

University of Southampton Delhi

Policy on Admission of Students Under the Age of 18

1. Purpose of Policy

1.1 The University of Southampton Delhi may occasionally admit students who are under 18 at the start of their academic programme. In most cases, these students will turn 18 shortly after admission; however, some may remain under 18.

1.2 This policy outlines the University's approach to admitting such students, highlighting the additional responsibilities, safeguards, and parental/guardian involvement required under Indian law.

1.3 While the University treats all students as independent learners, those under 18 are legally considered minors in India. Therefore, the University has an enhanced duty of care until they reach 18 years of age.

2. Context

2.1 The University is primarily an adult learning environment. Students are expected to manage their studies and personal lives independently, alongside peers from diverse backgrounds.

2.2 Admission decisions for applicants under 18 are made on academic merit only. No additional academic concessions are granted based on age.

2.3 A parent/guardian must provide written consent before enrolment. This includes consent for participation in academic and extracurricular activities, travel for fieldwork, and emergency medical treatment.

3. Parental Responsibility

3.1 The University does not act **in loco parentis** and cannot assume parental responsibility for minors.

3.2 A signed “**Under 18 Consent & Guardian Form**” is mandatory before enrolment. Parents/guardians must confirm:

- Acceptance of this policy.

- Agreement to act as guarantor for contracts such as tuition fees and accommodation.
 - Responsibility for ensuring that the student complies with Indian laws, including restrictions on alcohol, tobacco, and age-restricted services.
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4. Legal & Contractual Arrangements

4.1 Since minors cannot legally enter binding contracts in India, all contractual obligations (tuition, accommodation, liability) must be co-signed by a parent/guardian.

4.2 Any default in payments or breach of obligations by the student will be enforceable against the parent/guardian.

5. Data Protection & Communication

5.1 In line with Indian data protection laws, the University communicates directly with students regarding academic matters. Parents/guardians will not automatically receive academic updates.

5.2 Information may only be shared with parents/guardians if the student provides written consent, or if required by law.

6. Health, Safety & Emergency Contact

6.1 Parents/guardians must provide updated emergency contact details and nominate a **local guardian based in India** if they reside overseas.

6.2 In the event of an emergency requiring immediate action, the University is authorised to act on medical/police advice in the best interests of the student, until parents/guardians can be reached.

6.3 Parents/guardians must declare any medical conditions, allergies, or special needs before enrolment.

7. Academic & Co-Curricular Activities

7.1 Departmental Admissions Tutors will review whether course content, field trips, or placements are suitable for students under 18.

7.2 Participation in field trips or overnight travel requires explicit parental/guardian consent.

8. Student Accommodation

8.1 University housing is primarily designed for students over 18. Limited accommodation may be made available for under-18 students, but parents/guardians remain responsible for the student's general welfare.

8.2 In private accommodation, the University holds no supervisory responsibility beyond ensuring contractual compliance.

9. Safeguarding & Child Protection

9.1 Under Indian law, all persons under 18 are considered children. The University has a duty to safeguard such students and will act in accordance with its **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**.

9.2 Any concerns about abuse, neglect, or exploitation will be reported to the designated Student Experience Officer and, if necessary, to local Child Welfare Authorities.

10. Restrictions & Legal Compliance

10.1 Students under 18 are prohibited by Indian law from:

- Purchasing or consuming alcohol or tobacco.
- Entering contracts independently.
- Holding official positions within student bodies that carry legal or financial responsibility.

10.2 University staff are prohibited under the **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012** from engaging in any inappropriate conduct with minors. Breach will be treated as a criminal offence.

11. Overseas Applicants Under 18

11.1 Overseas students under 18 must provide:

- A parent/guardian consent letter authorising study in India.
- Contact details of a **local guardian in India** who will act in emergencies.

11.2 The University will not arrange guardianship services; families must secure appropriate arrangements before enrolment.

12. Notification of Age

12.1 Applicants must truthfully declare their date of birth at admission. Relevant staff (Admissions, Academic Registry, Accommodation, and Student Services) will be informed of under-18 students, though not all teaching staff will be routinely notified.

13. Duration of Safeguards

13.1 All enhanced safeguarding and parental consent measures cease automatically on the student's 18th birthday.