Safety for Residents

Introduction
This guide will provide you with all the information you need to stay safe in our accommodation. University accommodation is fitted with modern fire detection systems to provide the highest level of life safety. However, the fire detectors are sensitive and susceptible to unwanted false alarms, caused by smoke from burning food, steam from kettles, aerosol sprays, etc. Therefore cooking should never be left unattended.

Fire blankets
These can be used to smother fires in frying pans, cover small appliances that are on fire, and wrap around people whose clothing is burning.
Once you have used the blanket for whatever purpose, DO NOT REMOVE IT until you are sure it is safe to do so. If you have wrapped it around someone, leave it there for skilled medical people to remove.
Remember, if there is a fire the golden rule is:
GET OUT, DIAL 999, AND STAY OUT!

Fire doors
All doors that are marked as fire doors are required to be closed at all times. Fire doors are designed to ensure your safety should there be a fire in your accommodation. Any fire doors that are propped or wedged open will be considered a misuse of fire safety equipment and residents will be subject to the set charge of £100. Staff will carry out spot checks throughout the year to ensure that all residents are complying with our fire safety regulations.

Fire drill evacuation
Fire drills will be held during your first term. The objective of fire drills is to familiarise you with the routine to be followed in the event of fire. Treat them seriously, because there may be a real fire.
Check how to get out and identify a safe alternative route should your normal exit be blocked. Check the location of fire alarms, fire extinguishers, and fire blankets. Check the sound of the fire alarm in your accommodation. On hearing the alarm, leave the building immediately using the nearest available route. Do not assume that it is a false alarm or test. If there is a fire, time spent talking might reduce your chances of evacuating safely.
A report of any non-evacuated students will be supplied to the Accommodation Office and those students not evacuating will be subject to a charge of £100.
Remember to take your keys and fob with you when evacuating so you can get into the building when the all clear is given to enter your property.
Remember –
GET OUT, DIAL 999, AND STAY OUT!
Flammable items

Candles, tea lights, oil burners, fireworks, joss sticks, live coals, shishas, hookahs, flammable liquids, electric heaters, electric cigarettes, plug in air fresheners, self heating devices etc are a potential source of fire as well as a serious fire hazard and therefore can not be permitted in your accommodation or in any shared or communal areas. If any of these items are discovered in your accommodation you may be charged.

Charges can be found online at: www.le.ac.uk/accommodation

Preventing false alarms

You can prevent false activations of the fire alarm by following these simple steps:

• Do NOT smoke in the flats – if you are caught smoking in your flat – even out of the window you will be issued with an £100 charge and face disciplinary action.
• This includes e-cigarettes, these can set off the fire alarm and are not permitted within the accommodation
• Keep your kitchen door closed when cooking – use the extractor fan and open a window to ventilate the room. Wedging the kitchen door open allows cooking fumes into the hall where the smoke detector there will activate the alarm.
• Keep the shower room door closed after a shower to prevent steam from activating the alarm.
• Don’t spray aerosols directly underneath the smoke/heat detectors.
• Don’t use hair straighteners, hair dryers, irons and other heat producing items directly under the detector heads. Ensure they are switched off when not in use.
• Use a heat protective mat with your straighteners and don’t leave straighteners etc on the floor.
• Do not tamper or cover the detector heads
• Do not set off the fire extinguisher unless in an emergency as the powder inside will activate the fire alarm system.

Persistent false activations of the fire alarm system will result in disciplinary action and anyone found maliciously activating the fire alarm will be subject to fire tampering charges, eviction and a possible criminal record.

BBQs

BBQs are only permitted on the dedicated BBQ stations. These are brick stands with a metal grill top which can be used for disposable BBQs. Make sure you follow the safety instructions on the BBQ stand and on the BBQ box.

Smoking

We operate a No-Smoking policy in our accommodation, this includes electronic cigarettes. If you are caught smoking anywhere inside University property you will be charged £100.

If you choose to smoke, please:

• Smoke outside University buildings, away from doorways or open windows
• Make sure you put out your cigarette and dispose of it safely
• Do not smoke in areas where there are flammable items
Electrical safety

**Electrically-powered equipment** manufactured to normal commercial standards and in good condition should not present any electrical danger as all dangerous parts should be fully enclosed. Residents are strictly forbidden to carry out any work which might give rise to the danger of electrocution. This includes, for example, attempting to repair/adjust electrical appliances and connecting defective or dangerous appliances to the mains. All faults should be reported via the online maintenance system.

**Electrical socket outlets** in study bedrooms and elsewhere are to be used to supply one appliance. The use of extension leads and multi-way adaptors can lead to overloading of the electrical systems, which may trip overload protection devices (fuses, circuit breakers, etc) or even cause a fire.

Operating appliances designed for use on voltages other than 230V can cause fires when connected to the University mains supply. Small electrical cooking appliances such as toasters, kettles and microwaves, etc may only be connected to the mains in kitchens. The use of electrical appliances in socket outlets in corridors is strictly prohibited for residents.

**Important note:**
The responsibility for the safety of personal electrical equipment rests with the owner. Residents using their own electrical appliances should regularly check for defects, and in particular look for:

- Broken plugs
- Frayed, chafed, cracked or split supply cables
- Signs of overheating, e.g. scorch marks, blackening or blistering
- Dangerous connections at the appliance and plug ends of the cable. Cable grips should hold both the outer and inner sheathing securely
- Rattling or other looseness in the plug or appliance which might indicate an internal fault

We offer free PAT testing of resident’s appliances. There is no charge for this service. Please submit a request on the online maintenance system.
Kitchen safety
Never leave cooking unattended, it will lead to fires.

Deep fat/oil frying
The use of deep fat fryers/chip pans is prohibited.

Microwave ovens
• Keep them clean so that they work effectively
• Keep door seals clean by wiping frequently with a soft, damp cloth and, if necessary, by cleaning out food particles. Never use a sharp pointed knife or similar. This will ruin the seal
• Keep metal out of the microwave.
• Do not run a microwave cooker without a load (something to be heated). This may damage the cooker.
• Open containers fully and remove caps and closures from bottles and jars
• Beware of superheating. Superheating is the phenomenon in which a liquid is heated to a temperature higher than its boiling point, without boiling. However, once the liquid is disturbed (by stirring, jolting the container or adding a further substance) some of it violently flashes to steam, spraying boiling water out of the container

Dangerous substances
Many substances used domestically are dangerous if not used with care. Only use substances for the purpose for which they are supplied.

Before using any substances, check the directions for health and safety information and follow them carefully.

Be particularly wary when using products marked as follows:

These will damage human tissue, causing painful and disfiguring burns. Protect your skin with a pair of good quality rubber or plastic gloves and keep arms covered. If in contact with eyes or skin wash off with lots of water immediately. If ingested seek immediate medical attention.

Burns and scalds
Scalds can be caused by steam, hot water, hot soup or beverages, or hot oil, and burn injuries can be caused by hot utensils, flames, etc. To avoid these injuries:
• Lift lids off cooking utensils carefully to avoid the steam
• Turn pan handles away from you when cooking, to avoid knocking them
• Turn off the oven before going out, answering phone calls or attending to visitors
• Do not directly hold utensils containing hot liquids – use oven mitts

First aid
If you or another resident require first aid support, please contact your reception for advice.
Food hygiene
Perishable foodstuffs should be stored in the refrigerator, as low temperatures slow down microorganism growth. Cooking destroys microorganisms; however, it is necessary to cook food for long enough to raise the temperature adequately throughout the food. If food is left at warm temperatures, bacteria build up and produce toxins. Subsequent cooking may destroy bacteria but may not destroy all toxins. Germs are killed at high temperatures and are slowed down by refrigeration. The best ways of avoiding food contamination and food poisoning are to:
• Keep food frozen or refrigerated.
• Do not keep food longer than recommended.
• Follow advice on packaging regarding cooking instructions and use by dates.
• Do not store fresh food (intended to be cooked) with precooked food (which is to be eaten as is). Any germs in the fresh food can be transferred to the pre-cooked food.
• Cook food thoroughly. Make sure that any food is cooked in the middle as well as on the outside.
• Take special care when using leftovers. Cook thoroughly.
• Keep pans, kitchen tools, glass, crockery, fridges and food storage areas clean. Food scraps, crumbs and open containers encourage vermin that carry disease.
• Wash your hands often when handling food. Keep towels, tea-towels and washcloths clean and dry them quickly (and safely – not near an open flame). A warm, damp cloth that has been used to wipe food from hands is an ideal breeding ground for germs.
• Avoid handling food if you have an injury or a skin condition. Cover cuts with a clean, waterproof adhesive dressing.

Allergies
Talk to your flatmates and be considerate when using shared space if those you share with have allergies. If you have allergies and need any support e.g. if you need your own fridge, make sure you talk to a member of the Residence Life Team.

Eyes are particularly vulnerable
Most household substances – bleach, scouring powder, toilet cleaners, disinfectants, detergents etc. – are designed to dissolve grease and remove stains. Follow instructions on the label of household products.

Take extra care with things such as aerosol cans of oven cleaner.
NEVER MIX HOUSEHOLD SUBSTANCES.
Domestic hazards

Think carefully when storing things. Do not put heavy objects on high shelves if you can avoid it. They are more difficult to put up and take down, and if they fall, they are liable to inflict more serious injury. Load free-standing shelves and bookcases with care, to avoid top-heaviness and overturning. Take great care with medicines. Residents under medical supervision and taking regular doses of tablets or medicines should ensure these are kept in a secure place in their own rooms. If you require a fridge for medical purposes, please contact reception.

Pest Prevention

You can play an important part in pest prevention. Mice have a very strong sense of smell and will be attracted by food left lying around. Keep your kitchens clean and remove any food debris from the floors and worktops regularly. Keep all leftover food in sealed containers.

If you see any mice or droppings, please report this immediately via the online maintenance system. You may be charged for the call out if your flat isn’t clean or if there are lots of food stuffs lying around to entice the mice.

Slips, trips and falls

• Being surrounded by clutter gives rise to the danger of slipping, tripping and falling
• Keep trailing electrical leads to a minimum and out of your way, as you move about.
• DO NOT CLIMB OR SCALE BUILDINGS
• DO NOT SIT IN WINDOW OPENINGS OR ON WINDOW LEDGES
• DO NOT GAIN ACCESS TO ANY BUILDING ROOF
• DO NOT REMOVE WINDOW RESTRICTIONS. THESE ARE THERE FOR YOUR SAFETY AND SHOULD NOT BE REMOVED.
Condensation Guide in Student Accommodation

How do I avoid condensation?

 Produce less moisture vapour:
• keep lids on pots and pans when cooking and keep the kitchen door closed
• keep a window open when drying clothes indoors
• don’t dry clothes over warm radiators
• keep the bathroom door closed when running a bath or having a shower

 Ventilate effectively:
• ventilate rooms when in use
• open windows to increase ventilation when cooking and when you’re washing and drying clothes
• ventilate cupboards and wardrobes and do not overfill them
• if extractor fans are fitted, use them
Need something repairing?

If something in your room or flat is broken you can report it by filling in a maintenance form online at www.le.ac.uk/maintenanceform.

Once you have submitted the form you will receive a confirmation email and reference number. If you feel like a repair hasn’t been done, contact reception. We deal with maintenance requests in order of priority using the scale below:

**Priority Definition**

- **Priority A – Emergency Repairs**: These repairs are those which if unattended would cause a danger to health, a risk to the safety of the residences or serious damage to the building. We aim to attend to these within 1 hour of becoming aware of the problem and 4 hours to make safe. Depending on the nature of the issue and parts required it may take longer to solve the issue fully.

- **Priority B – Urgent Repairs**: These repairs will be where any faults cause operational problems if not attended to quickly or which may develop into emergency if not remedied. We aim to attend within 4 hours and make safe within 8 hours of becoming aware of the problem.

- **Priority C – Routine Repairs**: These are reactive repairs which do not fall into either of the above categories and not considered as immediately detrimental and is not causing significant operational problems. We aim to attend these within 5 working days and completed within twenty working days of becoming aware of the problem.

- **Priority D – Planned maintenance programme**: These would be desirable improvements which would be considered in the programme of minor or major work planned by the university.

You can find more information at www.le.ac.uk/accommodation
IMPORTANT – Fire Action

All University buildings have built in Fire Safety systems of high standards that alert you to a real or potential fire, protect you from its effects and enable you to make your way to a place of safety.

You have a responsibility to cooperate and act immediately when you hear the fire alarm.

Fire Notices

Fire notices are posted throughout all buildings informing you of what to do in case of fire. Make sure that you are familiar with the arrangements in your building(s).

If you discover a fire

• **Sound the alarm** by breaking the glass in the nearest fire alarm call point
• **Call the Fire Service** – Dial 999
  (check the Fire action notice in the building)
• Tackle the fire only if you are trained and it is safe to do so – do not take risks
• **Make your way to the Assembly Point** and await instructions from Staff.

If you hear the fire alarm

• **Leave the building by the nearest available exit**
• Close doors in the vicinity and evacuate the building
• If it is practicable and safe to do so switch off equipment
• **Go to the Assembly Point** and await instructions from Staff.

DO NOT

• Stop to collect personal belongings
• Use the lift – unless authorised to do so
• Re-enter the building for any reason unless authorised to do so

Remember your responsibility when the fire alarm sounds – cooperate and evacuate immediately
Getting home safely

Whether you’ve stayed late in the library, or attended an event on campus it’s always important to consider how you are going to get back to your accommodation ahead of time. Here’s some tips to help ensure you have the best possible experience without compromising your safety:

• Before going out make sure you have your phone, keys and enough money on you to get home.
• Let a friend know where you’re going, and tell them what time you expect to be back.

Taxis

• Save a couple of Leicester-based taxi company numbers in your phone.
• Pre-book a licensed taxi and avoid unlicensed vehicles.
• Put your allocated taxi money in a separate pocket or in a different part of your wallet. This way you may be less likely to spend it.
• When using services such as Uber, make sure you get in the right car. Before you get in the car, check that license plate, driver photo, and driver name all match what’s listed in the app. Uber rides can only be requested through the app, so never get in a car with a driver who claims to be with Uber and offers a ride.

Walking

• Always make sure you plan your route ahead of time, and stick to paths with street lights.
• Walk with a friend or in small groups. If you have to walk alone, make sure you let a friend or family member know where you’re going and the time you expect to arrive.
• Stay alert to your surroundings, listening to music or using your phone can make you less aware of potential hazards around you.

Public transport

• Always make sure you plan your route ahead of time, and stick to paths with street lights.
• Walk with a friend or in small groups. If you have to walk alone, make sure you let a friend or family member know where you’re going and the time you expect to arrive.
• Stay alert to your surroundings, listening to music or using your phone can make you less aware of potential hazards around you.

What to do if you feel unsafe

• In an emergency situation always call 999.
• If you want support or need assistance at any time of the day you can call reception on the number listed on your keys.
• Be sure to contact somebody. Whether it’s a friend, family member, or even reception, they can give guidance or support if you feel uneasy or unsafe at any point on your journey.

Remember that alcohol can compromise your judgement, avoid taking unnecessary risks and always use common sense.