

## Accommodation and Housing

The cost of living in Bolton is generally lower than most other University cities/towns in Britain, and you will find that there is plenty of student accommodation available either owned and run by the University or by private landlords.

### University Accommodation

The two Halls of Residence (Orlando and Hollins) are managed by Student and Residential Services. Both are self-catering and in total offer 700 single study bedrooms.

### Please Note:

You are required to provide your own bedding, towels, cutlery, crockery and cooking utensils in the Halls of Residence. You will find fully furnished kitchens in all the flats. There is also the opportunity to purchase a complete bedding pack at a small cost of £21. The pack contains one of each of the following: pillow, pillowcase, duvet, duvet cover and sheet.

Students must sign a contract prior to arrival. This is a legally binding document, which means students have a legal obligation to pay for the full contractual period (usually the academic year).

**If you are unsure or have failed to fully understand the terms of the contract then you are strongly advised to speak to the staff in Student Services on Ext 3481/3484 or the Students' Union before signing the contract. Once you have signed it, it is not possible to terminate it simply because you do not like the Halls of Residence, or you have found somewhere else to live within the private sector. All students are bound to their contracts even if they decide to leave.**

### What is the cost of accommodation?

The cost of accommodation for the 2008/2009 academic year will be £2,356 (£62 per week). This covers a period of 38 weeks and includes the Easter and Christmas vacations. It includes costs of heating, lighting and hot water, **but not a TV licence.**

### Methods of Payment:

There are three methods of payment, a one off payment for the full amount, termly instalments and direct debit. You will be sent further details with your offer of accommodation.

For further details on the University accommodation contracts and payment methods please contact the Student Centre.

## Private Accommodation

This option is as popular as the Halls of Residence. If you choose this type of accommodation because your dependants will be joining you, or you simply prefer to rent privately, then a private renting list can be obtained from Student Services with full listings of available properties and rooms. The list is updated every month.

Student Services do not inspect or specifically endorse any of the properties advertised. If you need to arrange temporary accommodation then you should contact Student Services.

**Please note:** University accommodation may not be used as a temporary measure until you arrange your own housing.

Rents average between £50 - £60 per week and rents of over £55 **may** be inclusive of utility bills - always check what is included in the rent and what you will have to pay in addition to your rent **before** you sign a contract. A deposit of £150 - £250 is normally required at the time of signing, although some landlords may require the equivalent of two months rent.

Before signing any tenancy agreement make sure you ask the landlord/agent for a copy of their gas certificate and that the tenancy agreement covers you in case of problems with the electrics in the house.

For further information on the do's and don'ts of renting private accommodation see the Housing Section of the Advice Unit Web Site.

## Tenancy Deposit scheme

If you are asked to pay a deposit for private accommodation, your landlord must 'protect it' by using one of the Tenancy Deposit Schemes (TDS) set up by the UK Government. These Schemes have been set up to stop landlords illegally withholding deposits at the end of the contract, and it will also resolve disputes about the return of deposits if this should arise.

Once you have paid your deposit, your landlord has 14 days to lodge the money with one of the TDS. Before the 14 days have passed your landlord **must** provide you with the following information:

- The contact details of the TDS they are using
- The landlord/agent contact details
- How to apply for the release of your deposit at the end of your contract
- Information explaining the purpose of the deposit
- What to do in case of a dispute at the end of your tenancy agreement

If your landlord fails to give you the above information, you can apply to the County Court; they can order the landlord or agent to either repay the deposit to you or to lodge the money in a TDS immediately, if they fail to do this they can be ordered to pay you three times the amount of the deposit you paid. For further information please contact the Students' Union Advice Unit.

## **Useful Contacts**

Student Services

Chancellor's Mall

Tel: 01204 900600/528851 Ext: 3733

A Private Accommodation List is available from Student Services which is updated every month.

Housing Advice Services

The Housing Options Centre

Ground Floor

Silverwell Lane

Bolton

BL1 1QN

Tel: 01204 335 900

## **Council Tax**

Council Tax is a property tax that is collected by the local Council (Bolton Metro). It is based on the value of the property you are living in, including the number and nature of its occupants. Students are not automatically exempt from paying Council Tax and international students are liable or disregarded for Council Tax in the same way as home students. You will need to get a Council Tax Exemption Certificate from Student Services once you have enrolled. Halls of Residence students are exempt from Council Tax.

## **Living With Non-Students**

Since the April 1st 2004 the Government has changed the rules relating to full time students who live with other non-students as part of the household. The changes now mean that full time students will not be pursued for non-payment of the household Council Tax and, therefore, solely the non-student members of the household should pay this tax.

If you think these new changes will affect you, then you should seek further clarification and assistance from the Advice Unit as soon as possible.

## **Council Tax Exemption Certificate (not applicable to Halls of Residence)**

You **must** obtain this if you live in private rented accommodation. After enrolment you should visit Student Services who will be able to produce a Council Tax Exemption Certificate for you.

If you live with your husband/wife who are classed as your dependants and:

- She/he is not a British Citizen
- Is prevented from working OR claiming public funds such as welfare benefits,

then your house or flat should be exempt from Council Tax. Therefore, if your spouse has the right to work in the UK but not to claim any benefits, then you should be exempted.

Contact the Advice Unit if you experience any difficulties with Bolton Metro.

Bolton Metro will need to see evidence of your marriage, such as a Marriage Certificate and your spouse's passport in order to process their exemption. Contact the Advice Unit as soon as possible if you are unsure about what to do.

**As the regulations relating to this tax are complicated, you are strongly advised to contact the Advice Unit if you have any queries or if you receive any correspondence from Bolton Metro Council Tax Section.**

## **Insurances**

Insuring your possessions is especially important if you rent privately. We advise against bringing or purchasing high cost items such as computers, music systems, and jewellery or to insure these items against theft and accidental damage.

Types of insurance vary as do their costs, and it is a good idea to shop around for a few quotations before making a final decision as to the best policy for you.

There are numerous Insurance Companies who offer competitive deals to students and you can find information available from the websites.

Contact the Advice Unit if you have any queries or require advice on insurance policies.

## **Television Licence**

You must obtain a Television Licence if you have a television set. Failure to do so can lead to possible court action and a fine of up to £1000. Detector vans locate televisions at addresses that do not have licenses.

Licences can be bought at Post Offices, and the nearest Post Office to the University of Bolton is the main Post Office in the town centre on Deansgate.

A licence for a colour television set is £139.50 for one year, and a black and white television licence costs £47.00 for one year. If you cannot pay in one lump sum there are flexible payment options available such as monthly or quarterly payments. Some students may be entitled to a three-month refund against the cost of a licence.

If you need further details contact the Students' Union, any Post Office or have a look at their website at [www.tvlicensing.co.uk](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk).

