

Tenancy Agreements

The purpose of tenancy agreements are to set out the terms and conditions of both the landlord and the occupier. These will include how much rent you pay, how long you are entitled to stay in the property and who is responsible for any repairs. It is vital that you read and understand your agreement thoroughly before you sign it. If there is anything you do not understand, please seek independent advice.

When checking over your agreement check the following:

- The name and address of the landlord or landlord's agent to whom rent is payable and where repairs/issues are reported.
- Who will be responsible for the management of the property? - If you found the accommodation through an agency will they be managing the property or should you deal directly with the landlord if a problem arises?
- What type of repairs/replacements are you responsible for?
- The amount of rent and how often it is paid/the due date?
- If you have to pay a returnable deposit, how much it is and how it will be protected?
- What are the conditions of this deposit?
- What is included in the rent? If utility bills are excluded, how are they paid and how much will it cost?
- The length of the agreement and when it starts. Consider how long you need the property for and check when your course ends. Once you commit to an agreement your landlord is unlikely to release you early unless there is a replacement for you and there is a risk of additional charges.
- Is there an option to include a break-clause or end the agreement early?
- What happens at the end of the first rental period? Is there a possibility to renew?
- If you are entering an agreement with others is the tenancy offered as a joint tenancy? If it is a joint tenancy you need to be aware of the rules around this. Joint tenants are responsible for paying rent and bills as a collective and you may be pursued for fees should another tenant not pay their share.
- Any restrictions on visitors or use of facilities (e.g. telephone, kitchen, bathroom) – this is particularly aimed at those who live with their landlord.
- Are there any other terms that appear to place an unrealistic burden or financial liability upon you that you don't think are reasonable?

Some useful links for information on private renting and your rights as a tenant:

- <https://www.gov.uk/private-renting>
- <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/.../renting-from-a.../>
- <https://www.thetenantsvoice.co.uk/advice.../tenants-rights/>
- https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/private_renting

Citizens Advice is a great platform for free advice and are contactable via phone, email and web-chat: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/.../contact-us/contact-us/>