

# MARTIN & CO

# STUDENT HOMES

## PARENT & GUARANTOR GUIDE

As a Parent or Guarantor we understand that you are likely to be concerned about the letting agent responsible for your son, daughter or family member's accommodation. At Martin & Co we pride ourselves on our level of customer service and recognise that without reliable and trustworthy tenants our business wouldn't work, that's why our Students are always top on our priority list.

Whether it's fixing the heating or offering advice we will always help our Students as efficiently and effectively as possible. Our customer service has won us numerous awards over recent years and allowed us to proudly boast the title of the UK's No.1 letting agent.

All Martin & Co Students are given a copy of the Student Handbook when they move in. The handbook is designed to help answer any queries or questions a student may have; including items that the landlord is responsible for, what they as a tenant are responsible for and other more general topics such as operating gas appliances. We understand that most students are renting for the first time and our expertly trained staff are friendly and patient to ensure that their time in a Martin & Co Student Home is an enjoyable one. A copy of the Student Handbook forms the latter part of this guide, we encourage you as the Parent or Guarantor to have a read through the guide, which should answer any questions that you may have about the rental process.

We have highlighted a few key areas below that you may find interesting:

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# THE STUDENT HANDBOOK

MARTIN & CO  
STUDENT HOMES

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A Jargon Buster explaining the technical terms in this handbook is available at [www.martinco.com/students](http://www.martinco.com/students)

# YOUR APPLICATION



## Viewing the property

It is usual for a Parent / Guardian who is going to act as a Guarantor to attend the viewing at the property. It is essential that all applicants view the property prior to the application being made to ensure that everyone is happy with the property and its facilities.



## Do I Need to Fill Out Forms?

You will be asked to complete a **Tenant Terms of Business** & a **Terms of Business for Students** which provide more information about you and the terms of your application. You will also be asked to complete a reference form which is provided by HomeLet, our credit referencing agency. Your Martin & Co local office may ask permission to contact your university to ensure that you are not behind with your tuition fees. They may also ask permission to speak to your university if you stayed in halls of residence last year.



## What will I need to Pay to the Martin & Co Local Office if I Would Like to Rent the Property?

The Martin & Co local office will ask you to pay an administration and / or referencing fee. You may also be asked to pay a holding fee which will become part of your first month's rent when the Tenancy commences. However, if the Tenancy does not proceed for any reason other than the Landlord withdrawing the property from the market, then this money will be non-refundable and may be paid to the Landlord. You should check these terms with your Martin & Co local office.



## Do I Need to Pay a Retainer Fee?

If you agree to take a property but do not want to move into the property until the start of the academic year, it is usual for a Landlord or the Martin & Co local office to ask for a retainer payment to be made. This is in lieu of rent being paid during the summer months but guarantees that the Landlord will keep the property for you until the start of the academic year.



### Do I Need a Guarantor?

Each applicant will require a Guarantor. The role of the Guarantor is to ensure that you, the Tenant, abides by the terms of the Tenancy including payment of the rent as specified in your Tenancy Agreement. Your Guarantor will need to complete an application form which is provided by HomeLet also. Prior to you signing your Tenancy Agreement, and your Tenancy commencing, all of the Guarantors will be asked to sign an individual '**Deed of Guarantee**' to confirm their obligations to the Landlord. These obligations will last for the duration of your Tenancy and any subsequent extension after the end of the initial fixed term.



## What ID Do I Need?

Your Martin & Co local office will ask all of the applicants and all of the Guarantors to provide 2 forms of ID. One will be photographic ID, such as a passport or driving licence, the other will be proof of the applicant's and Guarantor's current address. The second document must be a utility bill or mobile phone bill dated within the last 3 months.



## After Your Application has been Processed

Once all of the referencing processes have been completed with satisfactory results, a Tenancy Agreement will be created for your future Tenancy. This is drawn up in advance of your Tenancy commencing and your Martin & Co local office may also ask you to pay some rent and deposit at this point. Your Tenancy Agreement will reflect any payments of money and the dates on which these payments are due. All of the applicants (to be Tenants) and the Landlord will sign the Tenancy Agreement. The agreement will then be dated which means that it is binding on both parties.



## Do I Need to Pay a Deposit?

The Tenancy will state how much deposit you need to pay. This amount will be for the property and usually each Student pays a share towards this total deposit amount. This deposit will be dealt with as one lump payment and not as individual shares. At the end of the Tenancy you and your fellow Students will be jointly responsible for any damage at the property and this may be deducted from the whole deposit regardless of where in the property the damage occurred. Normally you will liaise with your fellow Students to decide who should receive what amount back after deductions have been made and the Tenancy Deposit Schemes can arrange for these individual payments to be made.



## Preparing for First Monthly Payments

The first instalment will be paid at the commencement or prior to the commencement of the Tenancy. It is usual for

Tenants to create a 'house bank account' into which the rent is collected and then paid as one payment to the Martin & Co local office (or the Landlord if applicable). You may wish to look at the facilities which are available to you in advance of the moving day so that you are able to provide bank account details at your sign-up appointment.

## WELCOME

### Welcome to Your New Home!

In order for your Tenancy to run as smoothly as possible, your Martin & Co local office are providing you with the following information which you may wish to refer to at points throughout your Tenancy.





# YOUR STUDENT HOME



## The Sign-Up Appointment

All of the Tenants who have signed the Tenancy Agreement must make an appointment to go to the Martin & Co local office on the official first day of the Tenancy (according to the agreement). The appointment will last approximately 20 – 30 minutes.

During the appointment you will be provided with the following:

- A copy of the valid gas safety certificate (if applicable)
- A standing order form which must be completed during the appointment (the Martin & Co local office may conduct a direct debit service instead of standing orders)
- Details of the property management department personnel including instructions on how to report repairs requests
- Fire safety advice
- Manuals for any appliances which are provided with the property (where available)
- The date of your first management visit
- Sets of keys; sufficient for every Student
- Details of any parking provided with the property to include permits if applicable
- A copy of the Inventory and schedule of condition, or instructions to meet an Inventory clerk at the property who will provide a copy of the document
- Any information which is specific to your property which you are moving into such as water softeners which need maintaining or unusual operation of appliances



## Inventory & Schedule of Condition

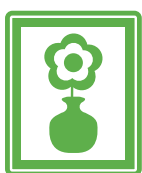
You will be provided with a 'Schedule of Condition and Inventory' relating to your property. This document is an essential part of your Tenancy. Ensure that you read this document thoroughly and notify your Martin & Co local



office of any discrepancies within the first 7 days of the commencement of the Tenancy. These discrepancies should always be put in writing.

It may be that a representative of either the Martin & Co local office or the Inventory provider may wish to revisit the property to verify the changes highlighted.

If at the end of the 7 days after the commencement of your Tenancy, you have not notified your Martin & Co local office of any discrepancies, then the original document which was passed to you either at the sign-up appointment at the local office, or by the Inventory Clerk at a check in appointment, will be deemed to be correct and an accurate reflection of your property. A signed copy of this document will be held by the Martin & Co local office (or the Landlord) and will be used at the end of your Tenancy by the Inventory Clerk when the check out is conducted.



### Pictures and Mirrors

Most properties will already have picture hooks located on the walls. If this is not the case and you wish to hang pictures and / or mirrors you must contact your Martin & Co local office, in writing, requesting where and how many hooks you wish to add. Permission must be sought from the Landlord before any work is undertaken.



## Furnishings

If your Landlord has provided the furnishings in your new home, you must treat these items in a 'Tenant like manner'. This means that you must respect the items and must not allow acts of waste or neglect to occur during your Tenancy either by you or your visitors. The condition of these items will have been noted in the Inventory and Schedule of Condition and it will be expected for these items to be returned in the same condition, with the exception of fair wear and tear.

Where the Landlord has provided furnishing, you must not remove them from the property during the Tenancy, even into storage, without the Landlord's or the Martin & Co local office's written consent.

At the end of the Tenancy you must ensure that the furniture is placed back in its original position as per the Inventory. If this is not done, you may be subject to the cost of labour required to reposition the items.





## Utilities

Your Martin & Co local office will contact the relevant utility suppliers to inform them of the change of occupant at the property if they are acting as the managing agent for your Landlord. They will also contact the local Council Tax department and inform them of your Student status. This is usually completed within the first 10 days of you moving into the property but it is your responsibility to ensure that you are registered and that the bills are paid. The local Council Tax department may request proof of your Student status.

Your Landlord or Martin & Co local office may ask for evidence that you have settled all of these accounts when you vacate your property at the end of the Tenancy.



## The Role of the Martin & Co local office as your Landlord's Agent

Your Landlord has appointed the Martin & Co local office to manage his property for him throughout the Tenancy. This means that should you have any queries regarding your Tenancy you must contact the Martin & Co local office. Your Landlord has authorised us to deal with any matters relating to his property and your Tenancy.

However, there may be occasions whereby we may have to refer back to your Landlord for authorisation on certain matters. These would include for example, requests from you for permission to hang pictures and mirrors in the property, or perhaps whereby any essential maintenance or repairs have exceeded the delegated amount of money that your Landlord has told us we may spend. Therefore in these circumstances, there may be a delay before we are able to confirm any requests to you or action any works.



## Insurance

Your Landlord will insure his property but this will only cover the building itself. He will also insure his own furniture but this will not cover accidental damage caused by you. You are responsible for your own possessions and furnishings and also for any accidental damage that may occur to the Landlord's fixtures and fittings. Martin & Co

strongly advise that you take out insurance to cover your own possessions. However, as a term of the Tenancy we ask that you take out insurance that the Landlord or his Martin & Co local office considers adequate to protect up to £2,500 against accidental damage caused by you to the contents, furniture, fixtures and fittings at the property as described in the attached Inventory. If you wish, please speak to your Martin & Co local office who can provide information on cover provided by HomeLet or you may telephone Homelet directly.



### Rubbish and Recycling

Please ensure that all rubbish and recycling is disposed of in the appropriate manner. If you are living in a flat within a block, you should familiarise yourself with the location of the communal bins – you should not leave your rubbish in the communal areas. If you are living in an individual property, you may wish to check with the local council regarding the rubbish collection days and any special arrangements that they may operate. All councils now offer recycling facilities and you are responsible for separating your rubbish for the separate collections.



### Communal Areas (applicable for flats only)

Please be aware that communal areas do not form part of the exclusive Tenancy Agreement and these areas can be accessed by all of the residents in the block. These areas may include hallways, stairwells, gardens, leisure facilities, bike stores, bins stores and parking areas. You must ensure that personal possessions are not kept in these areas and that they are kept clear at all times. Items kept in communal areas are potential hazards to yours and your neighbours' safety.



### Utility Meters and Stopcock

Please familiarise yourself with the location of your utility meters, the gas control valve, the electric fuse box and stopcock in case of emergency. These should be listed and located on your Inventory and Schedule of Condition for easy reference. In the event of an emergency all of the Tenants must be able to locate them.



## Parking

Please ensure you are familiar with the correct parking space which is allocated to your property. You may also need a key fob or code and to display a permit, if your space is in a communal area. Please check with the Martin & Co local office for specific details. Most communal parking areas have wheel clamping in operation. To prevent this happening to you please ensure you park correctly at all times. Parking in incorrect spaces is antisocial and will upset your neighbours.

Remember that visitors' parking spaces are provided at properties purely for temporary parking for those who have visitors. They are not to be used for regular Tenant or occupiers parking. Parking is controlled by the block managers and not by the Landlord or the Martin & Co local office.



## Telephone

Your Landlord is not responsible for supplying a telephone line to the property. Should you wish to install a telephone you will be responsible for any charges that are incurred in both the connection of the line and any subsequent bills. If there is already a telephone line at the property it is your responsibility to transfer the telephone account into your name at the start of the Tenancy. If there is a telephone line connected at the commencement of your tenancy you should not change the original telephone number (unless written permission is given by the Landlord or the Martin & Co local office)



## TV Licence

You are responsible for ensuring that you purchase a TV licence. Even if you watch programmes on your laptop you still have to hold a TV licence.

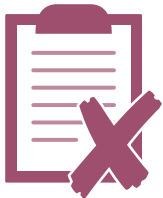
This can be arranged on-line at **[www.tvlicensing.co.uk](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk)**.

# YOUR TENANCY



## The Tenancy Agreement

The document contains both the details of your responsibilities and also the Landlord's responsibilities. It will define the address of the property, the names of the Tenants who have been granted the Tenancy, the rent that is due, how to pay your rent, the amount of deposit that you have paid, the start date of the agreement and the duration of the Tenancy. Please refer to your Tenancy Agreement for the full details.



## Restrictions

You are not allowed to do the following at the property without prior consent from the Landlord. Please check with the Martin & Co local office for more information.

- Run a business from the property
- Decorate the property
- Repair cars at the property or store cars that you are not the registered keeper of
- Store a boat or caravan at the property

All flats which comprise part of a larger building will be restricted by the 'Head Lease'. This document lists the rules which all of the residents within the block must adhere to. Examples of these are:

- Do not play loud music between certain hours
- Do not hang washing on the balcony
- Do not park in the visitors parking space
- No pets to be kept within the building

A full list of these restrictions should be provided to you by the Landlord or the Martin & Co local office.



## Pets

You should refer to your Tenancy Agreement regarding permission to keep pets or animals at the property.



If permission has not been granted prior to the commencement of the Tenancy, you must not keep any animals at the premises. You must seek approval before they may reside at the property during the Tenancy.



### Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

Your Landlord must ensure that he complies with the HMO legislation. There is additional protection for people who live in shared accommodation with shared facilities. Your Landlord may be required to apply for a licence from the local council who will assess the property, grant a licence and also stipulate how many people can live in the property. It is essential that you limit the number of people living at the property to just those named on the Tenancy Agreement so that you comply with the licence terms.



# YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A TENANT



## General Safety within the Home Smoking

Smoking is not permitted within the property by you or your visitors. Your Tenancy Agreement also states this. Smoking in a property means that the decoration will deteriorate more quickly than if there was no smoking. If it is noticed by an inventory clerk that you have been smoking then you may also be responsible for cleaning upholstery, carpets and curtains if they too show signs of damage due to smoke. It is advised that if you have a garden that you restrict any smoking to this outside area.



## Illegal Drugs

Illegal drugs must not be used at the property by any of the Tenants or visitors. Evidence of use of these will result in your Martin & Co local office being obliged to contact the police.



## Keys and Access

Please keep all keys that have been issued to you safe, including key fobs and any codes that have been issued to you. In the event of you losing any keys you will be responsible for the cost of replacing these keys. For your own safety do not issue any keys to anyone other than those named on the Tenancy Agreement. You may wish to lodge a spare set (if available) with a trusted neighbour, Parent, Guardian or Guarantor for emergencies. If you lose your keys or leave them inside the property, you will be responsible for contacting your fellow Tenants or instructing a locksmith to gain entry. If this action requires a new lock, you must ensure that a copy key is provided to the Martin & Co local office. The Martin & Co local office can provide details of a trusted local locksmith for emergencies such as these. Please remember to tell the Martin & Co local office if you have any additional keys cut due to lost sets.

Do not allow access to your property or give access via a communal entrance to anyone that you do not know or are not expecting. The communal locks and intercoms are fitted for your safety.



## Smoke Alarms

Where your Landlord has provided a battery powered smoke alarm, it is your responsibility to ensure that the battery is powered and that the detector is in good working order. Ensure you test the detector regularly and replace the battery as necessary. Be aware of any potential fire hazards that you may create in the property such as burning candles, hot cooking oil, open fires etc.

Please refer to: **[www.firekills.gov.uk](http://www.firekills.gov.uk)**

Your Martin & Co local office will also provide you with information issued by the fire brigade. You should do everything in your power to ensure that you and your fellow Tenants are safe at all times within the property. Do **NOT** wedge open fire doors, or take batteries out of smoke alarms as this could endanger your life in the event of a fire.



Candles can be extremely hazardous and you should use these with care and never leave them unattended. Remember that any cost incurred due to damage caused by candles etc. will be that of the Tenants.



## Gas

**If you smell gas, call free on 0800 111999**

**Don't create a flame or operate electrical switches.**

**Do put out flames (i.e. the cooker), open doors and windows, keep people away from the area and turn the gas off at the control valve.**



## Broken Glass

If any glass is broken at the property, you must ensure that it is repaired at your cost in a Tenant like manner. Broken glass is dangerous and should be dealt with by professionals. Be sure to warn the other occupants of any breakages by erecting a sign. Broken glass can also pose a security risk as it will be easier for an intruder to gain access.



## Security at the property

As the Tenant and occupier of the property, you are responsible for the security of the property. You must ensure that you secure the premises every time you leave the property. You will remain responsible for the security of the property until the end of your Tenancy. If the property is provided with an alarm, it is essential that this continues to be used. You must ensure that all occupants at the property know how to operate the alarm. If the alarm is not used it could invalidate the Landlord's insurance policy which could mean that you are responsible for the cost of any damage or loss.

Unfortunately, Students can be the target of crime due to the electrical gadgets that most Students possess. Make a rule that every window on the ground floor remains locked when the property is left unoccupied.

Keep all electrical items and other items of value out of sight from potential intruders.

**It is recommended that every Student holds an insurance policy to cover the loss of their personal possessions.**



### Payment of Rent

Your Tenancy states that all of the Tenants and all of the Guarantors for the property are jointly and severally liable for the terms of the Tenancy which includes the payment of rent. The Martin & Co local office will ask you to ensure that only 1 standing order payment is made for the property. If you fail to do this the Martin & Co local office may make an additional charge to cover the administration of these extra transactions.

Should you encounter any financial difficulties during the Tenancy you should notify the Martin & Co local office as soon as possible. You may also be able to seek advice from the Student Union. However, the remaining Students and Guarantors will be pursued in addition to you and your Guarantor for any outstanding rent which can cause bad feeling between housemates.



### Payment of other household bills

It is quite usual for you and your Student colleagues to create a kitty into which you pay money on a monthly basis to cover the cost of both utilities and other every day essential shared expenses such as milk, toilet rolls, bin bags etc. It is best to set this budget from day 1, and ensure that everyone contributes fairly. Your Martin & Co local office may be able to assist with a bank account into which you pay the utility contributions so that they can pay the bills on your behalf.



### Access

The Martin & Co local office will hold a management set of keys. This is so that we may gain access to the property in the event of a major emergency, to carry out routine maintenance and repairs and to conduct management visits. We will always give you prior notice if we need to gain access to the property for routine maintenance and

management visits. In the event of an emergency it may not be possible to provide any notice although the Martin & Co local office will endeavour to make contact with one of the Tenants - usually the nominated Lead Tenant.



### Access for viewings during your Tenancy

If you are not remaining in the property for a further term at the end of the period stated in your Tenancy agreement then the Martin & Co local office will need to start marketing the property in order to find new occupants when you leave. In the same way that you started viewing properties well before the date when you wanted to move in, new Student Tenants will also wish to start viewing early.

Therefore the Martin & Co local office may ask your permission to start viewings as early as September. These of course will be kept to a minimum and we will always contact you before attending the property. It is likely that the property will be let quite quickly and therefore once new prospective Student Tenants have been found no further viewings will be required.

The Martin & Co local office and your Landlord will respect your right to 'quiet enjoyment' but we ask for your co-operation so that new Students can start to prepare for their next academic year.



### Neighbours and noise

As a Tenant in a property you will be expected to act with consideration to your neighbours. Living in a flat can mean that you are closer to your neighbours than if you live in a house and it is inevitable that you will hear some noise from adjoining homes. Please take care not to cause excessive noise and ensure that you are aware of any terms within the head lease which may apply to you. You are also responsible for any guests that visit your property.

Even if you live in a house, detached, semi or terrace, noise will travel and you should consider your neighbors.

You should endeavor to minimise any noise made by you or your visitors during the hours of 11.00pm and 9.00am.



If you are aware of any 'extra' noise that may occur, perhaps due to a birthday party, it is always best to inform your neighbours in advance.

Nuisance caused by home occupants is dealt with by the local council's environmental health department. They have the power to impose fines and to remove equipment which has caused the noise such as stereos. We may also alert your university of any anti social behavior.



### Shared Tenancy Potential Problems

It can be quite testing living in a property with other Students whom you barely know and therefore some basic common sense must play a roll.

- Decide how much everyone will contribute on a monthly basis for utilities etc
- Over estimate how much you will need to pay so that there is always sufficient money in the kitty to cover these bills

- Set ground rules as to visitors – everyone has friends and some have partners but it can seem to be unfair if they overstay their welcome – perhaps ask that your fellow students keep these visitors out of the communal rooms unless you are all agreed to share and if it becomes a regular occurrence, perhaps ask them to contribute towards the ‘house kitty’ after all they will no doubt be using the water, electric and toilet rolls!
- Be sure that everyone understands that they must pay their share of the rent into the group bank account in advance of the standing order being paid – failure to do so could result in bank charges depending on the type of bank account that you set up.
- Remember that you are going to need to study at some point during your Tenancy – be considerate to your fellow householders and respect their privacy and quiet enjoyment.



### What Happens if Someone Wants to Leave?

Every person who is named on the Tenancy Agreement is committed to the fixed term of the Tenancy i.e. until the last day of the Tenancy as per the written agreement. However, there may be occasions when one of the Students wishes to leave the property part way through the Tenancy due to personal circumstances, clashes of personality or even leaving the university course.

Someone wishing to leave partway through a Tenancy can cause problems for those who remain at the property. Every person named, including Guarantors, are jointly and severally liable (including the Tenant who is leaving) for the rent which means that even if only 1 person doesn't pay their share, everyone else can be pursued for this outstanding amount. So just walking away from the Tenancy will not be the answer.

You may as a household agree to let the Student leave and you may chose to take on the share of the rent as a group which leaves a spare room at the property for studying or for visitors. This means that you will not have to find a replacement. Under these circumstances you should contact the Martin & Co local office and discuss

the removal of that person from the agreement although this type of decision will always be made on an individual basis and you and your Guarantors may have to re-sign new documentation.

You may however not be able to afford to allow someone to leave the Tenancy without finding a replacement Student to take on their share of the rent. If this situation occurs you should ensure that you talk to the Martin & Co local office first to explain what you propose to do. Remember that every person who is living at the property must be named on the Tenancy – you are not allowed to change occupants without permission. It will be the responsibility of the remaining housemates to find a replacement Tenant (or you may chose to make it the responsibility of the Tenant who is leaving) and this replacement person will have to complete reference forms, terms of business, provide ID, pay fees and provide Guarantor details in the same way that you did at the start of the Tenancy. You could advertise the available room at the university but be sure that you chose someone who is compatible with the remaining group.



### Management Visits

The Martin & Co local office will conduct management visits at the property as part of their management duties for the Landlord. They will either write to inform you of the proposed date or make contact by telephone to arrange an appointment. You do not have to be present for this visit and the Martin & Co local office representative will carry out a brief visual check of the property and note any problems that they find. If you are not present the representative will use the management set of keys that are held on behalf of the Landlord.

Following this visit, the Martin & Co local office may write to you stating any damage, defects or areas that require cleaning which have been found during the visit, or should they feel that the Tenancy is being breached in any way. You will be allowed a reasonable timescale to rectify these observations or breaches, and the property is usually revisited again.



# MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS



## What is your Landlord Responsible for?

Your Landlord is responsible for ensuring that all furniture, which has been provided as part of the Tenancy, complies with The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire)(Safety) Regulations 1988.

Your Landlord is responsible for ensuring that all gas appliances, which have been provided as part of the Tenancy, comply with Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.

Your Landlord is responsible for ensuring that all electrical appliances, which have been provided as part of the Tenancy, comply with Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994, and with the Plugs and Sockets etc (Safety) Regulations 1994.

The Landlord is responsible for the structure of your building, drains, gutters and down pipes. If the property is a flat then the Freeholder and its managing agent will ensure that these are maintained. The Landlord is also responsible for maintaining the heating and hot water, sanitary appliances, installation of gas, electric and water at the property which will be repaired as necessary throughout the Tenancy, unless the fault has been caused by the neglect or misuse of the Tenants, in which case you will be responsible.

You must inform the Martin & Co local office of any potential problems that may cause damage to the property such as a bath seal which requires replacement. You are also responsible for reporting anything that may cause harm or poses a hazard to you and your fellow Students.



## Care of the Property

You should ensure that you treat the property and the fixtures and fittings in a Tenant like manner. Should you or your visitors damage anything at the property then



you will be responsible for the arrangement and the cost of the repair to this damage. If you fail to do so within a reasonable timescale and notice, then the Martin & Co local office may arrange for the work to be completed and charge the costs to you. These costs can also be sought from your Guarantors where necessary and reports of damage will be relayed to all Guarantors in writing.



### Malicious Damage

Any malicious damage or break in at the property must be reported to the police. Should you wish to make a claim using your personal insurance, the company will no doubt require a crime number. Your landlord's insurer may also require a crime number.



### Wooden Floors

If your property contains any wooden floors you should make sure that you remove any stiletto heeled shoes and any other footwear that may damage the floor. It is recommended that only soft soled shoes should be worn. Some furniture may also damage the flooring so you should take precautions to minimise any damage. You are responsible for the cost of any damage that occurs due to your misuse or neglect.



## Gas and Gas Appliances

Any gas appliances in the property will be maintained and checked annually for safety by an appointed qualified contractor. The Martin & Co local office will contact you prior to this date to make an appointment for the contractor to attend the property.

**IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU ALLOW ACCESS FOR THIS CHECK TO BE CONDUCTED – IT IS TO ENSURE THAT THE APPLIACANCES ARE SAFE FOR YOU TO USE.**



## Electric and the Trip Switch

Most modern electric circuits are fitted with circuit breakers and these are called trip switches. If a fault occurs for any reason, as a safety devise, the trip switch will 'trip' meaning that the electric will switch off in a certain area of the property – this could be lights, certain rooms etc.



The switch can trip due to a number of reasons which include: - overload of sockets, an appliance having a fault, or because a bulb has blown.

To reset the trip, simply flick the switch back to the opposite direction. Your Property Manager at your Martin & Co local office can provide you with more information.



### The Property Manager

Some of the larger Martin & Co local offices will have a dedicated Property Manager. However, your Martin & Co local office will inform you at the commencement of your Tenancy who your point of contact will be during the Tenancy.



### How to Report a Repair Request

Your Martin & Co local office will indicate their preferred method of reporting any repair requests, although you will be able to contact them by telephone, in person, by email or in writing.

If your repair relates to an appliance that has been left at the property for your use by the Landlord, please ensure that you have all information relating to serial numbers, models and makes.

You are also responsible for reporting any defects to electrical appliances belonging to the Landlord (including plugs & electrical sockets) during the Tenancy. If you fail to do so then you may be responsible for the cost of the repairs incurred.

Please see the details of your local office below:

Once your repair has been reported, the Martin & Co local office will either instruct a contractor to attend and repair, ask a contractor to attend and quote, or in the case of larger, reoccurring or more complicated repairs, seek approval and instruction from your Landlord.

Repairs that are not an emergency will be allocated by a contractor accordingly. The appointed contractor will be provided with your telephone number and access details and will contact you directly in order attend the property.

Sometimes it is necessary for parts to be ordered in the event of breakdown and repair. These parts may sometimes take several days to arrive if they are difficult to source, unusual or required at peak or seasonal times. Compensation cannot be claimed from the Landlord due to these delays if it is beyond the control of the Landlord.

The Martin & Co local office may contact you after the contractor has attended to ensure that the works have been carried out fully and the repair resolved.



### New Build Properties

If your property was recently constructed or converted, it is possible that any repair issues that you encounter may be covered by the builder's warranty. Therefore when you report any repair requests to us, we may not be authorised by the Landlord to instruct an independent contractor. In this instance, we shall forward your contact and access details to the builder so that the repair can be initiated.



### Appliances

If the Landlord has supplied appliances at the property you will be able to report any faults to the Martin & Co local office. If the repair is due to your mis-treatment of the appliance, the cost will be recharged to you. If the appliance is under guarantee, the Martin & Co local office will contact the manufacturer who will make contact with you and inspect the appliance. Remember to protect items such as grill pans with foil which will make cleaning easier. Regularly clean cooker tops to prevent build up of food.



## Items That You are Responsible for:-



### Sinks, Toilets and Drains

You will be responsible for the cost of clearing any blockages that have been caused by your misuse. This may be due to putting unsuitable items into toilets or sinks which may cause problems within the drainage at the property, such as nappies, sanitary towels, cooking fats and oils, tea leaves etc.



### Light Bulbs

You will be responsible for replacing any light bulbs in the property during the Tenancy.



### Damage in the Property

You will be responsible for rectifying any item that may be damaged by either yourself or your visitors at the property.



### Maintaining a Garden

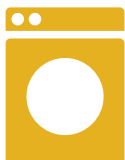
You may be responsible for ensuring that the garden is maintained. Please refer to your Tenancy Agreement for specific details. You may wish to pay someone to maintain the garden if you are unable as a group to maintain the standard.



### Washing Machines

You will be responsible for any damage caused due to misuse of the appliance. Ensure that any filters are cleaned regularly and that the soap tray / dish are kept clean or as dictated by the appliance manual.





## Tumble Dryers

If you have been provided with a tumble dryer that does not have a condensing unit, you are responsible of ensuring that the hose from the dryer is directed outside of the property, so that moisture extracted from the washing does not remain inside the property. If this is not maintained it may cause condensation and, in turn, mould at the property. Any damage to decoration caused by misuse of the appliance will be the responsibility of the Tenant. You are also responsible for regularly cleaning the filter.



## Dishwasher

Most dishwashers require salt and rinse aid to help them to work efficiently. They also have a filter within the machine which catches food particles etc during the cleaning cycle. You must ensure that the filter is kept clean otherwise it may impede the effectiveness of the machine.



## Cleaning

You must keep the property in the same clean and tidy condition that it was in at the commencement of the Tenancy. Usually each Student will be responsible for the cleaning within their own bedroom area, but the cleaning of the communal facilities (bathroom, kitchen, lounge etc.) must not be neglected. Regular cleaning will also include cleaning of the windows. Perhaps you could agree a cleaning rota at the beginning of the Tenancy? which is fair to all of your housemates. This will also help to protect the return of your deposit.

Perhaps put a rug or carpet runner down on carpets where dirt may accumulate such as in the communal hallway but make sure that it doesn't become a trip hazard. Perhaps invest in a doormat both inside and outside of the front and back door and any doors leading to the garden to prevent excessive dirt or wear and tear on the carpet.



## Condensation and Ventilation

Condensation starts as moisture that is produced by cooking, washing and using gas appliances. The moist



air condenses on cool surfaces such as walls, wall tiles and windows. It can also affect the ceilings.

Condensation can be prevented or reduced in the property by controlling the excess moisture in the following ways:

- Close your kitchen and bathroom doors to prevent steam going into other, colder, rooms.
- Open the kitchen or bathroom windows (if applicable) when cooking or washing.
- Open windows in other rooms to allow a change of air.
- Keep trickle vents open (these are small devices on new windows which can be opened without affecting the security to your property).
- Curtains and blinds should be kept open during the day as this will help to minimise the condensation in the property.
- Wipe down surfaces where moisture settles to prevent mould forming.
- Use the extractor fans if supplied in the property (do not isolate fans in bathrooms).
- Dry clothes outside if possible.
- Do not hang wet clothes over radiators (this will cause condensation and damage to the decoration which you will be responsible for rectifying).
- Ensure that tumble driers vent to the outside.
- Maintain a low background heat – it is advised that the property thermostat is kept at a minimum of 13 degrees during cold periods to prevent the hot and cold effect which causes condensation.

Failure to adhere to the above may result in damage to the property which in turn you will be responsible for - you will therefore have to cover the cost of any repairs or work required to rectify the problem.

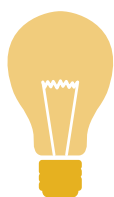


### Leaving the Property Unoccupied

If you are leaving the property unoccupied for a period of more than 14 days, you should notify the Martin & Co



local office. If this period is during the colder months, the heating should be left on a low temperature to prevent the pipes from freezing or even bursting.



### Energy Efficiency Advice

At a time when most people are very conscious of energy efficiency you may wish to look at further information on how to be more efficient and save money.

Your Martin & Co local office may have a leaflet with energy advice or you can log onto the following website for information **[www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)**

# MOVING OUT

At the commencement of your Tenancy an Inventory and Schedule of Condition will have been carried out at the property. This document will be used at the end of your Tenancy to conduct the check out. This will compare the initial document with the property on the day that you vacate.

A deposit will have been taken for safekeeping at the commencement of the Tenancy and your Landlord may ask to deduct money from your deposit for any dilapidations which are your responsibility.

Deposits are now covered by legislation called 'Tenancy Deposit Protection'. This means that no Agent or Landlord is able to make deductions from your deposit money without your consent. It also means that if you and the



Landlord, or the Martin & Co local office on behalf of the Landlord, cannot agree on a specific deduction you can refer the matter to a third party who will review the case independently. It is always advisable to try to come to an agreement regarding any deductions, as disputes may delay the length of time before you receive these disputed monies (if you are awarded them). Your Martin & Co local office will provide you with the details of the Tenancy Deposit Protection provider which they use at the beginning of your Tenancy, together with notes which you should read fully to understand how the scheme works.

We recommend that you review and action the following check list in preparation to vacating your property. By following this list you should minimise the possibility of any potential claims against your deposit money. If you require any further information you should contact the Martin & Co local office.



### Notes for Vacating Tenants

It is in your interests to present the property in a condition ready for a new Tenant to occupy. Failure to do so may result in charges being made to your security deposit.

- All items to be placed in their original position as described in the Inventory.
- All windows must be cleaned on the inside and interior window frames and ledges must be wiped clean throughout.
- Ceilings and walls must be cobweb free.
- All washable wall surfaces to be washed down and left dust, dirt and stain free.
- Skirting boards to be washed over and dust free.
- Curtains – nets to be washed, ironed and rehung. Kitchen curtains to be cleaned and rehung. Other heavy curtains to be professionally cleaned, if stained.
- Floors – to be vacuumed throughout and carpets to be professionally cleaned, if stained. Kitchen and bathroom floors to be washed.

- All wooden furniture to be dust free and polished, if required.
- Cooker to be cleaned thoroughly with oven cleaner, do not forget shelves in the oven, the glass door, grill pan and oven trays and changing the extractor hood filter – if applicable.
- Microwave, if applicable, to be cleaned on the inside and outside.
- Refrigerators and freezers should be defrosted and wiped out. The door must be left open and the appliance switched off.
- Baths, WC's, shower screens, wash hand basins and kitchen sinks must be cleaned.
- Mattress and pillow protectors must be washed.
- Insides of cupboards and drawers must be cleaned.
- The garage, if applicable, should be swept out.
- The garden, if applicable, should be left in a clean and tidy condition with borders recently dug and lawns cut.
- Washing machine soap dispenser must be washed and the filter cleaned.
- All lampshades to be dust free and light bulbs replaced where necessary.
- Vacuum cleaner bags to be emptied and filters cleaned.
- All rubbish/food, unwanted items of furniture/ belongings, must be removed from the property/ garden and placed in the dustbin provided for collection.
- All keys must be returned no later than at the check-out appointment.

The Property Manager of the Martin & Co local office may be able to assist with recommended cleaning companies, carpet cleaners and gardeners. Be sure to start planning this work well in advance of your vacation date. Some Students within your property may leave early and it may become difficult if left to the last minute to gather funds from everyone to pay for the cost of this work.



## The Check-Out

You will be invited to attend a check-out appointment on the last day of your Tenancy. At this appointment you will meet with the Inventory clerk who will assess the condition of the property and fixtures and fittings according to their condition when you moved into the property. The clerk will point out any damage to you and this will be noted on a check out document. The clerk will then ask you to sign to say that you agree to the condition report.

The report is returned to the Martin & Co local office who will then assess the cost of rectifying any damage or losses and advise you accordingly. The period of time between the clerk conducting the check out and the money being returned will be kept to a minimum although this will depend on the extent of the potential works required.

If you wish to dispute any of the Property Manager's findings or quotes for the work, you should do so in writing. This is to prevent any confusion on matters that have already been agreed.

The Martin & Co local office will ask for one Student to represent the group. Therefore it is advised that you all speak to one another once the check out report is available and decide whether you agree to any potential deductions. The Martin & Co local office will then continue to deal directly and regularly with the chosen point of contact until the matter has concluded.

If the Martin & Co local office is a member of the Deposit Protection Service (DPS) then you will receive any deposit monies which have been agreed to be returned to you directly from the scheme (not the local office). You must instigate the return of this money by logging onto the DPS website and following their instructions (please refer to your Terms and Conditions which were issued as part of your Tenancy Agreement).

If the Martin & Co local office is a member of The Dispute Service then you will receive any deposits monies which have been agreed to be returned to you directly from the Martin & Co local office.

Remember to re-direct any post prior to you leaving as this will not be forwarded to you once you have left the property.



### Items left in the property

You are responsible for all reasonable removal or storage costs in the event of you leaving items at the property. Please refer to your Tenancy Agreement which will explain how this process is operated.

*Additional copies of this handbook can be found at [www.martinco.com/students](http://www.martinco.com/students).*

*N.B. Any reference to you within this document refers to all of the Student Tenants and any applicable Guarantors being jointly and severally liable.*

*Written by Sue Hopson, FARLA.*

# USEFUL CONTACTS & NUMBERS

(to be completed by the Students)

Local Council

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Transco – call if you smell gas

.....

Local Water Company - Call if there is a water leak outside of the property (call the Martin & Co local office if there is a leak inside of the property)

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Local Health Centre

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Property Manager - Martin & Co local office for all maintenance & repair requests

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University accommodation officer

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Emergency contact details for each Student's next of kin

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# MARTIN & CO

# STUDENT HOMES

[www.martinco.com/students](http://www.martinco.com/students)