with next of kin as a matter of course, and that the release of information to emergency services for any student is permitted, provided that it is to protect the vital interests of the individual concerned.

### **15 Parental Guarantees and Consent**

- 15.1 Parents or guardians will also be required to act as guarantors for any contracts or debts in connection with the University which the student might incur up until the age of 18. Consent forms signed by parents or guardians will be required before any student under the age of 18 can take part in a planned University activity off campus.

### **16 Student Responsibilities**

- 16.1 It is the responsibility of students under the age of 18 to adhere to this policy and to behave responsibly and appropriately at all times.



## Appendix A: Letter Sent to Parents or Guardians of Applicants Under the Age of 18

TO: The Parent/s or Guardian/s of:

Dear Sir/ Madam

### Admission of applicants under the age of 18

I am writing to you as the parent/s or legal guardian/s of {name}. As you will be aware, {name} will be under 18 years of age at the start of {his/her} course at Bishop Grosseteste University.

**United Kingdom law defines people under the age of 18 years as children and although not specifically covered by this legislation, universities have an enhanced implied duty of care towards students who are legally children. In order to enable us to properly fulfil this duty of care I am writing to inform you about a number of points in relation to your child's time at the University.**

Firstly, you need to be aware that the University will not act 'in loco parentis'. This means that the University will not act in a parental capacity towards your child.

Secondly, all University staff who come into contact with young people are required to must have passed the appropriate scrutiny and checks. These will include, at the very least, a basic disclosure from the Disclosure Barring Service. For those with pastoral or tutorial responsibilities, an enhanced disclosure will normally be required.

In general, students staying in accommodation on campus are not supervised and are free to come and go without having to sign in or out. There are a number of licensed catering outlets on campus which offer a range of food choices, prices and opening hours. You may wish to advise your child that they will be breaking the law if they consume or purchase alcohol from this outlet whilst under the age of 18. You may also wish to reinforce other age-related legal restrictions such as the purchasing of solvents and the renting of 18 certificate DVDs or computer games, both of which are illegal under the age of 18.

Finally, we must ensure that any potential students under 18 years old who apply for a place on a University programme have the permission of their parent/s or guardian/s to undertake that programme. In this context, I would be grateful if you could complete and return the attached form, confirming your permission and providing your preferred contact details in case of emergency.

Although informing you of these points is necessarily formal, please rest assured that the University campus is in general a safe and happy place with excellent support networks where the majority of students enjoy their time and have a trouble-free university career.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me using the details above.

Yours sincerely

Admissions Manager



## Appendix B – Consent form

### Admission of Applicants Under the age of 18 to University programmes

The University requires that students under the age of 18 years who apply for a place on one of our programmes **must** have the permission of their parent or guardian to attend the programme.

The University's Policy in Respect of the Admission and Welfare of Students who are under the Age of 18 at entry are available via our website.

#### Parents/Guardians

I understand that the University cannot be held responsible for the welfare of my child when they are not on campus and I have been advised to make appropriate arrangements to ensure their safety during such periods.

I recognise that the University will not act 'in loco parentis' (in place of the parent) at any stage whilst my child is completing their programme of study, either on or off campus.

I **would like/would not like\*** the University to communicate with the emergency contact named below in an emergency situation (*\*please delete as applicable*)

I hereby give my permission for (name of student) .....

To attend the following Bishop Grosseteste University programme (name of programme):

.....

Commencing on (date) .....

Nominated emergency contact (name): .....

Home Tel: ..... Work Tel: ..... Mobile: .....

Nominated contact address: .....

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*Note: If you are a parent or guardian who resides outside the UK you are required to nominate a UK based guardian*

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Name of parent or guardian .....

Home Tel: ..... Work Tel: ..... Mobile: .....

Nominated address of parent or guardian .....

.....

Signed ..... Date ...../...../.....

Parent/Guardian\*

*\*please delete as appropriate*

Please return this completed form to: **Admissions, Bishop Grosseteste University, Longdales Road, Lincoln LN1 3DY**