UNIVERSITY of STIRLING | International Study Centre

Information for parents of students under the age of 18

Living in a university setting in the UK

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.

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.

University of Stirling, International Study Centre 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 University of Stirling, International Study Centre and the University of Stirling in the same way as any other student, nearly all of whom will be over 18 years of age.

UK based AEGIS approved Guardianship Service

Whilst University of Stirling, International Study Centre 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 UK based AEGIS approved Guardianship Service, who is resident in the UK, for your child. The UK based AEGIS approved Guardianship Service 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.

Although encouraged, appointing a UK based AEGIS approved Guardianship Service is not compulsory for students under the age of 18 who are living in **University of Stirling, International Study Centre accommodation**. If you have decided to appoint someone to act as your child's guardian in the UK, you should complete **Form 3** of the acceptance forms.

The UK based AEGIS approved Guardianship Service that we work with is Sable Guardians. A link to the form to register with this guardianship service is here.

For students under the age of 18 who choose to stay in **non-University of Stirling, International Study Centre accommodation, and within private Purpose-Built Student Accommodation**, a UK based AEGIS approved Guardianship Service must be appointed and the information should be added to **Form 3** of the acceptance forms. Click here for more information on finding an appropriate private Purpose-Built Student Accommodation option.

For students under the age of 18 who choose to stay with a **close family member, over the age of 21**, a UK based AEGIS approved Guardianship Service does not been to be selected as the family member will be nominated as the student's guardian, however written parental permission must be given within **Form 3** of the acceptance forms, and the student must live within a 1-hour commute to Stirling. For more information see here.

What University of Stirling, International Study Centre will do to support and help your child

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.

University of Stirling, International Study Centre has a duty of care to all of its students and especially those under the age of 18. All University of Stirling, International Study Centre 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.

University of Stirling, International Study Centre 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 Director of Support Services if they become concerned that their child might be suffering abuse from any other student or any member of staff.

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.

Support Services Staff

University of Stirling, International Study Centre has a number of Support Services Staff, whose role it is to look after the welfare of all of our students, but particularly those under the age of 18. Support 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 Support Services Staff also help student with:

- Registration with the local Medical Centre
- Social Programme

Social Programme and Social Activities

University of Stirling, International Study Centre 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.

University of Stirling, International Study Centre also offers a range of excursions to places of interest such as Edinburgh, Glasgow, Loch Lomond and the Scottish Highlands. There is sometimes 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, or INTO network who does speak your child's language

24-hour support

University of Stirling, International Study Centre uses the Student Assistance Programme, Spectrum Life. All students have 24-hour support available to them for their emotional wellbeing. Students can contact Spectrum Life on 0800 0318227 to speak to a qualified counsellor or psychotherapist.

Medical Services

The local Medical Centre is located on campus near to the University of Stirling, International Study Centre. All students studying at University of Stirling, International Study Centre 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 University of Stirling, International Study Centre for less than 6 months will be able to get medical treatment from the Health Centre, however they may 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. University of Stirling, International Study Centre 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 pre-departure information before they leave home to come to University of Stirling, International Study Centre. You should read this information together to make sure that your child is prepared for arrival in the UK.

Meet and Greet Service

In the Policy Guidance for Student Route Visas 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 University of Stirling, International Study Centre. 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 University of Stirling, International Study Centre.

Accommodation

As detailed in the "UK based AEGIS approved Guardianship Service" section above, students who are under the age of 18 have three options when selecting their accommodation for their studies:

- Live in University of Stirling, International Study Centre accommodation. For students under 18, we strongly recommend booking en-suite facilities. We cannot guarantee that shared-bathroom accommodation will be segregated by age, gender, religion, or ethnic group. Accommodation is located on campus, within a short walk to the International Study Centre.
- Live with a close family member, over the age of 21, who will act as their guardian within the UK. Students under 18 who are living with a close family member should be living within a 1-hour commute to the International Study Centre. Parental permission must be given within Form 3 of the acceptance forms.
- Live in private Purpose-Built Student Accommodation, located off campus. A UK based AEGIS approved Guardianship Service must be selected. Click here for more information on finding an appropriate private Purpose-Built Student Accommodation option.

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.

University of Stirling, International Study Centre 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 University of Stirling, International Study Centre 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 emailed to all students before they arrive at University of Stirling, International Study Centre. A copy is available on request.

Attendance

Good attendance is key to academic success. University of Stirling, International Study Centre expects students to attend **all academic sessions**.

Any student under the age of 18 will be contacted if they miss class without informing the Support Services Team beforehand. If we are unable to contact the student, we will contact the student's parents or guardians before contacting the police to log a missing persons report within 24 hours of the last contact with the student.

Please refer to the centre's attendance policy for more information on this.

Disciplinary Action

Any student who fails to meets University of Stirling, International Study Centre's expectations for attendance or behaviour and conduct is likely to face disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action for minor offences will range from a verbal warning, 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 UKVI, the student will be subject to formal disciplinary action. Centre Director has the authority to suspend or permanently exclude the student from University of Stirling, International Study Centre.

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 University of Stirling, International Study Centre, the student will not be asked to leave University of Stirling, International Study Centre 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 University of Stirling, International Study Centre Internet Safety Policy for further details.