

Choosing Your Accommodation – A Guide for MSc and PhD Students

Choosing the right accommodation during your time in Liverpool can make all the difference to your overall student experience. LSTM does not possess its own halls of residence, however, with over 50,000 students in Liverpool there are plenty of options to choose from.

It is important to understand that there are advantages and disadvantages to every accommodation option. This guide aims to assist you in making an informed decision about your choice of accommodation.

We advise you to contact the Student Experience Officer at LSTM as soon as possible to get advice on suitable accommodation options. LSTM maintains its own accommodation list which all students with a Confirmed Place to study can request.

Private Halls of Residence

The most popular accommodation with long term students is halls of residence. Many private companies now offer an alternative to the traditional university owned halls of residence.

The cost of private halls varies greatly. You can expect to pay £80 - £170 per week for city centre halls which are open to undergraduate and postgraduate students. The price you pay is usually inclusive of fuel bills (gas, electricity, water etc). You are usually expected to pay a deposit and will be asked to sign a contract for the academic year. There may be an additional fixed charge for internet access but generally this tends to be included in the overall rent.

Most private halls are arranged into clusters of flats. Within each flat, students will have their own private study bedroom but will share the main living quarters (usually the kitchen, lounge area and bathroom(s)) with other students. How many students you share with depends on the size of the flat. On average you can expect to share with between 4 - 6 people but in some cases it can be as many as 10. Some properties offer en-suite rooms, which means you have your own private bathroom connected to your bedroom. En-suite rooms are more expensive.

Tenancy agreements (contracts) are usually a **minimum of 43 weeks** and you will be expected to pay for the room for this period, even if you will be spending time out of the UK.

As general advice, we advise Masters Students planning to carry out an overseas research project to book their accommodation until early May (e.g. 10th May 2017). Some private halls will allow you to do this but this must be built into the terms of your contract.

The majority of private halls can be booked online. In most cases you will complete an online application form which

will ask for information such as the name of your university, your next of kin details, etc. You will also be asked to pay a deposit (Sometimes called a reservation/ booking fee). Once you submit your application form and pay your deposit you are committing yourself to that accommodation. If you change your mind you could risk losing your deposit. In some cases, if you cancel your room at the last minute and a new tenant cannot be found, you will be liable for the total rent for the full tenancy period!

Always read the cancellation policy before committing yourself to any accommodation. Although it is not possible for every student, where practical, you should arrange a trip to Liverpool to view any accommodation you may be interested in before committing yourself. Some accommodation providers will allow students to pay in instalments, if they have a UK guarantor. Students without a UK guarantor will be expected to pay the full cost of their accommodation upfront i.e. before you move in.

If you require single sex accommodation then you should state this on your application form.

It is also a good idea to stress that you want to be housed with third year undergraduate or postgraduate students. Lettings Managers do tend to group mature students as a matter of course but do this as an extra measure. You don't want to end up sharing with a group of rowdy first year undergraduates.

MOST IMPORTANTLY – PRIVATE HALLS START TAKING BOOKINGS FOR SEPTEMBER ENTRY UP TO 6 MONTHS BEFORE THE START OF THE ACADEMIC SEMESTER. YOU SHOULD BOOK EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT.

Are Private Halls of Residence for me?

Advantages: Private halls of residence are well suited to single students looking to live the true student experience. They are the perfect way to meet new people and to help you settle into a new city. Almost all private halls in Liverpool are within comfortable walking distance (5-20 minutes) from LSTM. Some are literally a stone's throw away. Halls of residence are reasonably priced for city centre living and the fixed cost pricing structure means no squabbling over bills; it also allows students to budget easily.

Disadvantages: Sharing facilities with others can have its problems but if you set boundaries from the start you then you're less likely to run into problems. Student halls can also be noisy at times. Tenancy agreements are usually for the academic year (43 weeks) and students can only be released from their contract in exceptional circumstances.

Monument Building

Monument Building is a private student hall which is a 5-minute walk from LSTM.

Different size flats are available sharing with between 2 and 9 other students. Good sized single bedrooms available with large communal room, lounge, bathrooms and separate kitchen in the larger flats and kitchen with dining area and bathrooms in the smaller ones. Self-contained flats are also available. There is the option to request to be placed in a flat solely sharing with other LSTM students.

Rent begins at £86 per week, inclusive of all bills for Masters students at LSTM booking a tenancy of 21 weeks or more. Shorter contracts are available but the rental price will increase to between £96 and £106.

Your contractual agreement is with Monument Building and not with LSTM.

For further information please visit:

<http://www.liverpoolstudenthomes.org/Property/52586>

Beacon Building

Beacon Building is a private student hall which is a 5-minute walk from LSTM.

Double and Single student rooms are available all of which are a good size and are arranged into 6 to 10 bedroomed flats which share double kitchens and between 2 and 4 bathrooms. There are also laundry (washing/drying/ironing) facilities in each area. One and two-bedroomed apartments are also available.

Rooms, studios and flats contain a range of furniture including as a minimum a bed (doubles depending upon size and layout of the room), desk and chair, wardrobe, chest of drawers and armchair or sofa.

The monthly rent for a single study room in a shared flat is £380 which is inclusive of all bills including internet. Studio flats are available from £495 per month.

Your contractual agreement is with Beacon Building and not with LSTM.

For further information please visit:

<http://tinyurl.com/h682mhr>

Please follow the links below for other Private Halls of Residence:

Urban Student Life

<http://www.urbanstudentlife.com>

The Lodge

<http://www.rooms4u.co.uk/thelodge/>

Mansion Student Accommodation

www.mansionstudent.co.uk

Europa Student Accommodation

www.freshstudentliving.co.uk

Cosmopolitan Student Homes

www.cosmostudents.com

Agnes Jones House

www.agnesjones.co.uk

Unite Student Housing

www.unite-students.com

Lee Court

<http://www.crm-students.com/>

X1 Arndale House

<http://www.x1lettings.com/>

Vita Student Liverpool

<http://www.vitastudent.com/>

Other Accommodation Options

Private sector accommodation

By private sector accommodation we mean:

- Renting a whole house or flat; or
- Renting a room in a shared student house; or
- Lodging with an individual or a family.

Private accommodation close to LSTM is difficult to find and there is no parking at the School. However, the transport networks in and around Liverpool are excellent and students very often commute on the train or bus. You will need to budget at least £50 per month for travel if you live out of the city centre. If you are looking for private accommodation then please remember that it is a time-consuming task. With this in mind you should come to Liverpool well before the start of your course in order to find something suitable. If you intend to bring your family then you should initially come alone and then send for them once you have found appropriate accommodation.

Renting a whole house or flat

Students who don't want to share facilities or students who wish to bring their family with them will probably be looking for a whole house or flat to rent. The price you pay will depend on the size of the property and the area it is located in. You can expect to pay between £300-500 per month for a small bedsit or flat. You can rent a small house from between £500 - £800 per month. Flats and houses can come fully furnished, part furnished or unfurnished. Fully furnished properties are more expensive. Bills (Gas, electricity, Council Tax, water rates, TV license, telephone, internet, buildings and contents insurance) are not usually included in the rent therefore you will need to budget accordingly. If you are renting a small bedsit or flat then you need to budget £200 upwards for bills. For a small house you should budget for £300 upwards for bills.

When you find a property that you are happy with you will be asked to sign a contract for a fixed period of time, usually no less than 6 months. It is important to note that you will not be able to end your tenancy agreement before the end of the fixed period unless your tenancy agreement (contract) contains a break clause. If you try and end your tenancy early and you have no right to do so, you can be liable for the rent up until the end of the fixed period. For this reason it is important that you are one hundred percent happy with the property before signing the tenancy agreement. You will normally be required to pay a deposit to the landlord as security in case you damage the property or its furnishings. On average landlords will ask for a sum equivalent to one month's rent. The deposit will normally be refunded after you move out of the property, provided it is left in good condition.

From April 2007 if you have an assured shorthold tenancy agreement (this is the type of contract you will most likely have) then your landlord must place your deposit with a government authorised scheme. The scheme aims to safeguard a tenant's money by resolving the dispute through a neutral third party. Tenants who have left their property in good condition can be confident that they will not have all or part of their deposit withheld unfairly. Your landlord must provide you with details of the scheme within 14 days of you paying your deposit.

Liverpool Student Homes

If you are thinking of renting a whole house or flat then you should read the advice pages on the Liverpool Student Homes website:

LSH is a joint initiative between the Universities of Liverpool and their respective Student Unions. If you are seeking student accommodation in the private sector you are strongly advised to use this service. All properties advertised on the website are registered to the LSH Code of Practice which gives you confidence that they meet rigorous criteria. The LSH website provides details of accommodation offered by private landlords/letting agents including; lodgings, rooms for rent in shared student houses, student flats/apartments, bed-sits and larger housing schemes.

- <http://www.liverpoolstudenthomes.org/Accommodation>
- +44 (0)151-794-3296

LSTM Contact Information

Student Experience Officer

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