



UNIVERSITY OF
STIRLING

Considering Private Accommodation ?



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INTRODUCTION

Residential Services maintains a list of accommodation offered locally by private landlords, this consists mainly of flats and houses for rent but there are also details of a smaller number of lodgings where students can stay with the owner in the owners own home.

It should be noted that the conclusion of an agreement between the householder and the student is a private matter between them and Stirling University accepts no responsibility for the obligations of either party. For this reason it is strongly recommended that the terms of the let are clearly understood by both parties from the beginning.

OFF CAMPUS LIST

Landlords apply to residential services to have their accommodation advertised on the list; the most up to date version is available from the residential services office or on line at <http://www.studentaccommodation.stir.ac.uk/documents/off-campus-list.pdf> . Once you have the list and you see a property that you are interested in you should contact the owner using the printed contact details. Residential services do ask that landlords contact the office when a property is let and the list is correct at the time of issue.

VIEWING A PROPERTY

Please note that residential services do not vet any landlord on the off campus list and does not inspect any of the properties that are offered. Please ensure if you are viewing a property you take sensible safety precautions:

- Know the name and contact details of the person you are meeting.
- Ensure a friend is left with the contact details of the landlord and the address of the property and give them an expected time you will be back.
- Where possible, even if its a single bed property, take a friend with you to the viewing.
- Please do not give any bank details / personal details to the landlord if you do not wish to take the property.
- Don't feel pressurised into taking the property – if you are not sure about it walk away.

RETAINING FEES/DEPOSITS

Most landlords will take one months rent when a booking is made; it is illegal for anyone to charge any kind of non-refundable fee for holding a property.

Any deposit taken must be returned if a student fulfils his/her obligations. Please ensure that you complete an inventory of the property when you move in, even if one is not left for you by the landlord. Take photos if required. It is recommended that you supply copies of these to the landlord within 7 days of moving in. If there are any issues contact the landlord in writing asking them to remedy the problem. Ensure you keep a copy of all paperwork. When you vacate please ensure the flat / house is left clean and tidy, again take photos for your records. If a landlord

deducts money from your deposit you are entitled to a full statement – ask to see invoices of work completed if necessary.

(please note legislation is currently being considered by the Scottish Government for the implementation of a Tenancy Deposit Scheme){Oct 11}

AGREEMENT

You should ensure that you receive a lease which should always cover areas such as property address, rental charge, period of let, required notice of terminating let, method/frequency of payments, landlord's obligations /tenant obligations. If you are not sure about a lease, ask for a copy and then get it checked out before signing it – citizens advice can assist with this.

Before signing any lease read it carefully – always get a copy of the lease and ensure any deposits paid are receipted. Some landlords may ask for a summer retainer to hold the property for you. Please ensure when signing a lease that you are sure that you are able to meet its obligations – will you have enough money to pay the rent, utility bills, food bills, transport costs etc. Bear in mind other costs such as telephone / internet charges. Do not allow anyone else to sign a lease on your behalf – they are legally binding documents.

MOVING IN

Ensure that you are fully aware of the start and end date of your lease, check what time you can move in from and what time you must vacate by. Also ensure that you know where to pick up the key from and if applicable any codes for burglar / intruder alarms.

Read the electricity and gas meters on entry and departure of the property, and notify the appropriate company of the date and reading. Make sure you take note of these for your own records.

LOCAL AUTHORITY REGISTRATION

Any property advertised on the Residential Services off campus list will be registered with the local authority. Either as a house of multiple occupancy or under landlord registration scheme.

Students should ensure that when following up any advert for accommodation that the landlord registration number is listed on any advert. (this is in relation to section 84 (5) of the Anti social behaviour (Scotland) act 2004 and amended by the private rented housing (Scotland) act 2011.)

Students should check that gas and electricity safety certificates are up to date and that all furnishings comply with fire safety regulations. Students should ensure that they receive a copy of the gas or electricity safety certificates on taking up occupancy of the property.

Properties with three or more unrelated residents must be licensed by local authority as a house of multiple occupancy (HMO). The HMO Licence should be displayed within the premises. The licence proves that the property and the landlord have been checked by the council and meets required standards.

If in doubt contact Stirling or Alloa Council.

HOUSING BENEFIT

Remember that most students are not entitled to housing benefit so please bear this in mind when booking accommodation.

COUNCIL TAX

If you are a student enrolled in a full time course of study you will generally be exempt from paying council tax.

You should note that if your course is part time, of short duration or a pre sessional language course you may be liable to pay council tax. To avoid confusion you are strongly advised to contact the council tax office of the local council to your area to check your liability.

Please note – the University lacks the facilities to carry out a detailed inspection of accommodation listed and cannot make any representation as to the condition or safety of the accommodation or its compliance with any regulations.

We recommend that if students have any queries or doubts about accommodation they should contact the local council for clarification.