

## Things to consider while viewing a property...

### 1 General property condition

- Are there signs of dampness/condensation, such as mould on the walls or carpets?
- What heating/hot water system does the property use?
- Where is the meter?
- Are the windows double glazed?
- Are the rooms equally sized?
- Is there enough toilet/ shower facilities?
- Have you been shown the Energy Performance Certificate?

### 2 Furniture & fittings

- What furniture is provided/ not provided?
- What appliances are provided/ not provided?
- What condition is the furniture in?
- Is there enough storage space?
- Is there a washing machine/ tumble dryer/dishwasher?
- What condition are the curtains/carpets in?
- Is there an extractor fan in the bathroom?

### 3 Safety

- Is the wiring safe?  
(Check for any fittings loose from the wall)
- Is there sufficient ventilation? Check especially near any gas appliances.
- Are there smoke alarms on different floors?
- Are there any fire extinguishers/blankets?
- How secure are locks on doors/windows?

### 4 Outside space

- Are there any communal areas, such as an entrance hall or stairwell? If so, who is responsible for cleaning them?
- Is there a back yard or garden? If so, who is responsible for it?
- Who else has access to communal/outside areas? If so are those areas monitored or secured?
- Is the outside area appropriate for storing bicycles?

### 5 The landlord

- Is the property managed by a letting agent or landlord?
- Are you able to meet the landlord?
  - Would you feel able to approach them if anything went wrong, for example if the property needed repairs done or if you were going to be late with your rent?
  - Are they easy to contact?
- What is the opinion/experience of the current tenants?

### 6 Location & transport

- How far is it to your university?
- How far away is the nearest supermarket?
- Is the property on a bus or metro route?
- Do you need a permit to park outside your accommodation?
- What kind of area is it in, student or residential?
- Is it noisy at night? E.g. Located above a bar or restaurant.

### 7 Cost

- How much is the rent?
- How does it compare to other areas?
- Will you have to pay a deposit?
- Is payment for rent needed in advance?
- Is a holding, admin or agent fee required?
- What are the renewal fees?
- Are the fees refundable or not?
- How are utilities paid?
- What's the average monthly heating bill?

### 8 Can I provide?

- A deposit
- Holding fee/admin fee
- Right to rent documents
- A guarantor based in the UK



## Things to consider before signing a contract...

### 1 Tenancy Agreement - questions to ask

- What do your fees constitute and can you provide a breakdown?
- Can I have a copy of the tenancy agreement to take away before I sign the contract?
- Do I have to provide a guarantor and can they just guarantee my 'share' of the rent?
- Do you take a deposit? Which scheme protects it?
- Do I understand it all?

### 2 Management and status of the property - questions to ask

- Is your landlord/agent a member of a professional body/landlords association or is the property accredited?
- Is your agent registered with an independent redress scheme? Which one? (agents only)
- Is the Landlord based in the UK? Is the landlord local?
- Is the agent operating on a Tenant find (Let Only) basis or will they be managing the property?
- Is the property subject to a mortgage and does the mortgage acknowledge the tenants as authorised tenants?
- What measures do they offer if we are unable to move in on time or have to move out for any reason?
- Is the property a Licensable House of Multiple Occupation (HMO)?
- Am I renting from the landlord or am I sub-letting from another tenant?

### 3 Safety and condition of the property - questions to ask

- Has a Gas Safety Certificate/ Energy Performance Certificate been given?
- Is there an Electrical Safety Certificate for this property?
- Is there a Burglar Alarm? Has the property ever been burgled?
- Is there any history of damp, mould or condensation?
- Can I have a copy of the inventory before I sign the contract?
- Are any repairs or cosmetic improvements required on the property? When are you planning on carrying out them out?
- Are you happy for us to talk to the previous tenants of this property?

**Do you understand what you are agreeing to?  
If not please seek additional advice before you sign!**

**For further questions book an appointment with the Student Advice Centre for impartial housing advice.**

Telephone: 0191 239 3979  
Ground Floor, Newcastle University Students' Union  
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