



CITY UNIVERSITY  
LONDON

The University for business and the professions

# Accommodation Guide





# Where will you live?

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You have booked your course and arranged your finances. Now the next big question is – where will you live?

Whether you are looking for a place to live in halls of residence or private rented accommodation, the Accommodation team in the Student Centre can point you in the right direction.

In this booklet you will find information both on halls of residence associated with City University London and advice on finding housing in the private rented sector.

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## Halls of residence

City has recently invested in new and refurbished halls of residence with private, modern study bedrooms and communal living spaces where you can cook, relax and feel at home. All bedrooms have internet access.

Various halls of residence are available for undergraduate students and there is accommodation specifically for postgraduate students – self-catered facilities within easy travelling distance of the main University buildings. Please turn to the next page for information on these halls.

## Private housing

Looking for private housing often seems a daunting task but it does not have to be. We can advise you on how to start looking for housing, what to do once you have found something you like and we have also linked up with [studentpad.co.uk](http://studentpad.co.uk) which provides online information on private housing for students. Please turn to page 15 for information on private housing.

# Welcome to City University London residences

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The Accommodation team are based in the Student Centre and are committed to providing the best living environment for students without the worry of household bills or maintenance costs.

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All halls of residence are associated with City and are self-catered, therefore students are responsible for their own cooking.

Most of our residences are within a short walk of the main University buildings and each residence has a team of dedicated management staff and some halls have residential advisors whose role is to support and advise students living in London for the first time.

Please note that a limited number of rooms for returning undergraduate students can be found in certain halls each year. Please refer to our website for the current location. Final year students are held in priority over returning undergraduate students for these limited rooms.

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# Why choose halls at City University London?

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The halls of residence are located near the vibrant heart of cosmopolitan Islington. Islington's main high street is one of the most popular evening destinations in London throughout the week with its trendy restaurants, cafés and bars.

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The Barbican Centre is one of the premier venues for art and culture in the UK. It boasts three cinema screens, a concert hall and various galleries and gardens. As a resident in halls you will find an abundance of arts, culture and lively nightlife all within walking distance.

In addition, Covent Garden and the West End are only a short distance away on the Underground.

The halls of residence offer a range of rooms from single shared cluster rooms to self-contained studio rooms. Each room is equipped with work desks, storage cupboards, internet access\* and a comfortable bed. There are also communal areas such as common rooms, laundry rooms and some halls offer outside garden or court yard areas.

All halls have 24 hour security and reception staff are on hand to help you settle into your room. There is an on-call system operating outside of office hours to support students and deal with emergencies.

Halls give you the opportunity to immerse yourself in student activities and the broad range of students makes them the hub of University social life.

\* Please check with hall staff for more information.



## Undergraduate halls

# Liberty Court

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Liberty Court is offered exclusively to City University London students by Liberty Living, a third party housing provider.

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The hall comprises a block of purpose-built self-catering flats accommodating 295 students. The flats are in self-contained groups of three to five single study bedrooms, with shared kitchen and bathroom facilities. There are also four studio apartments with private bathroom and kitchenette.

Accommodation for students with mobility support needs is available. The residence is approximately ten minutes walk away from the University.

“

Living in Liberty Court is really convenient while you are studying. It is central to everything – the University, shops and nightlife. You don't need to worry about bills or council tax and allows you to really focus on your course.”

**Hannah,**  
Speech and Language Therapy student



# Liberty Hall

Liberty Hall is offered exclusively to City University London students by Liberty Living, a third party housing provider.

The hall provides accommodation for 240 students, mainly in single study bedrooms, each equipped with an *en suite* shower, wash basin and toilet. Kitchen facilities are shared between eight to ten students. There are also a small number of self-contained studios with *en suite* shower and a kitchenette and cluster flats, each with two bedrooms.

The hall is located in close proximity to Regents Canal and just five minutes walk from the lively area of Angel, Islington, which offers a wealth of shops, bars, cafés and restaurants.

“

Liberty Hall provides students with a quiet and relaxed environment in which to fully concentrate on their course.”

**Paul, Business Studies student**



# East Central House

East Central House offers a range of *en suite* rooms in different flat sizes. The rooms are mainly for undergraduate use, however a limited number are available to postgraduate students.

Each flat has a well-equipped kitchen and the hall offers a common room with flat screen TV and DVD player, an on-site laundry and bicycle storage. There is also a landscaped garden, perfect for summer barbecues. High-speed internet access, contents insurance and all utility bills are included in the price.

Please note East Central House is not exclusively for City University London students and accommodates students from other higher education institutions.



## Postgraduate halls

# Alliance House

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Alliance House is offered exclusively to City University London students by social landlord, Sanctuary Management Services.

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The hall comprises 213 single study bedrooms, most of which are equipped with *en suite* shower, wash basin and toilet. These rooms are arranged in cluster flats of six or seven, each flat having its own kitchen facilities. Every study bedroom has a telephone, data and television aerial point. There are also one, two and three bedroom flats with shared bathroom and kitchen facilities. This hall has a common room with television and DVD, a quiet sitting room and bicycle storage.

Alliance House is located in Newington Green, London N16, approximately 30 minutes travel (including public transport) from the main University buildings.



“

Living in Alliance House has given me a quiet and friendly place to live and study near central London. Everyone in my flat is a postgraduate student on an intensive course, so we all understand the need to be considerate of each other. The rooms are modern and spacious and the staff are always happy to help with everything from moving in to changing the shower curtain. Alliance House has made my first year in London a comfortable one.”

**Tim, Journalism student**

# Willen House

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Willen House is offered exclusively to City University London students by EC1 Residences, who own and manage the property as an agent of the University.

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The residence consists of 157 self-contained studios, each with *en suite* shower, wash basin and toilet. The studios also have their own kitchenette.

A common room with access to a television, pool table, air hockey table, table tennis table and bicycle storage is available to all students. For the summer months, Willen House has two outdoor terraces complete with tables and chairs. The residence is just a short walk from the main University buildings.

“

I have been living in Willen House during my Masters studies. It is very nice accommodation for City students. It is two minutes from the tube station and ten minutes from the University. The place is new, clean and very safe with 24hr security cover.”

**Sophie, Law student**



# Derwent Point

Derwent Point is located in the borough of Islington and is within short walking distance to City University London.

Derwent Point offers a choice of studio rooms all fitted with modern appliances and furniture. Each studio is self-contained; rooms include a private *en suite* bathroom and kitchen area as well as a study desk and an LCD TV including TV licence.

There is also an on-site common room and laundry. High-speed internet access\*, all utility bills and contents insurance are included in the rental price.

Derwent Point offers 24 hour on-site security including CCTV, secure door entry and intercom system and is located just a short walk from the main University buildings.

\*Subject to a yearly connection fee.

State of the art student living in Islington for City students.



# Your questions answered

## How can I apply for halls of residence?

For details on how to apply, please visit:  
**[www.city.ac.uk/accommodation](http://www.city.ac.uk/accommodation)**

## How are places in halls allocated?

First year undergraduates living outside the boundary of the Greater London area who apply to the Student Centre for accommodation before the 15 May are guaranteed a place in halls, provided they have firmly accepted a conditional or unconditional offer of a place on a full-time course and provided they are aged 18 years or above at the time of taking up residence in the hall. Students on the Diploma in Nursing Studies course can apply for a place in halls but are not included within the Guarantee Scheme.

Returning undergraduates should apply before 31 March for the following academic year. Results will be notified as soon as possible after this date. The University does not operate a guarantee scheme for returning students and places are limited. Students with disciplinary warnings from previous stay in hall accommodation are not usually considered for accommodation.

Postgraduates are advised to apply as early as possible as demand is high. The University does not operate a guarantee scheme for postgraduate students but priority is given to postgraduate students who are just starting their courses and who are coming to the UK for the first time.

## When can I expect to hear the results of my

## application for City University London halls?

Please note that all offers are sent via email. If you are successful we will notify you, using the email address that you supply on your accommodation application, as follows:

First year undergraduates who have a conditional offer of a place on a course at the University can expect to hear from us once the A-level results are released in the UK in August. We must wait until this time to confirm that you have met the conditions of the offer that the University has made to you. If you are holding an unconditional offer you can expect to hear from us before this – usually in June or July.

Final year undergraduates can expect to hear if they have been successful in obtaining a hall place by the end of May.

We will contact postgraduates students between June and September regarding their accommodation applications.

## Can I choose which hall I want to live in?

If you have a preference for a particular hall, please note this on your accommodation application form so that we are aware of your request. However, please be aware that we cannot guarantee to be able to meet your request and you are advised to put more than one preference down on the form, in choice order.

### **Is there any accommodation for couples or families?**

There is no accommodation for couples or families at City. If you are married or have children you are advised to come to London on your own initially until you have found somewhere suitable for you and your family to live. Housing staff at the Student Centre will be happy to advise you should you require assistance. If you require somewhere to stay while house hunting, temporary accommodation may be available for individuals in halls during the summer vacation period, subject to room availability.

### **I will be under 18 years old at the start of the academic year. Will I be eligible for accommodation in halls of residence?**

For the 2011/12 academic year, if you are an international student or live far from London you will be eligible to apply for Liberty Court only so long as you are turning 18 years old up to the end of December 2011. Please refer to our website for any updates on this issue.

### **Will I have to pay for any extras?**

Heating, lighting and all utilities bills for your room or flat are included in your hall fee. The launderettes are coin operated. Telephone call costs are not included in the hall fee, although there is no additional charge for the extension itself. Pre-paid telephone cards can be purchased from some hall receptions to enable you to make outgoing calls from the telephone in your study bedroom. Bedding is not provided. We advise that you either provide your own bedding, purchase it here when you arrive or (in some halls) purchase a bedding pack from the hall reception. The bedding packs usually contain a duvet, a pillow and a set of bed linen.

### **How big will my room be?**

The average floor space for a single study bedroom is approximately 12 square metres. Studio accommodation may vary in size and in some halls a price banding system is used reflecting a higher price for larger studios.

### **What should I bring with me?**

You will need to bring bath towels, tea towels, cutlery, crockery, pans and kitchen utensils. Bed linen is not supplied in any of the halls of residence although in Liberty properties, Willen House and Alliance House you can purchase a bedding pack from the hall reception upon arrival which contains a single duvet, a pillow, a single bed sheet, duvet cover and a pillow case.

You may bring your own television with you if you wish but please be advised that aerial signal reception in Central London is not always consistent and in some halls of residence reception can be quite poor at times. In Derwent Point all studios are equipped with flat screen televisions as standard.

### **Are there any car parking facilities?**

There are no car parking facilities at the University or at any of the halls of residence. You are advised not to bring a car unless it is absolutely necessary. The local authority administers an on-street parking scheme; applications for a permit should be made directly to:

**Parking Services, Islington Council,  
222 Upper Street, London N1 1YE  
T: 020 7527 1414**

All of the halls of residence have designated bicycle storage facilities, which are provided free of charge.

### **May I have overnight guests?**

Yes, although certain restrictions may apply in relation to the number of nights allowed per week and procedures for signing guests in and out of the hall. In some residences overnight guests are not permitted during the University's annual shutdown period at Christmas and New Year.

### **Who is responsible for cleaning?**

Residents are responsible for the cleaning of their own room or flat. Vacuum cleaners are supplied in each of the residences but residents will need to purchase their own cleaning products. If special cleaning is required or requested the appropriate charge will be levied. Hall management staff inspect the accommodation on a regular basis to ensure an acceptable standard of cleanliness is being maintained. Communal areas of all halls are cleaned on a regular basis by housekeeping staff.

### **Do I need to get a television licence?**

If you watch television in your room or communal area, you will need to purchase a television licence. This is irrespective of what channel you are watching, what device you are using (television, computer, laptop, mobile phone or any other) and how you receive the programmes (terrestrial, satellite, cable, via the internet or any other way). If you do not have a licence you risk prosecution and a fine of up to £1,000.

To check the licensing requirements, contact TV Licensing on 0300 790 6090 or visit the television licensing website: **[www.tvlicensing.co.uk](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk)**

### **Can I stay in halls outside term time?**

The licence or contract period for all the halls are inclusive of vacation periods. It may be possible to book additional nights' stay outside the designated contract period directly with the hall reception but this is subject to availability.

### **Who will I share a flat with?**

If you state a preference for a particular hall on your application form then every effort is made to allocate your preferred accommodation. If you have a request regarding single-sex accommodation you must specify this at the time of making your application to us. If you have a disability or a medical condition that you need us to take into consideration when allocating a room to you, you must provide us with full information at the time of applying for accommodation. In general, rooms in flats are allocated to a mixture of different nationalities of male and female students.

### **Can I view the rooms?**

A tour of one of the halls of residence is often included as part of a University Open Day – contact your academic Department for further details. For images of the halls please visit the individual websites below.

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Alliance House  
**[www.smsstudent.co.uk](http://www.smsstudent.co.uk)**

Willen House  
**[www.willenhouse.com](http://www.willenhouse.com)**

Liberty Hall or Liberty Court  
**[www.libertyliving.co.uk](http://www.libertyliving.co.uk)**

East Central House  
**[www.unite-students.com/student-accommodation/london/east-central-house](http://www.unite-students.com/student-accommodation/london/east-central-house)**

Derwent Point  
**[www.derwentstudents.com/student-accommodation/Islington/Derwent\\_Point](http://www.derwentstudents.com/student-accommodation/Islington/Derwent_Point)**  
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### **When can I pick up my keys?**

The keys for your room or flat are available from 12:00 midday on the date of your arrival at the relevant hall reception. Hall visits prior to the academic year may be possible by direct arrangement, in advance with the hall concerned but this would be at the Hall Manager's discretion.

### **If I live within the boundary of the Greater London area can I still get into the University halls?**

If you live within the Greater London area you may still apply for a hall place but you will not have priority. We will only consider your application once all applicants from outside of Greater London have been accommodated. London students will be placed on a waiting list for a hall vacancy but can usually expect to wait until December/January before a place comes available.

### **What should I do if I have a medical condition or a disability?**

You should state this information on the housing application form and send supporting documents to our Learning Success team who will advise us whether your condition requires us to make reasonable adjustments whilst you are residing in halls.

### **I am a second year returning student can I apply for halls?**

There are limited spaces in halls for returning students and of these priority is given to final year students. Second year students are usually expected to find their own accommodation in London, however you may still apply for housing and would be placed on a waiting list for halls.

### **For students currently living in halls**

#### **Can I leave halls before the end of my contract?**

If you decide to terminate your contract early, you will remain financially liable for the hall fees until a replacement student is found to take over the remaining contract period from you. You are advised to refer to the accommodation provider's own cancellation policy for Liberty Hall, Liberty Court, Alliance House, Willen House, East Central House and Derwent Point. You may well be liable for the room until a replacement is found. If you complete a 'Leavers Form' and take it to the Student Centre, staff can then place you on a waiting list pending replacements. Please note that this is not guaranteed as it depends on the demand for hall places. You can find your own replacement, however they must be a full-time City student, undergraduate/postgraduate depending on which hall is available and male/female would depend on whether the room is in a single-sex flat or single-sex area of the hall.

#### **Can I change from one hall to another part way through my contract?**

No. Since all student accommodation is provided through external companies, you would not be able to move from one residence to another without attracting significant financial liability. We would strongly recommend that you read all the terms and conditions of your offer and view the halls information on our website before accepting an offer of accommodation from one of our partner organisations.

#### **I have had problems with my neighbours, can I move rooms?**

If you are having problems with your room or with people occupying rooms close to you in the hall, your first point of contact should always be the management team within the residence. They will do their utmost to resolve any problems that you are experiencing. If in the event you are still unhappy with the situation, then please contact the Accommodation team in the Student Centre.

## Guide to amenities at the residences

	LIBERTY COURT	LIBERTY HALL	E. CENTRAL HOUSE	ALLIANCE HOUSE	WILLEN HOUSE	DERWENT POINT
Contract lengths available	42 wks	42/51 wks	42 wks	41/51 wks	50 wks	51 wks
Single <i>en suite</i> rooms available		RUG/UG	UG/PG	RUG/PG		
Cluster flats available	UG	UG/PG	UG/PG	RUG/PG		
<i>En suite</i> studio rooms available	UG/PG	UG/PG		RUG/PG	PG	PG
All utility bills covered	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
24-hr security	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Single-sex floors available				✓		
Telephone access in room	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ Internal calls only	
Internet access in room	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Internet included in rental	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Launderette	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common room		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Within walking distance from City	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Access to garden/patio area			✓	✓		
Bicycle storage available	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
TV + TV licence included						✓
Onsite maintenance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Exclusive to City students	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Self-catered	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

UG = first year undergraduate student

RUG = returning undergraduate student

PG = postgraduate student

# Private accommodation

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This section of the booklet provides information on private sector housing. The information provided on this booklet should only be used as a general guide to assist you in your search for privately owned accommodation.

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## Why look for private accommodation?

Many students prefer to live in private accommodation as this allows them:

- To live with a group of friends
- To live with a partner or children
- To enjoy a greater degree of independence and flexibility
- To choose a property that suits their budget.

Places in City University London halls of residence are, unfortunately, very limited.

Priority for accommodation is given to first year undergraduates and postgraduates which means the majority of returning students and students who apply for accommodation from around July onwards are encouraged to seek accommodation in the private sector due to limited rooms available in halls.

## How can City help you find private housing?

City has linked up with Studentpad which provides an interactive web based facility for private sector accommodation. Studentpad acts as an independent adviser and provider of information on private sector accommodation. The aim of Studentpad is to help students find the right property that is most suited to their needs as quickly and easily as possible.

**Studentpad [www.studentpad.co.uk](http://www.studentpad.co.uk)**

## Private accommodation workshops

The Accommodation team at City run private accommodation workshops throughout the academic year. The workshop offers practical information and guidance to students intending to live in private sector accommodation.

## City University London Accommodation Fair

This is an annual housing event for students looking for accommodation in the private sector. The Accommodation Fair attracts a wide range of exhibitors from local letting agents and private halls of residence to insurance agents who are all available on the day to provide you with a host of information on private sector accommodation.



## Private accommodation listings

The housing website has useful listings providing contact details for private halls of residence, letting agents, hotels and hostels and also has a glossary of housing terms. Please note City University London does not formally recommend or endorse the organisations contained within the listings, you are therefore advised to carry out your own research and make judgments as you feel necessary before committing yourself to a particular property.

You can view our private accommodation information on our website at:  
[www.city.ac.uk/accommodation](http://www.city.ac.uk/accommodation)

## Planning your search

First, think carefully about exactly what you are looking for:

- Decide whether you wish to live alone or with others.
- Which area do you want to live in?
- How much time are you willing to spend commuting to the University. Consider what your transport routes to the University will be and how much this might cost you.
- When budgeting for accommodation, remember to allow for bills – gas, electricity, water and telephone.
- Remember variations in rent levels depend on facilities provided at the property and its location.

## Areas to search for accommodation

City University London is situated in the heart of London and student accommodation close to the University tends to be rather expensive. The London travel zones range from zone 1 (Central London) out to zone 6. There is little accommodation available in Central London for large groups or families and therefore the majority of students will live outside travel zones 1 and 2. In the past students have lived in the following areas which generally have cheaper rental levels compared to properties located in zone 1. Living in these areas will usually entail 30 to 45 minutes travelling time to the University.

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<b>E1</b>	Whitechapel, Stepney
<b>E2</b>	Shoreditch, Bethnal Green
<b>E3</b>	Mile End, Bow
<b>E5</b>	Hackney Central
<b>E8</b>	Dalston
<b>E9</b>	London Fields
<b>E15</b>	Stratford
<b>SW9</b>	Stockwell
<b>SW17</b>	Tooting

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## Locations near City University London

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<b>EC1</b>	Clerkenwell/Barbican
<b>N1</b>	Islington, Angel, Kings Cross
<b>N4</b>	Finsbury Park, Haringay
<b>N5</b>	Highbury, Canonbury
<b>N7</b>	Holloway
<b>N16</b>	Stoke Newington
<b>NW1</b>	Camden
<b>NW5</b>	Kentish Town

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Wherever you decide to live in London there will be positive and negative aspects but it is useful to assess an area by visiting it during the day and at night, by picking up a local newspaper or by consulting friends or other students who have lived in that area before.

## Accommodation costs?

Prices for accommodation in London can vary considerably but students should expect to pay between £100 and £180 per week depending on the size of the room, the facilities offered and the area in which the property is located. As a rough guide students should expect to pay the following towards their living expenses per week:

- £100 to £180 for accommodation
- £35 to £50 for food
- £10 for gas/electricity
- £10 for a contents insurance/television licence
- £20 to £50 for entertainment
- £10 to £30 for travel
- £10 for books/equipment
- £20 other costs such as toiletries and clothes

**Total weekly expenditure £215 to £360.**

Some private halls of residence will cost more than this, however the fees usually include utility bills, internet, contents insurance and due to their proximity to City, there would not be travel costs.

## When to look?

The question of when to start looking for accommodation depends on the kind of property you want to live in. If you are looking for a place in an independent student hostel or private hall of residence you may need to apply months in advance. If, on the other hand, you are looking for a flat/house or a room with a resident landlord, you will not normally be able to arrange this more than four to six weeks in advance of moving in. You are not advised to enter into a commitment on a property unless you are actually in London and have viewed it first hand. Since you will be competing for properties with lots of students from other London institutions, it would be unwise to leave your search as late as September.

## Where to look?

There are many places where you can start to look for accommodation in London, such as message boards, newspapers, websites and letting agents.

### Flat sharing message boards

Message boards are very popular with students looking for accommodation or looking to meet new people to share accommodation with. Using an interactive message board is a good way of getting to know your future flatmates before viewing a property or agreeing to a formal contract. For more information on finding flatmates can be visit: [www.flatmateclick.co.uk](http://www.flatmateclick.co.uk) or [www.studentpad.co.uk](http://www.studentpad.co.uk)

### Newspapers – classified advertisements and other sources

Local newspapers can be purchased from local newsagents and free copies may be available in local libraries. Classified advertisements, usually at the back of the newspaper, contain information on cheap rooms, flats and houses for rent in the local area.

Islington Council's local newspaper can be found online:

[www.islingtongazette.co.uk/home](http://www.islingtongazette.co.uk/home)

*Loot* is a classified advertisement paper and website listing thousands of business and private advertisement across hundreds of categories. Anyone can place an advert through the UK call centre or on [www.loot.com](http://www.loot.com) and the advert will appear both online and in the *Loot* publications. You will find both rooms and whole properties advertised and you will need to be based in London to be able to view them. *Loot* is a very popular place to advertise and is published three times a week.

Local supermarkets and newsagents usually allow members of the public to place an advertisement on their notice board or on the shop window. These advertisements are not always up to date, however they are an easy way to advertise and it is possible to find yourself a bargain property.



## Letting agents

A letting agent is a UK term used for a middle person through whom an agreement is made between a landlord and tenant for the rental of a private property. The vast majority of private accommodation in London is advertised through a letting agent (also known as an estate agent).

You can register with a letting agent who can keep you updated on current vacancies as well as handle your deposit and rental fees. Most letting agents do not charge you for registering with them, however some agents may ask for a small administration fee to cover the costs of arranging a tenancy agreement but they should not charge you for viewing a property. Good letting agents will have a discussion with you to identify your budget, the type of accommodation you require and arrange any property viewings for free.

Please note that many letting agents will first show you properties that have been on their lists for some time so make clear to them exactly what kind of property you are after and keep in regular contact with them so that they keep you in mind when new properties are registered with the agency.

There is a wide choice of letting agents in London you can register with. The vast majority of reputable letting agents are accredited by professional bodies such as ARLA (Association of Residential Letting Agents), NALS (National Approved Letting Scheme) and the NAEA (National Association of Estate Agents).

More details of letting agents registered with any of the above professional bodies can be found on the following websites.



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**ARLA** [www.arla.co.uk](http://www.arla.co.uk)  
(Association of Residential Letting Agents)

**NALS** [www.nalscheme.co.uk](http://www.nalscheme.co.uk)  
(National Approved Letting Scheme)

**NAEA** [www.naea.co.uk](http://www.naea.co.uk)  
(National Association of Estate Agents)

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## Viewing properties

Once you have found a property you are interested in, the next step will be to view it. In this section we will look at the steps you should follow when viewing a property and some of the common problems to look out for. We strongly advise that you should arrange to view private accommodation prior to signing any legal agreement on the property.

Most students start looking for accommodation during the summer period and arrange to move into the property in September.

For every student viewing properties in London the following three items are a must:

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**A comprehensive street & travel map of London**

**A travelcard covering the zones in which you will be travelling**

**A mobile phone**

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You can find an A-Z of London map in bookshops and some newsagents. Travelcards or Oyster Cards can be purchased from any Underground station and remember students qualify for discounted travel. You can find pay-as-you-go sim-cards for mobile phones in phone shops and some larger supermarkets.

It is advisable when you view the property, to do so as if you were travelling back from the University. Ask yourself whether you would feel safe walking back to the property late at night?

## What to look out for when viewing a property?

It is also important to pay particular consideration to the following features of any property that you view. From the general look of a building you can tell whether the landlord has looked after the property – and you can always ask the current residents about the landlord.

### External Features

- What is the general condition of the property on the outside – is there sufficient lighting outside the building?
- Are there any broken doors, windows or rotten window frames?
- What do they have in the way of security at the building?
- Is there a central refuse collection point for rubbish?
- Do you notice any rodents or pests outside the building?

### Internal Features

- Are there enough facilities provided for those sharing the house (for example bathrooms)?
- What is the general condition of the property inside – are the main doors secure?
- Are the windows draught proof – is there any damage to the windows?
- What type of heating is in the property?
- When was the last time gas and electrical appliances were inspected?
- What are the conditions of the furniture within the property – check which furniture belongs to the property and which items belong to current tenants.
- Are all the cupboards, fixtures and fittings well maintained?
- Can you spot any damp or mould in the property?
- Is there any loose or faulty wiring where electrical appliances are kept?
- If the property is on a main road, open the window and check how noisy it is – remember in summer it can be hot in the UK and you may want the windows open.

**Do not feel pressurised into signing anything immediately – go away and have a think about it and arrange another visit if necessary.**



## Gas safety

The **Gas Safe Register** replaced Corgi as the organisation responsible for gas safety in Great Britain from the 1st April 2009.

All landlords are responsible for the safety of their tenants. The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 specifically deal with the duties of landlords to ensure that gas appliances and fittings provided for you are safe to use.

All Gas Safe registered engineers carry a Gas Safe Register ID card. Always check the front and the back of the card before having gas work done. Ensure that you check for the following information on the engineer's ID card:

- The licence number
- The start and expiry date
- The security hologram
- The work the engineer is qualified to do
- Up to date qualifications.

### Landlords must

- Ensure installation work, appliances provided for tenants are maintained in a safe condition.
- Ensure an annual safety check is carried out on each appliance.
- Ensure maintenance and annual safety checks are carried out by a Gas Safe registered installer.
- Keep a record of each safety check for two years.
- Issue a copy of the safety check to each existing tenant within 28 days of check being completed and to any new tenant before they move in.

You should allow your landlord access to the property to carry out maintenance or safety checks on appliances.

Gas appliances you own should be regularly maintained and a safety check carried out at least once every 12 months by a Gas Safe registered installer.

If there is any doubt about the safety of gas equipment it should be turned off and not touched until checked by a Gas Safe registered installer.

### What to do in a gas emergency

If you smell gas or suspect there may be a leak in your property you should act immediately and take the following steps:

- Open all doors and windows to ventilate the room. Get fresh air immediately. Do not turn on lights or smoke/light a cigarette!
- Switch off the appliance and do not reuse until it has been checked by a Gas Safe registered engineer.
- Shut off the gas supply at the mains (if you know where this is).
- Visit your GP or the hospital immediately and tell them that you believe your symptoms may be related to carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Contact a Gas Safe registered engineer to carry out the necessary repairs to the appliance.

If you smell gas and are unsure as to what to do then call the Gas Emergency Number on **0800 111 999** or in an absolute emergency call **999**.

For more information on gas safety visit: **[www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk)**

## Fire safety

Partying, smoking and drinking are often part and parcel of a student lifestyle but could put you at a higher risk of fire. Safety awareness should not stop when you get home.

### Tips to ensure your safety in the home

- Fit a smoke alarm on each level of the property and test it weekly.
- Do not leave cooking unattended and be careful when using oil.
- Take care when smoking inside (if you are allowed) and make sure that your cigarette is extinguished before you go to bed.
- Keep candles and incense away from flammable surfaces, never leave them unattended and make sure they are extinguished before you go to bed, (the same applies for barbecues).
- Do not overload plug sockets and turn off electrical equipment when not in use.
- Secure portable heaters up against a wall, so they do not fall over. Keep them away from curtains and furnishings and never dry clothes on them. Do not leave them unattended – switch off when not in use.
- Know your escape route – make sure you and your housemates know the quickest way out of the property and consider alternative routes in case the usual one is blocked.
- If you lock doors and windows, make sure the key is near to hand and all the housemates know the importance of keeping them in that location.



### Your landlord must:

- Maintain wiring and electrical appliances provided with the property, to ensure they are safe to use (which means it is up to you to make sure that your own belongings are all safe too).
- Make sure that any provided furniture and furnishings meet the fire resistance regulations.

If you are worried about your rented accommodation there is more information on this website:

**<http://firekills.direct.gov.uk/index.html>**

**Remember – if a fire starts, get out, stay out and call 999.**

## What else do you need to know about private accommodation?

### Tenancy agreements

The tenancy agreement is a contract between you and your landlord. The tenancy agreement gives certain rights to both you and your landlord, for example, your right to occupy the accommodation and your landlord's right to receive rent for letting the accommodation.

You and your landlord may have made arrangements about the tenancy and these will be part of the tenancy agreement as long as they do not conflict with law. Both you and your landlord have rights and responsibilities given by law. If a term in the tenancy agreement gives either you or your landlord less than your statutory rights, that term cannot be enforced.

### What is rent?

In almost all student tenancies, there will be a rent to be paid. Rent is the payment you are bound by contract to make to your landlord for exclusive use of the property you are staying in.

Before moving in, students should check the following:

- How much rent is payable and when is the payment is due? Is the rent to be paid weekly or monthly?
- What does the rent cover? Does it for example include bills such as gas, electricity, water, telephone, internet connection etc.
- How should the rent be paid? You may be asked to pay by cheque, cash, credit card, standing order or direct debit. If you are requested to pay by cash make sure you are provided with a written receipt of your payment.
- Check your tenancy agreement thoroughly for any clauses where the rent can be increased.
- Some landlords ask for a guarantor. This is someone close to you (friend or family) who will agree to pay your rent if you do not pay it. Please note that if you sign a joint-tenancy agreement, for example if you and some friends move into a property together and sign the agreement together (so that you are all liable for each other's rent), this also could mean that your guarantor will be liable for the other rents in the property too.

## Deposit and payments

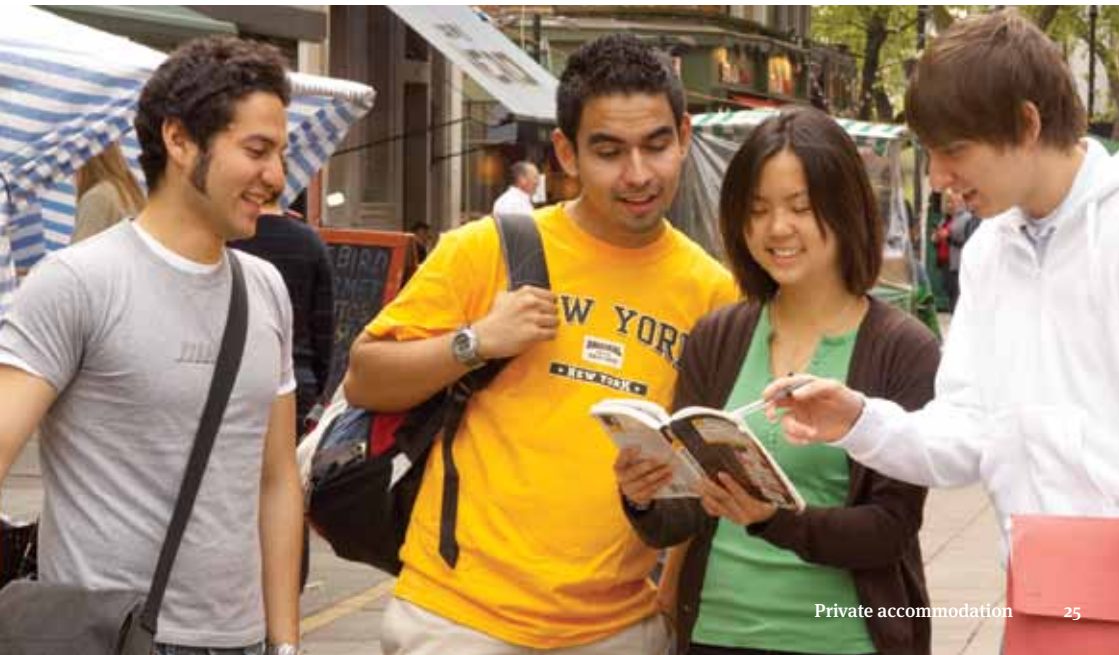
Once you have found a property that you are interested in, you may be required to pay a deposit. Most private landlords ask you to pay a deposit to cover any costs caused by damage to the property internally or externally. Also landlords use the deposit to cover any outstanding rental fees.

From time to time the issue of deposits and non-return of deposit by landlords at the end of the agreement is a major source of dispute and friction.

To resolve some of these disputes and disagreements a new scheme called the Tenancy Deposit Protection Scheme (TDPS) was introduced by the Government in April 2007. This scheme was introduced to significantly improve tenants' rights and ensures that their deposits are not unfairly withheld. The scheme also provides a service to sort out disagreements about the deposit without going to court.

## Tips to help you protect your deposit

- Before you pay any type of deposit, ensure you ask the landlord what the deposit covers and when the deposit will be returned to you.
- Ensure you get a written receipt of any money you pay and ask the landlord which tenancy deposit scheme the landlord will be using.
- Within 14 days of you paying a deposit your landlord must give you details of the scheme they are using to protect it.
- It is also important that you and your landlord agree, in writing, what condition the place is in when you start renting it, including a list of the furniture and fittings (known as an inventory). This should help prevent disagreements at the end of the tenancy.



## Tenancy deposit protection schemes

You can contact the schemes to find out if your deposit is protected. Each scheme can only provide information about deposits that it is protecting. It will not be able to tell you if your deposit is protected in another scheme.

The custodial scheme is called The Deposit Protection Service. Most small landlords will probably use this scheme. You can contact the scheme by calling **0844 472 7000** or visiting the website at: **[www.depositprotection.com](http://www.depositprotection.com)**

The Tenancy Deposit Scheme is an insurance-based scheme, aimed mainly at letting agents. You can contact the scheme by calling **0845 226 7837** or visiting the website at: **[www.thedisputeservice.co.uk](http://www.thedisputeservice.co.uk)**

'Mydeposits' is an insurance-based scheme, aimed mainly at landlords. You can contact the scheme by calling **0871 703 0552** or visiting the website at: **[www.mydeposits.co.uk](http://www.mydeposits.co.uk)** or email **[info@mydeposit.co.uk](mailto:info@mydeposit.co.uk)**

### Directgov

This is the main website for the UK Government. More information about tenancy deposit protection can be found at: **[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)**

## What happens at the end of the tenancy?

You should get your deposit back within ten days if you and your landlord agree about how much you should get back. The way this works and what happens if there is a disagreement, depends on the type of scheme your landlord is using. If there is a disagreement, make sure the landlord and the deposit scheme have your contact details. If you are staying in a hall of residence, you may have to wait up to 28 days to receive back your deposit.

It is reasonable for your landlord to take money off the deposit to cover, for example, damage to the property or furniture or missing items which were listed in the inventory.

If you are still not happy, then you can contact the following for more advice:

### Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

The Citizens Advice Bureau gives free, confidential, impartial and independent advice to help you solve problems. To find your nearest CAB go to: **[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)**

## What is council tax?

Council tax is a system of local taxation collected by local authorities. It is a tax on domestic property. Some property is exempt from council tax.

## Who has to pay council tax?

Usually one person, called the liable person, is required to pay council tax. Nobody under the age of 18 can be a liable person. Couples living together will both be liable, even if there is only one name on the bill. This applies whether the couple is married, cohabiting or in a civil partnership.

If you live in halls of residence or in a private property where everyone is classed as a full-time student for council tax purposes, you will be exempt from paying council tax but you will need to provide proof of this in the form of a letter (from either your Department or the Student Centre) and forward this to your local council in order to receive this exemption.

The rules are different if you live with someone who is not a full-time student but your household could still get a discount. Usually, the person living in a property will be the liable person but sometimes it will be the owner of the property who will be liable to pay.

The owner will be liable if:

- The property is in multiple occupation, for example, a house shared by a number of different households who all pay rent separately; or
- The people who live in the property are all under the age of 18; or
- The property is accommodation for asylum seekers; or
- The people who are staying in the property are there temporarily and have their main homes somewhere else; or
- The property is a care home, hospital, hostel or women's refuge. If you think that the owner of the property should be paying the council tax, you should consult an experienced adviser for example, at a Citizens Advice Bureau.

Contact details for the local council in Islington are as follows:

**Islington Council**  
**222 Upper Street, Islington, London N1 1XR**  
**[www.islington.gov.uk](http://www.islington.gov.uk)**

If you wish to find information on council tax and other public services in your local area please visit the Directgov home page at:  
**[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)**

## Houses in multiple occupation (HMO)

These are houses occupied by more than one household and are strictly defined in legislation. We often know them as bed-sits, flat-lets and shared houses.

Under the changes in the Housing Act 2004, there are two types of HMO licensing, Mandatory and Additional.

**Mandatory** HMO licensing applies to all privately rented property with three or more storeys occupied by five or more people who form two or more households. This would usually include large houses converted into flats or bedsits and blocks of flats. The landlord has to ensure that there are adequate amenities (such as kitchens, toilets and bathrooms) in place for the occupants. A household could be a single person or members of the same family living together. This includes couples and close relatives.

**Additional** licensing is when a council individually imposes a licence on HMO for which licensing is not mandatory. This may be because of poor management or inadequate amenities in the property.

If there are three or more people living in a flat or building and they are not related, such as a shared student house, the building or flat may be classified as an HMO.

If a property has an HMO licence, the landlord has these responsibilities:

- The property is not overcrowded and there are adequate amenities for the tenants.
- The property is managed correctly, including using a deposit scheme if a deposit is collected from you.
- The property is free from hazards that might affect your health and safety.

If you are unsure whether the property you are renting is an HMO or you feel that your house is overcrowded and/or has not adequate amenities for the tenants, you can seek advice from the Citizens Advice Bureau or your local council.



## Rights to repair – what is repair?

Repairs are work that is needed to keep the property in good condition internally and externally.

### Who is responsible for repairs?

In most cases the landlord is responsible for any repair work that is needed to keep the property in good condition. However, you should check your tenancy agreement for terms of repair which is not covered by the landlord.

In general the landlord is responsible for repairs to: roof, walls, floors, windows, baths, showers, toilets, basins, heating and gas appliances.

Telling your landlord about any repair works needed:

- If you feel that repair works are needed in your property you should put this in writing to the landlord.
- Keep copies of all letters you send and also receive from your landlord.
- Do not attempt to repair anything yourself – you could get blamed for the damage and/or cause further damage.



## Landlords right of entry

Your landlord does not have right to enter your home without your permission unless it is an absolute emergency. If your landlord wants to come and inspect the property then the landlord needs to provide you with a minimum of 24 hours notice.

If your landlord agrees to have repair work done in your property, the landlord should carry out all the necessary work without causing disruption to your daily routine. The landlord should also tell you in advance when the work will start and when it is likely to end. In the event the repair works require you to vacate the property then your landlord will need to find you an alternative accommodation whilst the work is being carried out.

As a tenant by law you should use the property in a responsible manner. This means ensuring general cleaning is carried out throughout the house. Do not allow your guests to damage the property. If you or your guests cause any damage to the property the landlord can take court action to recover the costs of repair or seek termination of your contact through an eviction order.

If you have written to your landlord regarding a repair but you have not had any response from the landlord or the repair work is not carried out, you can then take the following actions:

You can contact your local Consumer Protection Services who are a part of your local Trading Standards Office in your local borough. Your local Trading Standards office can investigate your complaints and if necessary they can also take legal action against your landlord. Your local authority will contact your landlord and express your concerns. In some instances the local authority will carry out the work themselves and pass on the charge to the landlord. For more information on the role of Trading Standards please visit:

**[www.tradingstandards.gov.uk](http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk)**

You can also request an Environmental Health Officer (EHO) to inspect your property. The EHO works within the Environmental Health Service in your local council. This service aims to improve living conditions in the poorest private rented housing in the borough through working in partnership with owners and where necessary by enforcement. The EHO can recommend your landlord what works are needed and any actions that may be taken against the landlord if the works are not carried out. More information can be found at:

**[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)**

## Court action

If you feel that your landlord is neglecting your request for essential repairs you have the right to take further action through a County Court. Before you decide to take legal action you should seek professional advice from a solicitor.

If you need help to pay for any legal action you may be entitled to Legal Aid to help with the cost of going to court. Legal Aid helps with the costs of legal advice for people who can not afford to pay for a solicitor or pay for other expert legal advice.

Financial Help from Legal Aid depends on:

- The type of legal problem you have
- Your income (how much you earn) and how much capital (money, property, belongings) you have
- Whether there is a reasonable chance of winning your case
- Whether it is worth the time and money needed to win.

For more information on Legal Aid please visit: [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

**You should never withhold your rent or use your rent to carry out repair work yourself. This can lead to more problems which can result in the landlord taking you to court for rent arrears.**



# Useful links

## City University London Student Centre

[www.city.ac.uk/studentcentre](http://www.city.ac.uk/studentcentre)

E: [studentcentre@city.ac.uk](mailto:studentcentre@city.ac.uk)

T: +44 (0)20 7040 7040

## City University London Accommodation team

[www.city.ac.uk/accommodation](http://www.city.ac.uk/accommodation)

E: [accomm@city.ac.uk](mailto:accomm@city.ac.uk)

T: +44 (0)20 7040 7040

## City University London Learning Success team

E: [disability@city.ac.uk](mailto:disability@city.ac.uk)

[dyslexia@city.ac.uk](mailto:dyslexia@city.ac.uk)

[academiclearningsupport@city.ac.uk](mailto:academiclearningsupport@city.ac.uk)

T: +44 (0)20 7040 0246

## City University London Open Days

[www.city.ac.uk/visitus](http://www.city.ac.uk/visitus)

## Property Search Engines

[www.rightmove.co.uk](http://www.rightmove.co.uk)

[www.findaproperty.co.uk](http://www.findaproperty.co.uk)

[www.propertyfinder.co.uk](http://www.propertyfinder.co.uk)

[www.loot.com](http://www.loot.com)

[www.gumtree.com](http://www.gumtree.com)

[www.flatmateclick.co.uk](http://www.flatmateclick.co.uk)

[www.fish4lettings.co.uk](http://www.fish4lettings.co.uk)





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Student Centre  
Northampton Square  
London EC1V 0HB