

Please note that in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, different procedures may be put in place which may affect the information in this guide. Student Welfare will however continue to update any changes as they become available.

The Scottish Government has set out a [route map](#) which provides the framework for decision-making in taking Scotland through and out of the crisis. It gives an indication of the order in which the government will carefully and gradually seek to change current restrictions. This guidance applies from the start of Phase 2 of the route map.

From 29 June 2020, all home moves are permitted and the Scottish Government has issued guidance which sets out how to do this safely. The guidance set out below offers additional guidance specific to student moves and should be considered alongside [Scottish Government guidance on moving home](#)

All home moves are permitted, provided they can be carried out safely. This includes students moving home and other home moves resulting in two households merging. <https://www.studentinformation.gov.scot/coronavirus/student-accommodation>

The Scottish Government have announced that anyone entering Scotland from abroad must go into quarantine for two weeks or face a £480 fine. This 14-day isolation period is being enforced to prevent new cases of Covid-19 being brought into our country. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-public-health-checks-at-borders/pages/overview/>

Student Welfare are working remotely to maintain up-to-date guidance on the Scottish Government emergency legislation related to supporting students in accommodation. If you have any concerns or questions, please get in touch welfare@gsa.ac.uk

Accommodation Guide

Our Student Welfare Advisers, based in Student Support Services at 30 Hill Street, can provide advice and support with your accommodation search or if you encounter any problems once you have moved in. You can contact the Student Welfare Service on welfare@gsa.ac.uk

If you are trying to find accommodation, please do not wait until the semester has started. Trying to begin your course and looking for somewhere to stay only increases anxiety. Start looking for somewhere as soon as possible, the longer you delay the more people you will be competing with. It is best to start looking in early summer for a place to move into at the start of the semester.

Connecting with other students can increase your chances, as you will then be able to search for multi-bedroom flats. Our Student Welfare Service can put you in contact with other students who are looking for accommodation via the GSA Student Contact List. Please contact welfare@gsa.ac.uk to be added to the list.

GSA Residential Student Accommodation

GSA offers residential student accommodation in the form of self-catering flats. There is limited space available in the GSA student accommodation; priority is given to students who have accepted an offer of full-time study at GSA; have no previous experience of living independently; have a recognised and declared disability or special need which will impact on accommodation requirements.

For further information including prices and how to apply, go to www.gsa.ac.uk/accommodation or contact the GSA Residence Manager, Fiona Sloan, f.sloan@gsa.ac.uk


Getting Around Glasgow



The Glasgow School of Art (GSA) is primarily located in the Centre of Glasgow, Scotland's largest city. The Garnethill campus is approximately 20 minutes' walk from Glasgow's Central and Queen Street railway stations. The nearest local railway station is Charing Cross and the nearest subway station is Cowcaddens. The School is easily accessed from all major approach roads, including the M8 motorway, and only 20 minutes by bus or taxi from Glasgow International Airport.

The GSA Campus Map can be found here:

<http://www.gsa.ac.uk/media/1667279/campus-map-september2019.pdf>

Glasgow has an extensive public transport system:

<p>Bus:</p> 	<p>First Bus Glasgow Timetables: http://www.firstgroup.com/ukbus/glasgow/</p>	<p>Buses stopping near the Garnethill campus: 19A, 6A, 3, 60/60A, 38B, 4/4A, 57, 61, 6 & 77. Student discounts are available.</p>
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<p>Subway:</p> 	<p>SPT Subway Glasgow: http://www.spt.co.uk/subway/</p>	<p>The Glasgow Subway travels in a circular route that connects parts of the West End, City Centre and Southside. Cowcaddens Underground station is a 5 minute walk from the Garnethill campus</p>
<p>Train:</p> 	<p>ScotRail: http://www.scotrail.co.uk/</p>	<p>Glasgow has a network of trains. Both Central Station and Queens Street Station are around a 20-minute walk from the Reid Building, Renfrew Street.</p>

Glasgow Postcodes

GSA's main campus is located in Garnethill (G3). Most students choose to live in the City Centre or the West End. However, appropriate and affordable accommodation can be found in the East End, Southside or North.

Please find below some selected post code areas in Glasgow, which have been popular with other GSA students.

Selected City Centre:	Selected West End:	Selected East End:
G1 Merchant City, Argyle St	G11 Partick, Thornwood	G31 Dennistoun
G2 Charing Cross	G12 Hyndland, Hillhead	Selected South Side:
G3 Finnieston, Garnethill, Woodlands	G20 North Kelvinside	G41 Pollokshields, Shawlands
G4 Cowcaddens, St Georges Cross		

The Cost of Living

Before beginning your accommodation search you should consider how much money you are able to spend. As a rough estimated guide we recommend you budget for an expenditure of at least £800 + per month for a single student. This amount does not include entertainment and can be broken down as follows:

£400 +	Rent	<i>Rent varies depending on the area and type of accommodation.</i>
£80	Bills	<i>Electricity and Gas are becoming increasingly costly. Try to minimise use, ensure you are getting the best deal, and budget appropriately.</i>
£175	Food	<i>Food is also becoming increasingly expensive.</i>
£25	Phone & broadband	<i>Please ensure you are on an appropriate and affordable tariff.</i>
£120	Miscellaneous	<i>Travel, toiletries and other housekeeping expenses.</i>

This very basic rough budget does not include any studio/workshop fees and the cost of materials, specialist equipment or field trips. Please refer to your programme's pages on the GSA website for a breakdown of costs.

The materials required for an art and design education can put significant strain on a student's finances. Budgeting and shopping wisely can help ensure you can afford the materials required for your area of work.

Before the start of the semester we recommend you write out a detailed budget by listing your expected income (Grant/Bursary, Student Loan, Parental/Family Support, wages from part-time employment) and compare it to your expected expenditure.

Please contact Student Welfare for further information and advice on budgeting or if you encounter financial difficulties during your studies: welfare@gsa.ac.uk

Student Halls and Commercial Student Halls in Glasgow

It is not advisable to secure accommodation unless you are in Glasgow, we advise that you inspect your property before entering into a contract. *(Please note that GSA has not inspected the accommodation noted below and is not recommending any individual establishment).*

Due to the coronavirus pandemic the Scottish Government has brought in new emergency legislation to support students during this uncertain time to bring Student Halls Accommodation in line with private sector accommodation notice periods. For more information on this go to the link below :

https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/advice_topics/renting_rights/your_rights_in_student_accommodation

If you live in purpose-built commercial student accommodation, and you want to end your tenancy because of the coronavirus outbreak. The amount of notice you need to give your landlord depends on when you moved into the accommodation:

Before 27 May 2020 - you need to give 7 days' notice that you are going to leave

On or after 27 May 2020 - you need to give 28 days' notice that you are going to leave.

The notice has to be in writing, and the tenancy will end the day after the notice period ends.

Halls of Residence (this list is not exhaustive)	
Glasgow School of Art	Summer lets are available. http://www.gsa.ac.uk/visit-gsa/summer-accommodation/
Firhill Court, Maryhill	https://wearehomesforstudents.com/student-accommodation/glasgow/firhill-court
Liberty Living	http://www.libertyliving.co.uk/student-accommodation/glasgow
Prime Student Living	www.primestudentliving.com
UNITE	https://www.unite-students.com/student-accommodation-glasgow
Gallery Apartments	https://wearehomesforstudents.com/student-accommodation/glasgow/gallery-apartments?utm_source=GMB-HFS&utm_medium=GMB&utm_campaign=GMB-HFS%20GMB%20Gallery%20Apartments
Kelvingrove House	https://wearehomesforstudents.com/student-accommodation/glasgow/kelvingrove-house
CRM – Claremont House	http://www.crm-students.com/crm-accommodation/glasgow/
Collegiate AC	http://www.collegiate-ac.com/uk-student-accommodation/glasgow
Fresh Student Living	www.freshstudentliving.co.uk Fresh Student Living, have a range of student accommodation at various locations around Glasgow .
True Student Living	https://www.truestudent.com/glasgow various locations around Glasgow .

Nido Boyce House	https://www.nidostudent.com/locations/glasgow/boyce-house/?gclid=EAlaIqobChMInZr6xNG54wIViZntCh1ZRgGJEAAAYASAAEgKomvD_BwE
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Short Stay Accomodation in Glasgow

Please find below details of some short-term accommodation where you can stay while undertaking your accommodation search:

Budget Options	
Glasgow Youth Hostel	7/8 Park Terrace, Glasgow, G3 6BY https://www.syha.org.uk/where-to-stay/lowlands/glasgow.aspx
Euro Hostel	318 Clyde Street, Glasgow, G1 4NR https://www.eurohostels.co.uk/glasgow?gclid=EAlaIqobChMlurPBkMHn2wIVEc-yCh2nhAsPEAAAYASAAEgIFwPD_BwE
Hostelling Scotland	Margaret McDonald House, G3 6QT https://www.hostellingscotland.org.uk/hostels/glasgow-metro/

Hotels, B&Bs and Guest Houses near GSA (Garnethill campus)			
Charing Cross Guest House 310 Renfrew Street Glasgow, G3	Willow Hotel 228 Renfrew Street Glasgow G3	The Atlantic Hotel 144 Renfrew Street Glasgow G3	McClays Guest House 264-276 Renfrew Street Glasgow, G3
Alba Lodge 232 Renfrew Street Glasgow, G3	Hampton Court Hotel 230 Renfrew Street Glasgow, G3	The Victorian House 212 Renfrew Street Glasgow, G3	Devoncove Hotel 931 Sauchiehall Street Glasgow, G3
Travel Lodge Glasgow City 5 Hill Street Glasgow	IBIS Hotel 220 West Regent Street Glasgow	DoubleTree by Hilton Glasgow Central 36 Cambridge Street Glasgow	Easy Hotel 1 Hill Street Glasgow G3 6RN

The Townhouse Hotel 21 Royal Crescent Charing Cross Glasgow G3	Argyll Guest House 973 Sauchiehall Street Glasgow G3	Lomond Hotel 6 Buckingham Terrace Kelvinbridge Glasgow G12	The Alfred Hotel 1 Alfred Terrace Kelvinbridge Glasgow G12
Merchant Lodge Hotel 52 Virginia Street City Centre Glasgow G1	airbnb accommodation -reasonable nightly/weekly/monthly rates with bills included: https://www.airbnb.co.uk/s/Glasgow--United-Kingdom		

Types of Private Rented Accommodation

There are a number of different types of accommodation and you should consider which one suits your needs:

- **Shared houses or flats:** This is usually the first option for the vast majority of students. You rent a room in a house or flat and share the lounge, bathroom, toilet and kitchen with housemates. If you're an international student, staying in shared accommodation can be a great way for you to experience Glasgow life and improve your language skills.
- **Self-contained flats:** This is the ideal accommodation for small families, couples or people who like their own space. The flat should have its own bathroom and kitchen, and a private front door. Amenities should not be shared.
- **Lodging:** This involves living in a house or flat, usually with the owner. It is not regulated, but expect house rules and check cooking arrangements. Meals may not be provided.

Accommodation will be advertised as either *furnished* or *unfurnished*. If you rent furnished accommodation you will often be expected to provide your own bed linen, towels and possibly crockery and cooking utensils.

Things to consider

Here are three things you need to consider when looking for private student accommodation in Glasgow:

- **Where are you going to live?**
It's great being close to lectures as well as nightlife, but make sure that a noisy city Centre location won't affect your quality of life. If you're not in the city Centre, try to choose somewhere that's on a direct bus or train route. Are there good facilities nearby, such as a convenience store, supermarket and launderette?
- **How much you can afford?**
All students know that managing money can be tricky, especially if you're living away from home for the first time. All of a sudden you're inundated with bills for things like rent, gas, electricity, telephone, TV license, transport, insurance and food. So how do you take care of all that and still afford to enjoy yourself? Budget, budget, budget – that's how! Get budgeting advice from our Student Welfare Advisers.
- **Who will be your housemates?**
Sharing with a group of friends can be the cheapest and easiest way to find somewhere to live. If there are a few of you house hunting together, make sure you start looking for somewhere as soon as possible. To help find a student to share with, add your name to our GSA Student Contact List by emailing welfare@gsa.ac.uk

Viewing a Property

We would advise that you inspect a property before entering into to a contract (lease). Once you find a property you are interested in the next step is to arrange a *viewing*. A viewing allows you to look at the property you will be renting and check that it suits your requirements. If you are moving into a shared flat it is also an opportunity to meet your potential flatmates. The following is a brief guide to viewing accommodation:

- Always have someone accompany you – never view a property alone.
- Confirm how much the rent is and what this covers (are bills included?).
- Ask to see the HMO licence (see info below) and the Gas Safety Certificate (this should be no more than 1 year old).
- Make sure everything works (e.g. cooker, shower, hot water, heating, smoke alarms etc). Take a note of anything which is defective and have the landlord agree in writing that these will be dealt with before you move in.
- Check the door and window locks.
- Consider the furniture and fittings – are they adequate for your needs?
- Talk to the current occupant and to neighbours.
- Is the local area safe and does it have the amenities you require (e.g. shops, doctor, pubs and restaurants)
- Consider the distance from GSA and find out about the local transport services (e.g. bus routes and nearest subway station).
- Visit the area during the day and at night. Get a feel for the place.
- **Do not hand over any money or sign any documents until you are satisfied with all aspects of the accommodation.** You should not be charged any upfront fees such as “holding fees”, “credit check fee”, “admin fee”. However, despite being against the law some agencies continue to charge these unlawful fees. The website <http://www.reclaimyourfees.com/> is a dedicated advice website with a step-by-step guide to help private tenants across Scotland reclaim these types of charges.

Where to Look

- **GSA's Student Welfare Service maintains an Accommodation List** containing details of flats / rooms that GSA students have available – contact welfare@gsa.ac.uk
- **Commercial Students Halls of Residence**
Glasgow has a good choice of commercial residential student accommodation available. If you are interested in staying in a Halls of Residence, and have been unable to secure a place at GSA Halls, please see Student halls and Commercial student halls section for the list of some of the commercial halls available.
- **Local Newspapers, Magazines and Newsagents**
The Evening Times newspaper advertises available accommodation every Tuesday, and The Herald newspaper advertises accommodation on a Wednesday. You should also look at The List magazine (issued fortnightly). Buy the papers in the morning and follow up adverts immediately.

Many newsagents (particularly on Byres Road) and supermarkets have notice boards with accommodation adverts. Have a walk around the shops in an area you are interested in living in.

- There are lots of **searchable accommodation websites** online. These are a quick way of sifting through lots of adverts. Please note: properties advertised may be rented via Letting Agents (see below) as well as Private Landlord:

www.accommodationforstudents.com	https://www.gumtree.com/property-to-rent/glasgow	www.glasgowwestend.co.uk/flat_hunting
www.rightmove.co.uk	http://student.spareroom.co.uk/accommodation/glasgow/	https://www.zoopla.co.uk/
www.s1homes.com	http://www.sspc.co.uk/	http://uk.easyroommate.com/
http://www.rentamatic.co.uk/	www.espc.co.uk	http://www.propertyquirrel.com/
www.sparerooms.co.uk	http://www.glasgowhotelsandapartments.co.uk/	www.ukpropertycentre.com

Scams

Be vigilant when looking for somewhere new to live. Students need to be aware of the potential for fraudsters to target students looking for accommodation. These scams trick people into paying an advance fee to rent a property. Typically, once money has been sent the 'landlord' becomes un-contactable leaving the potential tenant defrauded.

- **Do not send money up front** to anyone advertising online, make sure they are genuine first and view the property.
- **Beware if you are asked to wire any money via a money transfer service**, criminals can use details from the receipt to withdraw money from another location
- **Use government approved safe deposit schemes**
- **Check landlords are registered:** www.landlordregistrationscotland.gov.uk
- **Get paperwork and proof:** ask for a copy of the tenancy agreement or safety certificates to confirm that the "landlord" has a genuine legal connection with property.
- **Remember, if the offer is too good to be true, it probably is.**

More information and guidance can be found at the following websites:

<http://www.gsa.ac.uk/life/accommodation/rental-fraud>

<https://landlords.org.uk/news-campaigns/news/nla-issues-rental-fraud-warning-students>

<http://www.s1homes.com/renting-property-in-scotland/rental-scams-and-student-information/>

- **Estate Agents / Letting Agents**

Letting agents are private companies that act as go-betweens for tenants and landlords - helping tenants find accommodation to rent and collecting rent and managing the everyday running/maintenance of the property for the landlord.

All letting agents operating in Scotland must comply with the Letting Agent Code of Practice. This Code of Practice sets out the standards that letting agents must meet in managing their business and providing services to tenants and landlords. The Scottish Government has a guide for tenants with information on letting agent regulations:

www.mygov.scot/letting-agent-registration-tenants

There are advantages and disadvantages of using a letting agency – it is more likely that legal requirements (e.g. fire safety measures and HMO arrangements) are met in full and if you need something repaired in the property a letting agency should be able to sort it out promptly. However, some letting agents may try and charge additional fees such as "holding fees", "credit check fee", "admin fee" . The website <http://www.reclaimyourfees.com/> is a dedicated advice website with a step-by-step guide to help private tenants across Scotland reclaim these types of charges. It is illegal for a letting agency to require any fees before they have found you accommodation (e.g. when registering with them or for a list of available accommodation).

Under the Letting Agent Code of Practice, letting agents must have a written complaints procedure for handling complaints and they must make that available to their customers on request. If an

agent has failed to do what the Code of Practice says they're expected to do, the first step is for a landlord or a tenant to make a formal complaint to them. If the agent does not resolve the complaint within a reasonable time, then the landlord or tenant can make an application to the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing & Property Chamber). There is no fee to make an application to the Tribunal. More information on applying to the Housing and Property Chamber can be found on their website: <https://www.housingandpropertychamber.scot/>

You can search for letting agencies and flats advertised via estate agents at the following websites:

www.arla.co.uk (the Assoc. of Residential Letting Agents)	www.clydeproperty.com	www.letting-in-scotland.co.uk
http://www.cairnstateagency.com	www.lettingweb.com	www.fineholm.co.uk
http://www.lettingweb.com/	http://www.g4studentliving.co.uk/	www.1-2-let.co.uk
www.citylets.co.uk	www.merchantlettings.com/	http://www.letting-in-scotland.co.uk/
www.savills.co.uk/estate-agents/savills-glasgow.aspx	https://www.northwooduk.com/	

Leases/Tenancies & Contracts

From 1 December 2017, all new tenancies in Scotland became Private Residential Tenancies.

Any tenancy that started on or after 1 December 2017 will be a private residential tenancy. These new tenancies brought in changes and improvements to the private rented sector, including:

No more fixed terms - private residential tenancies are open ended, meaning your landlord can't ask you to leave just because you've been in the property for 6 months as they could with a short assured tenancy.

Rent increases - your rent can only be increased once every 12 months (with 3 months' notice) and if you think the proposed increase is unfair you can refer it to a rent officer.

Longer notice period - if you've lived in a property for longer than 6 months your landlord will have to give you at least 84 days' notice to leave (unless you've broken a term in the tenancy).

Simpler notices - the notice to quit process has been scrapped and replaced by a simpler notice to leave process.

Model tenancy agreement - the Scottish Government have published a model private residential tenancy that can be used by landlords to set up a tenancy.

Access for repairs - You must provide the landlord reasonable access to carry out repairs. They should give you at least 48 hours' notice, and not enter the property without your consent except in the case of an emergency.

Residents living in property - You must not sublet the property, take in a lodger or give up your tenancy to someone else unless the landlord gives you permission in writing.

This only applies to tenancies in **the private rented sector** and not to GSA halls of residence or Commercial student accommodation.

For more information on the new guidelines please visit the following websites:

Scottish Government: <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/private-residential-tenancies-tenants-guide/>

Landlords Responsibilities

The terms of any tenancy or occupancy agreement must be clear, fair and lawful.

The landlord must give the tenant details of their name and address, and the name and address of their agent, if they use one.

The accommodation must be kept wind and watertight and generally fit to live in.

The heating and water installations must be kept in proper working order.

All reported repairs must be carried out.

Tenant's Responsibilities

The terms of the legal contract (lease) with the landlord must be respected.

The tenant must use the house in a proper manner and make sure it is not damaged. The tenant is responsible for repairing any damage they or their visitors cause.

The tenant must inform the landlord if any repair are needed.

The occupier of a house or flat is responsible for taking their turn at cleaning common areas.

The tenant must pay their rent on time.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk>

Shelter Scotland: <https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/newhouserules>

Renting Scotland: <https://rentingscotland.org>

Model Private Residential Tenancy Agreement

The law requires landlords to provide their tenant(s) with all the written terms of their tenancy agreement and the correct set of notes which advise tenants of their rights and responsibilities. The Scottish Government has provided a model private residential tenancy agreement to help landlords to fulfil this duty, which can be viewed here:

<https://www.mygov.scot/tenancy-agreement-scotland/>

A tenancy is a legally binding document which should be read carefully and not signed unless you are satisfied with its conditions. **Do not sign the tenancy until you have read and understood it!** Once you have signed you are committed to rent the property for the agreed period unless this ends early by agreement between the landlord and the tenant, or as a result of breach by one party of its obligations under the Private Residential Tenancy Agreement. When you sign a tenancy, it is always a good idea to check a few things:

- how much notice do you have to give at the end of the lease if you want to leave?
- how often does the rent need to be paid (normally weekly or monthly)?
- how should the rent be paid for example via bank transfer? Make sure you have the right account details for your landlord. We recommend that you do not pay your rent in cash.
- does it state the reasons why the landlord can deduct money from the deposit?
- are the landlord's contact details included in the agreement?
- double check it is for the address that you're moving into.

Each tenant may have a separate lease. If a landlord wants one agreement for the whole flat, all the tenant's names should be listed, and everyone should sign it and be collectively responsible for the rent. We do not advise for only one of the tenants to sign the Tenancy for the flat as that tenant would be solely responsible.

If you find yourself in disagreement with your landlord over issues that you can't resolve, you can refer your issue to First-tier Tribunal for a final decision:

<https://www.housingandpropertychamber.scot>

You can also email Student Welfare (welfare@gsa.ac.uk) to request support for any accommodation problems you may encounter.

Landlord Registration

All landlords letting properties must be registered with Glasgow City Council, unless they are just letting a room in their own home. Check with www.landlordregistrationscotland.gov.uk or 0800 0270414

HMO

An HMO is a property that is shared by three or more tenants who aren't members of the same family. All properties housing three or more people who are unrelated must be licensed as a House in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) Check with Glasgow City Council Licensing Section, 45 John Street, or 0141 287 5354. Anyone with a complaint, query or enquiry about HMO can contact Glasgow City Council by telephoning 0800-0270-0414.

Further information is also available from the Council's website:

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=18374>

If properties are not registered or licensed, there is a real risk of difficulties arising during the tenancy.

Deposits

When you move into rented accommodation, most private landlords or letting agents ask for a deposit. The deposit is usually equivalent to one month's rent, but must not be more than two months' rent. **Always get a receipt when you pay your deposit.**

The deposit acts as a guarantee against:

- damage you, as a tenant, may do to the property
- cleaning bills if you have left the property in poor condition
- bills that are left unpaid, for example fuel or telephone bills
- any unpaid rent.

A deposit cannot be used to replace items that are damaged, or worn, due to normal wear and tear (e.g. worn carpets and furniture).

By law, your landlord must protect your deposit by lodging it with a **government-authorised Tenancy Deposit Scheme**. This is an independent third party authorised to hold and protect your deposit for the duration of the tenancy. Once the landlord has submitted the deposit, it is kept in a safe, designated account until the end of the tenancy and both parties have agreed to its return.

Further information about deposits, and how to ensure yours is returned to you in full, can be found on Shelter Scotland's website:

http://scotland.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/advice_topics/paying_for_a_home/deposits/about_deposits

Or Renting Scotland: <https://rentingscotland.org/>

Council Tax

Students often believe that they are not liable to pay Council Tax. This is not entirely true as students can and do receive Council Tax bills. Full-time students are eligible to claim a Council Tax exemption or discount. If you are a part-time student, you are not eligible to claim a Council Tax exemption or discount.

For council tax purposes a full-time student is someone who studies at a college or university in the UK for 21 hours or more per week for at least 24 weeks; or is under 20 years old and studies for 12 hours or more for at least 3 months.

An exemption from council tax may be awarded if you are a full-time student who lives alone or if you live with other full-time students only.

A discount from council tax may be awarded if you are a full-time student living with at least one other adult who is not a full-time student. The discount is based on the full household circumstances and the full-time student would not be held liable for Council Tax. Avoid leases that include Council Tax payment, as a full-time student you should be eligible to claim Council Tax exemption.

Please note that you are considered as a full-time student from the first day until the last day of your course. If you arrive early or remain after your course ends you may incur council tax charges which may not be eligible for student exemption or discount. Council Tax is charged on a daily basis and billed annually from 1 April to 31st March of the following year.

Please ensure you apply for your student exemption/discount. The Council Tax exception application form can be found here: <http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=17215>

As well as completing this application you must provide GSA with permission to submit your details to Glasgow City Council (GCC). You should provide this at enrolment. If you have enrolled and have not given Registry permission to submit your details to GCC, you should email registry@gsa.ac.uk

If you have any queries or doubts about whether you are liable to pay Council Tax, seek advice from our Student Welfare Advisers or the Council Tax Services at Glasgow City Council:
Tel: 0141 287 5050

Safety

No matter how attractive a flat may look, or how reasonable the rent may appear - walk away if you have any reservations about safety!

Fire Safety

- Can you exit easily if a fire breaks out in the flat or elsewhere in the building? (Beware of attic flats or basement flats that are fitted with permanent bars or grills).
- Does the flat have a fire blanket, multipurpose fire extinguisher and at least one smoke detector?
- Are those items all serviced and in full working order?
- Does the flat have at least one working **smoke alarm**? Remember to test it regularly.

Gas Safety

All gas appliances must be properly and professionally maintained by a Corgi registered installer. This is a legal requirement. If the landlord is in breach of safety regulations, he may face criminal prosecution.

- Have the appliances been professionally installed?
- Have the appliances been professionally serviced in the last 12 months?

Improperly installed or inadequately maintained gas appliances may produce Carbon Monoxide. It is a colourless, odourless and potentially fatal gas. Around 40 people are killed every year as a direct result of faulty gas appliances. It is therefore highly advisable to get a **carbon monoxide detector** (the battery operated ones are preferable to the cheaper "dot" detectors).

Electrical Safety

All electrical wiring should be checked by a qualified electrician to ensure that it is safe. Ask the landlord for proof if you are uncertain. Avoid flats where the wiring appears old and damaged or where there are signs of burning or scorching around sockets or switches. All cables running to appliances must have a correctly fused plug and must be intact and in good working condition with no damage to the plastic insulation.

Personal Safety

- Are the doors to your flat secure and fitted with effective locks?
- Is the street properly lit at night?
- Is there an intercom system if the flat is in a block with a communal door?
- Are all the windows easily secured from the inside?
- Can belongings be arranged so nothing valuable is easily overlooked from the street?

Other Important Things To Consider

UK Guarantor

International/EU students can be asked to pay a larger proportion of the rent up-front unless you can provide a UK guarantor. Sometimes landlords will ask you for a UK guarantor when you rent a property in the UK. * A guarantor would usually need to be a home owner with steady long-term employment; this is to satisfy the requirements of a good credit score and usually required to live in the UK.

If you do not have a UK resident guarantor, you may still be able to rent a property but the landlord will probably require from you up to six months' rent to the full cost of the tenancy, in advance. This may be open to negotiation.

For example, most student halls will accept full payment of your rent instead of a UK guarantor. When negotiating for a tenancy it is advisable to tell the landlord if you do not have a UK guarantor at an early stage as this will save time for both parties.

*A guarantor is an individual, often a close relative, who undertakes to assume the financial liabilities of the tenant including paying the rent in the event that they fail to do so. Where a guarantor enters into an agreement, he or she normally agrees to meet the full obligations under the tenancy agreement on the tenant's behalf. This may include rent arrears, damage to the property, or other liabilities and obligations arising from the tenant's failure to comply with the lease covenants. Please note that under the "joint and several liability" clause which is standard in most tenancy agreements, a guarantor, like a tenant, is liable for the whole property not just the tenant's room. The guarantor is contractually bound to accept these legal liabilities of the tenant and will be sued if they do not comply.

There are private companies which provide a guarantor service to EU/International students for a fee. Please be aware that the costs of this service can be high.

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

(Please note that Student Welfare is signposting these companies, not endorsing them and GSA cannot act as a guarantor for students or pay for this service).

Insurance

While the landlord will have insured the building and his possessions within it, you are strongly recommended to insure your personal belongings against the risk of theft, fire etc. Look for an insurance policy which will also cover you against claims from the landlord or neighbours for damage e.g. from water leaks or broken furniture that you may cause inadvertently. It may be that your parents' insurance policy could be extended to provide the cover you require.

Fuel Bills

If the cost of gas or electricity is not included in your rent, the landlord may ask you to pay direct to the companies concerned. Normally one person within a flat is made responsible so there should be a firm arrangement for collecting the money from everyone else. Read the meters with your landlord at the beginning and end of your tenancy and inform the gas and electricity companies. Some students record their meter readings by taking a picture of the readings on their phone. If a coin meter is installed in the flat or your landlord charges you for fuel, there is a limit to the amount that can be charged.

TV Licence

If you have a joint tenancy in a self-contained flat/house, you only need one TV licence for the flat irrespective of the number of television sets. If you have separate agreements with the landlord, there must be one licence for each set. If the landlord provides the TV, ask to see the TV licence. It is your responsibility as the user to ensure your TV is licensed. You may be fined for not doing so.

Noise

Have respect for your neighbours by limiting noise. It is a criminal offence to create excessive noise (by loud music, parties, vehicles etc.) which interferes with other peoples' quality of life. Where noise is caused by tenants or their visitors, the landlord will generally have authority under the terms of the tenancy to deal with the problem, with the possibility of eviction as a last resort.

Phone and Broadband Connection

You should ask your landlord about your phone line and which company provides your service. If the line is working you will need to inform them that you are the new tenant; if the line is disconnected, you will need to the service provider and arrange for your line to be re-connected (the service provider will explain how much this costs). The service provider that provides your phone line can also provide you with internet access, although you may wish to search on the internet for the best deals.

Utility and phone companies will bill you for the services used, if you do not pay all your bills your landlord is entitled to take money from your deposit to pay them.

Useful Contacts

GSA Student Welfare	0141 566 1138 / 353 4485 welfare@gsa.ac.uk
Citizens Advice	0808 800 9060 http://www.cas.org.uk/
Gas Emergency Line	0800 111 999
Glasgow City Council	0141 287 2000 http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/
Nightline	0141 552 2555 www.scnightline.com You can now text Nightline on 07982 107 920!

Police Non-Emergency (phone 999 in an emergency)	101
Shelter (Housing Aid)	0808 800 4444 http://scotland.shelter.org.uk/
Strathclyde Law Clinic	0141 548 5995 www.lawclinic.org.uk
TV Licensing	0844 800 6790 www.tvlicensing.co.uk
Samaritans	Call 116 123

Please note that all information provided on this document is for guidance only. GSA has no direct control over accommodation that is rented directly from a landlord or agent. GSA has not inspected accommodation and is not recommending any individual establishments mentioned in this document.