



# Student Booking and Cancellation Policy (During COVID-19 Pandemic) – Academic Year 2020/21 With our Landlord Places for People

## Introduction

The aim of this policy is to provide guidance on the types of bookings we have at Derwent Students on behalf of the landlord, Places For People, and how we assess these bookings, whilst supporting our students and ensuring our halls are safe and maintained.

## Types of Bookings

There are three types of bookings, these are Book Now, Create Application and University Bookings.

**Book Now** - Most of our bookings will be directly through our online system as this is the quickest way to book accommodation with us. When you complete your application online via our Book Now option, our system will automatically offer you a room depending on what your preferred choices are. This type of booking allows you to view your Tenancy Agreement and pay a deposit instantly.

**Create Application** – This option is used if you are looking to live with a group of friends or have a special requirement that you wish to tell us about. It is also used for our agent bookings and summer bookings. Once you have completed your application, our property teams will offer you a room based on your preferences.

**University Bookings** – Some of our accommodation is offered through the University. Once the University has confirmed your offer, we will be in touch with you in order to complete your booking.

## How will you assess my booking?

We will be unable to accept your application if any of the following apply:-

- You are not in full time education
- You are currently in breach of an existing tenancy agreement for any reason
- There is no suitable room available that meets your requirements

Our accommodation is an adult environment, where most tenants are aged over 18. If you will be under 18 at the tenancy start date, then please contact the relevant site direct before booking to ensure that we are able to accept your application.

We will endeavour, though cannot guarantee to meet all requirements. If we cannot offer your preferred choice, we will contact you with an alternative room or ask if you wish to be placed on a waiting list. For any university bookings, please note that the Booking Policy of that particular university will take precedence over this policy.

## Can I cancel my booking?

There are circumstances in which you may cancel your booking. These are set out below.

### During the COVID-19 (Coronavirus Outbreak & Lock Down)

We want to support our students to continue with their education and feel confident in booking their accommodation to attend University without the fear of signing a contract which begins in September when their University course may not.

To enable our students to move forward and plan we have made the following temporary adjustments to our Cancellation Policy.

- You can book your room with Derwent Students at Hassell Street with the confidence that should your University course not be continuing as planned in September, due to the continuation of the COVID-19 virus, your accommodation tenancy will also be deferred.
- To give you the confidence to secure your booking, we have extended the period of time in which you can cancel your booking. You will still need to pay a deposit but that this is refundable up to the end of August (2 weeks after A level results).
- Accommodation can be cancelled without charge up to the end of August (2 weeks after A level results).
- Should the COVID-19 Pandemic be concluded prior to September the usual cancellation periods will apply as stipulated in the conditions below.
- The Terms and Conditions of your tenancy will remain the same and the only aspect that will be altered in respect of COVID-19 will be the conditions mentioned above.

**PLEASE NOTE** – Places For People reserve the right to cancel your booking at Hassell Street should the accommodation not reach a sustainable occupancy level. In this case all students who have made a booking will be informed by 1<sup>st</sup> September and their deposits will be returned.

### Initial Cancellation Period

You have a short period after accepting the tenancy agreement in which you may cancel your booking, this is known as the Initial Cancellation Period. The duration of the Initial Cancellation Period depends on when you accept the tenancy agreement. You must give the specific properties site office written notice (by post or email) that you wish to cancel your booking.

- If you accept the tenancy agreement on or before Monday 10<sup>th</sup> August 2020, the Initial Cancellation Period is three working days starting on the day you sign or accept the tenancy agreement. Your cancellation request must reach us by the end of the third working day after you accept the tenancy agreement and before you move into your accommodation.
- If you accept the tenancy agreement after Monday 10<sup>th</sup> August 2020 the Initial Cancellation Period is one working day starting from the day you sign or accept the tenancy agreement. Your cancellation request must reach us by the end of the next working day after you accept the tenancy agreement and before you move into your accommodation.

## Outside the Initial Cancellation Period

If you have accepted an offer of accommodation and wish to cancel outside of the Initial Cancellation Period, regardless of whether you have collected your keys or not, the landlord **may** agree to release you from your contract due to the following circumstances:

- You are a first year or a prospective student and your offer at your first choice of University\Higher Education Institution is withdrawn as a result of you not achieving or exceeding their required entry grades. You must put your request in writing and send us supporting evidence from the University or UCAS within three working days of receiving your confirmation
- Your UK Visa application has been refused. You must put your request in writing and send us supporting evidence within five working days of you receiving official confirmation
- Mitigating circumstances such as ill health or family circumstances. If you request to cancel due to ill health you must produce a certificate from a recognised medical practitioner stating the medical reason of why you are unable to continue to live in your accommodation.

Where evidence is provided within the specified timescale, your cancellation request will be considered. Upon a cancellation request being granted, you will receive written confirmation of this, and you will no longer remain liable for the tenancy and any deposits or rents paid will be refunded.

Where a cancellation request is not in line with the above circumstances, you must find a suitable replacement who is acceptable to the landlord to take over your legally binding contract. The replacement tenant must arrange an appointment with us to sign a new tenancy agreement. It is your responsibility to find another suitable tenant (in most cases a prospective tenant will not be suitable if he/she is already renting a room from the landlord or bound into another contract).

When your accommodation has been re-let to a suitable replacement tenant, we will release you from your tenancy and a £50 release fee will be deducted from your deposit. This fee is for room preparation and administration fees. If Derwent Students accepts the request for the cancellation of your tenancy, you will receive written notification and be provided with a release date. Please note that you will be liable for rent until this date. Failure to return all keys, fobs or key cards may incur further charges. Your deposit refund will only be actioned once all charges and rent payments are received.

If you fail to find someone to take over your tenancy, you will remain liable for the full rent due under your tenancy agreement. Please note that Derwent Students will only assist you with finding a replacement tenant once full occupancy has been achieved for the property.

## **Disability and Special Requirements**

We will make every effort to meet the needs of students with disabilities or special needs. If you have a medical condition/special need that affects your accommodation requirement, please let us know in the additional notes section when you complete your application. Applicants are encouraged to disclose any special requirements (medical, religious etc.) to enable us to provide you with the right room for your needs.

## **Equality and Diversity: Equal Opportunities Policy**

We are committed to promoting Equal Opportunities in the provision of accommodation regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic and national origin, religious belief, age, gender, marital status or sexual orientation.

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Last Reviewed: 1st May 2020  
Next Review: 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020