



**POLICY 081  
UNDER-18 HIGHER EDUCATION  
ADMISSIONS POLICY**

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## **Policy 081: UNDER-18 HE ADMISSIONS**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 ACM is committed to equal opportunities and all applications are considered on their individual merits.

1.2 Occasionally, ACM admits students who are under the age of 18. In most cases this will be a very temporary situation, as the student will be approaching their eighteenth birthday at the time they enrol. These students and their parents/guardians should understand that ACM predominantly admits students who are over the age of 18 and that they will be entering an adult environment. ACM treats all its students as independent, mature individuals. Students who are under the age of 18 will be treated in the same way.

1.3 The usual personal and academic support arrangements will apply to students who are under 18 years old. This normally includes the allocation of a personal tutor and a comprehensive range of specialist student services.

1.4 However, ACM acknowledges that anyone under the age of 18 living in England is legally a child and recognises that students under the age of 18 may therefore have additional needs in relation to their wellbeing and require additional support.

1.5 This policy should be read in conjunction with ACM's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure documents.

1.6 ACM does **not** act *in loco parentis*.

### **2. POLICY**

2.1 ACM cannot assume parental responsibility for a student under the age of 18. In applying to ACM and accepting an offer, applicants and their parent/guardian accept that ACM is an adult environment. All ACM students are expected to behave like adults and to assume adult levels of responsibility.

2.2 In the case of students joining ACM before their 18th birthday, ACM does have an enhanced duty of care as such students are regarded as minors under English law. The following guidance seeks to ensure that the respective responsibilities of ACM and parent or guardian in relation to the applicant are clear.

2.3 ACM does not normally admit students under 16 years old.

#### **ACM Consent Form for Applicants Under the Age of 18**

2.4 It is a condition of admission to ACM that the parent or guardian of any student who is under the age of 18, confirms, by providing a signed copy of the ACM Consent Form for Applicants Under the Age of 18 before enrolment, their acceptance of the arrangements set out in this Policy.

#### **Emergency contact (next of kin)**

2.5 It is particularly important that emergency contact details are provided for students under the age of 18 and such students and/or their parents or guardians are required to supply this information prior to their registration with ACM. Students under 18 will not be allowed to register on their course unless this information is provided. For students whose parents are not in the UK, this could be a UK Guardian or close relative.

### 3. PROCESS

3.1 Where an applicant will be under the age of 18 on 1st September for the year they are joining, ACM will require the applicant's parent or guardian to sign the ACM Consent Form for Applicants Under the Age of 18, for students under the age of 18, where they are accepting an offer from ACM.

3.2 Completing this ACM Consent Form for Applicants Under the Age of 18 confirms the parent/ guardian has read and understood the nature of the obligations which ACM owes to its students under the age of 18 and the extent of the services available to them.

3.3 No applicant under the age of 18 will be eligible to be enrolled at ACM until the Parent/Guardian ACM Consent Form for Applicants Under the Age of 18 has been signed and returned.

3.4 Where a student is an international student and their parents remain overseas, ACM requires the details of a guardian who is based in the UK.

3.5 ACM will only be able to enrol a student once they have provided details of their UK based guardian. If, however, they do not have a contact in the UK who is willing and able to act as a guardian, then there are agencies who will, for a fee, make arrangements for them. The Association of Educational Guardians for International Students (AEGIS) inspects and provides accreditation to guardianship organisations in the UK in line with current UK legislation.

3.6 Notwithstanding the need for a parent/guardian, ACM will correspond with the student, and not with parents or guardians, unless ACM receives express written permission from the student or there is a medical, criminal or similar emergency.

3.7 A UK guardian is necessary because people under the age of 18 are classified as children under English law. This means that their parents or legal guardians must make decisions on their behalf and hold legal responsibility for their protection and safety while their child is in the UK. ACM must therefore be able to contact a UK-based guardian who has been nominated by parents/legal guardians to act on their behalf and be the liaison between ACM and the parents should an emergency situation arise, or if there are serious concerns for the health or wellbeing of the person under 18.

3.8 Any adult can be a guardian. Whoever is taking on the role of guardian should ensure:

- That they will be available for contact throughout the period that the child is under 18;
- That they understand that they will be contacted in the case of emergency situations where they will be expected to liaise directly with the parents/legal guardians and

may be expected to attend ACM premises or other location where the incident has occurred, where this is deemed necessary;

- That they understand they may need to arrange for alternative accommodation at short notice should ACM be closed due to an emergency or in the unlikely event that the student is suspended from ACM due to breaches in regulations, etc;
- That they understand they will need to take responsibility for any travel activities that the child arranges while in the country.

#### 4. REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS UNDER THE AGE OF 18

This section outlines the key requirements and expectations applicable to students who are under the age of 18 at the point of enrolment. It should be read alongside the ACM Consent Form for Applicants Under the Age of 18, which provides further detail on the responsibilities of both the student and their parent or guardian.

**4.1 Parental responsibilities:** As noted above, ACM is not able to take on parental responsibility for students under the age of 18. Students who are under the age of 18 years will be required to provide proof of a UK-based parent or guardian who is willing to be contacted in an emergency. Students who do not have a suitable relative in the UK will be required to register with and pay for a professional guardianship service. Students will be required to demonstrate that their guardianship contract covers the entire period until they become 18 years old.

**4.2 Contracts:** A student who is under the age of 18 has the status to enter into necessary contracts (e.g. for education) and will be liable for fees and charges payable under such contracts. In circumstances where a person must be aged 18 or over to be legally competent to enter into a contract, ACM requires a student's parents/guardians to honour all obligations that the student enters into before their 18th birthday (under any contracts with ACM). This means that parents/guardians must pay any sums agreed under a contract if the under-18 student fails to do so, and where that debt was incurred when under the age of 18. Failure to pay debts that are due to ACM could result in the student's enrolment at ACM being suspended or terminated. When students turn 18, they become liable for the fees and charges payable under such contracts.

**4.3 Academic course content:** Academic programmes are designed and validated to be delivered to students over the age of 18. Therefore, they may contain teaching materials that are 18-rated. If students and their parents/ guardians are concerned about the content of the programme they wish to enrol on, they are advised to discuss the content of the programme with the Executive Dean of Education.

**4.4 Off-campus activities:** Programmes or extra-curricular events or activities may involve travel and attendance at off-campus locations. ACM is not able to take any additional responsibility for a student who is under the age of 18 in relation to such activities. Unless indicated otherwise, by signing the ACM Consent Form for Applicants Under the Age of 18 the parent or guardian gives consent for the student to take part in these activities on that basis.

**4.5 Evening events and activities:** Like most higher education providers, ACM operates extended hours, which may include lectures and contact time with tutors, access to studios

or rooms, or ACM-related events, any of which could extend past 6:30pm. ACM cannot undertake to supervise any student travelling to their place of residence or elsewhere either later into the evening or early morning.

**4.6 Sale of alcohol and other restricted goods and services:** It is illegal in the UK for alcohol and other restricted goods or services to be sold to, or bought for, students who are under the age of 18. ACM expects all students to act responsibly and abide by all applicable laws and cannot undertake to supervise any individual student.

**4.7 Holding Office:** Students who are under the age of 18 are encouraged to join ACM's clubs and societies but are not able to hold office until after their 18th birthday. This is because Officers can carry legal responsibilities. The participation of under-18s in certain activities may be limited.

**4.8 Relationships with staff:** Under the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000, it is a criminal offence for any person in a position of trust (which may include members of ACM staff) to engage in sexual activity with someone who is under 18 years of age. ACM complies with Office for Students (OfS) Condition E6 Harassment and Sexual Misconduct, and publishes a single comprehensive source of information ([SCSI](#)) detailing all policies on harassment, sexual misconduct, and reporting procedures.

**4.9 Placements:** Where a student who is under 18 is required to undertake a placement as a mandatory part of the programme of study, appropriate arrangements will be made with the workplace to safeguard the student and to ensure compliance with relevant legislation, (such as Health and Safety and Working Time Regulations).

**4.10 Provision of IT services:** ACM offers email and internet services for all its students. These services are provided on an unsupervised basis. Students are expected to act in an adult and responsible manner when using these facilities and are required to abide by ACM's regulations relating to the use of information technology facilities, including ACM's Acceptable Use of IT and Online Safety Policy, and other relevant policies available at [www.acm.ac.uk/policies](http://www.acm.ac.uk/policies)

**4.11 Non-academic Activities:** Non-academic activities - a student is responsible for informing the organisers of non-academic activities in which they wish to participate that they are under the age of 18. In such cases the organiser will normally undertake a risk assessment and discuss with the student any particular concerns that arise, which may result in the student not being permitted to participate, or only with the express consent of the parent/guardian. The organiser will make any necessary special arrangements if required.

**4.12 Data Protection:** It is ACM's usual policy to communicate directly with students (with whom it has a contractual relationship) and not with parents/guardians, and this approach will also apply to students who are under the age of 18 years. Although those under 18 are regarded as children under the law, they still have the right under the Data Protection Act for information about them not to be disclosed without their consent. This means that ACM is not able to give information to parents regarding the student's progress, results or most other personal circumstances. However, if the student fails to pay any sums agreed on contracts, then it may be necessary to disclose this to any guarantor and, where applicable, to a debt collection agency.

**4.13 Notification:** The relevant academic department and professional services personnel will be notified, prior to registration, of any student who will be under the age of 18 on entry

to ACM. Teaching and other staff will not routinely be made aware of a student's age. A departmental risk assessment will be undertaken to ensure that appropriate safeguarding is in place for the individual student on their course. Once the student reaches the age of 18 this policy will no longer apply. At this point the student will become liable and responsible with regard to all matters.

## **5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

5.1 The Admissions Team is responsible for ensuring that any applicant under 18 for the year they are joining receives an ACM Consent Form for Applicants Under the Age of 18 and that it is signed by the applicant, and the parent or guardian where they are accepting an offer.

5.2 In the event that the form is not signed a further reminder will be sent. A student will not be able to complete registration without the completed form.

5.3 The Admissions Team will liaise with the relevant ACM team to inform the relevant academic and professional services colleagues, prior to enrolment, of any student who will be under the age of 18 on entry to ACM.

5.4 The relevant Pathway Leader (or their delegate) will ensure that appropriate and proportionate safeguarding considerations are reflected at a departmental level for any student who is under the age of 18, including in relation to course delivery and any associated activities such as off-campus events or activities. This does not imply that ACM assumes parental responsibility. Once the student reaches the age of 18, this policy will no longer apply.

## **6. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES**

6.1 The policy lead is responsible for the cyclical monitoring and review of the policy in liaison with the Policy Review Committee. The Admissions Policy lead is:

- Admissions Manager

6.2 Decisions and appropriate actions in support of the implementation of the Policy will be authorised by the following designated staff:

- Admissions Manager
- Admissions Officers
- Academic Registrar
- Executive Dean of Education
- Head of International Student Affairs

## **7. REFERENCE POINTS**

7.1 Internal:

- Admissions Guidance
- Complaints and Grievances Policy
- Data Access and Protection Policy

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Criminal Convictions Policy
- Additional Needs Policy
- Fitness to Study Policy

#### 7.2 External:

- ACM University Regulations, B. General Regulations for Admissions
- UALab Admissions Policy
- OfS Conditions B1 – B6
- Data Protection Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- The Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

### 8. DATE OF APPROVAL AND NEXT REVIEW

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Next Review:	August 2027