



## **Students Under 18 Years of Age in University-Managed Accommodation**

### **Introduction**

This procedure applies to students who are over the age of sixteen and under the age of eighteen at the start of their License to Occupy (Housing agreement) in respect of university-managed accommodation. This procedure aims to support the wellbeing of these students and explains the key responsibilities of those students, until they reach their eighteenth birthday. This applies to all accommodation managed or leased by the University of Sussex.

This policy does not apply to persons under the age of eighteen who use the University's residences where the accommodation is booked by a third-party organisation, for example Study Group. These separate organisations are covered by agreements between the University and the third party.

Students and their families should be aware that the University and its managed accommodation provides an environment for students of all ages to study and reside. The University does not assume parental responsibility for students under the age of eighteen. The University expects all students in residence to behave responsibly at all times and have the necessary skills to study and live alongside other students from a wide variety of backgrounds and ages. All students are expected to have the necessary level of maturity, skill, and responsibility to care for themselves and to live independently away from home.

### **Applications for Accommodation**

The University of Sussex does not accept applications from any person who will be under the age of sixteen at the commencement of a Licence to Occupy agreement.

Applications from those over the age of sixteen but under the age of eighteen will be considered in line with this policy and also our published accommodation guarantee:

<https://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/accommodation/accommodation-guarantee>

Students under the age of eighteen will only be allocated to university managed accommodation which is adjacent or close to a 24-hour reception on campus. Eligible accommodation for students under the age of eighteen is:

- East Slope Residences
- Stanmer Court
- Swanborough
- Brighthelm

As with all accommodation allocations, preferences for accommodation given on applications will be considered at allocation stage but cannot be guaranteed if demand is higher than availability.

## **Allocation of Accommodation**

University managed accommodation at the University of Sussex is an adult environment and as such, all students, irrespective of age, are expected to behave like responsible adults as well as in accordance with the Licence to Occupy Terms and Conditions.

Students under eighteen years of age will receive an allocation of a single occupancy study bedroom with access to lockable bathroom facilities. Allocations for students under the age of eighteen will be made in flats where no other resident is due to reach the age of twenty-one before the final day of the Licence Agreement period. As such, students under the age of eighteen will share communal areas of their flat such as kitchens, bathrooms and living areas with students of various backgrounds and genders but who will remain under the age of twenty-one for the length of the academic year.

Students under the age of eighteen are eligible to join the accommodation swap list when it opens at the start of each academic year, however all swaps must meet all conditions of this policy and have prior approval from Housing Services.

Once allocated to a particular room, students under the age of eighteen, should not swap this room with any other resident (even in the same flat) without prior approval from Housing Services.

### **Emergency Accommodation Allocation ( to students under the age of 18 to share with students over the age of 21)**

The University reserves the right to allocate accommodation to students under the age of 18 to share with students over the age of 21 **only in the following circumstances:**

- a. an immediate and unforeseen situation arises requiring urgent accommodation;
- b. no alternative suitable accommodation is reasonably available at the time; and
- c. the arrangement is necessary to protect the health, safety, or welfare of the student(s) concerned.

Any such emergency allocation must be limited to the shortest period required to resolve the emergency situation. The University will implement appropriate safeguarding measures during this time and maintain a written record describing the nature of the emergency, the rationale for, and the duration of the allocation, and the safeguarding steps taken.

## **Contracts for Accommodation**

All students living in University managed accommodation (including those under the age of eighteen) are subject to all Terms and Conditions of the Licence Agreement:

<https://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/accommodation/apply/policies>

If any student under the age of eighteen wishes to terminate their Licence to Occupy University managed accommodation before the end of the Licence period under any circumstances, they can do so by giving the University no less than 28 days' written notice and must give notice prior to their eighteenth birthday.

If a student turns eighteen during their Licence Period, from their eighteenth birthday they will be subject to the same rights to terminate under the Licence to Occupy as all residents. If they are not withdrawing from studies, they will remain liable for rent for the remainder of the contract period or until another student moves into the room (whichever is soonest).

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If any terms of the Licence to Occupy are breached, students under the age of eighteen will be subject to tenancy management action in proportion with the breach. Tenancy management actions include (but are not limited to) warning letters, damage charges, mandatory tenant workshops, room reallocation and in extreme cases termination of the Licence and court action to seek possession of the room and any monies owed to the University.

### **Support and Guidance**

Student Experience Division staff will contact you during the first weeks of the academic year to clarify any specific implications of studying at Sussex whilst under the age of eighteen and highlight the services you may find helpful to access. Our Student Centre is a central point on campus for all students to access services and find advice, information and guidance related to all aspects of their time at Sussex.

All students are allocated an Academic Advisor who will advise the student about academic progress and provide feedback on work and approach to study.

The Residential Life team provide welfare support and advice to all students living in University managed accommodation during office hours. They also manage Residential Life Connectors who live among other students and provide mediation and information when required. Emergency help is available from the Security team on campus 24/7.

Although those under the age of eighteen are regarded as children under UK law, they have the right under the General Data Protection Regulation for information about them not to be disclosed without their consent. This is the general position unless for example, there is a legal obligation for the University to disclose information or where it is in a student's vital interests to do so. This means that unless specific exceptions apply, the University is not able to give any information about the student to third parties (including parents/guardians) without the student's explicit consent.

Students who are sixteen or over have the legal capacity to consent to medical treatment. 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 of a named parent or guardian must be provided to the University prior to the student's arrival, during the Housing allocation process. Such named persons must be contactable on a 24 hour basis and live within a 50 mile radius of the University and be satisfied that they can reach a student's location, at short notice as may be required. This parent or guardian must be based in the UK. Details of guardian services can be supplied if requested.

### **Residential Staff**

The day-to-day operations of the residences including Porters, Building Managers and Housekeepers is managed by Sussex Estates Facilities (SEF), who also oversee the admittance of contractors and other third party employees in the residences via established sign in procedures.

SEF staff have access to the age of residents via the University's residential software management system and will ensure that SEF staff are not working alone when in the study bedroom of a resident under the age of eighteen years. In cases where staff must enter the room alone (such as to clean an ensuite bathroom) the resident will be asked to vacate the room and wait in the communal kitchen or living area until work is complete.

## **Responsibilities of All Parties:**

### **The University will:**

- Offer accommodation to all students who fulfil the criteria set out in the published accommodation guarantee.
- Allocate students under the age of eighteen in accommodation close to a 24-hour reception or on campus.
- Provide a Licence Agreement and Residents' Handbook to the student that the student must read and accept before they can take up residence.
- Ensure that staff will only enter student bedrooms in accordance with the Residential Services agreed access policy as published in the Accommodation Handbook: <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/accommodation/apply/policies>
- Consider any requests for a change of room within University managed accommodation that meet the criteria set out in this policy for students under the age of eighteen (subject to availability).
- Make known to students who to contact in case of difficulties. The University will try to encourage students to involve a parent or legal guardian/representative where appropriate.
- Follow the University's Safeguarding Policy: <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/safeguarding/>

### **The University will not:**

- Act in Loco Parentis or provide direct supervision of a student.
- Carry out DBS checks on other students
- Monitor how the student spends their leisure time or manages their finances.
- Monitor the students' movement to or from their accommodation or monitor any visitors they or their flat mates have to the accommodation.
- Inspect or monitor any accommodation that is not managed by the University.
- Intrude unnecessarily on students' reasonable privacy.

### **The Student will:**

- Provide identification (ID), including proof of age, when requested to do so by Residential Life Services staff or a nominee.
- Abide by the Terms and Conditions of the Licence to Occupy University managed accommodation: <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/accommodation/apply/policies>  
Comply with the regulations, policies and procedures that apply to all students at the University of Sussex: [https://www.sussex.ac.uk/ogs/govdocuments/regulations as well as legislation, including but not limited to illegal drugs and consumption of alcohol.](https://www.sussex.ac.uk/ogs/govdocuments/regulations%20as%20well%20as%20legislation,%20including%20but%20not%20limited%20to%20illegal%20drugs%20and%20consumption%20of%20alcohol)

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