



The Advice Hub House Hunting Starter Guide

There are several different types of accommodation that you can consider. There is some guidance below about the pros and cons of each one. This is just information to guide you; as The Advice Hub is an independent service we do not promote or vouch for any of the external sites or agencies listed. You are recommended to do your own research in to any organisation you choose to take up a contract/tenancy with.

Pros & Cons

There are 3 main types of accommodation: University Halls, Private Student Accommodation, and Private Rented (either directly through a landlord or through a letting agency).

University Halls

- Run by the University;
- Secure, easy to deal with problems;
- Close to campus;
- Only other Strathclyde students as residents;
- You are allowed to pay in instalments;
- No UK-based guarantor needed;
- No family accommodation available;
- UoS has accommodation for postgraduate students only;
- Usually 50 week contracts available for PG students, 39 weeks for UG;
- Can be more expensive than private rented flats, but bills are included.

You can find more info at: www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/accommodation

Private Student Accommodation

- Similar to University Halls but run by private companies;
- You are allowed to pay in instalments with some providers;
- Usually good condition/high spec accommodation;
- Shared flats and studios available;

- No family accommodation available;
- Usually no UK-based guarantor needed;
- Usually less than 52 week contract;
- Usually more expensive than Private Rent/Uni Halls.

There are a number of companies that offer private student accommodation in Glasgow, you can find out about some of them here:

Unite - www.unitestudents.com/glasgow

The Nido Collection - www.thenidocollection.com/locations/glasgow

CRM Students - www.crm-students.com/crm-accommodation/glasgow

Fresh Student Living - www.freshstudentliving.co.uk/location/glasgow

Fortis - www.fortisstudentliving.com/accommodation/glasgow

Liberty - www.libertyliving.co.uk/student-accommodation/glasgow/liberty-park

IQ Student Living - www.igstudentaccommodation.com/search/location/Glasgow

Student Roost - www.studentroost.co.uk/locations/glasgow

Hello Student - www.hellostudent.co.uk/student-accommodation/glasgow-city

Homes for Students - <https://wearehomesforstudents.com/student-accommodation/glasgow>

Prestige - <https://prestigestudentliving.com/student-accommodation/glasgow>

Primo Property Management - <https://primopropertymanagement.co.uk/property/clyde-house/>

Search Engines for Private Student Accommodation

My Student Halls – <https://www.mystudenthalls.com/student-accommodation/glasgow/>

Accommodation For Students - <https://www.accommodationforstudents.com/>

Private Rent (Landlord or Letting Agency)

- Usually cheaper than halls;
- Maintenance may not be as regular or quick;
- UK Guarantor is needed, or paying a significant amount of money up front (often 6 months' rent in advance, though this may be negotiable);
- Letting agencies and landlords cannot charge you any other fees, just rent and deposit;
- Rent with a letting agency may be slightly higher, but they are more likely to stick rigidly to and be up to date with the rules;
- Deposit must be in a deposit scheme such as Safe Deposit Scotland; your landlord should arrange this and provide you with a reference number;
- Never give any money until you have seen the flat yourself or someone you trust has seen it;
- Don't pay in cash; bank transfers from and to a UK bank account will be more secure and traceable.

Info on Private Rent Flats

The Advice Hub is an independent, unbiased service so we cannot recommend any individual letting agency, service or website. However, we know that many students use the websites below to search for accommodation.

BEWARE – Rental scams targeting students are common, be cautious when looking at adverts online. Look to our Safety & Rights webpage for info on how to spot scams: <https://www.strathunion.com/advice/housing/problemsafetyandrights/>

Websites to Search for Flats and Rooms

City Lets - www.citylets.co.uk/flats-rent-glasgow
S1 Homes - www.s1rental.com/Flats-for-rent/Glasgow
Flatshare - www.glasgowstudent.net/services/flatshare
Spare Room - www.spareroom.co.uk
Room Go - <https://www.roomgo.co.uk/>
Right Move - <https://www.rightmove.co.uk/>
1-2 Lets - www.1-2-let.co.uk
Rooms for Let - www.roomsforlet.co.uk
Gumtree - www.gumtree.com
Letting Web - www.lettingweb.com/
West End Flats - www.westendflatsglasgow.co.uk/index.html
Glasgow West End - www.glasgowwestend.co.uk/flathunting

Guarantor Information

A lot of private rented flats require a UK-based guarantor. This is someone that signs a contract to say that if you do not pay the rent then they will be liable to do so instead. If you do not have someone you know in the UK (usually a family member, but anyone who can demonstrate that they have a regular income will usually be accepted) who is acceptable as a guarantor, you can usually alternatively make an arrangement to pay more rent up front (usually 6 months' worth, but this may be open to negotiation).

There are two companies that offer a paid guarantor service, but please be aware that the costs of this service can be high:

- Housing Hand - www.housinghand.co.uk
- UK Guarantor – www.ukguarantor.com

Estate Agents

Renting through a reputable Estate Agent or Letting Agent can be a good option. They are more likely to know and stick to the rules and regulations around private renting and can help you to look for places within your preferred area and price range. They essentially act as a middle man between you and the landlord which means that rents can be slightly higher than if you are just dealing with the landlord directly. It is illegal in Scotland for a letting agent to charge you **any kind of fee**. They can only ask for a deposit and rent. There are loads of letting/estate agents out there so a top tip is to search for reviews online first.

Social Housing

Social housing is an umbrella term referring to rental housing which may be owned and managed by local councils, by non-profit organisations, or by a combination of the two, usually with the aim of providing affordable housing. You **may** be eligible if you are on a low income, have a disability, or have children or caring responsibilities for someone who lives with you. In Glasgow, social housing is provided through housing associations and you would need to apply directly to each association to be considered. Glasgow has many housing associations such as GHA (<https://www.gha.org.uk/>), the Wheatley Group who manage a number of associations (<https://www.wheatley-group.com>), and Southside Housing Association (<https://southside-ha.org>).

Ready to Rent from NUS

The National Union of Students have produced some great resources to help students when they are looking for flats for the first time. Have a look at their Ready to Rent website for some great resources: www.readytorent.nus.org.uk

This video might also be helpful and give you some things to think about and look out for: www.readytorent.nus.org.uk/tenancy-video

Top Ten Tips for Renting Privately

1. Landlord Registration

In Scotland the majority of landlords need to be registered. You can check if your landlord/potential property is registered at www.landlordregistrationscotland.gov.uk. It is a criminal offence for a landlord not to be registered and can carry a fine of up to £50,000. Some landlords are exempt from the registration requirement, including those who live all or most of the time with their tenants in the same property.

2. HMO

In Scotland any property in which three or more unrelated people are living needs a HMO (House in Multiple Occupancy) licence. Ask any potential landlord about this licence or check with the local council as it means that the property has had things like the proper fire safety checks done so it is really important. It is a criminal offence for a landlord not to have a HMO licence and can carry a fine for them of up to £50,000.

3. Photos and Inventory

When you move into a new flat the first thing you should do is check your inventory (provided by the landlord/letting agent) and take clear, dated and detailed photos of the flat – especially any areas of disrepair or damage. You should then send a copy of these to your landlord/letting agent. This is vital as if there are any problems further down the line you now have proof to show the state of repair when you moved in.

4. Deposit Schemes

Most deposits in Scotland need to be registered in a deposit protection scheme. In Scotland there are three: My Deposits Scotland, Safe Deposits Scotland and Letting Protection Service Scotland. They are independent organisations that hold your deposit money, so if there are any problems with charges or returning the money, they will look at the case objectively. Your landlord needs to register your deposit within 30 days of you giving them the money.

5. Flatmate Drama

Living with new people can be really exciting, but it can also be frustrating. Not everyone thinks the same way about mess or cleaning. To avoid getting into big arguments later it is a good idea to talk honestly with your flatmates when you move in together (or even before!), be upfront about how long you think it is acceptable to leave dishes in the sink, etc. Maybe come up with a cleaning rota or a kitty you all put into to pay for things like washing up liquid and toilet roll.

6. Tenancy Agreements

Read your tenancy agreement! Check it carefully to understand what your responsibilities are. Find out what type of tenancy you have and if it is joint or individual. This can have a big impact on your rights if any problems occur.

7, Tenancy Types

Pre-Dec 2017 in Scotland one of the most common tenancy types for student renting is a Short Assured Tenancy (SAT). If you have this kind of tenancy because you moved into your property before December 2017 you should have also been given a Tenancy Information Pack and an AT5 form. Be aware that for a joint tenancy like the SAT all members are liable for all the rent, so if one person leaves the rest are still responsible for that person's rent too.

Post-Dec 2017 all new tenancies in most private rented properties are Private Residential Tenancies. They offer greater rights and protections to tenants and you can find out more here:

https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/advice_topics/renting_rights/renting_from_a_private_landlord/the_private_residential_tenancy

8. Get Contents Insurance

Getting proper contents insurance may seem dull, but it's a much better option than having to replace all of your belongings out of your own pocket. Make sure to check the terms and conditions of any policy you take out. Endsleigh are a popular choice for insurance for students: <https://www.endsleigh.co.uk/student/student-insurance/>

9. Trust Your Gut

If a flat seems too good to be true or you are feeling pressured to hand over large sums of money then think twice. We have lots of useful info about avoiding housing scams on the Housing Problems page of our website:

<https://www.strathunion.com/advice/housing/problemssafetyandrights/>

10. Ask for Help

The most important tip of all! If you have any housing or house hunting questions, want someone to look over your tenancy agreement, or can see a problem on the horizon then please come and speak to us! We are happy to advise on all housing issues and will do our best to point you in the right direction.

Areas in Glasgow

If you're a bit confused by the different areas in Glasgow this might help you understand where roughly different areas are.

City Centre

This area is close to the University of Strathclyde and also cafes, bars, markets and night clubs. Not a lot of private accommodation available and, because of the location, it is usually of good quality and can be expensive. Areas within the city centre include the Merchant City (G1), Charing Cross (G2), Finnieston and Woodlands (G3), Cowcaddens & St Georges Cross (G4).

East End

The University is on the edge of this area and has a lot of affordable accommodation. Dennistoun (G31 & G38) is particularly popular with Strathclyde students.

West End

This area is popular with students from all over the city. It is very lively with lots of cafes, bars, interesting food shops & boutiques. Because of the competition for accommodation, rent may be higher than elsewhere (except possibly the city centre). Areas include Hyndland & Hillhead (G12), Partick & Thornwood (G11), and Jordanhill and Anniesland (G13).

South Side

This large area to the south of the River Clyde, is made up of many different types of suburbs, most of which are pleasant and have a variety of shops, bars & eating places. Accommodation is normally a reasonable price, particularly for those with families. Areas include Pollockshields & Shawlands (G41), Govanhill & Mount Florida (G42), Pollokshaws (G43), Cathcart (G44), Giffnock (G46), Kinning Park & Ibrox (G51 & G57), and Cardonald (G52).

Searching by Postcode

The UK is divided into postal areas which are given a code.

For example:

G is the code for the city of Glasgow and the surrounding area;
G1 covers part of the city centre;
G1 1XQ covers part of a street within the city centre.

If you have the postcode of a property, you can use it to look up on Google Maps and see the area.

Council Tax

Full-Time Students

All properties are charged council tax which is calculated on an annual basis, but most full-time students are exempt from paying this. You must apply to the council you live area for exemption. Please note that council tax exemption applies to the individual, not to the whole property, so if you live with non or part-time students, there may still be council tax applied to the property as a whole. You should not be expected to contribute to this unless you have agreed this with your flatmates.

To do this you need to go onto Pegasus, go to the 'Personal' tab and then in the 'Student Status' section you will be able to confirm your student status. There are two ways to do this: if your council tax is paid to Glasgow City Council you can select to notify them electronically. If you are under another council, you can select to get a

council tax exemption letter printed and collect it from Student Business (in the McCance Building) two days later.

Some Councils will send or give you a form to be stamped by the University. Strathclyde will not stamp this letter for you. You are expected to request a council tax exemption letter and attach it to the form the council has given you.

Part-Time Students

Part-time students are eligible to pay council tax, but may be able to apply for a Council Tax Reduction based on their income. Contact us if you're not sure how to do this.

I live with other people who aren't students

If you live with another person or other people who aren't students, they will have to pay Council Tax but you are exempt on the Council Tax bill. If you live with one other person they can apply for a single person discount because you don't count on the bill and this will give them 25% off the total Council Tax amount for your property. If you own the property these rules are more complicated so please contact us to discuss your situation.

And One More Thing...

If you are unsure about something, **PLEASE ASK US!**

Strath Union Advice Hub is on Level 7 of the Union building. We have drop in service 2-4pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday and you can also make an appointment to speak to an adviser here:

www.strathclydestudentsunion.simplybook.it/v2

Outside of our opening hours these websites have some great info and may be able to answer some of your questions:

www.readytorent.nus.org.uk

www.scotland.shelter.org.uk/get_advice

www.strathunion.com/advice/housing

www.themoneycharity.org.uk/advice-information/students