

FINDING ACCOMMODATION

It can be daunting starting your search for accommodation in London and the rental market can move quickly.

Whether you are looking for dedicated student halls, private rentals or a house share with other UCO students, this help sheet is intended to offer some tips for things to think about and places to start your search.

VIEWINGS



- Try to organise your viewings for accommodation by area to help save on costs, and to make it easier to compare properties within the area.
- Keep an eye out for transport links, convenience stores and other places that are important for you to have near your accommodation.
- Look out for any mould, damage and exposed wires. Does the property look secure (locks, secured windows etc)? What furniture does the accommodation come with? Is this in good condition?
- Don't feel pressure to make a decision on the spot and take someone with you for a second opinion if you want one.

TOP TIPS



● AUTHENTICITY:

Check the accreditations and memberships that your prospective landlord or letting agent holds. Ones to look out for include:

- ARLA (Association of Residential Letting Agents)
- NALS (National Approved Letting Scheme)
- RICS (Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors)
- TPO (The Property Ombudsman)

You can also check them against the Mayor's Rogue Landlord and Agent Checker to ensure they haven't been previously fined or prosecuted for housing law offences.

● DOUBLE CHECK:

Prior to signing any contracts, make sure that you understand the full terms and conditions of the contract. Enquire and ask questions if there is anything that you are unsure of, and make sure the contract reflects what you and the letting agent have spoken about. Always get a family member or friend to double check the contract before signing anything.

● BUDGET:

You like the property but does it fall within your budget? Are there any additional costs you need to consider? It might be helpful to create a draft budget at this stage which includes rent, water, gas, electricity, broadband, contents insurance and TV Licence.

These are all the basic essential costs associated with running a home. If you are sharing accommodation with non-students you may also be liable to pay council tax.

● REMAINING OBJECTIVE:

Remain objective throughout the process of finding the right accommodation for yourself. If you're sharing with others, ask yourself whether you could live with those people. Good friends may not always make the best of flatmates!

STARTING YOUR SEARCH

The following sites all offer private student accommodation and are a good place to start your search.

Please note that the UCO is not affiliated with these sites and has not vetted the properties listed. You should always do your research before signing any contracts or paying a deposit.

- [Yugo.com](https://www.yugo.com)
- [AA4S.co.uk](https://www.aa4s.co.uk)
- [Scape.com](https://www.scape.com)
- [Crm-students.com](https://www.crm-students.com)

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY

Landlords must treat you equally and must make reasonable adjustments to accommodation. It is unlawful for them to treat you less favourably, such as by requesting higher deposits and/or rent.

- [Disabled Students Helpline](#)
- [Equality Advisory Service](#)
- [Disability Rights UK](#)

GETTING AROUND



If you are looking for accommodation with good transport connections to the UCO check out the [TFL Journey Planner](#) tool.

Our nearest stations are:

- Borough (Northern Line) – 2 minute walk
- London Bridge (Jubilee, Northern & overground) – 10 minute walk
- Elephant & Castle (Bakerloo, Northern & overground) – 10 minute walk

Many of our students choose to live close to the UCO and travel by foot or bike to save on travel costs, but if you need to use public transport there are still lots of ways to make savings.



Apply for a discounted Oyster card by visiting tfl.gov.uk/student



Use apps such as [Citymapper](#) to help plan your journey



Hire a bike from £2 per day from tfl.gov.uk/cycling



Apply for a 16–25 railcard for discounted journeys

JOIN OUR FACEBOOK GROUP

To find other students looking for accommodation, a housemate or a room to rent, or just to seek accommodation advice from UCO students who have been through the process, join the [UCO Accommodation](#) group on Facebook.