

To whom it may concern,

We recognise these are challenging times for everyone and hope that you and your staff are keeping well. During times like these it is vital more than ever that we act as a community and ensure the safety of all our residences. Covid-19 has affected every single one of us, whether it be damage to health, the unpredictability of life at this moment or through financial hardship.

The disruption caused to students cannot be overstated. Covid-19 has forced restaurants, bars, clubs and many other businesses to close their doors. The majority of student jobs are in the now-closed service industry and our members are currently struggling financially. Even with the Government's retention scheme, many students have already lost their jobs; numerous of students will now have to take on caring responsibilities at home, and many are experiencing a detrimental impact on their mental health.

The financial situation many students now find themselves in cannot be understated. Some students will still be receiving maintenance loans (a minimum of £4,168 per year), this does not cover the true costs of their full amount of rent. As we have mentioned, many students who work for additional money to cover their rent now cannot. Some students also rely on parents or relatives for financial support; as is well documented, a large number of people have been affected financially by coronavirus. Additionally, low-income families may now unexpectedly have another person living at home and students may be asked to contribute to the household finances with their maintenance loans, leaving them in further hardship.

As such, we are urging all purpose-built student accommodation and private landlords to offer the following:

1. For students who are no longer living at the tenancy address, to be released from their current tenancy agreements, at no financial penalty to them. This follows similar action taken by the University's and providers such as [Unite Students](#). If students have already paid third term rent, you should refund this along with their deposit.
2. For students who cannot return home or are unable to find another place to live, an extension of tenancy subject to the Covid-19 pandemic continuing past tenancy dates to prevent students from becoming homeless.
3. For students who have been financially impacted due to Covid-19 and are unable to move, a significant rent reduction or a rent holiday for the duration of the pandemic.
4. For students who have moved home and are unable to collect their belongings, we ask you to show compassion and work with those students to find a solution.

We understand the drastic financial ask and the impact it could have, however we ask you to compassionately consider that if anything, we can come together and not enhance the crisis' we have on our hands. Under normal University provisions, we understand you have generated significant profit from the presence of thousands of students in our city. We are therefore urge you to absorb the financial impact of this situation where possible to support the University of Exeter student community.

The government have put in place schemes, including the retention and mortgage holiday schemes, to help business and property owners, therefore as landlords we urge you to consider these as they may give you the financial safety to make these positive steps.

For those receiving this letter and are unable to make this decision regarding rental payments, please share with your landlords and help where possible in accommodating the needs of their tenants.

We strongly urge for you all to come together to take this action in protecting the wellbeing and financial hardships of our students at this difficult time and we appreciate your kind actions at this difficult time. We would be happy to discuss any further steps you are taking to support our students through this uncertain time, please email us on coronavirus@exeterguild.com.

We hope you all stay well and safe throughout this unsettling time.

Yours sincerely,

University of Exeter Students' Guild Full-Time Officers:

Patrick Hoyle, Guild President

Katie Heard, Vice President Welfare and Diversity

Penny Dinh, Vice President Education

Sunday Blake, Vice President Postgraduate

Liv Harvey, Vice President Activities