

Private Rented Accommodation



Private rented accommodation

Now you have decided to study at the Arts University Bournemouth (AUB) you will need to consider where you will live. The following pages will provide you with information to help with this decision.

If you would prefer not to live in halls, or your application has been unsuccessful, this factsheet can help you with information on arranging student flat and house shares and our Accommodation Days.

We hope this is useful to you, but if you require further information or have any questions our Student Advisors can be contacted on studentadvice@aub.ac.uk or by calling +44 1202 363031/363242. More information can also be found on the accommodation pages of our website, aub.ac.uk

Finding your accommodation

AUB is located on the border between Bournemouth and Poole, about 2.5 miles from Bournemouth town centre. The most popular areas of student accommodation are Winton and Charminster, which are within easy cycling distance and are well served by the Bus for BU service.

Bournemouth has a wealth of private rented accommodation available, to suit all tastes and all price ranges. Large houses with up to 6 bedrooms are popular, but there is plenty of choice if you are interested in smaller houses, flats or bedsits.

Most houses are let fully furnished but you will need to provide your own bedding and (possibly) crockery and cutlery. Facilities such as gardens, parking and internet connection vary from property to property. You may wish to rent a room in a private home, where you have your own room and use of the kitchen to prepare your own meal. Some shared-with-landlord lodgings can also provide breakfast and evening meals. There is no need to sign a tenancy agreement for this type of accommodation, which usually requires a notice period of one month.

Finding somewhere to live, especially if you don't know the area, can seem a little daunting. To make things easier, AUB has a specialist "studentpad" accommodation website, www.aubstudentpad.co.uk. This lists properties registered by accredited landlords and you can search for properties by size, area or cost, or browse to see what's available. This site also has a message board facility, and lots of our students use this to arrange their accommodation.

You can check out messages from students advertising rooms or looking for housemates, or post a message of your own. It's a great way to get in touch with students who are also looking for a house and people to share with. There is also a facebook page 'AUB Accommodation' which works in a similar way to the message board.

Tenancy agreements

Most landlords will ask you to sign an Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreement. Tenancy agreements are legally binding documents issued by landlords or letting agents and, once signed, will tie you to a property for the duration of the agreement—usually twelve months, although this may vary from property to property. Some landlords may agree to you leaving if you find another student to take your place, but this is not guaranteed.

A group of students renting a house will usually be asked to sign one contract, which makes each student jointly and severally liable for the rent. This means that if one student leaves the others will be asked to make up the shortfall in the rent. Many landlords will ask students to provide a guarantor (usually a parent or relative).

You should always read any tenancy agreement carefully and ask if you do not understand something. If the landlord agrees to make any repairs, or makes any amendments to the agreement, you are advised to obtain written confirmation of this. The landlord should provide you with a signed copy of the tenancy agreement, setting out the terms and conditions for living in the property.

Paying the rent

You should remember that your rent is a continuing expense throughout the period of your tenancy, regardless of whether or not it is continuously occupied.

You should ensure that any agreement for the payment of rent is clear, and that you are given signed receipts for any money paid to the landlord. Any failure to pay your rent may put your tenancy at risk. Most landlords will ask for a deposit, equivalent to one month's rent, when you sign a tenancy agreement, to secure your property. By law, your landlord should place this in a Tenancy Deposit Protection Scheme and should provide you with details of the scheme used.

Furnishings and fittings

When you first move into a property you and your landlord should take an inventory of all furniture, fittings and equipment. If there is any damage evident when you move in, you should note this on the inventory to ensure you are not charged for damage you have not caused. A copy of the inventory should be retained by all parties. It can be a good idea to take photos of any existing damage when you move in.

Most landlords will insure their buildings, but it is up to you to arrange insurance for your own personal possessions. You may wish to consider security marking and noting serial numbers of any valuable items such as computer equipment. You should check with your landlord before bringing additional furniture in to the property or before moving any of the existing furniture. If you are sharing a property, all parties will be held jointly responsible for any damage. Landlords will also charge if you fail to clean the property regularly throughout the tenancy, so it's worth keeping up to date with the chores.

What to expect at an Accommodation Day

The aim of AUB Accommodation Days is to make it easy for you to arrange your accommodation for the start of your course. The days provide you with the opportunity to meet other students, form house-sharing groups and view private rented accommodation. On the day we provide lists of all our registered properties, plus details from local letting agents. Please note that all letting agents and some landlords may charge admin fees, so you should check this.

We have bus timetables available and street maps for sale, and our student advisors are on hand to help you start to mix with other students. It can be daunting to get to know new people, so we hold a quick "speed dating" session to help you meet other students. This takes place at the start of the session, so please arrive promptly. If you'd rather not take part, don't worry, there is no obligation.

There are always more properties than students, so we advise you to form a group before starting to select properties. Alternatively, you may decide to join a group that already has a house with a spare room to fill. We inform our landlords about the accommodation days and many of them will be there with details of their properties.

Things to consider

We recommend that you spend some time looking at the properties listed on the "student pad" website before the day, and bring details of any you are interested in. You will want to go out and visit properties so it's a good idea to make sure you (or someone with you) has access to a means of transport. You may also want to bring a camera to take photographs of the properties you view.

Most of our students will sign a tenancy agreement on the day, so you will need to ensure that you are able to pay a deposit to secure your property - this will usually range from about £200 to £350. Prices do, of course, vary but the average rent students paid during the past year for a room in a shared house or flat was around £85.00 per week (excluding bills). For lodgings (including bills and often meals), the figure was around £95.00 per week.

You will usually have to pay for gas, electricity and possibly water rates on top of your rent. We would advise you to allow a minimum of £15—£18 per week to cover these costs if they are not included in the rent, but this would vary depending on the size and type of property. Liability for household bills rests with the person named on that bill, so make sure any arrangement with housemates is clearly agreed by all parties. Many students set up shared accounts to pay bills, but you may also like to think about other shared costs such as laundry and cleaning products.

Any tenancy agreement cannot give a tenant less rights than they have in housing law. The law entitles tenants to “quiet enjoyment” of the property, which means that your landlord should provide reasonable notice of their wish to enter the property to carry out repairs or inspections.

Registering for an Accommodation Day

Please click on the link in your MyAUB Portal to register for an Accommodation Day:

You can book for both dates if you wish but students usually only need to attend one day. Your booking will be confirmed by email.

Accommodation Day Dates

- July 18th (9.30am - 3.30pm)
- August 15th (9.30am - 3.30pm)

With your permission, we will include your name and contact details on the list of attendees and email this to everyone who has registered to come to the same accommodation day approximately 10 days before that date.

You can then start to make contact before the day, or arrange to meet up with people you've got to know through Facebook and other social networking sites, or our “student pad” message board.

The Small Print

AUB is not able to arrange private rented accommodation on your behalf and we do not view properties listed on our “studentpad” website. Only landlords who are members of the Dorset Register of Accredited Landlords or who are accredited with The National Landlord Accreditation Scheme or The National Landlords Association are registered. However, in registering properties, or providing details at our accommodation days, we are not recommending them over any other.

Any tenancy agreement is strictly between you and your landlord, and we advise you to seek legal advice if you are uncertain about any of the terms. You should ensure that any agreement with your landlord is put in writing, and should keep copies of all correspondence and receipts.

You should not sub-let any part of your property without the written consent of your landlord. If you make use of a local letting agent please be aware that you will be charged an arrangement fee.

All full time students are exempt from Council Tax for the duration of their course of study. Exemption starts on the first day of your course, so if you move into your house before then, you should expect a bill.

When looking for accommodation, view as many properties as you can to help you make a decision. For safety reasons, never go to view a property on your own.

Remember to consider the full cost of your accommodation, including bills, contents insurance, television licence...and food!

AUB accepts no legal responsibility or liability to any party in matters of the provision of accommodation. AUB students are expected to behave in a responsible, co-operative manner and failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Any questions?

There's plenty to think about with arranging your accommodation but you can get in touch with us at any point if you have questions or queries.

Student Advice office

01202 363031/363242

Accommodation website

aubstudentpad.co.uk

Accommodation Facebook page

Accommodation@AUB