

## Information for parents of students under the age of 18

Under Scottish law, anyone under the age of 16 is considered to be a child although in the rest of the UK it is anyone under the age of 18. At INTO we consider as best practice that we have a special duty of care to students under the age of 18 and have applied this best practice throughout the document. Parents also continue to have a legal responsibility, even if they are not living in the UK.

### Living in a University setting in the UK

Universities in the UK may be very different from Universities in other countries and are not like boarding schools. Universities are adult environments where nearly all of the students are over the age of 18 and have the freedom and responsibilities of adults.

INTO University of Stirling recognises that international students under the age of 18 need extra support and help and that their parents will want to make sure that their children are as safe as possible. This information booklet will set out the ways in which we will care for your child. However, you should also be aware that you are still legally responsible for your child and that you should make any provision you feel necessary for their wellbeing when they are in the UK.

Your child will, for the most part, be treated by INTO University of Stirling and the University of Stirling in the same way as any other student, nearly all of whom will be over 18 years of age.

### Guardianship

Whilst INTO University of Stirling will do everything possible to care for your child whilst they are studying with us we cannot take full parental responsibility for your child. We strongly recommend that you appoint a Guardian, who is resident in the UK, for your child. The Guardian is someone who can act in your place if there are any problems or emergencies and will provide an added level of care for your child and give you peace of mind.

Guardianship options:

1. If you have a friend or relative living in the UK who is over 21 years of age and who you trust, they may be willing to act as your child's guardian
2. There are a variety of Guardianship agencies in the UK. You should look for a Guardianship agency which is a member of AEGIS. Go to website: [www.aegisuk.net](http://www.aegisuk.net)

If you have decided to appoint someone to act as your child's guardian in the UK, you should complete **Form 4**.

### What INTO will do to support and help your child

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## **General statement**

All students will be treated with dignity, respect and fairness by all staff. They will be provided with a learning environment which is free from physical, emotional and social abuse.

INTO has a duty of care to all of its students and especially those under the age of 18. All INTO University of Stirling staff have police checks to make sure that they have not committed any offences which would make them unfit to look after students under the age of 18. These are known as Disclosure Scotland checks.

INTO has a child protection policy to safeguard its students from abuse, which includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or bullying. Parents should contact the Head of Student Services if they become concerned that their child might be suffering abuse from any other student or any member of staff.

## **Support for students**

### **Personal Tutor**

Each student is assigned a personal tutor who is available to discuss and deal with any issues which might arise as part of the student's studies.

### **Student Services Staff**

INTO has a number of Student Services Staff, whose role it is to look after the welfare of all of our students, but particularly those under the age of 18. Student Services Staff are made aware of each student under the age of 18 so that they can provide extra help and support to these students.

As well as helping with day to day support, questions and problems, the Student Services Staff also help student with:

- Registration with the local Medical Centre
- Social Programme

### **Social Programme and Social Activities**

INTO University of Stirling runs a range of social activities in the evenings and at weekends. The University also has a range of social clubs and activities which your child will be encouraged to join. Please note that there are some activities, run by the University which may require your permission.

INTO University of Stirling also offers a range of excursions to places of interest such as Edinburgh, Glasgow, Loch Lomond and the Scottish Highlands. There is a charge for these excursions.

### **Language Advisors**

We also have some language advisors available to speak to students in their own language. The language advisors are there to help students if they need to speak to someone in their own language. The language advisors are also available to speak to parents if necessary. If the need arises and we do not have a language advisor who speaks your child's native language, we will do our best to find someone within the University who does speak your child's language

## **24 hour emergency support**

INTO University of Stirling has a 24 hour emergency support line, which means your child can contact someone from INTO University of Stirling day and night, no matter where they are. Also, if you have an emergency and need to contact someone from INTO University of Stirling out of normal office hours, you can telephone the INTO University of Stirling emergency number. You should make sure that your child has the number with them before they leave their own country. The emergency number is 07437 188627. Please note that this number should only be used for emergencies and not for general enquiries.

## **Medical Services**

The local Medical Centre is located on campus near to the INTO University of Stirling Centre. All students studying at INTO University of Stirling for 6 months or more will register with the Medical Centre. It is important that students bring any medical information with them.

Students studying at INTO University of Stirling for less than 6 months will be able to get medical treatment from the Health Centre, however they will have to pay for treatment in the first instance and then re-claim the cost from their insurance.

Please note that students between the age of 16 and 18 are able to give their own consent for medical treatment and their wishes will be respected by medical staff. INTO University of Stirling can only give consent for medical treatment if a student under the age of 18 is unable to do so themselves (for example if they are unconscious or the doctor thinks they are mentally unfit to give consent)

## **Dental Services**

A dental service is available on campus at the Dental Centre. A charge is made for dental treatment, however it may be possible to re-claim the charge for emergency dental work from the student's insurance

## **Pre-departure**

Your child will receive a pre-departure guide before they leave home to come to INTO University of Stirling. You should read this guide together to make sure that your child is prepared for arrival in the UK.

## **Meet and Greet Service**

In the Policy Guidance for Tier 4 of the Points Based System it states that 'All children studying in the United Kingdom must have suitable care arrangements in place for their travel, reception at port and living arrangements while here.

Children are all students under 18 years old. If you are 16 or 17 years old and applying as an adult student, you must have your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) written consent that you can live and travel independently.'

To ensure the safety of your child on arrival in the UK, we require parents of students under the age of 18 to use the 'meet and greet' service, at the cost set out in the brochure, unless they have made satisfactory alternative provision for their child to be met. A taxi will be there to meet your child and bring them to INTO University of Stirling. You should complete the 'Arrivals Details Form', which is sent with the student's course confirmation letter

If you do not wish to use the meet and greet service and have arranged for someone else to meet your child at the airport, you should complete **Form 5** to let us know the full details, including flight number, flight arrival time at the UK airport, the name of the person collecting the student and their expected arrival time at INTO University of Stirling.

### **Accommodation**

All rooms have their own private bathroom facilities, but students share a kitchen.

Please note that we are not able to segregate students by age, gender, religion or ethnic group.

### **Our expectations of students**

#### **Alcohol and Cigarettes**

In the UK it is illegal for alcohol or cigarettes to be sold to anyone under the age of 18. It is also illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to buy alcohol or cigarettes.

INTO does not allow smoking by any student either in the main teaching block or in its residences.

Please note that under UK law it is a criminal offence to smoke in any enclosed place used by the public.

#### **Conduct and behaviour of students**

All students are expected to treat other students, staff and visitors of INTO University of Stirling and the University of Stirling with respect, dignity and fairness. Students under the age of 18 are treated in the same way as other students and are expected to take responsibility for their own behaviour. The 'Student Code of Conduct' is given to all students when they arrive at INTO University of Stirling. A copy is available on request

#### **Attendance**

Good attendance is key to academic success. INTO University of Stirling expects students to attend **all academic sessions**.

Student attendance is monitored carefully and where attendance is not satisfactory, the Centre has an absence procedure, which is administered by the Academic Support Team. The Centre has an additional obligation to report to the Home Office, UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) service any changes that may affect the terms of an international student's visa, including absence from the programme.

Any student who persistently misses classes will be given a formal warning and you will be notified of this. INTO University of Stirling reserves the right to permanently exclude any student who receives 2 formal warnings.

#### **Disciplinary Action**

Any student who fails to meet INTO University of Stirling's expectations for attendance or behaviour and conduct is likely to face disciplinary action.



Disciplinary action for minor offences will range from a reprimand and for major offences, for example where the student's behaviour puts others at significant risk, or where the student has persistently failed to attend classes as required by the Border and Immigration Agency, the student will be subject to formal disciplinary action. Centre Director has the authority to suspend or permanently exclude the student from INTO University of Stirling.

If, for any reason, disciplinary action is taken against a student under the age of 18, the parents will be informed. They will be told why the student was disciplined, what is expected of the student in the future and what will happen if the student fails to meet the expectations.

In the unlikely event of a student under 18 years of age being permanently excluded from INTO University of Stirling, the student will not be asked to leave INTO University of Stirling before parents have been informed and have had the chance to make arrangements for the student to return home.

A copy of the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures is available on request

### **Internet**

The University is an adult environment and so does not have controls on websites to prevent younger people viewing them. Therefore your child will have access to any website which can be viewed by other members of the University, within the regulations laid out by the University. Please see the INTO Stirling Internet Safety Policy for further details.