

## Your guide to finding private accommodation

Joining us through Clearing or Adjustment or don't fall within our accommodation guarantee? What happens if all BU-managed accommodation options or alternative Halls in Bournemouth have been allocated? The important thing is to not panic! Here's your helpful guide to finding accommodation privately.



### Let others know you are looking for housemates

Join [www.facebook.com/BUfindahousemate](https://www.facebook.com/BUfindahousemate) and make contact with others looking for private accommodation.



### Look for vacancies and potential houses and flats

You might be looking at vacancies online and arranging your own viewings with Letting Agents. Gumtree and StudentPad are also useful sites for privately rented rooms/flats with a family, for example.

Our Accommodation Team are there to support you and can provide approved lists of landlords and student-friendly lettings agents. Email them – [accommodation@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:accommodation@bournemouth.ac.uk)

Many students choose to live in areas which are popular for our second and final year students, and often where many other first year students live in shared rented houses (Unilet). Properties will tend to be in Winton, Charminster, Ensbury Park, Springbourne, Boscombe, Wallisdown – all are well served by regular bus services to and from campuses (every 15 – 30 minutes).

It is sensible to arrange viewings on a single day and to take photographs to share, especially if the whole group cannot attend.

#### Ask the important questions:

##### Location of property

Is the property in an area convenient for your studies and social life?

Is the property within a suitable distance to local public transport and local amenities?

Would you feel sufficiently safe walking around the area during the day or in the evening?

##### External features

Does the exterior of the property appear well maintained? This would include no broken guttering, no damage to the roof e.g. missing roof tiles, no cracked window panes and solid front and back doors

Are all boundary walls in good condition e.g. no missing sections or crumbling bricks?

Are there sufficient bins for the property, including recycling?

Is the garden well maintained and clear of any rubbish?

Is the landlord/agent clear about who is responsible for the maintenance of the garden?

##### Internal features

Is there sufficient communal living space?

Do bedroom sizes meet the group's expectations?

Does the interior of the property appear well maintained? This includes no signs of damp, décor and furniture in good condition, no outstanding issues of disrepair and all the appliances and lights work (try them)

Are there enough facilities (e.g. kitchen appliances and cupboard space, bathrooms) for the number of tenants?

Is there sufficient heating (radiators etc.) throughout the property?

Do the appliances and taps work?

Is there hot water?

### Safety features

Does the landlord possess a current gas safety certificate that has been provided by a Safe Gas registered engineering within the past 12 months? You can check this at: [www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk)

Does the property have working smoke alarms?

Are plug sockets free from cracks and other damage?

Are there sufficient plug sockets in each room in the property?

Have you seen a copy of the HMO license (if property is five people or more)?

### Security features

Are all windows lockable?

Are there suitable strong locks on front and back doors, in line with regulations?

### Your landlord

Is the landlord or letting agency part of an accreditation scheme, which is run or approved by the Students' Union or local council?

Do you know who the landlord is, if it is different from the agent?

Will you receive the landlord's full contact name and address?

Do you know how to report maintenance?

### Money

Have you seen at least three properties with other landlords and compared rent levels?

Will the landlord provide details of which deposit scheme they will use to protect your money?

Do you know how much the weekly rent is? And when rent payments are due?

Is there summer rent?

Will you be on a joint or individual contract?

If on a joint contract, do you understand the impact of having joint liability? All people named on the tenancy agreement have **equal** responsibility for the terms of the contract including rent (i.e. if one person leaves the others have the responsibility to pay their share)

Do you know if there is anything else included within the rent e.g. utility bills, broadband etc?

Do you know who the utility (gas, electric, water) suppliers for the property are and how to set up your own accounts when you move in?

Are there any administration fees?

How much is the deposit?

Don't be afraid to ask lots of questions – that's what the agent/landlord is there for.

## ✓ Secure your property with a Private Landlord, Letting Agent or BU Lettings Service

Remember that you are signing a contract for your accommodation, so be sure to read the documents carefully and ask any questions. Contracts are typically 10 – 11 months and require monthly rental payments, so think about budgeting your finances over the year – can you afford the rent? You will need to confirm a guarantor who will be responsible for any rent arrears if you could not pay rent.

## ✓ Pay your deposit

Once you have confirmed you wish to go-ahead with the property you have selected, you will need to pay a deposit (typically a month's rent and some administrative costs) and the first month's rent. This could be in the region of £600–800. At this point, you should ensure your deposit is held in a secure location, such as the Tenancy Deposit Scheme. This means your money is safe and it is regulated.

## ✓ Make sure your finances are in place

You will usually receive your maintenance loan within a few days of enrolment so you can plan your finances over the remainder of the term. You will be expected to pay your rent monthly, usually on a fixed-date (i.e. 3rd day of each month). Most properties will not include bills in the rental amount, so you will need to think about these, and possibly share responsibility for payment. There may be one housemate who will act as 'lead tenant' who acts as a point of contact for the Letting Agent or Landlord and whose name will lead on bills.

Typically you can expect to pay:

- Gas & electricity – approximately £10–£20 each
- Water – approximately £3–£4 each
- TV Licence – approximately £3–£4 each
- Sewerage – approximately £8–£10 each
- Internet and phone – approximately £5 each
- Council tax – you will receive council tax exemption as a student.

Don't forget to organise contents insurance.

## ✓ Wait to receive your move in date and start thinking about what you want to take with you

Week One starts on Monday 19 September and you'll receive further updates about enrolment and social activities to get involved in within your Welcome Pack so make sure you're in Bournemouth by this date.

Don't forget the following:

- Electrical/entertainment essentials
- Study resources
- Kitchen essentials
- Bedding
- Bathroom essentials
- Clothing
- Food.

You may also want to [watch our series of accommodation videos](#) that provide helpful information and advice to those who have not secured a place in halls of residence.

...and move in!

**Remember:** If you have any questions, just give us a call on +44 (0)1202 962888.