

Information for all students under the age of 18

Heriot-Watt University has a duty of care towards all staff and students, particularly those that are regarded by law as being most vulnerable. Although in Scotland you are considered an adult from the age of 16, the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007, concerning the duty of care for children and vulnerable adults, applies to all under 18s. This page seeks to provide further information for these students and their families.

Parental Responsibility

Heriot-Watt University is predominantly an adult environment and the majority of our students and staff are above the age of 18. However, the University will treat everyone the same regardless of their age and expect all students and staff to act in a responsible manner. The University will not act in loco parentis (in the place of a parent) for students under 18.

Emergency Contact

Contact details should be provided to the University so that we know who to contact in the event of a medical or other emergency. These details will be used in the event of an emergency only and the University will not release any personal details to this contact without prior written permission to do so. We will ask for this information during the student enrolment process at the start of the programme.

Accommodation

Accommodation at our Edinburgh and Scottish Borders Campuses Accommodation is guaranteed to all new full time students (Undergraduate and Postgraduate) that have accepted an offer and have made an application by the relevant closing date. Depending on your age, it may be that the University considers that the Halls environment is unsuitable; if this is the case we will contact you to discuss your options once you have applied. Please be aware that in Scots law a person over 16 is deemed to have the capacity to enter into a contract and therefore once an accommodation contract is accepted online it is legally binding.

Each hall of residence has a Warden to offer advice, support and deal with any problems along the way. Wardens are also students at Heriot Watt University. Each Warden will arrange a welcome meeting in Welcome Week or week one to meet students and answer any questions. The University campus is a very safe environment and there are overnight Security Patrol

Officers on duty for your welfare and safety. There are also facilities for laundry and catering on campus.

Induction

During Welcome Week students will receive an induction to the University and to their academic school. They will be given the chance to meet key University staff, both academic and support staff, and given an introduction to the support services that are available within the University.

Risk Assessments

If students are participating in study activities that are out with their normal place of study then risk assessments will be carried out i.e. for field trips or work placements. The majority of our work placements take place in the third year of an undergraduate degree when students are over the age of 18.

Opening a Bank Account

The majority of banks in the UK have current accounts designed specifically for those under the age of 18 or 19. In most cases students will be expected to go to the branch to open the account and should take with them a passport (with a valid visa if appropriate) and proof of address such as a council tax letter or utility bill (some banks will also accept a University enrolment letter). Some banks do have residential requirements that can make it difficult for international students that are in the UK on short courses to open bank accounts. If you need further information on opening a bank account on arrival to the University please contact the International Student Advisors Office (ISAO).

Alcohol and Tobacco

In the UK it is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to buy or to be bought alcohol or tobacco. The University will seek to ensure that these laws are not broken on its premises, but will not be responsible for ensuring that these laws are adhered to by individual students.

Health Care

We have a Health Centre and Dentist located at our Edinburgh Campus that students within the City of Edinburgh can register with. Students based at the Scottish Borders or Orkney Campus should register with one of the local general practices. Staff at the Campus will be on hand to advise you on this during your enrolment.

If you are an International student coming to study in the UK then you may wish to look at our 'Entitlement to Healthcare' page for further information.

Data Protection

Any information that we collect is used fairly, stored safely and not disclosed to any other person unlawfully. To do this, we comply with the data protection principles that are set out in the Data Protection Act 1998. The University owes a duty of care to its students and therefore cannot disclose any information about the student (attendance, residence, academic achievement or any other information) to anyone, including parents/guardians without the prior written permission to do so from the student.

Information specifically for International students under the age of 18

Visa and Immigration Requirements

Students from outside of the EEA will normally require a visa to study in the UK. Visas are issued by the United Kingdom Visas and Immigration section of the Home Office, and in most cases applications are submitted online and processed through the Visa Application Centre in the applicant's home country. The International Student Advisors Office can offer advice on making a UK visa application and a link to their webpage can be found below.

Parent/Guardian consent Letter

If you are sponsored by Heriot Watt University for a Tier 4 student visa, and will be under 18 on the date of your visa application, then the University is required to keep a copy of the letter from your parents or legal guardian, (or just one parent if that parent has sole legal responsibility for the child) consenting to arrangements that have been made for the visa application, travel to the UK, reception in the UK, and living arrangements. The University is required to do this by the Home Office as a condition of our Tier 4 Sponsor Licence. Students and their families are responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place. This consent letter will be requested by the University once the offer of study has been made unconditional and has been accepted.

Travelling to the UK

When arriving at Edinburgh airport each passenger will have to go through immigration, where the passport and visa will be checked, and then customs. There will be different queues for EEA nationals and non EEA nationals. For information on entry and customs rules, including what you can and cannot bring into the country please refer to the HMRC website listed below.

Getting to the University

The International Student Advisors Office (ISAO) organises a free shuttle bus from Edinburgh Airport to the Edinburgh Campus the weekend before Welcome Week. More details are available on the Pre-Arrival section on our 'New Students' webpage detailed below. If you are arriving in Edinburgh by another route, or on another day, the easiest way to get to the Edinburgh campus is by Taxi. Taxis and private hire vehicles are located on the ground floor of the multi-storey car park opposite the main terminal building. A taxi from Edinburgh Airport to the Edinburgh Campus is likely to cost between £12 and £15.

If you need to contact the University during your travels please telephone +44 (0)131 449 5111.

Police Registration

If your student visa has the Police Registration condition then you will need to apply for a Police Registration Certificate within 7 days of arriving in the UK. If you are arriving in September then the International Student Advisors Office will be arranging on-campus registration. If this applies to you, you will be sent further information near the start of the semester. Further information on this can be seen on the ISAO website detailed below.

Useful documents or links

- International Student Advisors Office website: www.hw.ac.uk/isao
- New Students website: www.hw.ac.uk/students/new-students.htm
- Child Protection Policy:
www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/transparency/policies/child-protection
- British Council Guide on Travelling to the UK:
<http://www.educationuk.org/global/articles/travelling-to-the-uk/>
- HMRC Website – Banned or Restricted Goods: www.hmrc.gov.uk/customs/banned-restricted.htm
- NHS Inform - <http://www.nhsinform.co.uk/>