Accommodation Services

University Managed Accommodation Student Damages Policy

Purpose statement
To promote consistent and fair practice when dealing with damage attributed to residents or their guests.

Applicability and scope
All residents and visitors who have a contract, or booking for, University Managed Accommodation.

What do we mean by ‘damages’?
Any loss or breakages, including accidental damage, up to a maximum of £7,000*; this excludes damage caused by the University, its employees or agents and allowing for fair wear and tear.

Your responsibilities
On arrival, you will be sent, by email, an inventory listing fixtures and fittings of any area that you have a contractual responsibility for. You should check your inventory carefully noting any damaged or missing items before returning it to Reception within seven days. Where a room swap has taken place, the inventory should be returned within 48 hours of collecting your room keys. If you do not reply, this will be taken to mean that you agree with the details on the inventory.

Where a discrepancy is reported, our Customer Services Team will arrange appropriate repairs/replacement, or the discrepancy will be noted, so that a charge is not raised during or at the end of your contract.

Reporting damages
We will inspect your study-bedroom and communal areas during term-time and when your study-bedroom or flat is vacated and keys returned to reception at the end of your contract. Any damages will be reported to the Residences Team. We will notify you, by email, if any damages have been identified. You will have seven days from receipt of the email to contact the Residence Team to discuss the damages and costs.

At the end of your contract year, due to the high volume of inspections we need to undertake, there may be a delay of up to six weeks before we are able to notify you of any damage charges.

You can report damages directly to our Customer Services Team at reception or via the Newcastle University App; full details can be found at Reporting a Fault.
Charges
In order to cover the cost of repairs to University-owned and managed accommodation, we need to charge you for any damage you, or your guests, cause in your study-bedroom or communal areas.

How much will we charge?

Study-bedrooms
We will charge you for the full cost of damage caused to your study-bedroom up to a maximum of £7,000*. You are responsible for any damage caused by you, or your guests, in your study-bedroom. You are also responsible for any damage carried out within your study-bedroom if you leave your study-bedroom unlocked, or give your key to another person.

*If costs are in excess of £7,000 you will be responsible for the first £12,000. The University will cover any costs in excess of the £12,000.

Communal areas
Where damage occurs in a communal area, for example common room or kitchen shared by residents, all occupants will be jointly charged unless an individual claims personal responsibility within seven days of notification.

Administration charge
In order to cover our administration costs, a minimum charge of £5 will be added to any damage charge less than £100. Charges over £100 will incur an administration charge of 5% up to a maximum of £25.

Exceptions
A depreciation cost, equivalent to 10%, is applied to the replacement cost of all carpets and soft furnishings which are over one year old, up to a maximum of 10 years (100%).

Where a carpet or soft furnishing is more than 10 years old, you will only be charged for the labour element of the replacement, together with the administration charge. Where a repair can be carried out, you will be charged the full cost of the repair together with the administration charge.

It is important to be aware that all fixtures, fittings and soft furnishings are manufactured to a higher specification than those found in a domestic environment hence the higher cost of replacement. A guideline of standard charges is available from our Customer Services Team at your Reception.

Repairs
All property repairs will be undertaken by the University’s Estate Support Service or an approved contractor. You are not allowed, and should not attempt, to carry out repairs. Replacement furniture and fixtures will be purchased through University approved contractors.
Appeal procedure

If you wish to appeal against a damage charge, you must do so within 28 days of receipt of an invoice being raised. This must be in writing and addressed to the Assistant Residences Manager and should specify the grounds for appeal which may only be one or more of the following:

1. Procedural irregularity
2. Bias or prejudice
3. Excessive or inappropriate charge

The appeal will be considered initially by the Assistant Residences Manager who will decide whether there is a case. If there is a case for appeal, this will be considered by a Disciplinary Panel, consisting of a Residences Manager and a University manager from outside of Accommodation Services, who will confirm, amend or quash the original charge. Where the appeal has been dismissed, there shall be no further appeal within the University.

Original policy implementation date: September 2008 Reviewed: June 2017
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Policy owner: Paul Bandeen, Head of Accommodation Services