

Admissions policy for students under the age of 18 years

1. Introduction

Queen Mary University of London is an adult environment and our students are normally 18 or above at the time they start their programme. We treat all our students as mature individuals and expect them to have the necessary skills to study and live independently alongside people of all ages and from a variety of backgrounds.

This policy sets out our approach and the additional conditions that would apply, in individual cases, where we may decide to admit students who would be under 18 when they join Queen Mary and would therefore be regarded as children under UK law. The aim of this policy is to ensure that children, and all those who work with them, are safe and appropriately supported within Queen Mary.

A student will not normally be admitted unless they are due to turn 18 in their first year of study at Queen Mary. Where an applicant is not due to not turn 18 within the first year of their studies, their application will be reviewed by the university's Lead Safeguarding Officer and the university may invite the applicant and their parent or guardian to an interview to discuss suitability for study at Queen Mary. The School or Institute responsible for the intended programme of studies will be required to submit a risk assessment to the Lead Safeguarding Officer for approval as part of the admissions process. The decision of the university's Lead Safeguarding Officer in respect of admissions shall be final.

2. Scope of policy

This policy only applies to applicants and students on programmes that are delivered by Queen Mary in the UK and EU. There are separate arrangements for programmes delivered outside the EU which reflect local law and student support arrangements.

This policy does not apply to clinical programmes in Medicine and Dentistry, for which it is a requirement of the relevant regulatory bodies that students are 18 or above when they first enrol.

3. Parental responsibility

Queen Mary will not act in loco parentis for students who are under 18. The parents or guardians of any student under the age of 18 retain the usual rights, responsibilities and authority that they have in relation to their child. We will therefore require them to sign and return the Queen Mary *Under 18 Consent Form* before their child can enrol. When a student reaches the age of 18, they assume full legal responsibility and the conditions associated with the *Under 18 Consent Form* no longer apply.

In cases where the parents or guardians of the student live outside the UK, they must also include on the *Under 18 Consent Form* the name and contact details of a nominated guardian who lives in the UK and who can act on their behalf if required. The nominated person should be a self-sufficient person who lives in the UK and who gives explicit consent to being the student's nominated guardian. The nominated person must be over 18 years of age. Students (including family members) at Queen Mary or elsewhere in the UK will not normally be accepted as nominated guardians. We

strongly recommend that the nominated guardian should be somebody who lives in or near London. This is a private arrangement between the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) and the nominated guardian. Queen Mary is not able to assist in finding a suitable nominated guardian, but a list of accredited agencies can be obtained from The Association of Educational Guardians for International Students (AEGIS) (www.aegisuk.net).

4. Parental Involvement

It is Queen Mary policy to deal with applicants and students direct and not with their parents or guardians. All applicants and students, regardless of their age, have rights under the Data Protection Act 2018 and Queen Mary will not disclose information to their parents and guardians without the student's explicit permission.

5. Emergency Contact

The parents or guardians of any student under the age of 18 are required to supply emergency contact details on the *Under 18 Consent Form* and to notify Queen Mary of any subsequent changes.

6. Health

In rare instances, consent for emergency medical treatment may be required before the student's parents or guardians can be contacted. Queen Mary therefore requires the parents or guardians of any student under the age of 18, by signing the Under 18 Consent Form, to give authority to a senior member of Queen Mary in such an emergency to act on medical advice in the best interests of their child.

7. Child Protection/Safeguarding

Queen Mary has a duty to protect individuals under the age of 18 from abuse and is obliged to report any suspicions or allegations of abuse of children to the appropriate Social Services Officer, as set out in the Queen Mary Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Children and Adults in Need of Safeguarding.

8. Notification of Age of Student

The relevant Head of School, Residential Support Manager and Residential Advisors will be notified, prior to enrolment, of any student who will be under the age of 18. Queen Mary will ensure that students under the age of 18 are allocated an appropriately experienced Personal Tutor. Teaching and other staff will not otherwise be made aware of a student's age in a routine way.

9. Contracts

As a general rule, individuals under the age of 18 are unable to enter into legal contracts. Where contracts are required (e.g. in relation to accommodation and the payment of tuition fees), a parent or guardian will be required to act as the guarantor and to honour all contractual obligations with Queen Mary that the student enters into prior to his/her 18th birthday. Parents are required to acknowledge their acceptance of this requirement on the *Under 18 Consent Form*.

10. Student Accommodation

Parents and guardians should recognise that residential accommodation offered by QMUL is intended for the use of adults. Please see the [Residential Services and Support: Policy for Under 18s](#) and that, save in exceptional circumstances (e.g. relating to health issues or disability), special arrangements cannot be made for students under the age of 18.

11. Field Trips

Programmes may involve compulsory or optional field trips, excursions or other periods of study away from the Queen Mary campuses. Queen Mary does not take on any additional responsibility for a student who is under the age of 18 in relation to such activities. Parents are required to acknowledge this on the *Under 18 Consent Form*. Students taking part in exchange programmes with another institution will be required to adhere to the policies and procedures applicable to that institution.

12. Alcohol and Tobacco

It is illegal for alcohol or tobacco to be sold to or bought by individuals 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 Queen Mary Students' Union is responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place for its own licensed premises.

13. Relationship with staff

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, 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.

14. Holding Office

Students who are under the age of 18 are encouraged to join University or Students' Union clubs and societies but are not able to hold office until after their 18th birthday. This is because Students' Union office holders have legal responsibilities. The participation of students who are under 18 may be limited in certain activities.

15. Queen Mary University of London responsibilities in preparation

Queen Mary will ensure that students under the age of 18 are allocated to an appropriately experienced advisor within their academic School. They will also be given the details of the Faculty Principal Safeguarding Officer should they wish to speak to someone about any potential safeguarding concerns.