



## Fraudsters Target Students Seeking Properties to Rent

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Seasonal Rental Fraud is an emerging trend targeting students looking for suitable accommodation around August and before the start of the new term.

Fraudsters use a variety of websites to advertise available properties to rent, often at attractive rates and convenient locations. Adverts will seem genuine, accompanied by a number of photos and contact information to discuss your interest.

Due to demand, students will often agree to pay upfront fees to secure the property quickly, without viewing the property, only to discover that the fraudster posing as the landlord does not have ownership of the property, or often there are already tenants living there.

- Only use reputable letting companies;
- Do some online research such as using Google maps to check the property does exist;
- Make an appointment to view the property in person;
- Always view the property prior to paying any advance fees;
- Look out for warning signs, such as landlords requesting a 'holding deposit' due to the property being in high demand;
- A landlord will usually conduct some due diligence on any successful applicant. Be wary of handing over cash without the landlord requesting employment or character references.