
Accommodation

Finding private rented accommodation

Information about the options available when looking for accommodation.

Avoiding Fraud/Scams

Housing fraud is increasingly common in the UK. You must be wary of people pretending to be landlords in order to cheat tenants out of money. Please read our Renting Safely Factsheet for more information.

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/accommodation/media/docs/factsheets/renting-safely.pdf>

Personal safety

Always try to take someone with you when you go to view a property. If you have to go alone make sure someone knows where you are going, who you are meeting and when you will be back.

Never transfer money unless you are **100%** sure that the situation is authentic. If you are in any doubt, contact us for advice immediately.

Right to Rent

The UK Government has introduced new law that requires all private landlords in England to check that prospective tenants have the right to live in the UK. This will apply to everyone renting private sector accommodation so please read our factsheet for more details:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/accommodation/media/docs/factsheets/right-to-rent-students.pdf>

Booking Accommodation from abroad

You should not arrange long-term private rented accommodation from overseas if possible.

Reserve a room in a youth hostel or local guesthouse locally while you look for suitable accommodation. We would also advise not to bring your family until you have secured accommodation. The University cannot provide temporary accommodation but a list of guesthouses is available here:

<https://visitbristol.co.uk/accommodation> and a list of hostels is available here:
www.hostelbookers.com/hostels/england/bristol/

If you are interested in a room and you're liaising with a landlord, it would be worth asking if you could organise a live property tour of the property via eg whatsapp/messenger/facetime. This gives you the chance to see the accommodation before committing. If the landlord agrees then it also gives you extra assurance that it is not a scam.

If you must book accommodation from abroad then you should use one of the commercial housing providers, Bristol SU Lettings www.bristolsulettings.co.uk or an established agency, to be sure to avoid scams. A list of local agencies is available on our website <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/accommodation/media/docs/factsheets/letting-agencies.pdf> If you are considering renting from elsewhere then contact the accommodation office for advice.

Where to find rented accommodation

Bristol SU Lettings

A lettings service managed by UoB's Students' Union - this should be the first place you look. Bristol SU Lettings offers a full range of private accommodation options for individuals or groups but with no agency fees to pay. See www.bristolsulettings.co.uk

University of Bristol Bulletin Board

Staff and students with vacancies in their accommodation looking for sharers will advertise here. Alternatively you can post an advert here yourself if you're looking for other flat sharers. You will need to register with the site, preferably using a University email address. <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/accommodation/privately-rented/finding-privately-rented-accommodation/bulletin-board.html>

Facebook groups (remember to be vigilant of scams – especially if it's a public group)

*Erasmus Accommodation Bristol

www.facebook.com/groups/337165682970637/

*Student Accommodation in Bristol

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/StudentAccommodationBristol/>

*Bristol Uni Flatmate Finder

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/bristolhousemates/>

Letting Agencies

Following the Tenants Fees Act 2019, a letting agent can no longer charge fees to cover the costs of preparing the tenancy agreement, inventory, and checking references etc at the start of a private tenancy. The only permitted fees they can now charge are:

- holding fees (refundable and capped at 1 weeks rent)
- deposits (refundable and capped at 2 months rent)
- rent
- payments to change the tenancy, eg transfer to another tenant (this should be capped at £50 or reasonable costs if higher)
- payments associated with early termination of the tenancy
- payments in respect to utilities, communication services, tv license or Council Tax
- Default fee for late payment of rent and replacement of lost key/security device where required by the tenancy agreement.

For further information about permitted and prohibited fees please read our Tenants Fees Act factsheet:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/accommodation/media/docs/factsheets/tenant-fees-act.pdf>

It is a legal requirement for letting agencies to be a member of one of 2 government approved redress schemes who are there to help resolve disputes between agents and their customers. You can ask the agent who they are registered with or check their membership via the schemes' websites:

- The Property Ombudsman:
<https://www.tpos.co.uk/>
- The Property Redress Scheme:
<https://www.theprs.co.uk/Consumer>

Try to use an agency who is a member of a professional body e.g. NALS, ARLA, BALMA. A list of local agencies is available here:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/accommodation/media/docs/letting-agencies.pdf>

Large commercial providers

In Bristol there are a number of large properties built or refurbished by private developers specifically for students. They do not provide accommodation for families/children but accept singles and have limited accommodation for couples. Most require UK guarantors or expect the whole years' rent in advance. They offer tenancies of a minimum of 43 – 51 weeks.

Abodus - Studios with En-suite shower rooms, kitchen, Wi-Fi and contents insurance. On-site gym, study rooms & common room. CCTV & some on-site parking.

<https://www.abodusstudents.com/cities/bristol/>

Almero Student Mansions – Flats and studios with good facilities and well located for UoB.
<http://www.almerostudentmansions.com/properties/bristol/>

Collegiate – Central locations. Facilities include TV's in rooms, gym, cinema, games & common rooms, on-site concierge and laundry service.
<http://www.collegiate-ac.com/uk-student-accommodation/bristol>

CRM - Specialise in high end studios & small flats. Some buildings have facilities such as gyms, cinema rooms or TV rooms. The Holly Court property is within easy walking distance of the University. www.crm-students.com/student-accommodation/uk/bristol/

Dwell - Offer a range of standard and en-suite rooms in shared cluster flats as well as studio flats. <http://www.dwellstudent.co.uk/en/bristol/>

Fresh Student Living – Studios in central location. Social space and outside courtyard. Central location.
<http://freshstudentliving.co.uk/locations/bristol/>

Host – Central location with 1 and 2 bed studios, gym and cinema on site.
<https://host-students.com/locations/bristol/>

IQ – Offer a range of cluster flats and studios.
www.iqstudentaccommodation.com/bristol

Prestige – Studios and a range of extra facilities.
<https://prestigestudentliving.com/student-accommodation/bristol/dean-street-works>

Unite - Studio flats in central Bristol with Wi-Fi, common room, laundry. www.unite-students.com/student-accommodation-bristol

Urban Creation – Studios to 3 bedroom apartments available with kitchens, en suite shower rooms, double beds, desk space, TV, WIFI and contents insurance. Bills included.
<https://urban-creation.com/student-accommodation-near-bristol-university/>

Vita Student - Another new development with a range of studio flats. Widescreen TV in all studios plus gym and common rooms.
<http://www.vitastudent.com/student/locations/bristol/>

International/Postgraduate Accommodation
Hodgkin House provides single study bedrooms with shared facilities at a reasonable price. Offers flexible tenancy length from one to four years. Offers free wifi and laundry facilities. Large relaxing common rooms, small study library and garden. Located within a few minutes' walk to the University.
www.hodgkinhouse.org.uk

Other places to look

Student accommodation websites:

www.accommodationforstudents.com
www.studylets.co.uk
<https://student.spareroom.co.uk/>
<https://www.rightmove.co.uk/student-accommodation.html>
www.roomstorentbristol.co.uk (offers student and professional lets)
www.onthemarket.com/student/property/university-of-bristol/

Other accommodation websites (Be particularly aware of scams when using these sites)

www.bristol.gumtree.com
www.rightmove.co.uk
www.upmystreet.com
www.kangaroom.co.uk
www.spareroom.com
<http://www.trade-it.co.uk/property/>
www.onthemarket.com/to-rent/property/bristol/

Living with a resident landlord/landlady

These rooms are usually in family homes sharing facilities such as living room/bathroom/kitchen. This is often good value for money and bills are usually included. It is often more flexible with dates of the tenancy as well. Bristol SU Lettings www.bristolsulettings.co.uk advertise some vacancies with resident landlords and you'll find some on other accommodation websites as well.

Accreditation

Check if your property is part of the Rent with Confidence Scheme which should mean it upholds specific standards and which is overseen by Bristol City Council. If the property or landlord do not adhere to the standards you can complain to the organisation who approved them.

Also check if your landlord or agent has signed up to the Bristol Ethical Lettings Charter. This charter was created locally by a community organisation, Acorn, to help create a fair, professional and ethical private rental sector across Bristol. Participating landlords have signed up to a good practise charter, with bronze, silver and gold categories of commitments. UoB and Bristol SU support the charter.

UK Guarantor

When booking private accommodation, you will often be asked to provide the name and address of someone in the UK who will promise to pay your rent or for any damage if you are not able to. This person is known as a 'guarantor'. If you don't have one then you may be asked for the full years rent upfront.

Housinghand.co.uk

This organisation will act as a guarantor for University of Bristol students for a fee of £225 or 8 monthly payments of £30. You will need to check that your landlord will accept their guarantee though.
<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/accommodation/privately-rented/finding-privately-rented-accommodation/guarantors/>

The University of Bristol Accommodation Office runs a housing advice service for students, if you have any problems with your private rented accommodation please contact us.

Due to Coronavirus our office on campus is closed but our services are available remotely. Please contact us by email and an adviser will get back to you: accom-office@bris.ac.uk

The contents of this fact sheet are for information only. You should consult the Accommodation Office or an advice centre such as the CAB before taking any action.