



# TOP-TIPS FOR “TOP DIGS\*”

Whether you will be looking for a new place to stay in the coming year or you're happy where you are, here are a few suggestions for homely happiness. Not sure what you'll be doing? We've got you covered too.

- 1.** When you find somewhere that you like the look of on-line, have a look at the actual property before you sign the contract.



This is to check that:

- a. the property is as described and has the features promised
- b. you feel ok about the street / area / facilities
- c. it really exists and isn't a fake to swindle your money (it's rare, but it has happened)

The exception is if you apply to **Campus Living Villages** direct online or use a landlord registered with **Manchester Student Homes** (not from the message boards) – you still won't know what the area is like but you will know it is a real property.

- 2.** Get someone who knows what they are doing to read your contract, or at least do some research yourself – here are two handy guides on what to look for **(1)** and **(2)**.



Do remember that the contract is binding for the full period even if you leave University or aren't happy with the accommodation (although sometimes you might get a 'cooling off period' after you sign the contract, so ask about that if you need to). Even if you become ill, some landlords won't end the contract for **any reason** unless they legally have to, so make sure you and your guarantors know what you are signing up to.

- 3.** It is always a good idea to get your accommodation arranged in good time, because the housing market does get pretty full around August – November. But, don't panic! In particular, never let the fear of 'losing' a property you like, or being left without housing, cause you to rush into:



- a. moving in with people you are not sure about
- b. accepting a property that's too far to commute or costs more than you can afford or is unsafe or unsuitable in some other way
- c. signing a contract without checking it

- 4.** If you have a problem once you are in your 'home sweet home', start by contacting your landlord/agent. Be polite, be clear about what the problem is and what you think will be reasonable action to solve it, and a reasonable timeframe too. If a conversation doesn't produce a fast result, follow up in writing (alternatively use the formal complaints process if they have one). If you still don't get anywhere, or the problem *\*is\** your landlord or agent, contact us to see if we can offer further advice.



- 5.** Make sure you have an emergency contact for your accommodation provider handy in your phone and in writing in case of e.g. a burst pipe flood. If the problem is something dangerous like faulty electrical wiring or a gas leak, **DO NOT WAIT!** Act immediately – if you aren't sure what to do you will usually find emergency numbers for e.g. power companies on-line.



- 6.** If you can't find a place to live, someone to live with, you're having problems with your landlord or your house or anything else accommodation-related, you can contact us on **askus-accommodation@salford.ac.uk**. The University does not directly manage any accommodation and we can't always resolve your issue. But we may be able to help in different ways, and if we can't help, we might know who can. We also run Find-A-Home events at different times of year to make things easier.



\*for anyone who doesn't know – a slang word for where you stay, especially used of rented accommodation.

