



accommodation support

Your handy guide to filling out the Tenancy Checklist form

Question	Why should you ask?
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the facts

The cost per week/per month	Divide your maintenance loan by the number of weeks for the contract. If the figure is less than the advertised weekly rent then you are going to have a shortfall and you may well need to work to supplement your income.
How long is the contract?	If your course finishes at the end of May you may want to negotiate a shorter contract period instead of paying rent until the middle of August?
Are bills included?	Bills are usually included in student accommodation. Find out how much is the fair usage amount? If it's £6 or less per housemate, then you may end up with a bill for additional utility usage at the end of the tenancy.
Do you have to pay a deposit? 1. If yes, how much? 2. Is it protected by a scheme?	Many student letting agents take a deposit but then it is deducted from your first terms rent. This is to prevent them having to put it in a tenancy deposit scheme. It also means that at the end of the tenancy, if there are any damages, it cannot be taken out of the deposit and you will be billed for them. If your landlord does take a deposit, then it must be held with one of three specified schemes within 30 days of it being taken. If it is not protected then you may be entitled to compensation.
Are there any admin fees?	Admin fees for tenants were abolished in June 2019 so you should not be expected to pay these.

the checks

Exterior

Does the front door look secure?	The landlord will be responsible for insuring items in the common parts, but you will be responsible for insuring your own belongings. Your insurance may be invalid if the front door is not secure.
Are the windows in good condition and secure?	See above.
Does the roof look in good condition?	If the roof is not in a good condition, there is a risk of leaks and damp which will impact on your living conditions and increase your energy bills.
Do the neighbouring properties look in good condition?	Have a look around the area and make sure that you will feel happy living there, that you are aware of any unsafe parts of the neighbourhood and that there are unlikely to be any cause for tension with neighbours.

Interior

Does it come furnished?	Make sure that you confirm that the property you're viewing comes furnished otherwise on moving in day you may find that the cosy furniture that sold the property on viewing day has disappeared with the previous tenant. You don't want to be unexpectedly sat on cardboard boxes until you can afford to buy a sofa.
Take a big sniff, does it smell damp?	Mould and damp are caused by excess moisture. Moisture in buildings can be caused by leaking pipes, rising damp in basements or ground floors, or rain seeping in because of damage to the roof or around window frames.
Is the decoration in good condition?	If you are promised a re-vamp over the summer before you move in, make sure you get this in writing, as sometimes it can just be used to persuade you to rent the property with no intention of carrying out the work.

Is there any sign of damage?	Your landlord cannot charge you for normal wear and tear. If there are signs of damage, make sure you take photos and notify the landlord at the beginning of the tenancy so that you do not get charged for the damage at the end of your contract.
Run the taps, is there good water pressure?	There is nothing worse than taking a shower in a dribble of water. Poor water pressure can be a sign that there is a leak elsewhere in the property.
Does the shower/bath work?	This is self-explanatory. There is nothing wrong with checking to make sure that the water supply to the property is working well.
Flush the toilet, does it drain properly?	Always worth checking both when you view a property and when you move in. Report any issues with water pressure immediately.
Can you smell fresh paint? (If yes, ask why)	You may think that the smell of fresh paint is a positive – you've got the chance to rent a newly renovated/redecorate student pad. However, it could be that the fresh paint is covering signs of damp so make sure that you ask.

safety and legal obligations

Have all the gas appliances such as boilers, cookers and heaters been checked in the last 12 months by a registered Gas Safe Engineer?	This is a legal requirement and you should be given a copy of the gas safety certificate confirming that the gas appliances have been checked. The landlord does not have to check appliances owned by tenants.
Are certificates of gas checks available to you on request?	It is a legal requirement for rental properties to have an annual gas check. Make sure the certificate is in date and take a note of when it should be renewed.
Are there stickers on the plug of each electrical appliance saying when they were last checked?	Although not a legal requirement, a good landlord will arrange for electrical appliances to be checked annually.
Are any electrical fittings loose from the wall?	This is an obvious sign of danger and poor maintenance and should give rise to cause for concern for prospective tenants.
Are there working smoke alarms?	It is a legal requirement to have a working smoke alarm on each floor of a property which is used as living space.
Are there working carbon monoxide alarms?	It is a legal requirement to have a carbon monoxide alarm in any room where solid fuel is used as a living space
If there are more than five of you living in the household is there a notice outlining the landlord/manager's contact details prominently displayed in the property? It not, ask why	Again, this is a legal requirement. You can check with the Local Authority to find out if the property is registered as an HMO (house in multiple occupation). Find out more here.