

LET'S TALK HOUSING

BEFORE YOU SIGN

Contracts are legally binding documents. Use our tips to make sure you're asking the right questions, and are clear about your rights and responsibilities before you sign up.



1. **What do you need to pay up front?** Clarify any rent and deposits required. Make sure you get receipts for any payments made!
2. **How long is the contract?** If it is 12 months is there a rent reduction over the summer period, or a break clause in the contract to end it earlier if necessary?
3. **Is it a joint contract?** If so all tenants are jointly responsible for the full cost of rent and other bills. Agree between you any individual variations in monthly rent, for example due to the size of room.
4. **Have you arranged a guarantor?** Guarantors are third parties, such as parents or guardians that agree to pay your rent if you don't pay it. Your contract may require you to provide one.
5. **Do you understand the contract?** Are the responsibilities of both tenant and landlord clearly laid out? Have any agreed amendments been made? If in doubt contact the Student Hub, who provide contract checking services.
6. **Will the landlord provide an inventory detailing the contents and condition of the property?** If not, be sure to insist on one. Make plans to check this when moving in, including taking photographs of the property and querying any inaccuracies in the inventory.
7. **Do you know how your deposit is protected?** Your landlord or letting agent must put your deposit into a government-backed tenancy deposit scheme – check you know which scheme your landlord is using.
8. **Have you thought about insurance?** Shop around for quotes to insure your possessions. Don't just go for the insurer suggested by your landlord or letting agent.
9. **Do you know where to turn with any issues or concerns?** The contract should include details of who to contact if you have any problems, and should include the landlord/letting agent's full contact details.
10. **Have you agreed living arrangements?** Have you chosen rooms? How will you arrange paying bills? Will there be a cleaning rota? What will you do if someone moves out? Try to avoid problems by discussing these issues now.