Accommodation Services

Key Policy - University Managed Accommodation

Purpose Statement
To promote consistent and correct key management in order to protect your personal security, privacy and possessions and to safeguard University property.

Applicability and Scope
The policy applies to any resident who has a contract or a booking to stay in University Managed Accommodation.

Definition
Key: The instrument which locks and unlocks your accommodation eg metal key, access card or fob.

Our Responsibilities
Our Customer Services Team is responsible for administration relating to all key issues and charges. It is responsible for maintaining accurate key logs of all keys issued for access and ensuring that they are returned promptly.

Replacement Keys

Lost Keys
Replacement keys are issued by our Customer Services Team at reception and can only be issued to the occupier of the bedroom. Security checks will be undertaken to confirm your identity. You will be asked to sign a ‘Resident Charge Form’ which advises you how long you have to find your original key and return the replacement key to our Customer Services Team. If you don’t return the key, you will be charged £10 for a replacement key. Whether you are charged will depend on the circumstances regarding how and where your key was lost.

Lost or stolen keys must be reported to your reception within 24/48 hours of you realising they are missing

Damaged Keys
Any key which is bent or fractured will be replaced at no charge. If your key has snapped in a lock which necessitates the call-out of a locksmith, the cost will be met by the University.

Depending on the circumstances, you will only be issued with a new key free of charge if:

- your key is bent, fractured or the card chip becomes inoperable, but is not due to your negligence
- a police crime number can be produced to indicate your key was lost due to a reported theft
Lock-outs
If you lock yourself out of your accommodation during reception opening hours, you will be issued with a replacement key, in accordance with the ‘Lost key procedure’ (above). If you lock yourself out of your accommodation when reception is closed, Estates Security Service (ESS) is able to help. ESS staff will confirm your identity, ask you to complete the ‘Resident Charge Form’ and will let you back into your accommodation. ESS will aim to respond as quickly as possible but if staff are dealing with an emergency elsewhere on campus, there may be a delay. All lock-outs attended by ESS are recorded by the Customer Services Team. There is no charge the first time you are locked out of your accommodation, but a £10 charge will be issued for any subsequent lock-outs.

Authorised Access
Our Customer Services Team will only issue keys for access to your accommodation to:

- Residences Team who have a duty to clean and maintain your accommodation
- Maintenance staff, Estates staff or approved contractors – where you have requested that a repair be carried out

At all other times you will receive at least seven days advance notice when keys to your accommodation are to be issued for access. This will state who will require access, the date and approximate time and the reason. The exception for giving you seven days advance notice is in cases of emergency, fire drill, when it is believed that a breach of one or more of the conditions of contract has occurred, or there is reason to believe a criminal offence has been or is about to be committed.

Our Customer Services Team will only authorise access to your bedroom/flat, by a person other than yourself, after receiving your permission. Permission can be given in a signed letter, after your signature has been verified against your signed key card, or by email sent from your University email address. You must state clearly who is to have access and for what purpose. The person authorised to access your room must bring photo identity (eg driving licence, passport or University Smartcard). In exceptional circumstances, the Residence Manager, or their nominated deputy, can authorise access to your room, on your behalf, after proof of identity has been established to obtain specific items such as flight tickets, passport etc. Where this is necessary the authorised person, will be accompanied by a member of University staff who will be required to sign a receipt for any items removed.

End of your Contract
You are responsible for returning your keys to your reception at the end of your contract. Responsibility for rent will not cease until your keys have been returned.

If you are leaving outside of reception opening hours you can request a key envelope from our Customer Services Team. Keys should be placed inside the envelope, the envelope sealed, and left at the designated key return point on departure. It is your responsibility to return your keys – you should not give your keys to someone else to return on your behalf. Keys should also not be left in your room, flat or in the letterbox of
the flat you are leaving.

If you intend to return your key via post, prior to the end of your contract, we recommend that you use a padded envelope and a signed for delivery service. The University will not accept responsibility for keys lost in transit and should this occur, the University reserves the right to change locks and recover the cost from you.

Electronic access fobs/card will be cancelled to prevent further access from 10:00am on the last day of your contract period.

At the end of the academic year, if your contract has ended but you have not returned your keys, you will receive notification (email and/or letter) from the office who issued your contract. This will advise:

- that unless your keys are returned within an acceptable time period (maximum 8 days) the University reserves the right to charge for a lock change (up to £250).

If you lose your key and do not have a key to hand back at the end of the contract, you must report this before leaving. The University also reserves the right to change locks and recover the cost from you.

Original policy implementation date: January 2008
Last revision: June 2018
Next review date: May 2019
Policy owner: Senior Management Team, Accommodation Services