

# Information Sheet for Guardians of Underage Students

It is important that you read this information sheet if you are going to act as a guardian for a student who will be under the age of 18 at the time of starting a course at a Kaplan International Pathways college in the UK. We hope that it will address concerns and queries you may have as it is based on the questions that other guardians, and also parents of our youngest students have raised.

## **Why does Kaplan International Pathways have special arrangements for students who are under 18?**

Under the law of England and Wales anyone under the age of 18 is considered to be a minor (a child). In Scotland also some legal restrictions apply to them, but not to students who are older.

While we all work hard at Kaplan Pathways to give all of our students the most positive study experience they can have, we have an additional duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of under 18s in the UK. While we cannot take the place of these students' parents, we monitor them more closely than other students, and also require that they have a UK guardian with whom we can co-ordinate when necessary.

## **What is the role of a UK guardian?**

As the guardian of a Kaplan Pathways student who is under 18, you will be the person:

- whom we contact in case of an emergency (e.g. if they have an accident)
- whom we contact if we have any serious concerns about the child's welfare or health, attendance or punctuality, progress or motivation, or any proposed change to their study plans
- who is able to provide assistance to the student if they are unable to look after themselves (e.g through illness) and need care on a daily basis.

## **What makes a good guardian?**

From experience we know that the most effective guardians are those who:

- are mature and positive role models
- are able to make important decisions which may affect the student, and provide appropriate guidance to them
- can be available to provide support when needed and liaise as required with the study centre, accommodation provider and the student's parents
- are based in a location which is reasonably close to the study centre, ideally living in the town or city where the student is studying
- can communicate well in English
- are already known to the student
- make initial contact and assist the student to settle into their new location
- make regular contact and check in with the student

We like to work closely with guardians to ensure that our under-18s are well supported during their studies. We would like to invite you to come and meet us at the College so we can get to know you better.

If the nominated Guardian does not meet the expected requirements, responsibilities and obligations to fulfil the Guardian role, KI Pathways reserves the right to engage the services of a professional educational guardian to ensure these are met. Any additional fees that are incurred will be charged to the student's parent.

## **Parents of Kaplan Pathways students who are under 18 are required to complete an Underage Consent Form.**

### **Why is this necessary?**

In completing the Underage Consent Form parents will:

- formally appoint a suitable UK-based guardian who can be contacted when necessary
- confirm they have given permission for their child to travel to the UK and that they will provide the College with details of their child's arrival time and travel arrangements. This information must be provided to the College for visa purposes
- confirm their child's accommodation arrangements
- declare any health issues or medical conditions their child may have and confirm they have taken out EduTravel insurance or other comprehensive insurance on behalf of their child.
- give their written permission for their child to join in extra-curricular activities, and to be given emergency medical assistance if the need should arise.

Students who are under 18 are also required to sign the Underage Consent Form to:

- indicate that they understand they are considered to be a minor (a child) under the law of England and Wales, and Scotland. This means, for example, that the law prohibits them from buying alcohol or having alcohol purchased for them by others, buying tobacco or cigarettes, gambling (including purchasing lottery tickets) and buying a knife.
- indicate they have understood that in signing the application form and registration contract they are giving their permission for Kaplan International Pathways to share information about them, including with their parents and guardian (and sponsor where applicable).

### **What does the College do to support students who are under 18?**

Our Colleges take on a duty of care for all students who are under 18, but they are unable to act *in loco parentis*, which means they cannot take on the role of a parent. Staff in the College Services team at our Colleges will:

- explain the legal status of under 18s in the UK and the implications of this (although they cannot ensure that the student acts within the law)
- meet with the student on a regular basis
- liaise closely with the student's named advisor
- send a mid-term and end-of-term report to parents, and also to you as guardian. It is therefore important that you provide us with an up-to-date email address.
- contact you, as the student's guardian, in case of emergency, such as accident or illness, to ensure that the student is looked after appropriately. It is therefore important that we have a current telephone number for you.
- monitor any accommodation issues the student may have if they are living in accommodation arranged through the College
- inform the student about opportunities for learning and socializing outside of the classroom
- ensure that activities run in the College are suitable for students under 18 to participate in

In addition, if requested by parents, Kaplan International Pathways can:

- ensure the student is met at the airport and transported to their hall of residence free of charge at pre-registration weekend, or for a reasonable cost outside of this period
- offer the student secure, comfortable and appropriate accommodation, if it is booked through the Central Accommodation Team in advance.

Please note that catering is usually not provided in student accommodation booked through Kaplan (except for homestay options and Bournemouth International College), and that students are responsible for their own cooking, cleaning, laundry etc.

### **Should parents or guardians accompany students who are under 18 during registration and induction week?**

Many parents or guardians like to do this, and Kaplan Pathways welcome those who do. Please note the following important points concerning the settling-in period:

- It is very important that students attend induction and registration week as they will be given necessary academic and non-academic briefings, shown around the facilities which are available to them, and have opportunities to start making friends and get to know their local environment. Students who arrive after this not only miss valuable class time, but will have to settle themselves in while also studying full-time.
- We offer an airport Meet and Greet service to new students who arrive over the weekend before registration starts and recommend that younger students in particular take advantage of the free pick-up service from the airport to their accommodation.
- Adults accompanying students who are under 18 should contact the College in advance to make arrangements for any transport from the airport that they will require.
- Parents are not able to stay with their children in accommodation arranged through the Colleges, but the College will be able to provide you with a list of hotels which are nearby. Please note that hotels are frequently fully booked around student registration periods, so reservations should be made in advance.
- The Colleges help students open bank accounts and so this does not have to be done before a student enrolls. However, it can take two weeks for a student to receive their debit card after opening an account and so they therefore need enough money to cover their living expenses during this period, although it is advisable that they do not carry too much cash with them for security reasons. Please note that Colleges are unable to look after students' cash for them.

**We hope this Information Sheet has answered many of your questions about being a guardian of a Kaplan International Pathways student.**

If you would like any further information, please contact us at [pathways@kaplan.com](mailto:pathways@kaplan.com)

**We look forward to working with you to support the student for whom you are a guardian.**