



One in five Edi undergrad students didn't have a flat by the the start of the year

Many Edinburgh students have struggled to find flats to rent for the academic year

In the time of a cost-of-living crisis and housing shortage, many Edinburgh students have struggled to find flats to rent for the academic year. Students are competing with married couples and families for housing, and losing. New data corroborates this claim.



According to a survey conducted by Slurp Edinburgh, one in five undergraduate students had not confirmed a tenancy agreement by the 19th of September (the beginning of semester one). Additionally, 7.7 per cent of undergrads still had not signed an agreement by week five.

Students not having reliable accommodation deprives them of structure and a base near campus to study and feel distant from the university experience. It isolates them from committing to societies and sports, as public transport timetables limit their availability.

According to the cost-of-living advice page on the official Edinburgh University website, the university aims to provide guidance to any students looking for accommodation. It states that all students who adhered to the university's accommodation guarantee were provided with rent-controlled housing. The guarantee applies to all first-year students whose home address is not in Edinburgh.

The university is compensating for the increase in utility and energy bills in student halls by keeping student energy bill costs the same and paying the difference in the increase themselves. The university has also helped 2,600 additional students by providing them with housing.

As previously reported by The Tab, some students who contacted the university for support due to trouble securing flats were temporarily [housed in communal dorms in converted Pollock common rooms](#). Up to six people were residing in these dormitories.

Of the one in four students who contacted the university for help and support in finding accommodation, 60 per cent were dissatisfied with the help provided.

Some students who approached the Tab Edinburgh echoed these ideas. Joy (second year) describes her experience commuting daily for classes, saying: “travelling to and from uni daily, especially with the rail strikes, has been tiring and has stopped me from living the way students typically do.”

Kayleigh (second year) talked about the difficulties surrounding finding a flat in Edinburgh currently: “It’s difficult, bordering on impossible. It’s very competitive. They [landlords] prefer professional people to students. The agencies can’t help. We apply and don’t hear back.”

As for looking to the future of the housing crisis, 80 per cent of undergraduates expressed worry and uncertainty about where they will end up living for the next academic year.

In order to combat this stress, the survey informs us that 50 per cent of students had already begun planning for next year (2023/2024) by November 2022. This is abnormal as in the past the general consensus amongst students was to begin looking for flats significantly later in the term.

By Romily Bates

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