



UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER
ISLAMIC SOCIETY



THE MANCHESTER ISOC

ACCOMMODATION GUIDE

A guide to help Muslim students find the best student accommodation

CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Student Accommodation	
University halls	3
Private accommodation	5
Checklist of what to look out for	7
Recommended estate agents	8
Viewing private student houses	9
Signing the contract	12
Moving in checklist	14
House sharing tips	16
Frequently Asked Questions	17
Important contacts	20
How can ISoc help?	21

INTRODUCTION

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Living away from home is a new and exciting experience for many students, but we understand it can also be quite daunting. Especially as a Muslim, there may be things you're worried about such as finding accommodation that suits your needs, living with strangers and access to Islamic facilities. It's important to know that you're not alone and we're here to support you every step of the way inshaAllah.

But who are we? We are the University of Manchester's Islamic Society (ISoc). UoM ISoc prides itself on being an inclusive society, open to all, muslims and non-muslims alike. So regardless of who you are and what your story is, we hope that you will find a home in the ISoc.

Our aim is to ensure your new home and living environment helps you practise your faith in confidence. We have created this guide to equip you with all the necessary information to make your transition from home to your new accommodation as smooth as possible inshaAllah.

May Allah swt keep you guided upon the right path, may He bless your time at University and allow it to be a means of benefitting the ummah and more importantly, earning His pleasure. Ameen.



RECOMMENDED ACCOMMODATION: UNIVERSITY HALLS

	Brook Hall	Burkhardt House	Hulme Hall
Location	<p>Unite Students, Brook Hall, 281 Upper Brook St, M13 0FZ</p> <p>18 minute walk from main campus</p>	<p>Burkhardt House, Oxford Place, Victoria Park, M14 5RR</p> <p>17 minute walk from main campus</p>	<p>Hulme Hall, Oxford Place, Victoria Park, M14 5RR</p> <p>17 minute walk from main campus</p>
Price (£-£££)	££	££	£££
Amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tesco Express, Subway, Seoul Kitchen, Florida's fried chicken (amazing burgers!) • MRI hospital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wimpy road on your doorstep • Tesco, Lidl, Poundland, Superdrug, Tim Horton's • Al furqan Islamic centre • Shahjalal Mosque and Islamic Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wimpy road on your doorstep • Tesco, Lidl, Poundland, Superdrug, Tim Horton's • Shahjalal Mosque and Islamic Centre
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • En-suite • Fully equipped kitchen • Popular option for 1st year Muslim students • Smaller flat size (3-5 people) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • En-suite • Fully equipped kitchen • Can pay extra for catered meals at Hulme hall • Communal areas cleaned • Single sex areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catered • Common room • Communal areas cleaned • Single sex areas • Sports facilities
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer walk to campus • No nearby mosques, closest prayer space is Mcdougall's (our University prayer hall) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger flat sizes (8-10 people) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared bathroom • Bar in residence



Lifestyle moderated area

After submitting your accommodation application form, you can email accommodation@manchester.ac.uk to request to be allocated to a 'lifestyle moderated area.' These are areas provided by the university where students have agreed to adopt a moderated lifestyle in respect of alcohol, parties, and noise, etc. The University cannot guarantee a permanently quiet or alcohol-free environment but by grouping like-minded people together it is hoped that they can at least provide a 'space' where a moderated lifestyle might flourish.



Be wary of:

- **Halls in Fallowfield** (especially Owens Park): The environment is not ideal for a practising Muslim as there are usually issues such as flat parties, alcohol, haram food, loud music etc
- **Whitworth Park hall**: Same issue as above and flats are usually mixed gender

RECOMMENDED PRIVATE ACCOMMODATION

Please note accommodation prices are from the year 2022 and may be subject to change in subsequent years.

	Ropemaker Court	IQ Daisybank	Park View
Location	500 Moss Lane East, M14 4PL 10 minute walk from main campus	67 Daisy Bank Rd, M14 5QD 15 minute walk from main campus	345 Moss Ln E, M14 4LA 18 minute walk from main campus
Price (£-£££)	£££	£££	££
Amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lidl, Tesco, Poundland, Superdrug • Curry mile - lots of takeout options! • Worldwide - halal butchers! • Whitworth Park • Al Furqan Islamic Centre • Masjid Ibrahim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tesco Express, Subway, Florida's fried chicken (amazing burgers) • Manchester Central Mosque 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lidl, Tesco, Poundland, Superdrug • Curry mile - lots of takeout options! • Worldwide - halal butchers! • Whitworth Park • Al Furqan Islamic Centre • Masjid Ibrahim
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • En-suite • Fortnightly cleaner for communal areas • Common room with games, lounge area • Study room • Cinema room • TV • 24 hour security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newly refurbished en-suite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £200 cashback using "PV200CB" • For 2022/2023 students • On site parking • En-suite • Common room • TV
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No car park for residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nearest halal shops are on the curry mile • Longer walk to UoM campus- in Victoria Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less storage in bedroom • Bedroom walls are thin- can hear noise
Website	<u>Click here</u>	<u>Click here</u>	<u>Click here</u>

	Q3 Apartments	Sanctuary Students:Grafton Street	Moss Court	Hartley Halls
Location	Hyde Grove, M13 9LQ 15 minute walk from main campus	Nick Everton House, 78 Grafton St, M13 9LR 10 minute walk from main campus	422 Moss Lane East M14 4PQ 15 minute walk from main campus	61A Brantingham Road, M16 8PA 15 minute bus from main campus
Price (£-£££)	££	£	£	£
Amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tesco Express • MRI hospital • Swinton Grove Park • Manchester Central Mosque 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morrison's, Tesco Express • MRI hospital • Manchester Central Mosque 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lidl, Tesco, Poundland, Superdrug • Curry mile- lots of takeout options! • Worldwide- halal butchers! • Whitworth Park • Al Furqan Islamic Centre • Masjid Ibrahim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asda • Alexandra Park • British Muslim Heritage Centre
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close to city centre • Pool table • On-site laundry • Offer studio flats too 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • En-suite and shared bathroom available • 24 hour maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washer dryer in kitchen • Balcony in kitchen • On site car park • Friendly staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • En-suite • Free parking • Single-sex floors • Strict no alcohol, no gender mixing policy • short term lets • Free laundry
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located in Victoria Park so further away from UoM campus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very small bathrooms • Laundry facilities always busy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared bathroom • Small kitchen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kitchen shared with at least 8 people • Small rooms
Website	click here	click here	click here	click here

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR WHEN VIEWING ACCOMMODATION

A CHECKLIST:

- Security (Does the accommodation have on site security, is it 24/7, do they have CCTV, is it gated?)
- General safety of the area (Is it in a safe, well-lit area?)
- Are utilities included with the rent? (Water, gas, electricity bills etc)
- Laundry facilities (Most accommodations have a laundry room but circuit laundry can be a nightmare, a rare but great find would be your own washer dryer in the kitchen!)
- How are bill and rent payments organised (are they due after SF drops)?
- How much is the deposit?
- Is the deposit in the protection scheme?
- When is the contract start and end date?
- Is there a clause in the contract about not paying rent if the house isn't ready in time for the contract start date?
- What facilities are included with the house? (E.g Hoover/toaster/kettle etc)
- How do you call for maintenance when needed?
- How long does it usually take for maintenance to arrive?
- Signs of infestation / mould (infestations can be a problem with accommodations along the curry mile so do ask around as many places won't openly admit this so best to find out from the experience of other residents)
- Amenities (What grocery shops, restaurants are nearby? Is there a local GP/hospital?)

RECOMMENDED PROPERTY WEBSITES

When looking for private accommodation, there are many areas around the University campus that you can explore for rented homes. The areas we particularly recommend are **Plymouth Grove, Victoria Park, City Centre and Hulme**. These are generally the safest areas which are close to the main University campus, easily accessible by public transport and are close to many amenities and mosques. They are very affordable and there are many options available varying from studio flats to eight bedroom homes.

Here are some of our recommendations for estate agents:

Manchester student homes: (Most recommended!) Sponsored by 5 universities and higher education establishments in and around Manchester, including MMU and UoM. Added benefit of being vetted by the university with trusted agents and landlords. They also offer advice for prospective and current tenants, as well as a landlord accreditation scheme that can help settle disputes and give you peace of mind when renting.

- **Drake & Co**
- **Amber Student**
- **UniHomes**
- **Accommodation For Students**
- **Rightmove.com**
- **Zoopla.com**
- **Spareroom.com** (has a feature where you can search for female only accommodation)

For more information about rented and leased properties in Manchester, you can visit:

www.manchester.ac.uk/study/experience/accommodation/ where the university provides more detailed advice on accommodation.

VIEWING PRIVATE STUDENT HOUSES

When viewing a house or flat, make sure to ask the following questions:

- Are bills included?
- Is there a Gas Certificate and Energy Performance Certificate?
- Is there a discount for renting during the summer? (most accommodations offer half rent for the months of July and August)
- What is the deposit and deposit scheme?
- When does the deposit have to be paid?
- How can we get our deposit back at the end of the tenancy?
- Do you have an inventory list? What furniture and appliances are included?
- Is there a car park or bike storage available?
- Do you have a sample tenancy agreement we could see?
- Are there any agency/extra costs?

Here are 8 key things to watch out for when viewing or considering a property:

1. Damp

When viewing a house, check all walls and ceilings – particularly around windows, corners and behind wardrobes. Houses that do not have a tumble dryer are most likely to be affected. Look out for flaking paint or wallpaper, black mould patches and a musky smell. If you move in and find that the landlord hasn't sorted out the damp issue, do some research into your tenant rights as the property is deemed "unfit for living" and tenants are legally protected.

2. Pests

Infestations are another big problem in student houses. Check the kitchen cupboards, work surfaces and around bins. Look for traps, droppings and slug trails.



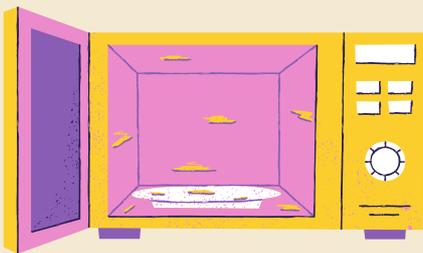
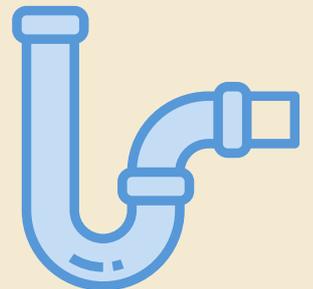
3. Security and Safety

Security is something that every student should take seriously when viewing a property. Ask if there's a burglar alarm system and check that the windows and doors are safely secured. Houses on well-lit main roads are often the most secure.



4. Electric appliances and white goods

Check if appliances are adequate and in working order. Be clear on what's included in the tenancy agreement and inventory. It's worth making sure that there are enough appliances to cater for the whole group.



5. The Water Supply

When viewing the kitchens and bathrooms, check that there is hot and cold water available, and that there is good flow coming from the taps. Flush the toilet to check they are in working order. Look out for damp patches or possible leaks. Water damage is costly and can be dangerous.

6. Furnishings and fittings

Have a clear idea of what's included in the inventory and what's not. Landlords of student homes should provide each tenant with a suitable desk and chair (these can be additional costs for you and can cause you a headache when moving out). If possible, you should also check mattresses for broken springs as these can become dangerous and uncomfortable over time.



7. Check that the house is well-insulated

Making sure that the house is well insulated can save you a lot of money throughout the year. Check for double-glazed windows, secure doors, a good heating system and a lack of draughty spots. You can have a feel of the walls inside the property - if they're cold, that's a sign that the insulation is poor (and could eventually lead to damp in the walls).

8. Talk to the current tenants

Nobody has a better idea of what a house is like to live in than its current tenants. They're likely to offer an unbiased and realistic account of living in the home and if the landlord is trying to hide anything from you.



SIGNING THE CONTRACT

Before signing a contract, there are a few things you should be mindful of:

Tenancy deposit protection scheme

You need to make sure your deposit is protected. Landlords have 30 days from receiving your deposit to put it into a tenancy deposit protection scheme (where it stays in case of a dispute when you leave). If they fail to do this, you could be entitled to up to four times the amount back, but you'd have to go through the small claims court.



30
DAYS

Letting agent fees and signing the contract

To find a property to rent, you may need to use a letting agent, who rents out the property on the landlords' behalf. Letting agents are known to charge high fees - so make sure you always check for any extra fees or charges first and factor them in. Letting agents should not charge you for just registering or showing you their list of properties available for rent.



RENT

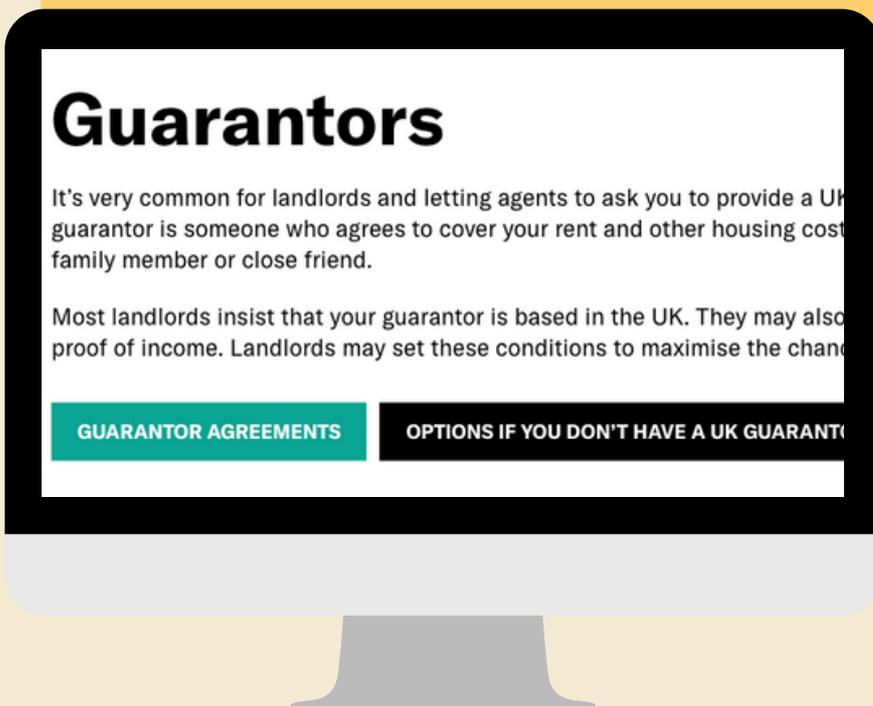
Once you get the contract, read it carefully before signing. Check it includes how much the deposit and rent is, when it's due, and what it covers. Discuss points you disagree on, or don't understand, with the landlord or letting agent. If they agree to change it, don't just take their word. Ensure the contract's changed too, so you've got proof.



Guarantors

It's very common for landlords and letting agents to ask you to provide a UK-based guarantor when signing a tenancy agreement. A guarantor is someone who agrees to cover your rent and other housing costs if you don't pay them. It's usually a parent or guardian, family member or close friend. Most landlords insist that your guarantor is based in the UK. They may also need your guarantor to pass a credit check or provide proof of income. This process may take a couple of weeks to do which can delay the start of your tenancy.

For more information on guarantor agreements and what options you have if you don't have a UK guarantor visit:
manchesterstudentsunion.com/housing-advice/guarantors



Also, it is important to know that your landlord doesn't have the right to turn up unannounced and inspect the house once you have started renting. They must give all tenants at least 24 hour notice beforehand.

MOVING IN CHECKLIST

Before moving in to your new accommodation, ensure you check the following:

- Sort out your Council Tax.** Full-time students are exempt from the tax but you'll need to complete a form to let your council know.
- Sort out your utilities** – gas, electricity and water. Work out whose name the bills will be in and what share you will each pay. These are sometimes included in your rent so check your contract carefully.
- Speak to your managing agent or landlord.** Make sure that their contact details are easily accessible so you can contact them if there are any problems. Your landlord is responsible for most repairs. They can also give you advice on how to control your heating or how to use the washing machine. Keep their details handy in case you need to contact them urgently.
- Check the local parking regulations if you have a car.** You may be restricted to parking in certain zones or at certain times. Avoid a hefty fine by establishing where you can park and whether you'll need a permit.
- Sort out internet access.** You're likely to need decent Wi-Fi in your house, so you'll need to arrange for broadband to be set up in your property. This may take a couple of weeks to set up.
- Familiarise yourself with the security in your home.** Make sure that you know how to lock the windows and doors and ensure outbuildings are secure. It's important that you take security seriously.

- ✓ **Check public transport routes.** Work out where the nearest bus stop or train station is so you know exactly how you will get to your lectures and seminars.
- ✓ **Buy some essentials.** Now you're in a house of your own, you're going to need to buy things like kitchen utensils, toilet roll, a lota, bleach and bedding.
- ✓ **Keep an eye on your finances.** Check what date your income or student finance is being paid and make sure you have budgeted for your rent, utility bills and regular costs such as food, toiletries and nights out.
- ✓ **Register for the doctor and dentist.** Register with your local practices in case you need to access healthcare services. Check if you need any vaccinations as some courses ask students to be vaccinated against meningitis.
- ✓ **Update your address.** Let your university and other organisations – for example your mobile phone provider and bank – know where you are living in case they need to get hold of you.
- ✓ **Check when the bins are collected.** Knowing when the bins are collected will help you avoid drowning in rubbish for weeks on end.
- ✓ **Your landlord may have left items in the property and they will expect these to be in good condition when you move out.** Always refer to your inventory and take photos of everything before moving in.

HOUSE SHARING TIPS

Take extra care to clean up after yourself in shared areas.



Try to clean your pots, pans and cutlery as soon as possible to avoid piling up.



Have a rota for cleaning and don't forget to take the bins out.



Decide how you are going to split up your fridge and shelf space beforehand.



Check with housemates if it's okay to invite people over.



Be cautious of your use of water and electricity, or ask your utility company to install a smart metre.



Don't be loud at night, others may be trying to sleep.



Generally, try to be considerate and not cause inconvenience to others.



The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, "Whoever is kind, affable, and easy-going, Allah will forbid him from entering Hellfire."

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: I have been placed in a mixed gendered flat for the year. Is there anything I can do to switch to a same gendered flat?

A: There are currently no single-sex halls available at the University of Manchester. However, you can request a single gender flat. Please note, though, there is no guarantee that you will get one.

Q: I have been placed into Owens Park Tower and I'm extremely uncomfortable being in this environment. Is there anything I can do to switch halls?

A: To switch halls visit www.accommodation.manchester.ac.uk/current/here/info/ and scroll down to the section "Transfer Between Halls" where all the relevant information can be found. For issues that are unable to be resolved through the website email the accommodation manager for more help.



Q: I've moved into catered halls and I don't know if they can provide me with halal food.

A: In halls, halal food can be provided if you order it pre-arrival. It's a bit frustrating sometimes having to ask for it every time. But gradually the staff gets to know your face and are ready with your dish as you get there. All catered halls provide halal food. If you have any issues, make sure you take it up with the accommodation manager and if necessary email the head of catering (alison.shedlock@manchester.ac.uk) to make any issues known.

Q: Where can I perform ablution in my halls of residence?

A: It is unlikely that there will be low-level sinks in university accommodation which makes foot-washing a challenge. If you have en suite accommodation this should not present any difficulties. However, if you are in a shared bathroom accommodation you may have to explain to other students that you need to use the hand wash basins for washing feet. And remember, always be considerate and wipe down any excess water. Leave it as clean as you found it!

Q: I'm worried about where I can pray in my halls as people keep coming in and out of my room with their shoes on.

A: In accommodation, your room is probably the only suitable place for prayers, but always ask if there is a designated space. Other students are likely to wear shoes in other parts of the accommodation. If your halls come with cleaning staff, it can be helpful to talk to staff who clean your room and explain that outdoor shoes on your floor will make it unclean for prayer, etc. They are unlikely to know unless you speak to them.

Q: My flatmates only want to socialise in an environment that I am not comfortable in (ie alcohol, clubbing etc.)

A: It's important to know that you shouldn't ever feel pressured into doing something that you're not comfortable with. At the beginning of your tenancy, it would be good to explain to your flatmates how you feel about the nature of these gatherings as early as you can. The majority of students we have met tend to respect your decision and will try to make changes. You can always offer alternatives if you want to get to know your flatmates/neighbours in a better environment, such as going to a restaurant for a meal or watching a movie. You don't have to just socialise with your flatmates. Meeting people at ISoc events or your hall's common room or joining your halls of residence Facebook group is also a way to find like-minded people living in your building.



Q: I'm really worried that my flatmates are going to be messy and they're going to contaminate our shared kitchen spaces with pork and alcohol.

A: This can be an awkward conversation to have, but trust us, most Muslims living in halls have had to go through this! Try approaching your flatmates in a friendly manner. Explain to them that you don't feel comfortable with alcohol/pork being left on the shared food preparation spaces, and that it's important that they thoroughly clean all the equipment they have used. Most students are helpful in preventing cross-contamination between halal and haram foods. This includes using sealed containers, different cooking utensils, foil on the grill pan, etc. Additionally, try to section off a part of the fridge for your use only. If you don't feel comfortable, then check your halls of residence guidance on bringing your own fridge to your room!

When moving into halls, bring your own plates, cutlery, cups, pans, and cleaning equipment. If your halls come with cleaning staff, it can be helpful to talk to staff who clean the shared living spaces to avoid cross-contaminating dirty plates/utensils with your kitchen items, etc. They are unlikely to know unless you speak to them!



Q: A member of the accommodation staff has made a racist or Islamophobic comment towards me. What can be done and who should I report this to?

A: The University has measures in place to combat any form of discrimination on university premises. It is really important to speak to someone about any incidents that have taken place. Contact headofservices@manchesterisoc.com or the university muslim chaplain. For more information on how to report incidents visit <https://www.reportandsupport.manchester.ac.uk/>

WHO CAN HELP?

If you have any questions, concerns or would like some help, these are your points of contact:

University Accommodation Office:



www.accommodation.manchester.ac.uk



0161 275 2888



accommodation@manchester.ac.uk

Students Union:



manchesterstudentsunion.com/housing-advice

ISoc contact:



headofservices@manchesterisoc.com



HOW CAN ISOC HELP

One of the most important ways ISoc can help is by providing you with the opportunity to meet other Muslims and like-minded people with similar expectations and accommodation needs.

All the options we have provided in this guide are in close proximity to the university, and you have the option of asking to share with only Muslim males/females if you so wish. Please note that our Islamic Society does not manage the advertised properties and is not, in any capacity, an estate agency.

You can also search for accommodation by posting in the University of Manchester Islamic Society public Facebook group to ask if there are any spaces/vacancies:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/manchesterisoc/>

We hope that this guide was beneficial in helping answer your accommodation questions, and we pray that Allah swt makes this journey easy for you, and grants you what is best for your dunya and akhira.

