

# Children on Campus Policy

## Introduction

1. Birkbeck, University of London (hereafter abbreviated to 'the College') aims to be a welcoming and inclusive environment for all and welcomes children onto campus; however, we also recognise that some spaces or activities are unsuitable for children. This policy is designed to protect children on campus. The College is predominantly an adult environment, and this policy is designed to ensure that risks to children are minimised and that, where appropriate, they can take advantage of the spaces or activities available.
2. This Policy is intended to clarify where children are permitted to be present on our premises, to ensure that we provide a welcoming environment for children while minimising the impact on staff and students and meeting our legal obligations.
3. In this document, a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people'. This policy also applies to under 18s who are not a current College student. For the policy on students under 18 who enrol for Undergraduate courses, please see [Admission of Students Under 18 Policy](#).
4. The College hosts a range of visits and on and off-campus activities involving children. This policy sets out the arrangements to be followed in general, to ensure that risks to children are minimised while they are on College premises or engaged in, or affected by, College activities.

## Visiting Library and social spaces (low risk)

5. We welcome children accompanied by staff, students and visitors for short durations into low-risk open areas, such as the library, the fifth-floor restaurant, cafes, reception areas, single-occupancy offices and other social spaces, provided they remain supervised at all times.
6. Children must be accompanied at all times and must not use College IT facilities themselves during their visit to any library or ITS workstation room. Parents/guardians must not allow the children in their care to use the parent's/guardian's login details to access the College's IT systems (either on campus or elsewhere).

**Risk assessments and arrangements for children visiting the College (other than library and social spaces)**

7. Children and young persons are more vulnerable to hazardous environments due to factors such as inexperience, lack of maturity and knowledge and awareness of existing or potential risks. Subsequently, situations which involve children and young persons on campus should be risk-assessed with these factors in mind.
8. Advance permission is not required to access the Library, Information Services workstation rooms, and social spaces. However, wherever possible, permission must be sought in advance in writing before bringing a child to other areas of the premises, so that an appropriate risk assessment can be undertaken. This arrangement applies to both formal and informal visits.
9. Staff members or students who wish to bring their children onto campus while they are engaging in an activity at the College, such as teaching or attending a lecture/seminar, must first obtain the approval of their line manager and/or Head of School. The child must be directly supervised by the staff member or student at all times (see Appendix 1).
10. Receiving such a request, the relevant module convenor, Programme Director or Line Manager will consider the type of activity being undertaken, the needs of other staff/students and any relevant health and safety or safeguarding requirements. This assessment will determine which of the following applies:
  - a. The current controls are sufficient to minimise the risk to the child (this will be the case for using the library and low-risk areas/activities).
  - b. Whether any additional controls are required and are possible (should be considered for medium risk areas/activities- see 'Other Areas and Activities (medium risk)', below.
  - c. Permission will be refused if the risk is too high and cannot be mitigated- see 'High-risk activities', below.
11. In areas where accompanied children are permitted, either routinely or by special arrangement, the parent or guardian must ensure that the child remains with them at all times and does not disrupt the work/study. They should be close enough to the child to react immediately to prevent accidents or inappropriate behaviour, e.g.

interfering with equipment, entering prohibited areas, or disturbing other area users. Care must also be taken that, where permitted, toys, pushchairs, or other articles of equipment do not cause obstructions or compromise fire escape routes. These responsibilities cannot be delegated to anyone else.

12. If there are concerns about the safety of the child or their behaviour, the parent or guardian may be asked to leave, and future visits may be refused.
13. Under no circumstances may contractors bring a child onto College premises.

### **Other areas and activities (medium risk)**

14. It is reasonable for staff and students to expect that children will not normally be present in multi-occupancy office and teaching spaces. As such, staff or students with children will ordinarily be expected to make suitable childcare arrangements, thus enabling them to fully partake in activities as an employees or students of the College.
15. However, it is recognised that there may be planned events which children are invited to attend or exceptional circumstances which cause a parent or guardian to request that a child temporarily accompanies them.
16. Wherever possible, such requests should be made prior to arrival at the premises and in writing, to the relevant member of staff (lecturer, manager, Head of School or director of professional service) in ample time for a risk assessment to be undertaken.
17. Children are not allowed in medium-risk areas unless a risk assessment has been completed, to ensure appropriate health and safety and/or safeguarding controls are in place. The child must also be accompanied by suitable and sufficient supervision.
18. Where staff are arranging events which children are invited to, they will be asked to undertake a risk assessment and ensure that safeguarding responsibility for the children is agreed.
19. Examples of medium-risk areas and activities include:
  - a. Workshops
  - b. Studios
  - c. Seminar rooms

- d. Multi-occupancy offices<sup>1</sup>
  - e. Kitchens
  - f. Any other area where significant risk is present.
20. Parents/guardians should be aware that lecture capture is used for formal on-campus lectures and that any accompanying child's contribution may be recorded.

### **High-risk activities**

21. Children must not accompany staff or students into plant rooms or laboratories, with the exception of children taking part in research studies which have been through the College risk assessment and ethical approval processes.

### **Accidents and safeguarding**

22. Any accident or near-miss involving a child on College premises must be recorded and reported to the Health and Safety Officer.
23. Safeguarding incidents or concerns should be [reported to the Safeguarding team](#).

### **Unaccompanied children**

24. Children must always be accompanied by an adult when on the College premises. If a child is left unaccompanied at any time, the College may call the emergency services; unaccompanied children should also be reported as a safeguarding concern to the [Safeguarding team](#).

### **Young persons 16 to 18 years old**

25. 16–18-year-old employees- such persons are protected under the Health and Safety (Young Persons) Regulations (1997) and as such, their activities are subject to a separate risk assessment by the employer. Refer any such young persons to the College Health and Safety Officer and complete the template risk assessment at Appendix 2.

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<sup>1</sup> Multiple occupancy offices are not normally considered low-risk areas, as it cannot be guaranteed that all parts of the office will have been made safe for a child. Exceptionally, children may be brought into these areas with the explicit consent of the office manager or supervisor and the agreement of all occupants of the office.

26. 16–18-year-old work experience students- any employee wishing to take on a work experience student should complete a full risk assessment of the work that will be undertaken and submit this to the College Health and Safety Officer well in advance of any start date. The school or college sending the student will probably also ask for one of their own risk assessment forms to be completed. Refer this to the College Health and Safety Officer.
27. 16–18-year-old students- in exceptional circumstances the College may allow young persons to attend its classes. See the Under 18-year-old Admissions Policy.

### **Related policies**

- [Safeguarding Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Student Pregnancy and Parental Leave Policy](#)
- [Under 18 Admissions Policy](#)
- [Staff maternity policy](#)

### **Policy Review**

Created:	July 2023
Latest update:	July 2023
Date of next review:	2027-28 academic year
Owner:	Head of Student Wellbeing
SLT owner:	DVC Education and Student Experience
Committee oversight:	Education and Student Experience Committee for Academic Board

**Appendix 1- Children on campus: Children's risk assessment and approval form**

<b>Member of staff or student making the request</b>	
Name	
Job title (if applicable)	
Student number (if applicable)	
Programme of study (if applicable)	
Email	
Mobile no.	
<b>Member of the school/line manager</b>	
Name	
Title	
Email	
<b>On-campus visit</b>	
Date when the child will be on campus	
Reason for their visit	
Is this a one-off visit or are they expecting to come onto campus more than once?	
<b>Risk</b>	
<b>Are any of the following risks identified</b> (Indicate if there are any possible physical risks or hazards that might be present during the visit. If attending a lecture, is the content of it suitable for the child to be present? Is the time of the visit appropriate for the age of the child?)	
<b>Control measures</b> (If there are any risks identified, please state which control measures will be put in place)	

to mitigate those).	
<b>Any other relevant information</b>	
<b>Outcome</b>	
Has the visit been approved, are there any measures of actions to be taken before doing so?	
<b>Agreed by student or member of staff responsible for the child. When signing this you agree that you have full responsibility for the child during their visit</b>	
Name	
Title	
Signature	
Date	
<b>Agreed by line manager, Head of School (or nominee)</b>	
Name	
Title	
Signature	
Date	

## **Appendix 2- Children on campus: Young persons' risk assessment and induction checklist**

Work experience is often a useful exercise for those still at school and or in further education colleges. There are two categories of individuals who may undertake work experience; young persons who are under 18 years of age and children who are either 16 years old or have not reached minimum school leaving age.

In order to make sure that those undertaking their work experience at the College have a safe experience, the following form should be completed. The risks that person may be exposed to should be considered and methods put in place to prevent or reduce the likelihood of harm occurring.

Supervisors should be aware that young persons may be immature and while interested, not fully aware of the risks associated with particular types of work.

Young persons are not allowed to be exposed to:

- work that cannot be adapted to meet any physical or mental limitations they may have, including exposure to potentially distressing scenes or situations
- substances which are toxic or cause cancer
- certain microbiological and biological agents
- radiation
- extreme heat or cold, noise or vibration
- situations where their lack of knowledge or experience could cause physical or mental injury
- live electrical systems.

View an [HSE publication](#) giving further information about young people and work experience.

The completed risk assessment must be explained to the young person's or child's parent or legal guardian before the project begins and they should sign the form below.

**Young person's risk assessment and induction checklist**

Young person's personal details	
Name of young person	
Is the person under 18 years old	Yes / No
Is the person under the minimum school leaving age (16 years)	Yes / No
Is the person below 14 years of age	Yes / No
Does the young person have any medical conditions or special requirements	Yes / No
Name of the young person's parent or guardian	
Home address of young person	
Emergency contact number	
Name of young person's school, academy or college	
Address of young person's school, academy or college	

Location and date details		
Name of host		
Name of risk assessor		
Name of director/school/support or corporate service		
How long will the young person be based in the school/service		
Proposed starting date		
Proposed finishing date		
Risk assessment		
The following list is not exhaustive. If the young person will be undertaking activities not listed below, please add them in the section called 'other activities'.		
A. Non-laboratory activities		
Hazards associated with the task	Risks to the young person	Proposed control measures (please tick or delete as appropriate)
Use of IT/general office equipment	Fatigue/stress	Training and supervision.  Regular breaks.
Use of IT for internet searches	Exposure to inappropriate or harmful content	Automatic filters to block access to inappropriate content.  Discussion of the College IT policy.  Supervision.

Manual handling	Physical injury	Remove the need for manual handling.  Training.  Supervision at all times.
Trip hazards, spillages, trailing cables	Injury due to slips, trips or falls	Awareness training.  Work environment is orderly and maintained.
Working at height	Physical injury- slips, trips, falls	Avoid work at height/provide kick-stools, ladders.
Moving vehicles/traffic	Physical injury	Awareness of vehicle activity.  Supervision at all times.
Potential emergencies, including fire	Physical injury	Fire drills.  Supervision during emergency situations.
<b>B. Laboratory activities- equipment hazards</b>		
<b>Hazards associated with the task</b>	<b>Risks to the young person</b>	<b>Proposed control measures</b> (please tick or delete as appropriate)
Use of general laboratory equipment e.g. pipettes, micropipettes	Potential physical injury from repeated use	Training in attaching pipette and micropipette tips.  Wearing of personal protective equipment (gloves, laboratory coats)

Use of cell counters e.g. haemocytometers	Potential physical injury from cracked haemocytometers	Training in use of equipment, wearing of PPE.  Supervisor to check condition of haemocytometers prior to use.
Use of ELISA readers	Potential physical injury from solution spillage	Training in use of equipment, wearing of PPE.
Use of ultraviolet/infrared (UV/IR) spectrophotometer s	System is enclosed, potential for injury from cracked cuvettes	Training in use of equipment, wearing of PPE.  Supervisor to check cuvettes prior to use.
Handling and electrophoresis of agar or agarose gels	Potential physical injury from solution spillage  Potential injury from malfunctioning power packs	Training in use of equipment, wearing of PPE.  Electrophoresis system should be checked prior to young people being allowed to adjust the power settings.
<b>C. Chemical hazards</b>		
<b>Hazards associated with the task</b>	<b>Risks to the young person</b>	<b>Proposed control measures</b> (please tick or delete as appropriate)
Exposure to neurological agents e.g. unpolymerised Acrylamide	Potential neurological problems	This should be avoided.  Young people may handle polymerised acrylamide gels if wearing gloves.
Exposure to strong mineral acids or corrosives	Potential physical injury from solution spillage	Training in use of equipment, wearing of PPE.

		Young people may handle these chemicals with gloves and supervision.
Exposure to known or suspected carcinogens or mutagens e.g. Phenol or Ethidium Bromide	Induction of cancers/mutations (unlikely to occur on a single exposure)	Young people must not be exposed to these agents.
<b>D. Microbiological hazards</b>		
<b>Hazards associated with the task</b>	<b>Risks to the young person</b>	<b>Proposed control measures</b> (please tick or delete as appropriate)
Use of class 2 microbiological safety cabinet	Back ache from poor posture	Training in use of equipment, wearing of PPE.
Growth of skin bacteria	Potential infection hazard if young people handle each other's samples without PPE	Training in use of equipment, wearing of PPE.
Growth of certain biohazard group 2 bacteria- the chosen bacteria should be of low infectivity and not a problem to young people	Potential infection hazard if samples are handled without wearing PPE	Training in use of equipment, wearing of PPE.
Growth of secondary cell lines	Potential infection hazard if samples are handled without wearing PPE	Training in use of equipment, wearing of PPE.

<b>Other activities</b>		
<b>Hazards associated with the task</b>	<b>Risks to the young person</b>	<b>Proposed control measures</b> (please tick or delete as appropriate)
<b>Confirmation that risk assessment has been completed</b> <p>Birkbeck, University of London has undertaken an assessment of the work/procedures which the young person will either engage in or be exposed to while within the College and has determined that the proposed work will pose a low likelihood of harm occurring.</p> <p>The young person will be supervised at all times and they will not be allowed into areas where radioactive, hazardous chemicals or hazardous bacteria will be used.</p>		
Name of risk assessor	Signature	Date assessment completed
Name of individual who will be hosting the work experience student	Signature of host	Date
Name of responsible manager/Principal Investigator	Signature	Date
Member of the SHE	Signature	Date

office who has discussed the risk assessment with the host if appropriate		
<b>Consent by young person's parent or guardian</b>		
I have read the form and understand the work/experience (name of young person) will gain from the activities, which will occur under controlled conditions and consent to let them take part in the work that has been discussed with me.		
Name of work experience student's parent/guardian	Signature	Date

**Young person induction checklist**

Induction checklist	
<b>Fire escape routes</b>	Date shown:
<b>Emergency/First aid procedures</b>	Date shown:
<b>Welfare facilities</b> (Toilets/break room)	Date shown: