

**Professor Sarah Purdy**  
**Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience)**  
Vice-Chancellor's Office  
Beacon House  
Queens Road  
Bristol BS8 1QU  
0117 42 83180  
pvc-studentexperience@bristol.ac.uk  
www.bristol.ac.uk

20 January 2021

Dear Bristol Student Accommodation Landlords

### **Supporting students to do the right thing**

COVID-19 has placed huge social, financial and wellbeing strains on individuals across the UK. Unfortunately, students have been particularly impacted by COVID-19 restrictions. Following the latest government mandated lockdown, many are facing financial hardship.

The University recognises the unprecedented challenge facing students. Together with the Bristol Students' Union, we are implementing a host of practical solutions to support students.

Our overall package of additional COVID-related support for students in University-owned residences for the 2020/21 academic year will have totalled an estimated £16.5m to the end of March. This includes a 100% rent reduction for the period 1 February to 26 March for students who have not returned to Bristol following the winter break. We have also introduced a policy to reflect the fact that it's better for some students' physical and mental health not to reside in University accommodation at this time. Students who are affected in this way are eligible for release from their tenancy penalty free.

However, students in non-University owned residences face the prospect of paying for accommodation they cannot access while sources of income, such as part-time work in the hospitality sector, have all but vanished. Please help them overcome this most difficult of times. Students are an integral part of the Bristol community and landlords can play their part in the city-wide efforts to combat COVID-19.

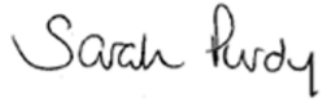
We will continue to act reasonably towards students and support them as best we can. We sincerely hope private landlords will follow suit and consider all available options at their disposal, including, wherever possible, the offer of rent holidays or reductions to student tenants; or the offer of penalty-free contract releases.

For students who have moved back to their permanent residence but not yet had the opportunity to collect their belongings, we have no doubt you will show compassion and work with those students to find a practical solution for reclaiming their possessions.

As good citizens, students want to play their part to help protect key workers and the most vulnerable residents of our city. With many students still residing at their permanent address following the winter break, the most effective way they can do this is by following government guidance and not returning to Bristol. For the safety of tenants and the wider

community, we also encourage landlords to substitute in-person house viewings with virtual viewings, at least until the lockdown period has ended.

This is an extraordinarily challenging time for students. Please help ensure they are not financially penalised for doing the right thing for their city.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Purdy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Professor Sarah Purdy**  
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience)