



APPROACH FOR HOUSING STUDENTS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE IN UNIVERSITY RESIDENCES*

Putting our students first in a student centered University.

Introduction

Students who are over the age of sixteen and under the age of eighteen have the legal capacity to enter into contracts for education and accommodation and will be liable for fees and charges payable under those contracts. This policy applies to those who are under eighteen years of age from the commencement of their residential tenancy agreement.

Most of our students are 18 years of age or over. However, we welcome all applicants with the aptitude to thrive at the University of Sussex and we treat everyone as independent and mature adults.

As our Under 18s are not, by law, adults, we make the following provision:

Pastoral Care

The Student Life Centre has a designated Student Advisor (Lynn O'Meara), within the Student Life Centre, who will make contact during Freshers week and will help to understand any specific implications of studying at Sussex whilst under the age of 18. The Student Life Centre ensures Sussex is a supportive environment for all students, providing help, information and resources to enhance the transition to and through University. The Student Life Centre Advisors can also help students understand how the University works and overcome challenges and manage any difficulties.

All students, upon arrival, are allocated an Academic Advisor. The Academic Advisor will advise students about academic progress and provide feedback on work and approach to study.

Although those under eighteen are regarded as children under UK law, they have the right under the Data Protection Act for information about them not to be disclosed without their consent. This means that the University is not able to give information to third parties unless the student has given consent.

This policy will apply to all students under eighteen living in accommodation owned by or directly leased by the University of Sussex from a third party accommodation provider. Both owned and leased accommodation are referred to as University accommodation.

*This document should be read in conjunction with the
University of Sussex accommodation tenancy terms and conditions and residence handbook:
<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/accommodation/apply/policies>

This policy does not apply to persons under 18 who use the University's Residences during vacation time following a booking made over the summer or to children of students residing in University allocated accommodation. These categories are covered in the bespoke contracts agreed with summer school providers and the component duties of care, including safeguarding, and sufficient supervision ratios agreed in advance.

Allocating accommodation

Those under eighteen will be allocated into accommodation with an adjacent twenty-four hour reception point on campus, subject to availability, such as York House in single rooms (corridor rather than flat) with access to adjacent, single, lockable, bathroom facilities. The residential welfare support team are also based in York House.

The accommodation provided is secure and meets fire and safety legislation as per the UUK Code of standards for University managed accommodation. In addition to a study bed-space, a suitable facility for meal preparation is provided.

Students are not supervised during their free time in the accommodation, however comprehensive information is provided to all students about who to contact if necessary either in or out of hours. The campus is essentially an adult environment.

CCTV provision within the Residences is located only in selected communal areas, i.e. lobbies and launderette, and where this is located, signing is provided.

Support and guidance

Led by Student Services, all residents have access to a comprehensive residential welfare support system. Within the accommodation there are Residential Advisors (RA) who provide out of hours support and welfare. Further information about RAs, and the links to the broad range of student services available, including our Student Life Centre, at the University is published here: www.sussex.ac.uk/campus-support

Students who are sixteen or over have the legal capacity to consent to medical treatment. Parents/guardians must be aware that the University cannot provide any consent for emergency medical treatment for a student. Students who are under eighteen may have any refusal to consent to life-saving treatment overridden by a parent, but the views of the child must be taken into account. Emergency contact details must therefore be provided to the University prior to the student's arrival. In such circumstances, decisions about treatment and treatment itself will be a matter for the medical practitioners.

If a student or staff member has any concern about the welfare of an under eighteen student, these concerns should be reported to the Director of Student Services, who is the University's designated safeguarding officer: www.sussex.ac.uk/studentsservices/issues

Residential staff

The day-to-day operations of the residence, including portering, Building Managers,

housekeeping etc, is managed by colleagues from Sussex Estates and Facilities (SEF), who also oversee the admittance of contractors and other third part employees in the residences via established sign in procedures.

SEF staff have access to the age of residents via the University's residential software, StarRez and will ensure that SEF staff are not working alone when in the bedroom of a resident under eighteen years of age, such as when responding to maintenance requests which will instead be completed when the bedroom is empty. Cleanliness of bed-spaces is the responsibility of the resident and is not provided, except where the resident has an en-suite facility. York House, the main base for those under eighteen years of age is not-ensuite. On occasions where an under eighteen resident is allocated to en-suite accommodation, SEF staff will ensure that the housekeeper will not enter the room alone, working instead when the room is unoccupied (with prior agreement from the resident) or in pairs with the Building Manager. The Building Manager will have passed DBS checks.

There is a clear management structure within the residences and an established formal complaints procedure (stage 1 of the University's formal complaints procedure):
<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/accommodation/apply/policies/housing-complaints>

The University's responsibilities to students under the age of 18 years

The University will:

- Offer accommodation to all those students who fulfil the criteria set out in allocation policy.
- Give priority choice of accommodation to students who qualify for the guaranteed accommodation in line with our accommodation guarantee.
<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/accommodation/accommodation-guarantee>
- House students in accommodation close to or where there is easy access to a member of the residential welfare support team.
- Provide documentation, including a Tenancy Agreement and Regulations Booklet, to the student that is required to be accepted before the student can take up residence.
- Ensure that staff will only enter student bedrooms acting in accordance with the Residential Services agreed access policy as published in the University's handbook:
www.sussex.ac.uk/study/accommodation/apply/policies
- Provide relevant training and guidance for accommodation staff employed by the University, room key holders and staff with regular access to study bedrooms and emphasize that all of them have a responsibility to report concerns.
- Treat sympathetically any requests for a change of room within the University accommodation (always subject to availability and suitability).
- Ensure that students are aware of whom to contact in case of difficulties, and ensure that students have means of ensuring confidentiality where they wish it. The University will try and encourage students to involve a parent or legal guardian / representative where appropriate.

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- Take seriously all suspicions and allegations of abuse and respond swiftly and appropriately, following the University's Safeguarding Policy. This could result in contacting official authorities e.g. police, social services etc:

www.sussex.ac.uk/studentsservices/issues

The University will not:

- Act in Loco Parentis or provide direct supervision of a student.
- Carry out DBS checks on other students or RAs.
- Monitor how the student spends their leisure time or manages their finances.
- Inspect or monitor any accommodation which is not managed by the University.
- Intrude unnecessarily on students' reasonable privacy.

Residents responsibilities to the

Residents will:

- Provide ID, including proof of age, when requested to do so by Residential Services staff or nominee.
- Be required to enter into a standard-form accommodation contract with the University and abide by its terms and conditions (including discipline) and abide by Policy and related procedures.
- Abide by the terms and conditions of the tenancy agreement:
<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/accommodation/apply/policies>

ENDS