

# News story: 'Rogue' private landlords must stop exploiting students

Rogue private landlords providing poor and substandard living conditions for students will be warned over exploiting learners by the Universities Minister today (25 March), as new regulations now in force give tenants the power to make them face justice in court.

Speaking to students today, the Minister will hit out at private landlords who do not fulfil their responsibilities, resulting in some students encountering poor conditions such as a lack of heating or hot water. Some [figures](#) have even suggested that one in five students live in 'squalor' and reported mice, slugs, and other vermin infesting their accommodation.

[New regulations](#) came into force last week empowering students and renters across the country, giving them the right to take landlords to court where they fail to address serious defects in homes such as mould, damp and safety hazards.

The Minister will describe the regulations as a 'milestone' for student renters, helping to raise standards in student accommodation and hold landlords more accountable for their actions and responsibilities.

Universities Minister Chris Skidmore said:

Students' time at university should be some of the best days of their lives and yet I have heard appalling stories of students living in terrible conditions, which can affect their studies and even their mental health.

While there are many landlords who do take their responsibilities seriously, for too long rogue private landlords have been exploiting vulnerable students by failing to provide even basic standards of living.

Now the time is up for these landlords making a profit from shoddy accommodation. These new regulations make landlords more accountable, helping to improve standards, and students should use their powers to make sure landlords face justice where they're not fulfilling their responsibilities.

Minister for Housing Heather Wheeler MP said:

For the last year, we have worked tirelessly to ensure all tenants, including students, have access to a fairer private rented market across the country.

From cracking down on unnecessary costs through our Tenant Fees Act, extending HMO regulations to offer protections to more tenants than ever before and giving councils the funding they need to tackle rogue landlords, we are determined to make renting of the standard it should be.

Now, these changes are set to have a real impact. Students must use these powers to crackdown on poor quality accommodation and opportunistic landlords profiting from tenants' misery.

A [survey by NUS and UniPol](#) found that in 2018, 40 per cent of UK students who rented privately lived with damp and mould on their walls. The same survey found that over a third of students said poor living conditions made them feel anxious or depressed (36%).

To make sure that students receive adequate accommodation when renting privately, Unipol and Universities UK have created codes to set standards for practice and conduct, which landlords can sign up to, to make sure standards are met.

The Universities Minister is calling on all private landlords renting properties to students to sign up to these codes to help to ensure they act responsibly, meet standards of practice and have a clear complaints process.

Mr Skidmore will also encourage all universities to consider the social value of contracting out services, such as accommodation, to help make sure the wider community benefits from these decisions.

He is working with the University of Northampton to look at ways in which universities can ensure they are embedding social values in their procurement practices.