

Motion for the Students' Union to produce their own "Student Housing Accreditation Scheme" to protect their student members living in rented accommodation.

This Union notes:

- 50.1% of students live in Privately Rented Accommodation, according to the Student Housing Survey 2019
- 74% of students didn't know whether their property was accredited or not, according to the Student Housing Survey 2019
- The current Accreditation scheme is managed by the University of Lincoln, with the official partners being Bishop Grosseteste University, City of Lincoln Council, Lincolnshire County Council (trading standards), Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue, & Lincolnshire Police
- There is no information available for Students to understand what the accreditation scheme is, with only one page regarding accreditation on the accommodation website, which is solely aimed at Landlords
(<https://accommodation.lincoln.ac.uk/city-of-lincoln-student-housing-accreditation-scheme-registration/>)
- StudentPad is used to promote accredited landlords and their houses, as well as the Student Housing Fayre hosted each November. 345 students attended the Housing Fayre in 2019.
- 23.8% of students living in privately rented were either neither "dissatisfied or satisfied", "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied", according to the Student Housing Survey 2019
- 67.4% had experienced maintenance issues with 23% of students experience issues with landlords not responding, according to the Student Housing Survey 2019
- The University of Lincoln Accommodation Team no longer visit multiple houses to do spot checks on the quality and safety of the accommodation.
- The current scheme states maintenance issues (not urgent i.e. not toilet blockage, flooding, or electrical faults etc) should be remedied within 28 working days
- The current scheme states landlords should "respond reasonably and promptly to any complaints raised by tenants or their representatives".
- The current scheme includes no form of Student Feedback Mechanism
- Research from Pevalin, Reeves, Baker & Bentley (2017) found living in poor quality housing for extended periods of time has negative consequences for mental health
- In the year of 2019-20, the Students' Union Advice Centre dealt with 98 cases relating to housing from landlord disputes to poor quality maintenance.

This Union believes:

- A large proportion of our membership live in privately rented HMO (houses of multiples occupancy) across the city of Lincoln.
- The lack of publicity and poor turn out for the housing fayre has caused little knowledge of the accreditation system within the student population.

- This lack of knowledge about the accreditation system means it carries no value anymore, as students do not see a benefit in looking for specifically accredited accommodation.
- Housing is becoming a more prominent issue, particularly regarding the maintenance, landlord communication and upkeep of housing.
- The current accreditation scheme no longer ensures housing is well-kept or maintained, and has no form of student feedback mechanism
- The current scheme is outdated, and should provide more protection for student renters against “rogue” landlords
- The correlation between negative wellbeing and poor-quality housing, would mean if there was an improvement in housing standards across the city this could see an improvement in student wellbeing for our Members.

This Union resolves:

- We, The University of Lincoln Students' Union, action our Executive to produce a new Students' Union Specific Accreditation Scheme, that puts student welfare and safety as a top priority.
- The Accreditation Scheme should put student feedback and consistent monitoring at the forefront of its membership criteria, along with traditional safety and HMO licensing procedures.