

Appendix 4 – Accommodation Rules

House Rules and Disciplinary Procedures

1 Overview

1.1 Purpose

The Accommodation Rules are for the safety and comfort of all residents and exist to ensure that everyone enjoys living in university accommodation. They also form part of the Handbook of Student Regulations and as such any action taken will be in line with the Handbook.

All residents, whether living in or visiting our buildings, are required to understand their responsibilities with respect to maintaining a safe and healthy environment in which to work, study and live; this includes ensuring that a safe environment is maintained for residents, staff and contractors.

Behaviour judged to be in breach of the Accommodation Rules set out in Paragraph 2 below (noting that those behaviours are not exhaustive) will be treated according to the procedures in this Section of the Handbook.

1.2 Applicability

Residents are bound by these rules and are responsible for ensuring that non-residents (e.g. guests and visitors) that they have invited or who are in their company are aware of and comply with the Accommodation Rules at all times.

Non-compliance with the rules by residents, guests or visitors will usually result in a warning, fine, notice to quit or a combination of these, as set out in Paragraph [XX] below

2 House Rules

2.1. Accommodation Induction

2.1.1. All students are required to complete an Accommodation Induction at the commencement of their tenancy.

2.2 Fire Safety

- 2.2.1** Cooking, in any form, is not permitted in bedrooms except in self-contained studio accommodation.
- 2.2.2** You must respond to fire alarms by following the accommodation fire safety rules and vacating the building. Do not re-enter the building until you are informed it is safe to do so.
- 2.2.3** Keep all fire doors closed. Fire doors must not be propped open.
- 2.2.4** Do not interfere with any fire safety equipment, or activate a fire alarm call point without good reason.
- 2.2.5** Do not bring, store or use potentially dangerous items which could cause a fire e.g. candles, heaters and unsafe cooking equipment. See paragraph 2.4 - Electrical Safety below for permitted exceptions to this rule.
- 2.2.6** Cooking must be checked and attended at all times.
- 2.2.7** Emergency exits are to be used only in an emergency.
- 2.2.8** Emergency exits must not be blocked.
- 2.2.9** Furniture and appliances, including domestic appliances (e.g. heaters, cookers and fridges etc.) must not be brought into residences.

2.3 Smoking

- 2.3.1** Smoking and vaping are not permitted inside, and outside are only permitted in areas designated by the University

2.4 Electrical Safety

- 2.4.1.** All electrical appliances must be used safely, so as to prevent the risk of fire, electrocution or any other injury
- 2.4.2.** Only electrical appliances that are fitted with fused plugs e.g., hair dryers, shavers, irons and straighteners may be used in accommodation buildings.
- 2.4.3** All residents must attend the electrical testing open sessions, which are held in each accommodation building, where appliances will be tested for electrical safety. Staff will remove unsafe items as a matter of course throughout the year.

2.5 Health, Safety and Wellbeing

- 2.5.1.** Students have a responsibility to act in the interests of the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves, other students, staff and contractors whilst they are onsite of any University Accommodation and must comply with relevant public health legislation and guidance issued by the Government or Local Authority
- 2.5.2.** Students are also required to comply with any additional procedures reasonably imposed by the University in the interest of maintaining the health, safety and wellbeing of students, staff and contractors.

2.6. Noise and Nuisance

- 2.6.1** Residents must not engage in any behaviour constituting a nuisance or annoyance or interfering with the quiet and comfort of other residents, users of neighbouring property or members of the local community
- 2.6.2.** Residents are not to make unreasonable noise at any time and in particular between the hours of 11.00pm and 8.00am. Noise that would disturb other residents should not be audible outside the room in which the noise is being made. Please note: discretion is given to the Building Management Teams during Exam Periods, to manage as appropriate.

2.7. Non-residents and Security

- 2.7.1.** Residents must not allow unauthorised persons to enter the building. If a suspicious person is spotted, then residents should contact security immediately.
- 2.7.2.** Any visitor authorised by a resident is permitted to stay for a maximum of two nights in any seven.
- 2.7.3.** If the resident allows any visitors onto the premises who the University considers unsuitable, those visitors may be requested to leave the premises permanently and not return.

2.8 Damage

- 2.8.1.** Residents must not in any way damage, remove or misuse any part of the premises, its furnishings, fixtures, fittings, decoration or equipment.
- 2.8.2.** Users of the building are prohibited from undertaking any intrusive works e.g. do not make a hole in the wall (please use the noticeboards provided), or

drive any nail, screw or other article into any part of the building or affix any placard or other object to any part of the building.

2.8.3. Damage charges may be applied as described in Annexe 1 of these rules

2.9. Security of Keys

2.9.1 Residents are responsible for the security of their own keys, access fobs and passes, persistent security call outs for residents who are “locked out” may result in a charge as described in Annexe 1 of these rules.

2.10 Pets

2.10.1 Pets/animals are not to be kept on the premises or in any part of the accommodation. Registered assistance dogs are the exception and special arrangements will be made.

2.11 Offensive Material

2.11.1 Any material deemed to be offensive or causing offence is not permitted to be displayed in any accommodation building, and will be removed wherever found.

2.12. Staff/Contractors Co-operation

2.12.1 Residents are to give access to University and Sodexo staff and also authorised contractors, carrying out their duties. Reasonable notice will always be given of a visit, wherever practicable.

2.13. Dangerous and Abusive Behaviour

2.13.1 Behaviour that is dangerous, whether malicious or as an intended prank, is not permitted. This includes careless, thoughtless or malicious actions that place other people in danger

2.13.2. Behaviour towards other students, University and Sodexo staff, authorised contractors and visitors, which falls within the University’s Unacceptable Behaviour Policy, may be deemed to be misconduct.

2.13.3. Where behaviour and/or any misconduct is deemed to be of such a serious nature or concern, this will be referred into the University Serious Welfare Team for consideration in line with the Section 17 of the Handbook of Student Regulations (Precautionary Action on the Basis of Duty of Care)

2.14 Drugs

- 2.14.1** The storage, use or supply of drugs, drugs paraphernalia and legal/illegal highs is not permitted in any accommodation building and police will be involved if use/supply of any such items is discovered. All accommodation buildings may be subject to routine visits from local police force which may include the K9 Unit.

2.15 Dangerous Items

- 2.15.1** Any item or substance that is illegal, or could cause harm and is inappropriate to a residential environment, or is intended to inflict harm, is prohibited.

2.16 Criminal Activity

- 2.16.1** If residents commit an offence, which may cause the University to consider the resident to be an unsuitable tenant, they may be required to leave the accommodation permanently, and the relevant Notices to Quit will be served. This rule applies to offences committed either on or off University premises.

3 Disciplinary Procedures

3.1 Overview

- 3.1.1** If any student is alleged to have acted in breach of the rules outlined in paragraph 2 above, action may be initiated in accordance with Section 3.6 of the Handbook of Student Regulations – Procedure for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct.
- 3.1.2** If at any point in the disciplinary process it becomes apparent to the University that the student is on a professional programme and their ‘fitness to practise’ may have been compromised, the relevant Faculty Disciplinary Officer will be informed. This may result in accommodation disciplinary proceedings being halted, and the case investigated further by the Faculty Disciplinary Officer, with a view to being considered by a ‘Fitness to Practise Panel’. The decision whether to do this will be made by the Faculty Disciplinary Officer.

3.1.3 At all stages of the disciplinary process, a 'Friend' may accompany the resident (see Section 1 of the Handbook of Student Regulations for a definition of a 'Friend')

3.2 Stage 1: The Informal Stage

3.2.1 Stage 1 will be conducted in line with 3.6.1 of the Handbook of Student Regulations. The University may delegate responsibility for dealing with Stage 1 disciplinary matters to its contractors, for example Sodexo.

3.2.2 Outcomes at Stage 1 may include a warning or a fine (standard fines for breaches of the Accommodation Rules are set out in Appendix 2 of these rules); or the matter being referred to Stage 2. Additionally, confiscation procedures may be applied at this stage.

3.2.3 A student may appeal against the outcome of the Stage 1 disciplinary process.

3.2.3.1 Within 5 days of Stage 1 outcome, students should consult the Nominated Accommodation Representative who will explain the reasons for the fine and the criteria used to judge any appeal.

3.2.3.2 Within 10 days of Stage 1 outcome - Students should commence an appeal by submitting in writing (email is acceptable) to the Nominated University Accommodation Representative.

3.2.3.3 Appeal letters should describe the basis upon which the appeal is made. Students should understand that an appeal re-opens the case, with the full range of penalties available (i.e. the result of an appeal could be a more severe penalty)

3.2.3.4 If an appeal is lodged, the Nominated University Accommodation Representative will review the case with the managers concerned and come to a uphold the appeal or if the matter cannot be resolved, arrange a Stage 2 Disciplinary Hearing to hear the appeal.

3.3 Stage 2: The Formal Stage

3.3.1 Stage 2 will be conducted in line with 3.6.2.-3.6.10 of the Handbook of Student Regulations. Any Formal Disciplinary Hearing will be chaired by the relevant Disciplinary Officer or their nominee.

3.3.2 Outcomes at Stage 2 may include penalties as set out in 3.6.6. of the Handbook of Student Regulations. Standard fines for breaches of the Accommodation Rules are set out at Annexe 2 below.

3.4 Stage 3: Request for Review

3.4.1 Stage 3 will be conducted in line with 3.7 and Appendix G of the Handbook of Student Regulations. Any Request for Review should be submitted to the Students Appeals and Complaints Officer at studentappealsandcomplaints@northumbria.ac.uk

3.5 Taking a case to the OIA

3.5.1 If the student wishes to challenge the University's decision, but judge they cannot do so on the grounds permitted in Appendix G, they may request a Completion of Procedures Letter from the Student Appeals and Complaints Officer (studentappealsandcomplaints@northumbria.ac.uk) within 1 month of the decision and take their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) (See Appendix H of the Handbook of Student Regulations for further information).

ANNEXE 1

Damage charges:

These are not fines but are straight re-charges that the University has incurred as a result of, either accidental damage or malicious damage. Where there is a case of malicious damage, there may also be disciplinary proceedings. If there is an accidental damage charge, a student will be informed by Accommodation Management, and it will be applied to their student account.

Charges may also be imposed in the event of a resident being "locked out" due to failing to take responsibility for their own keys, where this failure results in repeated security call outs.

Students wishing to challenge the above charges should do so by submitting a Student Complaint in accordance with Section 10 of the Handbook of Student Regulations.

ANNEXE 2

Standard Fines:

The following fines may be applied at Stage 1: Informal Stage, or Stage 2: Formal Stage of the Disciplinary process. This list is not exhaustive or definitive, but is indicative of how seriously the University regards these examples of misconduct. Repetition of the same offence could result in an increased fine being applied.

2.1	Failure to attend the compulsory Accommodation Induction, following your arrival	£30
2.2.2.	Non-evacuation of the building on hearing the fire alarm	£50
2.2.3. 2.2.7. 2.2.8.	Inappropriate use of emergency exit (e.g. using them as an exit and setting off the alarm when there is no fire)	£30
2.2.3.	Wedging open fire doors or removal of automatic door closers	£30
2.2.4	Misuse or interference of fire systems and equipment provided for the purpose of detection, safety or firefighting (detectors, extinguishers etc)	£50 - £130
2.2.4	Activation of pre alarm (a system warning that the fire alarm will go into full activation if not re-set by a member of staff):	£20 on first time, £60 on second occasion and rising further on subsequent occasions
2.2.4. 2.2.6.	Activating the fire alarm without reasonable cause (including not attending to food being cooked at all times)	£70
2.2.5	Prohibited items, with the potential to cause a fire hazard, e.g. candles or other similar items, found to be alight	£70
2.3.	Smoking or vaping in prohibited areas	£50 for the first offence; £70 for subsequent offences
2.5.	Failure to comply with Health, Safety and Wellbeing guidance and legislation	£50 - £300
2.6	Noise problems	£30 minimum (fines for noise are automatically £60 minimum during exam periods)
2.13	Anti-social behaviour problems or dangerous behaviour	£50 - £300

2.14	Possession of illegal substances and/or legal highs/banned substances (All will result in a referral to the Student Life and Wellbeing Team. Repeat offending will result in escalation to investigation for Stage 2 Hearing)	£100
------	---	------

Fines are applied to the students account, and payment should be made via the online student portal. A student making prompt payment does not affect their right to appeal.

A fine may be imposed upon a resident or a non-resident student and such fine may relate to his/her own actions or to those of his/her guest or visitor for which he/she is deemed to be responsible. Where the actions giving rise to the fine have been those of unidentified individual(s) from an identifiable group, the fine shall be divided equally between every member of that group.