

CARDIFF COUNTY COUNCIL

CHECKLIST FOR SELECTING A RENTED PROPERTY

We receive lots of complaints from students about their accommodation. One way of preventing problems is to make sure you rent the right property in the first place. Here is a checklist that may help you to avoid the more obvious pitfalls.

Score each element of the property from 1 to 5 [1 = very poor, 5 = very good]

<u>GENERAL APPEARANCE</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Look at the outside of the property - any obvious problems, e.g. missing or damaged roof tiles, rainwater gutters or down pipes, cracks in walls, missing render. These can lead to damp problems.• Does the property appear to be generally well maintained, both inside and out?• If there are any obvious repair items, will the landlord carry out the work before you move in?• Is the property clean? If not, will the landlord clean it before you move in?• Is there any rubbish left in the property? Will the landlord remove it before you move in?	
GENERAL APPEARANCE - OVERALL SCORE	
<u>DAMP/CONDENSATION</u> [N.B. This will be difficult to detect on dry, sunny days] <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are there any obvious signs, such as discolouration of walls, of evidence of damp or mould growth?• Can the kitchens and bathrooms be ventilated, either by opening a window or by a mechanical extractor fan? If not, this may create condensation problems later on.	
DAMP/CONDENSATION - OVERALL SCORE	
<u>ELECTRICS</u> You are probably not an electrician, but - <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do the electrical fittings look relatively new>• Are there any obvious problems such as cracked or loose sockets, bare wires or damaged light fittings?	
ELECTRICS - OVERALL SCORE	

<p><u>HEATING</u></p> <p>All rented properties must have adequate heating, which must be permanently fixed. Free standing heaters are not acceptable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the property benefit from gas central heating? • Does the property have individual fixed heating appliances in each room? 	
<p>HEATING - OVERALL SCORE</p>	
<p><u>FIXTURES AND FITTINGS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there an adequate number of baths, showers and W.C's for the proposed number of occupants? • Is the W.C. separate from the bathroom? • Are the sanitary fittings in good condition? • Is there an adequate number of cookers, storage cupboards and food preparation surfaces? Are they in reasonably good condition? 	
<p>FIXTURES AND FITTINGS - OVERALL SCORE</p>	
<p><u>REFUSE STORAGE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the landlord provide bins to store refuse outside the house? • If bins are at the front of the property, will the landlord secure them to prevent theft? 	
<p>REFUSE STORAGE - OVERALL SCORE</p>	
<p><u>GARDENS AND YARDS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the gardens or yards in good condition? • Is there any rubbish in the garden to be removed? Will it be removed before you move in? • Who is responsible for maintaining gardens or yards? 	
<p>GARDENS AND YARDS - OVERALL SCORE</p>	
<p><u>COMMUNAL AREAS</u></p> <p>If you are renting self-contained accommodation, e.g. a bedsit or flat, with a common staircase and landings, the landlord is usually responsible for communal areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the common areas well maintained and clean? 	
<p>COMMUNAL AREAS - OVERALL SCORE</p>	

<p><u>FIRE PRECAUTIONS</u></p> <p>In houses in multiple occupation e.g. flats, bedsits or some shared houses, the landlord is required to provide certain fire precautions. In single let properties, these are not legally required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any fire extinguishers in the property? • Is there a fire blanket in the kitchen? • Do most of the rooms have fire doors with self-closing devices? • Are there mains operated smoke detectors in the property or some other fire alarm system? 	
<p>FIRE PRECAUTIONS - OVERALL SCORE</p>	
<p><u>LANDLORD DETAILS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the landlord leave contact details at the property for emergencies? • Does the landlord employ an agent whose details are readily available? 	
<p>LANDLORD DETAILS - OVERALL SCORE</p>	
<p><u>RETAINERS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will you have to pay a retainer to 'hold' the property over the summer vacation? If so, please seek advice from the Housing Help Centre. 	
<p>RETAINERS - OVERALL SCORE</p>	
<p><u>HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the household appliances supplied with the property look in a reasonable condition? • Can the landlord/agent provide you with the current gas safety certificate from a CORGI contractor? • Do any portable electrical appliances have plugs which are marked with BS 1363. • Do any of the electrical appliances have loose or frayed cables? • Do all gas and electrical heaters have adequate guards? 	
<p><u>FURNITURE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the furniture look clean and free from excessive wear? <p>All upholstered furniture and mattresses must, by law, have a permanent label stating that the item complies with fire safety regulations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does all the furniture comply with the furniture and furnishing regulations? 	
<p>FURNITURE - OVERALL SCORE</p>	

If you mostly scored the property as 1's or 2's, then it may well be better to look somewhere else. If you scored mostly 4's or 5's, then the property will probably be suitable.

Further Advice

If you have any further queries regarding the house, you can contact the following parts of Cardiff County Council for advice:

- ❖ Repairs, fire precautions, general property condition - Private Sector Housing [02920 873564]
- ❖ Tenancy agreements, deposits, retainers and any other charges connected with a tenancy - Housing Help Centre [02920 871050]
- ❖ Unsafe household goods and furniture - Trading standards [02920 872059]

Try not to accept the first property that you see [unless it is perfect]. View a number of properties until you find the right one - remember that you will probably be living there for at least a year.