

Accommodation

Last modified: 28 October 2024

There are many different accommodation options for international students in the UK.

You can choose to live in student housing managed by your college or university, or you can rent a room, studio or apartment privately.

To help you decide which option is the best for you, we have created an overview of key information and questions to consider. We also give details about immigration checks, guarantors and costs to consider.

It's important to remember that if you are looking to stay in student housing, you will need to book your accommodation before you come to the UK.

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What types of accommodation are available?

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There are a number of accommodation options available for international students. Before you make a decision, it may be helpful to understand the different types of housing on offer.

[Student housing](#)

The most common type of accommodation is student housing. This is housing arranged by your college or university; normally in large halls of residence (normally just called "halls".)

These large halls of residence are divided into shared flats (apartments) where a group of students (typically five or six) share a kitchen or social space. Each student normally has a study bedroom for their own use.

Study bedrooms normally have an [en-suite](#) bathroom, or in older-style halls you may use a shared bathroom. In both cases, the bathroom will have a toilet, wash basins and a shower, but it may not have a bathtub. Some more traditional university halls are "catered halls" which provide meals which can help budget your money, but it may not be the food you are used to.

Student housing is usually mixed, with male and female students sharing the building, but having their own private study bedroom. Some universities may have a limited supply of single-sex housing options.

Most student housing provides an internet connection, either through the university server or with each student having their own individual contract with a commercial provider. Utility costs (energy and water) are normally included in the rent and the contract will state this.

Student housing is normally fully furnished, but you may need to provide your own bedding and towels. In some institutions you can pre-order a bedding pack if you need one.

Private halls or student villages

Many larger cities have private halls or student villages which are not allocated to specific universities. Students can book directly with the company that manages the housing. In many ways they are very similar to university-managed halls, but often with a higher level of services, furnishings and facilities, and a more expensive rent. Your university can advise you if there are any private halls in your city, but you will be signing a contract with a private company, not with your university.

Some institutions also own or manage some smaller blocks of flats (apartments) or smaller houses.

Private rental housing

Not all students live in student housing, there are private rental options available. The most common types are:

Renting a studio apartment

A studio is one room that includes sleeping, kitchen and bathroom facilities. It is usually for one person, but some larger studios may be suitable for a couple.

Studios are normally the most expensive type of housing available. Although sharing a flat or facilities can raise issues, it is also a good way of meeting people. Living on your own in a studio can make meeting people more difficult.

Private rentals may be fully furnished, but this will depend on the landlord and options available.

Becoming a lodger (homestay)

Lodging means that you live in part of a property that is also lived in by the owner, who may have a family.

You are expected to share the facilities with the other residents, fit in with their lifestyle and their house rules. Some or all meals may be provided.

Lodging with a family is most common in London. It is a popular option for students under the age of 18. Many homestay providers are experienced in housing international students and the challenges they face in living in a new country. These schemes are normally run through your institution.

Hostels

Hostels are especially common in London, and often owned by a charitable organisation. Some provide housing for single students and for student couples. Hostels may provide some meals or have cooking facilities for you to prepare your own food. They can give you the opportunity to become familiar with the area where you are studying before searching for private accommodation.

Homeshare

A homeshare is where you live in housing in exchange for providing support to someone who needs it. For example, you may be living with an older person; by providing support like helping with shopping, you may have lower levels of rent.

Differences between student housing and other private housing

Even if your first instinct is to choose student housing, do look at all your options before making a commitment. Living in private accommodation can be rewarding and give you a real sense of life in the UK. Any contract you sign for student housing will likely be for the full academic year with limited opportunity for changing your mind once you arrive.

This is a summary of the differences between student housing and living in a shared house or flat in the private sector.

	Student housing (based on a single room in a shared flat of four/five)	Shared house or flat (based on a single room in a shared house of four/five)
Rent	May look more expensive but is likely to include some or all utility bills and possibly some other services	May look cheaper but is likely not to include some or all utility bills
Gas, water, electricity	Nearly always included	Variable cost depending on the provider
Internet	Usually included	Variable cost depending on the provider
Payment methods	Flexible - often a number of ways to pay	Often negotiable (eg monthly or quarterly payment terms on request)
Insurance (basic cover)	Usually included	Variable cost depending on the provider

Contract length	Standard contract until June or September	Standard contract until June or September
Opportunity to move	May be possible to move to other managed housing if there are vacancies	Generally not possible to change accommodation (unless you find a replacement)
Pastoral Care	May have wardens or a reception desk	Usually no pastoral care
Flatmates	May be possible to choose the people you share with	Possible to choose housemates
Cleaning	Often there is a service to remove rubbish and clean communal areas	Usually no cleaning service provided
Waste disposal	Often there is a service to remove rubbish and clean communal areas. Bins will be provided on site, normally in a central location	Your rubbish will be collected either weekly or fortnightly by the local authority. Ask your landlord for details
Accessibility of landlord	Usually management office on site. University housing will have a Housing Office on campus	Varies
Security	Usually a security presence and regular security patrols, sometimes 24-hrs a day	Generally not available
Repairs and maintenance	There may be a formal commitment to getting repairs and maintenance done within specified timescales	Varies, but if your landlord is part of a recognised accreditation scheme it is likely they will be working to agreed timescales

Choosing your accommodation

Last modified: 24 October 2024

Choosing what accommodation to live in is a big decision. There are lots of factors to think about. Do you want to share your living space? Do you want an en-suite bathroom? What location do you

want? Here are some suggestions to think about:

Communal living space

Having a communal living space within a flat or in a shared house is good for relaxing and for socialising. Not having a space like this can be very limiting.

En suite bathroom

Many new students opt for this, because the level of privacy is important to them or because it supports ritual washing as part of religious observances. However, be aware of the extra cost over a standard room. Would you rather have a standard room (often larger), sharing toilet facilities, and have extra cash to spend on other things which are important to you?

Kitchen

Unless you are going into single accommodation, you will be sharing food preparation and cooking facilities. The number of students you share these facilities with varies widely – it may be four or five; it may be 20. Your institution or prospective landlord should be able to give you this information. If it isn't clear, contact them. If you have specific requirements for preparing food and you are concerned about how the facilities will support you in meeting these requirements, you should contact your institution or prospective landlord.

Mix of people

Whether you are in institution housing or privately rented housing, you are likely to be sharing with other students. They may be from your country, from other countries, and/or UK-based students. They may be undergraduates and postgraduates, male and female. To help manage your own expectations, you might want to check this pre-arrival, if the information is available. If you have particular requirements, it is important to raise this with the provider beforehand.

Social opportunities

Living in halls of residence gives you access to large numbers of other students, possibly from many different cultures. Your institution may also organise social events for students in these types of housing. If you live in a privately rented shared house or in a studio you are unlikely to have social opportunities on this scale.

Nonetheless, if you opt to live in a shared house, you will have some choice about who you live with. Living in a bedsit/studio can be lonely. Many institution towns have residential areas which are a focus for student living and these can have a strong student identity and sense of community.

Location

Many students prefer to live close to their place of study, but this may not always be the best choice. You may need to balance cost, quality and convenience, especially in larger cities. Issues to think about include the following:

Where is the housing located?

It may be on campus; it may be near your place of study; or it may be some distance away. If it is not on campus, check that the location offers you what you need and what you want.

What are the transport links and what are the costs?

This is particularly important if your housing is not on campus or if you can't reasonably walk (or cycle) to your place of study, or to other places that you need to visit. In some towns living further away from your institution can save money, as housing may be cheaper. If you are thinking of living further out, check that extra travel costs do not outweigh your savings on rent.

Management and security

Many international students new to the UK have particular concerns about personal safety and security. Institutionally-allocated developments often have some sort of security service – staffed offices and security personnel on patrol for some of the night/day or perhaps a full 24-hour service with CCTV.

Vacations

If you live in a shared house in the private sector, you are likely to sign a contract for a fixed and uninterrupted period, so that you can live in the housing from the start of the contract until it ends. This may also be true of institution housing.

However, some institutions have special arrangements for vacation periods, particularly Christmas. Because many staff take leave from work at Christmas, the level of service to students may be reduced. To help manage this, some institutions require students staying in student housing over the Christmas period to relocate into another hall of residence.

You might want to check whether this is the case for your institution. Similarly for the Easter vacation, students may be required to relocate to enable the institution to stage residential conferences. If this is likely to affect you as a resident, it should be made clear when you sign your contract. If you are concerned about it, contact the housing office at your institution.

Your contract

You will be signing a legally-binding contract when you commit to your accommodation, so be aware of the implications.

When entering into private accommodation with your friends, you may have made arrangements to sign a joint contract with your landlord. This means that each of you is jointly responsible for the rent and for keeping the property clean and tidy. So, if one of you moves out, the landlord/agent can pursue the remaining residents (as well as the resident who has left) for any rent due.

Landlords will normally offer individual lets (where you are only responsible for your room and your share of the communal areas) so if you would prefer this you should ask the landlord.

How do I book my accommodation?

If you're planning to live in student housing, you must apply for your accommodation before you come to the UK. If you're looking at private housing, it is usually recommended to arrange it once you're here.

Student Housing

You must apply for student housing before you come to the UK, with a few exceptions. If you are offered a place on a course, you will usually be asked if you would like your institution to provide housing or to help you find privately rented housing. Make sure that you follow the application procedures and, in particular, that you meet the application deadlines to secure housing.

Read your institution's housing information carefully. Make sure you are clear about what you want, and that you understand what options are available. Institution housing is the first choice for most students who are new to the UK, for many reasons:

- being at the heart of the institution
- feeling safer and more secure
- feeling better connected and having more social opportunities
- having easier access to the institution's facilities and services
- the convenience and confidence of booking before you travel to the UK.

These factors may or may not be true about your institution's housing, but many new international students feel that these things are important for them.

Private housing

For other long-term housing, it is not usually a good idea to arrange it before you arrive in the UK. It can be frustrating to arrive in the UK with uncertainty about your longer-term housing arrangements but there are things you can do to help prepare:

- read the guidance from your institution about housing options for international students
- check the processes for finding privately rented accommodation and what support you can get from your institution, your students' union and any other local agencies
- check online to get an early idea of what is available and the quality and cost of housing in your host town or city
- use social networks to connect with other students who are starting at your institution at the same time, and who will be looking for housing

If your institution does not have temporary housing, your other options are hotels, guest houses and hostels. Guest houses are like hotels but instead of having a restaurant, they may have a dining room where you have no choice about the meals served. Living in a hotel for a long period of time will be expensive. However, hotels and guest houses provide useful temporary housing which you can book before you travel to the UK.

After you arrive at your pre-booked temporary housing, start your search for longer-term housing with help from your institution. Internet searches, housing agencies, local newspapers and

advertisements in shop windows or on an institution noticeboard are useful when you are looking for somewhere to live.

Stay safe from rental fraud

Last modified: 24 October 2024

Before booking your accommodation, it is important to check that a property, landlord or institution is part of a reputable [accreditation scheme](#). An accreditation scheme is normally run by a local authority working together with institutions or professional landlord associations. Speak to your institution who may be able to provide you with further details in this area.

Landlords in schemes are committed to offering housing and services which meet specific professional standards. This includes how the contract is written, how properties are marketed and managed, how quickly any repairs are done, health and safety, how deposits and any disputes are handled.

Under accreditation schemes members' properties are checked to ensure they meet these standards. If they do not, they can be removed from the scheme. If you move into housing which is part of an accreditation scheme, you know that the housing will be of an acceptable standard and that you will receive a fair and professional service. All schemes have a robust complaints procedure that you can use if there are any problems.

The [National Codes](#) are schemes for larger-scale student developments. There is one scheme for properties managed and controlled by education institutions, and another for privately rented properties.

Fake landlords operate in the private student housing market, preying on vulnerable (often international) students, for example by pretending to offer housing online, for example, through Facebook or Gumtree. Victims are asked to pay for a deposit for a house or flat that does not exist. [Action Fraud](#) has some useful tips on protecting yourself from rental fraud.

Remember that estate agencies cannot charge you a fee just for registering with them, and you should not pay for details of places they have to rent.

What immigration checks are there?

Last modified: 28 October 2024

Private landlords must check that you are allowed to rent in England. These checks are called 'right to rent' checks.

['Right to rent' checks](#)

Landlords in England are required to check their tenants' immigration status before granting a tenancy agreement, to make sure that the tenant has a 'right to rent'. You have a right to rent if:

- You have current immigration permission to be in the UK, for example Student permission (including Tier 4 (General) permission) or a Short-Term Student visa; or

- You are an EEA/Swiss national or family member of an EEA/Swiss national with status granted under the EU Settlement Scheme; or
- You have been granted immigration permission under the points-based system; or
- You do not have valid immigration permission to be in the UK but you have been granted 'permission to rent' by the UK government (this only applies in exceptional circumstances).

Landlords have a duty not to discriminate against tenants on the grounds of their race or nationality. Right to rent checks for EU, EEA and Swiss citizens and their family members continued to be conducted in the same way up until 30 June 2021. Landlords are not required to conduct retrospective checks on EEA citizens who entered into a tenancy agreement up to and including 30 June 2021.

Exemptions from 'right to rent' checks

Additionally, you will not be subject to a right to rent check if any of the following points apply to you:

- You live in an exempt property. This includes student halls of residence; accommodation owned and managed by a higher or further education institution, or a body established for charitable purposes only; and accommodation that you have been nominated to occupy by such an institution, or charitable body. Full details of exempt properties can be found in the [Landlord's guide to right to rent checks](#).
- You are under 18 when you enter into the tenancy agreement; you will remain exempt until the landlord's next set of checks are due, even if you turn 18 during this time.
- You are not using the property as your main or only home in the UK.
- The landlord is your immediate family, such as a parent.
- You are a guest in the property, you do not pay rent to stay there and it is not your only or main home in the UK.
- The property is holiday accommodation, such as a hotel, and you will be staying there for only a short period of time.

The evidence needed of your right to be in the UK

If you are subject to a right to rent check then your landlord, (or the property agent if you are not dealing directly with your landlord), can carry out a right to rent check in one of two ways; a manual document-based check or using the Home Office online checking service.

If you arrange your accommodation before you arrive in the UK then your landlord (or property agent) will check your right to rent before you move into the property. A right to rent check cannot be carried out more than 28 days before you enter into a tenancy agreement with your landlord.

Manual check

Your landlord (or property agent) will need to take a copy of your original documents as set out in the [Landlord's guide to right to rent checks](#). Your landlord will then be required to return your

original documents to you.

If you are unable to provide your landlord with any of the acceptable documents, your landlord can make a request to the [Landlord Checking Service](#) to establish whether you have a right to rent.

Online checking service

If you fall into one of the following categories below, your landlord will be able to rely on the online service on the [Check a tenant's right to rent page](#) in order to complete an online check:

- you have a current biometric resident permit or card
- you have either settled or pre-settled status granted under the EU Settlement Scheme
- you applied for a visa using the "UK Immigration: ID Check" app to scan your identity document on your phone

You will first need to view your own status electronically and then provide your landlord with a 'share code'. Your landlord will need to enter this code along with your date of birth in order to access your right to rent profile page.

Your landlord will need to be satisfied that the image that appears in your right to rent profile page is you. This can be done in person or via video link.

As your landlord will be able to access your right to rent status in 'real time', they will not need to see a copy of your original documents unlike with the manual document-based check.

From 1 July 2021, you can evidence your right to rent in the UK as follows:

EEA / Swiss nationals	From 1 July 2021: If you have made a successful application under the EU Settlement Scheme you can prove your status by using the online checking service and providing your landlord with your share code (see above). If you made an application under the EU Settlement Scheme by 30 June 2021 and this remains pending, or have a pending appeal, you may have been issued with a Certificate of Application or an email confirming the receipt of your application. If this was issued digitally, you can provide your landlord with your share code in order for them to use the online checking service. If this was issued to you in a paper format, your landlord will need to contact the Landlord Checking Service in order to carry out your right to rent check. If you have made a late application under the EU Settlement Scheme that has been accepted and a Certificate of Application issued your rights will be protected until your application is decided. Your landlord should use the online checking service if you have been issued with a digital Certificate of Application, and the Landlord Checking Service if your Certificate of Application was issued in a paper format.
Family members of EEA / Swiss nationals	From 1 July 2021: EEA family permit and passport. Non-EEA family members of EEA citizens can provide landlords with their share code. The landlord can then conduct a right to rent check using the online checking service (see above). If you are still in receipt of a Biometric Residence card, your landlord will also be required to carry out a right to rent check using the online checking service. See Landlord's guide to right to rent checks for further details. Joining family members of EEA and Swiss nationals who hold a EEA family permit will either receive a vignette endorsement in their passport, or be issued with a digital status. If issued with a vignette, your landlord will need to complete a manual right to study check, and if issued with a digital status, your landlord will need to complete an online right to study check. Joining family members who apply for further permission under the EU Settlement Scheme once in the UK, will receive a Certificate of Application. Your right to rent with a Certificate of Application in this instance can either be met through the online process or the digital process as described above. This

	also applies to proving your right to rent pending the outcome of any application under the EU Settlement Scheme or any appeal.
Visitor EEA nationals	EEA nationals with a biometric passport are permitted to use the eGates in order to enter the UK as a visitor for up to 6 months. Those without a biometric passport, are permitted to enter the UK as a visitor for up to 6 months following admission by a Border Force Officer. In either case, you will not receive a stamp endorsed in your passport. Acceptable evidence includes a passport plus evidence of your travel to the UK. Evidence of your travel to the UK can include a boarding pass, airline ticket or another type of booking confirmation that you may have. Given that evidence of your travel to the UK may be in a digital format, an original or copy is acceptable here.
Irish citizens	Irish passport/Irish passport card. Alternatively you can produce an Irish birth or adoption certificate together with a document outlined in List A, Document Group 2 of the Landlord's guide to right to rent checks.
People with immigration permission to be in the UK	Physical documents Passport containing a valid visa, or a valid biometric residence permit (BRP). If these documents are with the Home Office as part of an ongoing immigration application (or you have a pending appeal or administrative review) then your landlord should request a right to rent check from the Landlord Checking Service. The Home Office's Right to rent document checks: user guide confirms that your visa must be in a current passport if you have a time limit on your immigration permission. The Home Office's Code of practice also states that your visa must be in a current passport if you have a time limit on your immigration permission. If your visa is in an expired passport and the landlord will not accept it, you can apply for a transfer of conditions whilst this is still available in order to have your immigration permission transferred onto a biometric residence permit (BRP). Digital immigration permission

	If you have an eVisa, you will need to prove your right to rent by using the online process as outlined above.
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	If your immigration permission is in an expired passport and you have a time limit on your immigration permission, you may be required to register for a UKVI account to prove your immigration status via the online process instead of applying for a transfer of conditions.
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If you have limited immigration permission to be in the UK

If you have limited immigration permission to be in the UK then your landlord must check your immigration permission again after 12 months, or before your immigration permission expires, whichever is later. If your right to rent expires, for example if you become an overstayer, then your landlord will report this to the Home Office. Your landlord is not required to evict you but the Home Office may take action against you.

If you sub-let your accommodation

If you sub-let your accommodation (for example during vacation periods) or you have a lodger, then you will be considered to be a landlord and will be required to carry out right to rent checks. You should discuss this with your landlord (or property agent), beforehand to make sure that your tenancy agreement allows you to sub-let your accommodation and to agree who will take responsibility for conducting these checks. This agreement should be in writing.

Can my family live with me?

Last modified: 24 October 2024

Few institutions provide housing for families. When they do, there is often high demand and short supply, both for long-term and short-term temporary housing.

Check before you arrive whether and how your institution can help you in your search for suitable housing. It takes several weeks for newly-arrived students to find suitable family housing.

It may be easier for you to initially come to the UK alone, and stay in temporary, single housing while you look for a family home. Once you have found longer-term housing for yourself and your family, your family can travel to the UK.

If you do all travel to the UK together, make sure you have enough money to cover the high costs of temporary family housing. Your institution can advise what this may be.

Requirements for students with families will vary, but, as a guide, these are the kinds of factors that you may wish to consider:

- housing made safe for children

- a location close to healthcare services, childcare provision, schools, parks/play areas, bus routes, supermarkets, car parking, parent and toddler groups, antenatal classes to support family life and reduce the risk of isolation for non-studying parents
- a quieter location, removed from undergraduate residences
- a stronger emphasis on the quantity and quality of social space
- a stronger emphasis on the quality of study space
- longer-term housing contracts
- affordability

Accommodation for students with a disability

Last modified: 24 October 2024

UK institutions are legally required not to discriminate against disabled students, and not to treat them less favourably than other students. Institutions are also required to make adjustments to services for disabled students so that they are not disadvantaged in comparison with non-disabled students. These laws apply to international students as well as to students who are UK citizens.

Because UK law is strong on disability rights, you should find your institution helpful in supporting you in your search for suitable housing. Some institutions have housing which is designed or adapted for students with specific disabilities. Your institution may also make changes to housing to support your particular disability. In some institutions it may even be possible to secure housing for the full duration of your course.

There may, however, be no suitable housing available at your institution and no housing which can be reasonably adjusted to support your needs. In this case, it is important you review the options carefully and seek your institution's support in helping you find housing in the private sector which is suitable for you.

The most important thing is to let your institution know as early as possible that you have a disability which means you have particular housing needs. Although you might declare this as part of your application for a place on a course, it is also a good idea to contact your institution's housing office and disability officer to raise and discuss the matter directly with them. In this way you are likely to receive the best service that your institution can offer you. If you do not raise it early, you may be disappointed and struggle to find anything appropriate.

International students with a disability do not have access to funding from UK authorities to support their living costs, although funding may be available from your institution to assist with direct study-related costs.

How much will student accommodation cost?

Last modified: 24 October 2024

There are many associated costs with housing, not just the rent. Try to calculate how much money you will have, and how much you will need to spend on other things, including food, rent, study

materials, bills (every day and utilities), clothes, a social life and transport. Try to get an idea of what proportion of the total money that you have, you can (or want to) use for rent.

Here are some factors to consider.

Insurance

You should have insurance to protect your belongings from theft, fire, loss or accidental damage while you are staying in the UK. In some purpose-built student housing some insurance may be included in your rent.

Websites such as www.moneysavingexpert.com/insurance/home-insurance/ offer a good overview of insurance policies for students.

Council Tax

Council tax is collected by local authorities. It is a tax on the properties in which people live. The money collected is used to provide local services, such as rubbish collections. See further information about [Council Tax on our webpage](#).

Parking

Driving a car in the UK is costly and most students get by with a combination of walking and using public transport (buses, trains) and taxis. If you do intend to use a car, be aware that parking facilities are generally limited and expensive. You will also need to ensure that your licence is valid for use in the UK; that you have appropriate insurance; and that the car is taxed and has a valid MOT. See our further information about [Driving](#).

Deposit

You will need to pay a deposit; this is a sum of money you pay to your institution/landlord at the start of the contract. It is normally equal to one month's rent but can be more, especially in London.

The institution/landlord will return the money soon after you move out, but they are entitled to keep some or all of the money if they incur expenses for which you are responsible, for instance:

- damage to the property, like broken windows
- damage to fixtures and fittings such as furniture or carpets
- the cost of cleaning the property if you have left it in a condition which means the landlord cannot re-let it without cleaning it
- re-decoration costs, for example, if you have painted a room without the landlord's permission
- the cost of replacing keys which you fail to return to the landlord
- any rent which you haven't paid
- the cost of removing from the property any rubbish you leave behind.

Depending on what it says in your contract, your institution/landlord can make additional charges, for instance:

- an extra charge for dealing with late rental payments you might have made
- the cost of replacing any missing items, for example, curtains, furniture

The institution/landlord cannot charge you for fair 'wear and tear' throughout the tenancy. 'Wear and tear' means the normal deterioration of fixtures, fittings and items provided through normal use of them.

Never pay a deposit without getting proof of your payment, especially if you pay in cash.

Protecting your deposit money

By law, private landlords and suppliers must protect your deposit money by signing up to a Tenancy Deposit Scheme. Education institutions and those in shared rooms are exempt from this requirement. The Tenancy Deposit Schemes are designed to make sure money is not unfairly deducted or kept from you at the end of your tenancy. They provide a dispute resolution service, so that if you believe your landlord has acted unfairly in keeping some or all of your deposit when you move out, you can use the service to argue that you should get your money back.

There are three schemes for lettings in England and Wales that are registered with the government for these purposes:

- [Deposit Protection Service](#)
- [My Deposits](#)
- [Tenancy Deposit Scheme](#)

For lettings in Scotland, there are also three schemes that are registered with the government for these purposes:

- [Letting Protection Service Scotland](#)
- [Safe Deposits Scotland](#)
- [My Deposits Scotland](#)

In Northern Ireland, there are two approved schemes as follows:

- [Tenancy Deposit Scheme Northern Ireland](#)
- [My Deposits Northern Ireland](#)

Your landlord must tell you which existing scheme they have signed up to. If you have not received this information, you can check directly with the schemes to see if your deposit is protected.

How to help ensure you get your full deposit back when you move out:

- when you move into a property, check for damage, uncleanliness and missing items

- report any problems to the landlord in writing, keeping copies of all correspondence and, if appropriate, taking and keeping labelled and dated photos
- keep a detailed list of contents
- ensure the property is thoroughly cleaned before you move out
- ensure you remove all your possessions
- respect the property and treat it well
- make sure you understand what the contract makes you responsible for
- ensure you do not have any rent owing at the end of your contract
- dispose of rubbish properly to minimise the risk of pest infestations, which are costly to get rid of
- report any damage to the landlord as soon as it happens – repair/replacement may be cheaper than leaving it to the landlord to put right after you have left

If you feel your deposit has been wrongfully withheld, you should seek advice from Housing Services or the students' union at your institution, the [Citizen's Advice Bureau](#), [Shelter](#), or another housing advice agency or local law centre.

Do you need a guarantor?

Many landlords require students (and particularly international students) to provide a guarantor as a condition of the housing contract. The guarantor – a third-party individual or organisation – guarantees to pay the landlord any rent which the student fails to pay and the cost of any damage for which the student is responsible and fails to pay. Landlords generally insist that a guarantor is UK-based.

Institutions rarely ask for a guarantor. Landlords for privately-rented shared houses will often not insist on you naming a guarantor, especially as for many international students, it is very difficult to identify someone who is UK-based to undertake this legal commitment. It is landlords of large-scale purpose-built housing developments in the private sector who are likely to require you to provide a guarantor. If you cannot provide one, they will probably require you to pay most, if not all of, the rent for the full contract before you move in. This is a considerable financial challenge for many students.

In a small number of cases, your institution may be able to stand as guarantor for you. If you find yourself in difficulties over this, check with your institution whether they are prepared to act in this capacity.

If you do need a guarantor and you are able to find one, it is important that your guarantor's financial liability is limited to just your personal rent/damages.

The charity Citizens Advice has some useful information on the topic of guarantorship for students in [England](#), [Wales](#) and [Scotland](#). Students in Northern Ireland can contact [Citizens Advice](#) directly for advice and helpful tips on guarantorships also.

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