



Lodgings Registration Pack 2012-2013

Disclaimer

Please note that the information provided in this pack is for general guidance and it is not intended as legal advice or a complete or authoritative interpretation of your rights and responsibilities as a landlord under housing law.

If you require more details on your rights and responsibilities, or legal advice about letting a property it is advisable to contact a legal advisor or solicitor.

Student Housing has tried to ensure that the information in this pack is accurate and as up to date as possible, however legislation can change quickly so this cannot be guaranteed.

Please note that our Registration Criteria is subject to change at any point during the 12 month registration cycle. We will notify Landlords of any changes and we will allow a period of time for compliance before the advertising service is withdrawn.

Student Housing will not accept liability for any loss, damage or inconvenience arising as a consequence of any use of the advertising service or information in this pack, nor are we responsible for claims brought by third parties arising from the use of this service or pack.

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Dear Resident Landlord,

Thank you for requesting information about our free advertising service for Resident Landlords. In order to advertise with the University you must first register your property with us.

Since you, as a Resident Landlord live on the premises, (*a son or daughter living on the premises, is also classed as a Resident Landlord*), and students will be expected to share certain facilities with you (the Resident Landlord), we have compiled a list of criteria which must be met before we will consider registering your room(s).

For Landlords who have purchased a house with the view to renting to students including a son or daughter this would also be registered on our Lodgings list. Further information on Resident Landlords from page 7 onwards in this pack.

By insisting that all rooms meet a required standard we are able to promote them more easily to interested students.

Please read the criteria and other information included in this pack, before returning any completed Landlord Registration Form to us.

If you or a member of your family does not live on the premises then you should not use this pack. Please contact Student Housing on 023 92 84 3214 for a Landlord Registration Pack.

Data protection & Information disclosure

All information provided to Student Housing and the University of Portsmouth will be processed, held and safeguarded under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.

By signing up to the landlord registration scheme you agree that Student Housing can include your name and contact details in advertisements produced for *StudentPad*.

The University will disclose your contact details to students seeking accommodation but will not disclose your personal data to anyone else e.g. banks, referencing agencies, unless the University is under a legal duty to disclose the data. This may happen if the University is in receipt of an official request for data from a statutory authority. Statutory authorities include the Police, Fire Service, government bodies and the local authority.

It is your responsibility to inform us as soon as possible if data we hold about you requires updating. We will also provide an annual opportunity for you to update your data through our landlord registration process.

CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTANCE

ALL rooms offered must comply with the following:

- Only single study bedrooms will be accepted (the student does not share the bedroom with anyone else)
- Adequate natural light
- Adequate hanging and drawer space for clothing
- Study desk and chair must be provided
- Bedrooms must be decorated and furnished to an acceptable standard
- Rent must be charged on an inclusive basis (no extra charge for utility bills)
- Bedrooms must have secure heating - central heating is preferred
- A carbon monoxide detector with audible alarm will need to be situated in each bedroom that contains a gas appliance (ie boiler)
- **No open bar electric fires or naked flame gas fires are allowed in bedrooms**

In addition, the house ***must*** ...

- Be within a reasonable distance of the Guildhall Campus - Southsea is preferred, however properties between postcodes PO1 to PO5 are also considered.
- Be fitted with a smoke detector on each floor
- Have a good overall standard of cleanliness, decoration and furniture
- Contain a communal room for students to use in addition to their bedroom. If there is no communal room in the property, we will consider the suitability of the lodgings on an individual basis.
- Have a current (and valid) Gas Safety Certificate (Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations 1988). All gas appliances at the property have been safety tested and are included on the certificate. We require a copy of the Gas Safety Certificate for our records

Desirable:

If you supply any portable electric items to your student's bedroom e.g. bedside lamp, extension leads etc. or if they have their own kitchen, a microwave, washing machine, fridge etc these should be made subject to a Portable Appliance Test (PAT) by a qualified and competent electrician, and a certificate must be issued prior to be registered with Student Housing. **Please note this is not mandatory for resident landlords to undertake this, but it is advisable.**

Any electrical appliances and fittings provided by the owner should be regularly visually inspected for wear and tear and any defects must either be replaced or be remedied by a competent, qualified electrician at the end of every academic year. Resident Landlords will provide tenants with clear, written instructions for the safe use of all electrical appliances where applicable.

Student Housing maintains the right to refuse any room offered if it is considered unsuitable for student letting, even if the above criteria has been met.

GLOSSARY OF SOME TERMS USED

Holding deposit - *Sum of money paid to landlord to guarantee that the prospective student wishes to take up occupancy. If a holding deposit has been paid and the student does not take the room, the landlord is entitled to keep the money. By taking a holding deposit you agree to stop advertising the room to other prospective students*

Damage deposit - *Sum of money paid to landlord when moving in. It is used as a safeguard against any damage caused by the student to your property beyond normal wear and tear, and, if specified, against any unpaid rent.*

Retainers - *Some landlords will reserve a room over the summer months at a reduced rent. The retainer is a sum of money paid for holding the room prior to the student's arrival. The student may wish to store their belongings prior to moving in. The sum of money agreed is non refundable.*

Room only - *No food is offered, but the student(s) have full use of the kitchen and adequate storage, fridge/freezer space for their food.*

Half board - *Two meals a day are offered, usually breakfast and evening meal.*

Academic year – *the University year runs for 37 weeks. For 2012/2013, the term starts on Monday 24th September and ends on Friday 31st May 2013.*

Semester - *This is when the academic year is divided into two parts (October through to January and January through to May).*

Resident Landlords - *a Landlord is considered a Resident Landlord when the lodger/licensee shares some essential living accommodation with the landlord or **a member of his/her family.***

Licence - *an Assured or Assured Shorthold Tenancy agreement cannot be used if you are a Resident Landlord, the agreement will generally be a licence.*

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Please note, as a Resident Landlord, you cannot ask for a contract specifying a particular length of stay to be signed. The notice period for either party wishing to terminate the occupancy of the room is equivalent to one rental period i.e. paying weekly requires one weeks' notice, paying monthly requires one months notice.

WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

Please read the Criteria for Acceptance on page 5 of this pack, ensuring your property meets all requirements.

My accommodation meets all the criteria so what do I do next?

Return the registration checklist and declaration form to us by the methods overleaf. A Student Housing Officer will contact you to arrange an appointment to carry out an initial inspection.

How do I register my room(s)?

You can register your room(s) by one of two ways:

1. Complete either the online Registration Form accessed through *StudentPad* or alternatively, download the registration form, print it out and please fill it in by hand. These can be accessed by going to:
<http://portsmouthstudentpad.co.uk/Advertise-Lettings.asp>
2. If completing by hand, please return the **postal** Registration Form to Student Housing; together with the Gas Safety Certificate.
3. For online property registration, please log into your *StudentPad* account, click on "Property Management" and then "Add a New Property". Please follow the online form to complete your registration for your room(s).
4. You can upload a maximum of 6 photographs per room advertisement on *StudentPad*. Each photograph can be no larger in size than 200KB. To upload an image, simply click on the grey "Browse" button in the "Pictures" section and select a photograph from your own computer files, click on "Open" and the photograph will be loaded up to the registration form. Need help on how to resize your photos? Click on the blue "Pixier" link below the photo upload boxes and simply follow the instructions provided.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS***During the inspection the Officer finds a problem - can I still advertise my room?***

If we find a small problem with the accommodation - for example there is no desk in the room - then we shall continue with the inspection and record your details. However, we would possibly arrange a follow up visit to ensure the problem had been rectified. Once we are sure everything is satisfactory we will advertise your room(s) and confirm this in writing.

How will my rooms(s) be advertised?

Details of your room(s) will be published on through our *StudentPad* website so any interested student of the University of Portsmouth can view your advertisement.

The advertisement will give brief details of your accommodation, including the street name, the type of board offered, the rent, a contact telephone number and/or an email address. The house number is not given so all students must telephone you first to make an appointment. Therefore it is advisable to give a contact telephone number or an email address where you can be easily contacted or a message can be left.

I only want male students - am I allowed to state this on my advertisement?

Yes, you can make certain stipulations concerning sex or whether or not you will allow smokers. However, we will not allow any racial discrimination or any terminology, which may exclude certain groups.

Advertising your room(s)

Once your property is registered your details will be held on the *StudentPad* database, your advertisement will remain on there until **31st October 2012** from the registration date. It is **your** responsibility to log into *StudentPad* and take your advertisement down from the website by simply un-checking the "activate" box on your registration form to prevent you receiving unnecessary phone calls.

You can advertise your room(s) at any stage during the year without the need to telephone or email Student Housing. If you need to re-advertise at anytime during the 2012/13 academic year, you can simply log into your account, alter your advertisement details accordingly and activate it once again from the start date you select by checking the "activate" box at the base of your registration form.

We are unable to renew adverts upon expiry of the Gas Safety Certificate. It is **your** responsibility to ensure that you have a current Gas Safety Certificate for your property at all times and to supply Student Housing with a copy.

We will write to you before or on expiration of the certificate requesting a copy of the new Gas Safety Certificate for the property.

Will I have any more contact with the University?

During the course of the academic year, a Student Housing Officer will contact you to arrange a routine visit to your home. This will allow us to note any changes to the accommodation and also allow you to mention any problems or voice queries. If you need to talk to a Student Housing Officer at any time just call us and we can either arrange to visit you or give advice over the telephone.

The student has been with me a few weeks but things are not working out. What should I do?

Sometimes things go wrong. In the first instance, try and discuss any problems with the student. If you are unable to resolve the problem then you are entitled to give notice and ask them to leave. The notice period should be equivalent to one rental period - so if rent is paid weekly then one week's notice is acceptable, and if rent is paid monthly then one month's notice should be given.

Be careful though - if you normally collect rent weekly then that is the notice period that should be used even if on some occasions, for convenience, more than one week's rent is paid. You should give them a formal letter (signed and dated) and keep a copy just in case there is a dispute later. Similarly, the student is entitled to leave if the correct notice has been given. *Please note that in some circumstances it may be mutually agreed that no notice period is required*

My lodger refuses to move out. What should I do?

This is quite rare. You do not need to obtain an order of the Court to get possession but you should not use or threaten violence as this is a criminal offence. If you have given written notice, and the notice period has expired, and your lodger still hasn't moved out, you could consider changing the locks one day whilst they are out and then refuse to let them in again. You will need to arrange a mutually convenient time for them to return and collect their belongings.

I have heard about students who only study in Portsmouth for a few months. Is it worth offering them a room?

Some courses, especially business courses, operate on a semester basis. This means that the academic year is divided into two parts. The first semester starts in September and runs until the end of January and the second semester starts at the beginning of February and runs until the beginning of June.

Most semester students will be here for only one of these two semesters, because of this their accommodation options are limited. They are not in a position to sign a long-term tenancy agreement and the University is not able to offer them places in Halls of Residence, so Student Housing actively promote Lodgings as a good option for these students.

Do I need to ask the student to sign a contract/agreement?

No, it is not necessary but it is strongly advisable to have one outlining house rules, rent amounts etc as this will make any disagreements which may arise later. You can draw up your own agreement or ask a legal advisor to create one for you. Suitable points to cover in your own agreement might include:

- ✎ How much rent the occupier has to pay and when e.g. weekly or monthly.
- ✎ How much notice each party will give the other to end the agreement.
- ✎ What meals and services may be provided, if they are included.

Do I need to provide them with a rent book?

No, this is not a legal requirement although if your lodger is paying in cash it is advisable. Ensure that when you exchange any money you issue a receipt. The best way for rent to be paid is by standing order as this will stop rent being paid late and provides confirmation of payment.

Should I provide a key for the bedroom?

Although your lodger may request a lock and key, we would not advise it. You should reserve the right to enter the room e.g. for occasional inspection or cleaning. For safety reasons it would be inadvisable to have the student lock the door when leaving as you may need to gain access in an emergency. But care should be taken to allow your lodger their privacy.

If my lodger has a television in their room, will they need a separate licence?

No, your licence should cover all the sets in your home. Of course if you do not have a television you will have to make sure that a licence is obtained before the lodger uses their television.

We are selling our home. What should we do?

If you sell your property, or no longer wish to be advertised on *StudentPad* please deactivate your advert accordingly and let us know so that we can update our records.

CHARGES

Students are liable for paying their rent and the University **will not** accept liability under any circumstances. The cost of utilities such as gas and electricity should be included within the rent. Some costs, such as telephone charges, can be passed on to the student. Other costs, such as the use of the washing machine, should be discussed when showing a prospective student around.

The University of Portsmouth does not recommend specific rents but you may wish to use the following as a guide. When a Student Housing Officer visits, they will be able to advise on an appropriate rent level.

Type of Board	Weekly Cost
Room Only	£75-£90
Half Board	£85-£100

When a room is offered as *room only*, it is expected that students will have full use of the kitchen to cook and prepare meals for themselves and will also be given adequate storage/cupboard space.

When the room is offered as *half board*, we recommend you provide at least two meals a day, preferably breakfast and evening meal.

Deposits

Students will expect to pay some form of deposit and it is a good safeguard for you against possible damage or rent arrears. Again, clarify what the deposit can be used for, and when it will be returned, from the outset.

Some students may ask to pay a reduced rent during vacations, if they go back home, rather than full rent. This is entirely a matter of negotiation between you and the student, and it is a good idea to agree this from the outset. You do not have to reduce the rent during vacations.

What if the student fails to take the room?

To ensure that a student takes the room and doesn't cancel at the last minute, you may wish to take a holding deposit. This is different to a damage deposit as it only secures the room.

This can be an amount of your choice and will be returned to the student upon occupation. If a student decides not to take the room you are entitled to keep the money.

We would like to thank you for offering your accommodation to students of the University of Portsmouth.



Useful Contact Information

Useful Contact Details

The Student & Neighbour Liaison Service

Student Housing,
The Nuffield Centre,
St. Michael's Road,
Portsmouth
PO1 2ED

023 9284 3214

student-neighbourliaison@port.ac.uk

Portsmouth City Council

Civic Offices,
Guildhall Square,
Portsmouth
PO1 2BG

www.portsmouth.gov.uk

023 9283 4092 City Helpdesk

cityhelpdesk@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

02392 688639 Housing Standards

housing.privatesector@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

023 9284 1659 Houses in Multiple Occupation

023 9268 8369 Conditions in private-rented houses

023 9283 4092 Rubbish and Recycling

023 9268 8588 Council Tax enquiries

Portsmouth Landlord Accreditation Scheme

Accreditation Officer
Portsmouth City Council
Private Sector Housing
Civic Offices
Guildhall Walk
PO1 2AZ

023 9284 1659

las@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

www.las.portsmouth.gov.uk/Home.aspx

Useful Contact Details continued...

Utility companies

National Gas Emergency Service (National Grid)

0800 111 999 (gas emergencies/leaks)

Southern Electric

0845 744 4555 (general enquiries)

customerservice@southern-electric.co.uk

Southern Water (waste)

0845 272 0845 Account enquiries

0845 278 0845 Emergency service

Portsmouth Water (supply)

023 9249 9888 Head Office

023 9247 7999 Emergency service

Land Registry

www.landregistry.gov.uk

General Landlord Advice

Portsmouth Citizen's Advice Bureau

Community Legal Advice Centre,

1-3a London Road,

Portsmouth,

PO2 0BQ

023 9265 6300 (Advice line)

www.portsmouthcab.org.uk

LandlordLaw online

www.landlordlaw.co.uk

Portsmouth & District Landlord Association

02392 421826

www.pdpla.com

National Landlords Association

020 7840 8900

www.landlords.org.uk

Student Housing

Nuffield Centre

St Michael's Road

Portsmouth

PO1 2ED

Tel: (023) 9284 3214

Fax: (023) 9284 5900

student.housing@port.ac.uk

student-neighbourliaison@port.ac.uk

Opening hours:

Monday: 0930 – 1700

Tuesday: 0930 – 1700

Wednesday: 1000 – 1700

Thursday: 0930 – 1700

Friday: 0930 – 1600

www.port.ac.uk/accommodation