

## An open letter to student landlords

We are writing to you on behalf of many students across Leicester. As we enter another national lockdown and students are scattered across the country still having to complete their degrees, we request that given this last year has been uncertain and stressful for so many students, you highly consider giving students the choice to end their tenancy early, provide special exemption for students who are not currently occupying their accommodation due to government restrictions on travel and to provide an affordable payment arrangement for upcoming rent.

As the impact of the pandemic continues, thousands of students across the country are struggling financially. Many students and your tenants rely on part-time or zero-hour work and scores of students have found themselves out of work as a result of the impact of the pandemic on the economy. Meaning student income, income many use to pay accommodation fees is at an all-time low. Although some students receive a loan. For many this does not cover their full rent and we have plenty of students from families that cannot afford to finance the shortfall.

We are seeing a drastic increase in mental ill health, stress, financial concerns and dissatisfaction of our students – your tenants. Through no fault of their own, students have been trying to survive while completing a degree from home and with limited resources and support.

At this time, many students are either stuck back home due to travel restrictions or have remained with their support network. They continue to pay for accommodation and an experience they have not been able to access. This is an additional stress point that our students do not need, between students feeling forgotten by our own government the financial peril has left students with no other choice to review their current living arrangements and significant numbers of our student population report they are unable to pay their rent for the remaining months of their contract. A proportion of students also wish to not return due to the high-risk of infection transmission or they are living with those now shielding once again. Students continue to compromise their mental, physical and financial health in order to support the government and country in staying safe.

We understand this ask can be to your financial detriment, but right now, we are in a crisis and our students more than ever need your support. As a community we ask that for the many years that students have supported your business and kept the private rent sector and the Leicester economy prosperous, that you have these considerations for a community that is trying to survive a crisis point just like everyone else.

As representatives of Leicester students, we ask that you support our students, your tenants, wherever possible.

Warmest regards,

**University of Leicester Students' Union Executive Officers and De Montfort Students' Union Executive Officers**

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