
Home Run – The Housing Bureau



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Helping students to find safe fairly-priced accommodation with responsible landlords

Minimum Standards for Landlords

1. Pre-Tenancy

- 1.1 **NO** fees are charged to students.
- 1.2 All tenants/licensees **must** be provided with a written agreement/licence/rent book which records the amount of rent to be paid, when it is due, what services, if any, are included, the rental period and finally any notice required to vacate the property.
- 1.3 Properties **must** be adequately equipped and furnished at the **start** of the rental period. Study bedrooms **must** contain at least a bed, desk, chair, wardrobe and drawers unit. All furnishings and furniture supplied by the landlord **must** comply with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988.
- 1.4 Property details including rent levels **must** be reported accurately on the original Property Registration Form without misrepresentation to prospective tenants.
- 1.5 The letting agreement **must** clearly state the rental and occupation arrangement for the summer period (e.g. a %retainer+ or %reduced rent+). The date that the tenants are entitled to take up occupation **must** be agreed and included in any agreement.
- 1.6 It **must** be made clear whether the owners of the property OR any other person authorised to act as owners or managing agents are managing the letting of that property.
- 1.7 All properties which landlords offer to students **must** be registered with Home Run. If a landlord or agent is suspected of offering properties to students that are not registered, Home Run may suspend advertising ALL properties owned by that landlord/agent. Landlords who offer properties that are not registered risk being suspended from Home Run.
- 1.8 All tenancy/licence agreements **must** be accompanied by a detailed inventory. The tenants should check the inventory and forward a copy along with any discrepancies within 14 days of occupation. A full and final inventory is to be agreed by the tenants and the landlord/agent within 28 days of occupation.
- 1.9 At the start of the tenancy the property **must** be fully habitable. Any major structural works **must** be completed, the property **must** be clean and in good order and any old furniture/appliances **must** be removed and disposed of correctly. Landlords **must** ensure that there is adequate time between tenancies to clean (and refurbish) the property, to make sure it is in a suitable condition for the new tenants. In cases where tenancies run back to back, the landlord/agent **must** offer a pro-rata refund of rent to the new tenants for the period they are checking, cleaning or refurbishing the property.
- 1.10 Damage deposits (if taken) **must** be protected in accordance with mandatory Tenancy Deposit Protection (if letting on an Assured Shorthold Tenancy).
- 1.11 If a holding deposit is taken (to secure the property before the tenants sign the tenancy agreement), this payment is either returned to the tenants upon signing the tenancy agreement, or used as part / full payment of the damage deposit. This **must** be clearly noted. A receipt **must** be given and it **must** be clearly stated, in writing, if the holding deposit is non-refundable.
- 1.12 Where the prospective tenants do not know each other, a joint tenancy **must** not be offered.

2. During the Tenancy

- 2.1 Repairs, once reported to a Landlord, **must** be dealt with in a timely manner. Refer to Complaints and Suspension Policy for the full repair schedule.

- 2.2 All parties **must** be included in negotiations should unforeseen work need to be carried out once the tenancy has commenced.
- 2.3 If the landlord or agent requires access to the property, they **must** give the tenants at least 24 hours notice in writing, stating the day, time and purpose of the visit, unless an emergency arises and it therefore becomes impractical to serve a notice.

3. The End of the Tenancy

- 3.1 At the end of the tenancy, or when the last tenant is leaving, the inventory is checked and a record of any discrepancies and/or damage is made. This check should be performed in the presence of the tenants wherever possible.
- 3.2 Deductions made from tenants' deposits are only made for those items which the deposit was intended to cover.
- 3.3 Where a landlord or agent has retained a proportion of the deposit to cover costs incurred, receipts and invoices for work undertaken **must** be provided to the former tenants along with a written statement detailing the deductions.

4. Other Provisions

Landlords or their Agents will ensure that:

- 4.1 All properties **must** comply with Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 and a valid CORGI certificate on headed stationery **must** be provided for each property annually to cover all gas appliances in the property. This applies to LPG (liquid petroleum gas) and natural gas appliances.
- 4.2 A valid electrical inspection report **must** be provided for each property every two years for non-resident landlords, and every five years if the landlord is a resident at the property, unless the recommendation on the report is for an earlier re-test. We will only accept reports from NICEIC, NAPIT or ELECSA (ECA) contractors on headed stationery. Any alterations to the property or the electrical installation may also require an earlier re-test.
- 4.3 If the landlord is resident at the property, a valid Council Tax bill **must** be provided annually to prove residency.
- 4.4 Smoke detectors **must** be supplied and maintained at all properties. Fire blankets and/or fire extinguishers **must** be supplied at all properties. If fire extinguishers are supplied they **must** be serviced annually.
- 4.5 Landlords whose property/properties are classified as Houses in Multiple Occupation which are required to be licenced, **must** provide Home Run with the licence or a copy of their application.
- 4.6 Landlords are responsible for keeping the exterior of the property in a good condition. All gardens, paths and paved areas shall be kept in good order, and any plants or shrubs shall be properly maintained and not allowed to obstruct pavements or public areas surrounding the property.
- 4.7 The internal condition of the property - paintwork, woodwork, flooring, kitchens and bathrooms **must** be of a good standard. Home Run reserves the right to suspend advertising a property that is in an unsatisfactory condition.
- 4.8 Full Gas or Electric Central Heating **must** be provided.

If it is brought to Home Run's attention that a landlord is failing to comply with the Minimum Standards a decision to suspend them from advertising with Home Run may be taken. For a copy of the Complaints and Suspension document please ask at the Union Advice Centre.

5. Further Recommendations

The following are recommendations and not compulsory.

- 5.1 Internal redecoration should be carried out every 3 years, external decoration every 5 years.
- 5.2 Adequate insulation should be installed to ensure maximum energy efficiency.
- 5.3 All electrical appliances provided by the landlord should be tested every two years and should carry a sticker to indicate the date of testing.