

SAFE RENTING CHECKLIST



Before you hand over any money, make sure you take these steps:

- ☐ **Verify landlord/agent details**
Check reviews, make sure they are legit!
- ☐ **Double check the listing**
Compare to other listings, reverse image search photos.
- ☐ **View the property in person**
Remember this should not require an upfront payment.
- ☐ **Pay using legitimate payment methods**
Use a government approved tenancy deposit scheme. This is a legal requirement.
- ☐ **Celebrate!**
Get ready to make the new place your own.

Stay vigilant, verify the details and never rush into paying money.

REPORTING

Report Fraud

Contact your bank immediately if you think you have been a victim of fraud. Tell the police using the Report Fraud service via reportfraud.police.uk or by calling **0300 123 2040**.

159

If you receive a call or message asking you to hand over money or personal information then **stop, hang up and call 159** to be connected directly to your bank.

7726

Report spam or scam texts directly to your mobile phone provider free of charge by **forwarding the text message to 7726**.

Stop! Think Fraud

Visit stophinkfraud.campaign.gov.uk where you can get more advice on how to protect yourself against fraud.

Scan the QR code to learn about different types of fraud.



THE LITTLE LEAFLET OF RENTAL FRAUD

FOR STUDENTS



**SOUTH WEST
ROCU**

Regional Organised Crime Unit



WHAT IS RENTAL FRAUD?

Looking for your next student home can be exciting, but it can also feel overwhelming - leaving you open to being targeted by criminals. This guide will help you recognise the warning signs and protect yourself from fraud.

Some individuals pose as landlords, create fake property listings and use pressure tactics to obtain money for housing that does not exist.

They may ask you for upfront fees for viewings or deposits, and they may ask you to pay via an unprotected method, such as gift cards or cryptocurrencies. These properties are often advertised on social media sites and online marketplaces.



RECOVERY FRAUD & REPEAT TARGETING

Victims of fraud may have their details shared or sold to other fraudsters. Once the fraud ends, criminals may make contact claiming to help recover the stolen money for a fee.



SPOTTING THE RED FLAGS



Too Good To Be True:

The rent is significantly below market price, especially for a luxury property or in a prime location.



Unusual Imagery:

They are of poor quality, has limited photos, uses AI-imagery or they have watermarks on the images.



Pressure Tactics:

They are rushing you or demanding a payment.



No Viewing Offered:

They refuse or delay in-person viewings.



Unusual Payment Methods:

These include cash, cryptocurrency, gift cards, and online or international money services.



Requests to Pay Cash Upfront:

Asking for a deposit to secure a viewing of the property.

SOMETHING DOESN'T SEEM RIGHT... WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Don't rush, even if pressured by the landlord! If anything feels off, take a moment and talk to someone you trust.



Already Paid? Contact your bank as soon as possible if you've transferred money. You can do this quickly by dialling 159.



Make a report. If you feel threatened or are in immediate danger, call 999. Otherwise, use the national fraud and cybercrime reporting service, Report Fraud.



Seek support. University housing advisors and your student union can check contracts and provide you with advice.

You are not on your own.

Over 43% of all crime reported is fraud. Many students experience this fraud type each year and if you need it, there is further support available.