

What are the ASH Standards?

The ASH Standards are a set of property guidelines and requirements that all registered landlords/agents commit to in order to advertise their accommodation with us.

Before landlords can register their accommodation, they must provide ASH with current gas and electrical safety certification. If applicable, we also require a HMO licence, EPC and landlord/agent proof of ID.

Registered landlords/agents must also treat tenants in a courteous way and their business practices must meet current legislation.

How can the ASH Standards help students?

The ASH Standards are in place to offer students protection from poor living conditions when renting private accommodation in Birmingham. ASH aims to raise the standard of student accommodation across the city and you should be able to expect all registered properties to meet the criteria set out in the ASH Standards, summarised below.

If you choose to live in an ASH registered property and you think your landlord/agent is in breach of any part of the ASH Standards, you can make a formal complaint to us and we will investigate.

WHEN SEARCHING FOR YOUR ACCOMMODATION

The landlord/agent should:

- provide accurate information and images relating to the property
- answer telephone calls or have a voicemail option if a telephone number is advertised
- offer a viewing of the property, giving due regard to the existing tenants

WHEN SUPPLYING A TENANCY AGREEMENT

The landlord/agent should:

- not demand money before the creation of a tenancy agreement
- create an Assured Tenancy unless exempted under Schedule 1 of the Housing Act 1988
- give clear written instructions for the payment of rent
- issue a full copy of the tenancy agreement to the prospective tenant/s and give them a minimum of 24 hours to consider the tenancy agreement, before signing
- ensure the tenancy agreement contains no clauses that conflict with the tenants' legal rights
- include the name and address of the landlord/agent on the tenancy agreement
- clearly state who is responsible for the payment of all service charges
- ensure that the contract will only be amended following the tenants' written consent
- ensure that any agreed pre-tenancy repairs or improvements are confirmed in writing and attached to the tenancy agreement

WHEN YOUR TENANCY STARTS

The landlord/agent should:

- ensure the property is vacant
- ensure the property is in a good state of repair and clean



FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The landlord/agent should:

- not demand money unreasonably
- issue written receipts for all cash transactions
- Comply with Tenant Fees Act



DEPOSITS

The landlord/agent should:

- provide an inventory of contents supplied in the property
- where appropriate protect the deposit under one of the government schemes and provide the scheme details to the tenants within 30 days
- provide the tenants with detailed information about steps to avoid deductions from deposit
- comply with reasonable requests for a joint end of tenancy inspection
- return deposits within 30 days of the tenancy ending
- give a written explanation to the tenants if any deposit is deducted



SECURITY

The landlord/agent should:

- ensure that all external doors and frames are of solid construction
- ensure that final exit doors and front doors are fitted with a five lever mortise deadlock
- ensure that ground floor windows and others which are accessible are fitted with locks
- ensure that property boundaries are well secured and properly maintained
- ensure that, where appropriate, an alley gate key will be available for the tenants



ASH STANDARDS

HEATING AND COMFORT

The landlord/agent should:



- ensure water tanks and pipes in cold areas are covered and hot water cylinders insulated
- ensure there is heating in the property
- ensure doors and windows are well fitted to avoid draughts
- ensure roof spaces are insulated to a minimum of 250mm

REPAIRS

The landlord/agent should:



- carry out repairs in accordance with the legal legislation
- complete repairs within reasonable timescales
- repairs should be carried out by a competent tradesperson
- give at least 24 hours notice if access is required to the house except in an emergency
- ensure that the exterior of the property and garden areas are presentable

FIXTURES & FITTINGS

The landlord/agent should:



- ensure all study/bedrooms contain sufficient furniture
- ensure the property is adequately furnished with items that comply with fire regulations
- provide adequate space and equipment, with the exception of utensils, for cooking/storage
- ensure there is adequate floor space within each study/bedroom let
- provide an adequate number of baths/or showers and toilets for the number of tenants
- provide sufficient cleaning equipment to enable the effective cleaning of the property
- provide sufficient waste disposal containers for the number of tenants in the property

HEALTH & SAFETY

The landlord/agent should:



- install a working fire detection system
- complete a Fire Risk Assessment
- comply with fire door fitted to kitchen areas
- ensure safety certificates are provided for gas and electricity
- install a carbon monoxide detector and fire blanket

PROPERTY & MANAGEMENT

The landlord/agent should:



- display contact information within the property
- ensure that where required properties are licensed
- be polite, courteous and fair at all times
- not discriminate against prospective tenants on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, race, creed, disability or colour

The tenant should:

- pay the agreed deposit and rent
- agree the inventory for the property within 7 days of the start of the tenancy
- promptly report any repairs and allow reasonable access for inspection, repairs and viewing
- take gas and electric meter readings
- behave in a reasonable manner, with consideration for neighbours and owners
- inform the landlord if there are any genuine financial difficulties with paying the rent or bills
- use all security measures provided

- take care of the property, its furniture and equipment and pay for any damage caused by the tenant
- treat fire protection equipment responsibly and only for the use it is intended
- dispose of domestic rubbish in the correct way
- keep the property clean and tidy
- be polite, courteous and fair at all times
- promptly return all sets of keys
- take final meter readings, arrange transfer of services/disconnection and leave forwarding addresses with utility suppliers
- leave the property in a clean and tidy condition

