

## Exeter College

### Safeguarding and Protection

#### Students Under 18 years of age

Exeter College recognises the particular need for a safeguarding culture in relation to students who are under 18 years of age, and advocates a holistic approach to safeguarding, through assessment and proportional management of risk, and integration of good safeguarding practice into our activities. The College does not take parental responsibility for any of its students, including those who are children. The following provisions relate to Students who are under the age of 18, and therefore legally children, while studying at Exeter College.

**1. Personal Data and Contract:** Facilities and services for students at the University of Oxford and Exeter College are designed with a predominantly adult user group in mind. Therefore, it is assumed that students under 18 are competent to make decisions regarding their personal data and their consent is required, in the same way as for adults, with regard to any matters of data protection. In view of this, Exeter College will not ordinarily share or discuss personal information of students under 18's with any third parties, including parent(s)/guardian(s) unless the student has submitted a written request asking for us to share their personal information with another named person. Consent for Exeter College to share information needs to be submitted in writing to the Academic Office. Such a request should be time-limited and specific about the data which can be shared.

Under 18 unconditional offer holders will be asked to enter into the College Contract we require all undergraduates to sign. This will need to be re-signed and ratified when the student turns 18. The parent(s)/legal guardian(s) must guarantee fulfilment of any contract the undergraduate student enters into with the College and must undertake payment of all sums due under any such contract. Negotiation concerning contracts shall normally be undertaken with the student, and when they have agreed, the contract will be deemed to have been underwritten and guaranteed by the parent/guardian. Generally, the College shall deem the undergraduate student as competent to understand all aspects of the normal College process, to obey the College regulations, to be disciplined under College procedures and shall not as a matter of routine make contact with the parent(s)/guardian(s) concerning any matter.

**2. Accommodation.** Students under the age of 16 will not be offered College accommodation. Students who turn 16 during their degree may be offered accommodation from the start of the Michaelmas term after their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. Students under the age of 16 must reside together with a parent or guardian outside College accommodation. In arranging that accommodation, parents or guardians should bear in mind the University of Oxford's residency requirements, which require that students living with parents or guardians live within a 25-mile radius of the city centre. The College must be informed of the address. For students on four-year courses, any year spent living out of College accommodation before the Michaelmas after their sixteenth birthday will not count towards their three-year College accommodation entitlement.

Students who are aged 16-17 while students at Exeter will usually be offered College accommodation, but the College reserves the right not to offer accommodation to such students if, following a risk assessment, the environment of College accommodation is not considered appropriate for a particular underage student. Decisions on this matter lie with the

Sub-Rector, as College officer with responsibility for the allocation of student accommodation, who will seek advice from the College staff responsible for safeguarding and welfare. Students aged 16-17 who are not offered College accommodation must reside together with a parent or guardian outside College accommodation. In arranging that accommodation, parents or guardians should bear in mind the University of Oxford's residency requirements, which require that students living with parents or guardians live within a 25-mile radius of the city centre. The College must be informed of the address. For students on four-year courses, any year spent living out while aged 16-17 will not count towards their three-year College accommodation entitlement.

The College's usual expectation is that undergraduate students vacate College accommodation and return home at the end of term. Any request for alternative arrangements while a student remains 16-17 years of age will only be considered following a satisfactory risk assessment, and cannot be guaranteed.

**3. Provision of Contact Details:** It is mandatory for students under the age of 18 to provide parent(s)/guardian(s) and emergency contact details (including telephone number) via Self-Service. For under-18 students residing with a parent or guardian outside of College accommodation, the name of the parent/guardian they are residing with, address and contact details (to include telephone number) must be provided. This information needs to be provided to Exeter College before a student can be permitted to enrol. This information is essential for us to ensure under-18 students' safety and wellbeing during their time at Exeter College.

**4. Use of Contact Details:** Exeter College may, if deemed necessary, contact parent(s)/guardian(s) and emergency contacts to verify their details or invite them to meetings, i.e. when there are relevant concerns about a student's wellbeing or safety.

**5. Guardianship:** With the College being an adult environment, we expect students under the age 18 to behave like adults and assume an adult level of responsibility and have the necessary skills to live and study independently. The College will not be acting in loco parentis or assuming delegated parental responsibility. Where parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are not resident within the Oxfordshire area, it will normally be necessary to appoint a guardian for the student. It is necessary that the guardian is made fully aware of their responsibilities by the family. The guardian should reside in the Oxfordshire area and be a member of the family or a family friend that is known to the student. If a member of the family or family friend is not available to act as guardian then Exeter College will only allow UK based guardianship agencies accredited by the 'Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students' (AEGIS) ([www.aegisuk.net](http://www.aegisuk.net)).

Additionally, Exeter College expects the following of the guardian:

- To understand and accept the information provided in this guidance.
- To remain primarily responsible for the student's personal supervision and welfare whilst the student is at the university.

- To provide up to date and full contact details and take the role of a first emergency contact for the student if their emergency contact is not resident within the Oxfordshire area.
- To respond to communication from the College and University and if necessary, accompany the student to induction sessions and meetings.
- In the case of international students, to be involved in his/her travel arrangements and receive them on initial arrival in the UK.

**6. Visiting the College:** Students under the age of 18 and their parent(s)/guardian(s) and appointed guardians are welcome to visit the College or arrange a virtual meeting prior to the start of their study, and meet with a representative from the College's Welfare team and their lead subject tutor. Further sessions and follow up meetings may be arranged for the students by a designated member of staff within the College with responsibility for student welfare.

**7. Mitigation of Risk:** For under 18 offer holders, an individual risk assessment will be carried out. If necessary, additional to the information contained in this policy, further information regarding individual safeguarding and the mitigation of risk will be sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student and the student, which they are required to read through.

**8. Social Restrictions:** There will be some instances where the student will not be able to participate in certain elements of events or in certain societies. Examples include a small number of sports societies which require students to be 17 or 18 for insurance and liability purposes. The student must inform clubs of their correct age in case this has implications for their ability to partake fully in the club or society. The underage student will not be permitted to hold an office of the College where to do so would require them to carry out activities that are unlawful as a minor. However, reasonable adjustments will be made to an office, where possible.

**9. Educational and Pastoral Provision, and Access to Medical Advice:** Students may contact any member of the College Welfare team, details of whom are in the Freshers' Hub, and/or designated staff within University's Student Services, to seek support and advice. The College expects the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) to have read the overview of the student's course structure and to have an understanding of the teaching and learning involved. The College also expects the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and student to read through the Red Book and Green Guide (available on the College website [LINK]). This includes information regarding the College's welfare provision for undergraduates, and the limits thereof. Under-18 students will be given advice on how to access any required medical treatment; we encourage parents or guardians to consider in advance what provisions they would need to put in place in the event of illness.

**10. Internet Access and Email:** The College offers email and unregulated 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 the College's and the University's rules and regulations relating to Information Technology.

**11. Information sharing within the College.** As necessary, relevant members of College staff, including tutors and those students who hold positions of responsibility within the College, will be informed of the student's age and associated risk assessments in order to help safeguard them during their time at the College. Other members of staff and members of the student body will not be informed that your child is under the age of 18; we recommend that parents and guardians encourage their children to share this information with members of their peer group.

**12. Alcohol.** The College will abide by its legal responsibilities regarding the sale and serving of alcohol on its premises. The student will not be permitted to purchase alcohol on College premises before their eighteenth birthday. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that the student is aware of the law regarding the purchase and consumption of alcohol in the UK, and that they are aware of responsible behaviours surrounding alcohol, before they arrive in Oxford.

**13. Suspicions and Disclosures.** Procedures and responsibilities for responding to suspicions and disclosures relating to safeguarding are set out in the College's 'Responding to Suspicions and Disclosures' procedure. Where any member of College has safeguarding concerns about a student who is under the age of 18, they should report it to the Welfare Lead, who **must** refer it to the SPH Lead.

**14. Responsibilities regarding Offer-Holders:** The Academic Registrar is responsible for ensuring that:

- Offer-holders under the age of 18 are identified in the Hilary term before which they will matriculate (or, in the case of Open-offer-holders coming from other Colleges after confirmation, in the August before they matriculate); and
- Sub-Rector, Senior Tutor, Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Lead, and Welfare Lead are notified of the details of incoming undergraduates under the age of 18 as soon as possible such that appropriate risk assessment and communication with parents or guardians (as detailed in this policy) may be carried out
- Tutors, domestic staff, lodge staff, bar staff, College nurse, and Junior Deans, and any relevant Student Representatives, are notified of the details of undergraduate students under the age of 18 before they arrive in College; and
- During August, students who will not have turned 18 by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> week will be identified by the academic office. Tutors and the Academic Office must then identify all tutors, whether or not employed by Exeter, who are expected to have more than three encounters with any individual single under-18 student in a 30 day period. These tutors will be required to pass an "enhanced DBS check with children barred list disclosure"; and
- Tutors that will be undertaking teaching (or advice or guidance), where this meets the "Regulated Activities" threshold, of students that are under the age of 18 will be identified prior to teaching commencing, and will be required to pass an "enhanced DBS check with children barred list disclosure"; and

- In the case where one to one teaching is proposed for a student under 18, the academic office will consider, and record, whether supervision arrangements are necessary. The HR Manager will be contacted to organise these checks, which must be returned prior to first teaching contact with the student concerned; and

Responsibilities relating to referrals to the DBS when relevant conditions are met are set down in the College's Safeguarding and Protection 'Statement of Relevant Policies and Procedures'.

The Senior Tutor is responsible for informing students under 18 and their parent(s) and/or guardian(s) in writing to explain the terms on which students are accepted for study, what mitigations have been put in place to protect and support them, any special arrangements for accommodation, the limits of the College's responsibility to them (noting that the College is not *in loco parentis*), and, with the academic office, for ensuring that these terms have been accepted.

**15. Communication with Offer-Holder and their parents or guardians.** A copy of this policy will be sent to under-18 offer holders and their parents/guardians, together with any further information as detailed above in Section 7. Parents or Guardians, as well as under-18 offer-holders, will be required to confirm in writing that they understand and accept this policy and the further information sent through before the under-18 student begins their course.

#### **Appendix 1: Sample Form to be completed by Parents/Guardian of Student aged 16-18:**

[Note: a variation on this form, with appropriate changes/deletions made to sections on accommodation, will need to be completed by parents/guardians of any student aged under 16, including an acknowledgement that Exeter College will not offer accommodation to their child while they are under the age of sixteen, and that the child will need to reside outside College accommodation together with a parent or guardian and that the College will need to be informed of the address at which he is residing during Oxford's term-time]

#### **FORM 1: TO BE COMPLETED AND SIGNED BY PARENT(S)/LEGAL GUARDIAN(S) OF STUDENTS AGED 16-18**

This form is to be completed by a parent or legal guardian.

Please complete all sections of this form.

If the student named below takes up a place of study at Exeter College, I the undersigned parent or guardian:

1. Understand and accept the information provided in the guidance letter from the Senior Tutor dated [Date].

2. Understand and accept that the College predominantly admits students who are over the age of 18 years and that the student will be entering an adult environment. The College treats all its students as independent, mature individuals: students who are under the age of 18 years will be treated in the same way.
3. Understand and accept the information provided regarding College welfare provision linked to on the Freshers' hub.
4. Understand that the College and/or the University shall not have parental responsibility and shall not be liable for any acts or omissions by the student. I agree that I, the parent/legal guardian, shall remain primarily responsible for the student's personal supervision and welfare. For this purpose, I understand that I must consider whether there is a need to provide any continuing personal supervision.
5. Understand that I shall be responsible for ensuring that the College and University's rules and regulations are adhered to by the student.
6. Consent to the student undertaking the programme of study and participating in such extra-curricular activities as the student shall determine.
7. Accept that the College's obligation of confidentiality is owed to the student and to nobody else. Accordingly, the College shall not divulge confidential information, for example about a student's academic progress to a parent/legal guardian or anyone else without the consent of the student.
8. Understand and agree that, in the event that the student becomes too unwell to remain in College accommodation, I will be responsible for arranging for them to be collected.
9. Understand that this agreement shall remain in force until the eighteenth birthday of the student.

**I declare that I have read and accept the above conditions.**

**Name of Student:**

**UCAS ID:**

**Name of Parent/Legal Guardian:**

**Relationship to applicant:**

**Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian:**

**Date:**

**Appendix 2: Sample form to be completed by student aged under 18**

**FORM 2: TO BE COMPLETED AND SIGNED BY THE STUDENT**

This form is to be completed by the student holding an offer to study at Exeter College, University of Oxford, and who will be under 18 years of age at the start of their degree course.

Please complete all sections of this form.

If taking up a place of study at Exeter College, I, the undersigned offer holder:

1. Understand and accept the information provided to my parent(s)/legal guardian(s) by the College's Senior Tutor in his guidance letter of [date].
2. Understand and accept the information provided regarding College welfare provision linked to on the Freshers' Hub.
3. Understand that the College and/or the University shall not have parental responsibility and shall not be liable for any acts or omissions by myself, the student. I understand that my parent(s)/legal guardian(s) shall remain primarily responsible for my personal supervision and welfare.
4. Understand that this agreement shall remain in force until my eighteenth birthday.

**I declare that I have read and accept the above conditions.**

**Name of Student:**

**UCAS ID:**

**Signature of Student:**

**Date:**

By College Order 25/035, this policy was approved by Governing Body on the 12<sup>th</sup> March 2025, with immediate effect and is due to be reviewed the 12<sup>th</sup> March 2026, and was also approved for display on the website.