

Policy for the admittance, enrolment and study activities of underage students

1. Introduction

Underage is a term used to define those who are not adults. In England and Wales young people become adults on their 18th birthday. Until then, in the eyes of the law, they are still children.

At the University of East London we assess an applicant's suitability for study based upon their academic ability and potential to succeed.

We do not consider age when assessing academic suitability for a programme and recognise that underage applicants can be academically qualified for a programme of study at UEL.

However, we do have a duty of care to ensure that parents / legal guardians and underage applicants:

- I. Are aware that they will be entering into an adult environment by studying at UEL and will generally be treated as an adult. This includes access to materials intended for persons over the age of 18;
- II. Understand the level of maturity required to operate within that environment;
- III. Have express permission from their parents / legal guardian to study at UEL;
- IV. Have made arrangements, in conjunction with their parents / legal guardian, to appoint a local guardian (i.e. a UK-based responsible adult such as a family member or friend who the university can contact in case of an emergency);
- V. Understand that they will be necessarily excluded from certain university spaces and activities due to their age for legal compliance purposes;
- VI. Understand that parent(s) (or legal guardian as appropriate) are responsible for the debts of their child;
- VII. Understand that UEL is unable to provide parents / guardians, anyone else unless required under the Data Protection Act, information relating to their child's progress without the express and written permission of the child to do so;
- VIII. Understand that UEL will not be acting in loco parentis for their child but is committed to the safeguarding of all those who access our services and facilities;
- IX. Understand that any adjustments made for the child are made in the best interests of the child – UEL aims to provide a commensurate, if not identical, study experience for students under 18 years of age.

The policy below sets out the admissions, enrolment and study processes for underage applicants.

2	Admitting underage applicants
2.1	Applicants must declare their date of birth on their application for study whether made directly to UEL or via a centralised admissions system such as UCAS.
2.2	International applicants requiring a Tier 4 (General) student visa must comply with UK Visas and Immigration's Tier 4 requirements for those aged 16 and 17: https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/overview
2.3	The application will be processed in the normal way and a decision on academic suitability made without consideration of the age of the applicant (except where a professional body requirement precludes this).
2.4	Applicants should ensure that they are aware of any study restrictions for those under 18 years of age, prior to making an application to UEL, by reading the programme specification available at www.uel.ac.uk/study
2.5	If an interview is required in order to assess suitability for a programme, the interview should be conducted with two interviewees. A responsible adult identified by the parent / legal guardian is welcome to attend but must not participate in the interview.
2.6	If an offer of a place (either conditional or unconditional) is to be made and the applicant will be 17 years of age on entry a formal offer will be communicated in the normal way.
2.7	The applicant will be requested by the Admissions Team to provide an authorised Parental Consent Form (see Appendix 1) from a parent / legal guardian as well as confirmation of their local guardian details.
2.8	Enrolment will not be permitted until these documents have been received.
2.9	UEL reserves the right to independently verify the information contained within these undertakings and consents prior to permitting enrolment.
2.10	If the applicant is, or will be, academically qualified for the programme by the requested point of entry but will be under 17 years of age on entry, a formal offer will not be made until the applicant's maturity and readiness to enter an adult environment has been assessed.
2.11	This assessment will be made by the Head of Student Admissions in conjunction with the Director of Student Support.
2.12	Means of assessment may include, but are not limited to, supporting statements and references from Schools / Colleges and / or interview with the applicant and a parent / legal guardian.
2.13	If the Head of Student Admissions and the Director of Student Support are satisfied that the applicant has the level of maturity and understanding required to enter an adult environment a formal offer will be made and a Parental Consent Form requested by the Applicant Checks Officer.
2.14	Enrolment will not be permitted until these documents and information have been received.
2.15	UEL reserves the right to independently verify the information contained within the Parental Consent Form prior to permitting enrolment.
2.16	If the Head of Student Admissions and the Director of Student Support are not satisfied that the applicant has the level of maturity and understanding required to enter an adult environment the application will be considered unsuccessful.
2.17	At the discretion of the Head of Student Admissions and the Director of Student Support the applicant may be offered a deferred place for the chosen programme of study for a point at which they feel the applicant will have the required maturity or will be legally considered an adult – i.e.: 18 years of age.

3	Enrolling underage applicants
3.1	If an applicant is considered both academically qualified for a programme and is also considered to understand the level of maturity required to enter an adult environment, they will be permitted to enrol at UEL.
3.2	At the point of transfer to enrolment, the Applicant Checks Officer will notify the relevant Dean and School Manager that an underage student will be joining a programme in their School.
3.3	This notification will be copied to the Director of Student Support.
3.4	The student record will have the "Next of Kin" details updated with the details of the appointed local guardian as provided on the Parental Consent Form by the Applicant Checks Officer.
3.5	Once fully enrolled, underage students will be issued with a University student card that identifies that they are below 18 years of age. This can be exchanged for a standard UEL student identity card, free of charge, as soon as the student reaches 18 years of age and presents at the Student Hub for such a card to be issued.
4	Study and life at UEL for underage students
4.1	The Dean of School and Director of Student Support will be responsible for monitoring their welfare until legal adult age is reached. Guidance on safeguarding children is contained in our Policy on the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults http://www.uel.ac.uk/hrservices/documents/emhandbook/Safeguarding.pdf
4.2	If regular confidential interviews or 1-2-1 meetings are necessary, the School will take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the child in accordance with our Policy on the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults http://www.uel.ac.uk/hrservices/documents/emhandbook/Safeguarding.pdf
4.3	No underage student shall be permitted to enter UEL accommodation. Residential Services can however advise on accommodation alternatives for underage students.
4.4	Upon reaching legal, age the student may move into UEL accommodation provided that a space is available.
4.5	No underage student shall be permitted to enter UEL licensed premises after 6pm nor consume alcohol on those premises at any time in compliance with the Licensing Act 2003.
4.6	On occasion, students may be placed outside of their normal place of study. This includes, but is not limited to, activities such as field trips and placements. The School will be responsible for ensuring that the welfare of underage students participating in these activities is considered prior to the activity taking place by performing the required risk assessment for that activity.
4.7	Some programmes of study at UEL require the use of specialist equipment. The School will be responsible for ensuring that an appropriate risk assessment which considers underage students is performed and that any required supervision and insurance is in place.
4.8	Underage students will be subject to the law applicable in the UK and University Regulations and Policies, excepting debt where the parent / legal guardian will be responsible for debt incurred by the student until they are 18 years of age.
4.9	Once the student reaches legal age they will no longer be considered a child and this policy will cease to apply to them.



Parental Consent Form for Underage Applicants

Underage is a term used to refer to those who are not adults. In England and Wales, young people become adults on their 18th birthday. Until then, in the eyes of the law, they are still children.

This means that as the parent / legal guardian of an underage applicant we need to seek your express permission for your child to study at UEL. In signing this form you therefore agree to the following:

- To appoint a local guardian for your child and provide full contact details to UEL in the space provided below;
- That UEL will not be acting in loco parentis for your child;
- To consent to the activities that the student will be undertaking as a participant on the programme;
- That you are liable for your child's debts to the institution;
- That you understand that the University is an adult environment and that your child will generally be treated as an adult. This includes access to materials intended for persons over the age of 18 held in our libraries, on-line resources and general teaching materials;
- That your child will be excluded from certain activities and spaces due to their age – this includes university licensed premises and university accommodation;
- That while at UEL your child will be subject to UK law and University regulations and policies;
- Tier 4 students: To consent to your child travelling and living in the UK independently;
- That the University cannot give you, or anyone else unless required under the Data Protection Act, information relating to your child's progress without the express and written permission of your child to do so.

Name of child in full:	
His / her date of birth:	
His / her UEL / UCAS reference number:	
Parent / legal guardian details	
Your name in full:	
Your relationship to them e.g. parent / legal guardian)	
Your address:	
Your telephone number:	

Local guardian details	
Name of local guardian:	
Address:	
Telephone number:	
Relationship to applicant	

If you are unable to nominate a UK based local guardian then we recommend that you contact AEGIS - the Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students at www.aegisuk.net who will be able to support in finding a guardian organisation. Confirmation of an approved guardian will need to be provided.

I accept and agree to comply with the points listed above and confirm that I have read and have understood the full implications of permitting my child to join the University of East London.

Signature:

Date:

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO applicantchecks@uel.ac.uk

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO ENROL UNTIL THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN RECEIVED AND ASSESSED.

If you have any queries or concerns regarding this form or the information contained in our policies please contact Applicant Enquiries on +44(0) 208 223 3333 or at applicantchecks@uel.ac.uk

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