



27th March 2020

Dear Residents

RE: Your Licence/ Tenancy Agreement with Student Castle 2019/20

Across the world and here in the UK, we are each experiencing unique times with the Coronavirus outbreak. We know this is a period of worry and many unknowns for our residents, team members, and their families.

As ever, the health, safety and wellbeing of our residents and team members remain our highest priority. For our current residents, this is your home and we intend to do all we can to ensure it continues to feel that way.

We are working hard and doing everything we can to ensure we provide the best support we can, as the situation continues to evolve.

The current advice from the UK Government for students living in halls of residence is as follows:

"The Government's advice is that students remaining at university in England should now stay where they are and not attempt to travel. If they are living in student halls, or private rented accommodation, they should remain there and stay indoors while current restrictions are in force. As the Prime Minister said, staying put and remaining indoors are now crucial to slow the rate of transmission of COVID-19, to protect the NHS from being overwhelmed, and save the lives of fellow citizens".

Michelle Donelan MP (Minister of State for Universities)

However, due to the ongoing restrictions imposed by the government as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are aware that many of you have returned home and will not be returning to Student Castle before the end of the academic year.

We wanted to write to you to outline Student Castle's position on your agreement with us for the current academic year. We have outlined below our policy depending on your situation:

- ***"I am staying at Student Castle until the end of my licence/ tenancy period."***

Student Castle intends to remain open as long as government directives allow. Restrictions to communal area usage will remain for as long as the government directives continue but may be amended in line with government strategy.

- ***"I have left Student Castle temporarily and intend to return"***

Your room will be there for you for when you are able to return until the end of your current licence/ tenancy period.

- ***"I have left Student Castle and will not be returning"***

If you email us by 12 noon (UK time) on **Friday 10 April 2020** with notice that you wish to terminate your licence/ tenancy, we will terminate as of **Saturday 11 April 2020** for the remaining period of your agreement. **This deadline cannot be pushed back and if we do not hear from you then we will assume you wish to continue your licence.** Please return your keycards, wristbands and post box keys



by **Wednesday 15 April 2020** by post otherwise we will deduct the charges from any refund due to you.

All normal check out procedures will apply and any damages to the room will be deducted from your rent refund.

If your terminating of your licence/ tenancy results in a credit on your account, no further payments will be required. If you are terminating your licence/ tenancy and charges remain outstanding after the corresponding credits have been applied, payment of any outstanding balance will be required before we can terminate the licence/ tenancy. For those of you up to date with your payments, the 3rd instalment due on 13 April 2020 will not be required to be paid.

How you made your latest rent payment and whether you are staying with us next year will drive how any credits on your account are processed. Please see summary below;

- ***"I am returning to Student Castle for academic year 2020/21"***

A credit will be applied to your account corresponding to any credit left over as a result of your early termination of your contract for academic year 2019/20. This will reduce the amount you have to pay for 2020/21.

- ***"I am not returning to Student Castle for academic year 2020/21 and made my latest rent payment online by Sagepay"***

For those of you who paid in full by Sagepay, we will refund to the card that you made your rent payment on, unless we hear differently by **Friday 10 April 2020**. **If you are happy for us to refund to this card you do not need to complete a refund form**. Refunding by Sagepay is the quickest and easiest way for us to refund you.

- ***"I am not returning to Student Castle for academic year 2020/21 and made my latest rent payment by bank transfer or PDQ"***

For those of you who paid by other methods, please complete the refund form attached to this letter and return it via email. Please note that bank transfers to overseas banks will incur fees that will be deducted by the bank from any refund sent to you.

Please note

Given the amount of administration involved in this process and that we are working with reduced staffing levels because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the refund process could take up to 8 weeks. If you have not received a refund by 5th June 2020, please contact us. This is an unprecedented situation and we ask for your patience and understanding whilst we process these refunds.

- ***"I left Student Castle quickly and there are some belongings left in my room, but now I wish to terminate my licence/ tenancy"***

Please highlight in your e-mail confirming your wish to terminate that there are belongings remaining in your room that you wish to keep. Once restrictions are lifted, then you will have **2 weeks** to clear out your belongings. We will contact you to let you know when the restrictions have been lifted. If you cannot attend in person, you may email us with the details of someone else who will clear the room on your behalf. We will allow them access to your room if they are able to show ID. If your room is not emptied **within 2 weeks** following restrictions being lifted, then we can arrange shipping for you, but

an administration fee will be applied in addition to the cost of the shipping. We will not be able to take responsibility for any missing or damaged items, or any delays or further charges arising from customs checks. Any administration and shipping fees will need to be paid in full before items are released. If we do not hear from you then the items will be disposed of or donated to a local charity.

- ***“I am still at Student Castle, but I cannot travel home at the moment because of travel restrictions. When these restrictions are lifted then I wish to return home and will not come back to Student Castle”***

You must still tell us of your intention to leave by 12:00pm on 10th April. If you have not paid your 3rd instalment, then this will be required to be paid as per the terms of your agreement. You will be able to stay at Student Castle until the restrictions are lifted and then you will have a further 14 days to leave. You will then receive a refund for the unused period following the 14 days after restrictions are lifted. If you do not leave within the 14 days, then you will be held to the original terms of the licence.

- ***“What will happen to my deposit?”***

We will release your deposit via the Deposit Protection Service, and you will then receive an email from them advising how to reclaim your deposit.

Please note if you are returning to Student Castle for 2020/21, then your deposit will be rolled over from this academic year. Any charges that result from the inspection will be applied to your account or deducted from your rent refund should you have terminated your licence.

<p>Please note that due to current government restrictions on all but essential travel for work, the release of your deposit may be delayed as all scheme management are running on skeleton staff. We ask for your patience and understanding whilst we process these deposits.</p>

To all of you, we thank you for your patience and understanding during these difficult and unprecedented times. We hope this statement will alleviate some of your worries or concerns.

For those of you staying with us during this period, we hope we can make your stay as comfortable as possible.

To all our residents that are coming back to us later in the year, we look forward to welcoming you back in easier times.

Finally, for those who will be leaving and not returning, we hope you have enjoyed your time at Student Castle. Most importantly, at this time, please stay safe and healthy and if you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

With all our best wishes,

Student Castle