



## Health & Safety Access to the University by Children

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<sup>1</sup> or earlier if change in legislation or on risk assessment

### Amendment Control

Version	Date	Amendments
1.1	Jan 2018	Policy reviewed – no changes (S Hughes)
2.0	Mar 2021	Policy reviewed – no changes (K Weir / S Hughes)
3.0	Sept 2022	Policy reviewed – details on permitted and restricted areas of access, and responsibilities updated (B Rennie / S Hughes)
3.1	Sept 2022	Policy summary, S2 and S7.2 updated
3.2	Mar 2023	7.3 and 7.4 updated
4.0	Sept 2023	Pg 2, section 2, 3, 4.3, 7.1 and 7.2

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## Policy Summary

The University has a responsibility to manage access to its buildings. This includes children (defined in Scottish Law as those under 16 years of age) and young persons (under 18).

The University has various potentially hazardous areas. These include laboratories, workshops, kitchens and plant rooms. It is also the case that children can be subject to hazards within general areas as a result of the normal traffic of staff and materials.

Access to general and public areas of the University by children will be permitted only when they are accompanied by a responsible adult. Children coming into the University with adults must not be without their supervision at any time, the permitted areas of access are detailed in section 7.1.

Access by children to teaching laboratories, teaching workshops and sports centres will be permitted only at prearranged University activities when appropriate staff are in attendance and a suitable and sufficient risk assessment has been completed and communicated to the relevant personnel.

No children under any circumstances will be allowed to access the following areas due to the potential hazards and risks associated with the activities that take place:

- Roof areas
- Workshops
- Plant rooms
- Telecommunication (IT server) rooms
- Studios – film and photography
- High voltage and low voltage electrical rooms
- Chemical stores
- Confined spaces
- Laboratories (unless organised visits/risk assessment in place)
- Areas where remedial, construction or maintenance works are being carried out
- Areas where external contractors are working

Contractors are not permitted to bring children on to the campus.

Children of students are not permitted to stay in University residences.

This policy covers what requirements need to be met with regard to children accessing the University premises.

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## 1. Introduction

The University has a responsibility to manage access to its buildings. This includes children (defined in Scottish Law as those under 16 years of age) and young persons (under 18). The University has various potentially hazardous areas. These include laboratories, workshops, kitchens and plant rooms.

This policy will cover what requirements need to be met with regard to children accessing the University premises.

## 2. Policy Statement

Many areas of the University are potentially very hazardous to children. Those of particular risk include laboratories, workshops, kitchens and plant rooms to name a few. It is also the case that children can be subject to hazards within general areas as a result of the normal traffic of staff and materials. The University's Statement of Safety Policy, Organisation and Procedures states that "*the University Court accepts its responsibility to protect persons arising out of or in connection with the activities of its employees*". It is clear that the University Court has a responsibility to protect any children on the premises.

The Statement of Policy also makes reference to the fact that the:

*"final level of responsibility for matters of health and safety is that of each employee or student:*

- to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and;*
- as regards any duty or requirement imposed on the University Court or any other person by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions to co-operate with them so far as is necessary to enable that duty or requirement to be complied with".*

Access to general and public areas of the University by children will be permitted only when they are accompanied by a responsible adult. Children coming into the University with adults **must be** under their supervision at all times.

Access by children to teaching laboratories, teaching workshops and sports centres (See Sections 5 and 6) will be permitted only at prearranged University activities where appropriate staff are in attendance and a suitable and sufficient risk assessment has been completed and communicated to the relevant personnel. ([Copy of risk assessment form.](#))

No children under any circumstances will be allowed to access the following areas due to the potential hazards and risks associated with the activities that take place:

- Roof areas
- Workshops
- Plant rooms
- Service areas or ducts
- Kitchen/preparation areas

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- Telecommunication (IT server) rooms
- Studios – film and photography
- High voltage and low voltage electrical rooms
- Chemical stores
- Confined spaces
- Laboratories (unless organised visits/risk assessment in place)
- Areas where remedial, construction or maintenance works are being carried out
- Areas where external contractors are working

Nor may they be permitted access to any room which can be accessed from one of the above areas.

Contractors are not permitted to bring children on to the campus.

Children of students are not permitted to stay in University residences.

### **3. Definitions**

For the purpose of this procedure a child or children is defined as being less than 16 years of age.

University campus and accommodation includes all internal and external areas within the designated University boundaries. These include:

- Internal spaces within campus and accommodation
- External spaces including car parks, footpaths, access and egress areas including fire assembly points.

### **4. Responsibilities**

#### **4.1. Staff and Students**

- All staff or students are responsible for any child brought on to the premises. Making other arrangements would aid in reducing the risk of bringing a child onto University premises.
- Staff and students attempting to bring children into the University out with normal working hours will be refused access by Campus Security (unless an approved risk assessment is in place).

#### **4.2. Deans of School and Directors of Service**

- Where a University School or Service directly arranges an activity involving young persons, it is the responsibility of the Dean of School or Director of Service to ensure that legal requirements are met and best practice followed.
- Where work experience placements take place Deans and Directors should ensure that suitable arrangements are in place (e.g. supervision and risk assessment).

### **4.3. Parents or Guardians**

- During informal visits to University premises by children accompanied by parents or guardians, the individual accompanying the child is responsible for their supervision at all times.

### **4.4. Emergency Evacuations**

- Any person with responsibility for a child within University premises must be mindful of the needs of that child with regard to emergency evacuation. Since the University's lifts may not be used in the event of fire, a child in a push-chair or a disabled child in a wheelchair for example may need to be assisted down stairways. Consideration must be given as to whether the child might need help with exiting from the building. If assistance may be required local University staff should be informed to allow PEEP (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan) arrangements to be planned and put into place.
- The University's emergency evacuation procedures, in all but very exceptional circumstances, provide for rescue of those persons unable to use stairs unaided in an emergency. The University's Health and Safety Office can be contacted for detailed advice and guidance on emergency evacuation procedures.

## **5. Access for children for work, study, exhibitions, events etc.**

The School/Service arranging an event, which may include children in attendance, must ensure that suitable and sufficient arrangements and controls are in place to ensure their safety whilst on University property or in connection with the University's activities (e.g. field trip). A suitable and sufficient risk assessment must be undertaken and completed with appropriate controls put in place.

A risk assessment is required to be completed and supplied prior to use of premises. For all events where children will be attending, suitable supervision will be provided by the establishment or host.

All events will follow the emergency procedures laid down by the University.

## **6. Sporting events and activities**

The safety of authorised children within University sports facilities are the responsibility of Property & Facilities ([EN]GAGE), unless the event or activity is arranged by another University department.

Property & Facilities ([EN]GAGE) shall ensure that suitable local rules are in place and that a risk assessment has been undertaken and completed to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of children whilst undertaking sporting activities within/on University property where this is arranged through Property & Facilities ([EN]GAGE). Local rules shall include levels of supervision necessary and should list any prohibited activities.

Where Schools/Services have arranged sporting activities for or to include children, the Dean/Director of that School/Service is responsible for ensuring that a suitable and sufficient risk assessment has been undertaken, completed and where necessary local rules put in place, to ensure the safety of

children. Local rules and risk assessments must consider levels of supervision and the hazards of the activities involved.

Close supervision of children is important in the car park areas and goods delivery areas outside our [EN]GAGE premises.

## **7. Informal access for children of staff and students**

Children have permitted access to the areas as defined in Section 7.1, subject to having appropriate supervision in place. Children have restricted access to all the areas as defined in Section 7.2.

### **7.1. Permitted locations for access for children**

The children of staff and students are permitted into the public areas of departments of the University during the normal operational hours of those departments. Such public areas are the reception offices and desks of Schools and Services, the canteen/cafe areas and the help desks of the University's libraries and the route through the library to the 'family study room'.

The University has at present only one dedicated 'family study room' - it is in the Library at Merchiston for use by parents and children. It has been assessed to be child friendly, but parents are still responsible for supervising their children whilst using this room. In order to use this room, there is a booking system facilitated by the Library Team that needs to be followed.

Whilst in the library and 'family study room' children must be directly supervised by a parent or other responsible adult and must not cause a disturbance to other users. Parents or guardians of children causing a disturbance will be asked to remove them.

Close supervision of children is particularly important in the car park areas, traffic routes including goods delivery areas, revolving and automatic opening doors, lifts and stairways of buildings.

### **7.2. Restricted areas for access for children**

No children under any circumstances will be allowed to access the following areas due to the potential hazards and risks associated with the activities that take place:

- Roof areas
- Workshops
- Plant rooms
- Service areas or ducts
- Kitchen/preparation areas
- Telecommunication (IT server) rooms
- Studios – film and photography
- High voltage and low voltage electrical rooms
- Chemical stores
- Confined spaces
- Laboratories (unless organised visits/risk assessment in place)
- Areas where remedial, construction or maintenance works are being carried out
- Areas where external contractors are working

Nor may they be permitted access to any room which can be accessed from one of the above areas.

Contractors are not permitted to bring children on to the campus.

### **7.3. Children of students and visitors**

Bringing children on to campus out with the public areas of the University is not permitted. If this is required due to **exceptional circumstances, then a risk assessment must be completed, and authorisation must be sought and approved in advance of the visit taking place by the appropriate Dean of School or Director of Service.**

Children of students are not permitted to stay in University residences.

### **7.4. Children of members of staff**

Bringing children on to campus out with the public areas of the University is **not permitted**. If this is required **due to exceptional circumstances, then a risk assessment must be completed, and authorisation must be sought and approved in advance of the visit taking place by their line manager.**

## **8. Accidents**

Any accident or near-miss involving a child on University premises must be recorded on the University [accident form](#) and forwarded to the University Health & Safety Team.

If an accident involving a child on University premises results in the child being taken to hospital, a report to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) will be necessary - a requirement of RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations). Such accidents must therefore be reported to the Health & Safety Team immediately by telephone or in person so that the report can be sent by the team to the HSE. All such accidents will be investigated.

## **9. Monitoring compliance with the requirements of this policy**

Each School and Service is required to ensure compliance with this policy. During School/Service audits by the Health and Safety Team, evidence may be requested to check for compliance with this policy.