

Dear [please insert the name of your private third-party provider/landlord/letting agent],

I hope you and your loved ones are keeping well in these unprecedented and fast-changing circumstances.

As you will be aware, COVID-19 has affected many people around the UK, the student community in particular, in relation to payment for our rented accommodation. Many of us are in the same situation and we now collectively face great uncertainty, as well as financial strain, whether we decide to return home or remain in our current accommodation.

[Please insert more details about your situation and how COVID-19 is impacting upon your financial and personal circumstances - make it as personal as you feel comfortable with, while ensuring it is a succinct account of your circumstances. Some options to consider:

- you have stepped forward to assist the NHS
- your income has been eradicated or greatly reduced due to loss of job, sickness
- you have caring responsibilities, which have seen you move home, thus impacting on your ability to undertake your former job
- you are an international student who has had to return home due to Government's advice in your home country
- you may need to extend your stay if you are an international student who is unable to leave due to travel restrictions and for students who do not wish to return home to avoid placing a vulnerable member of their household at increased risk] * [delete as appropriate] Please note, you should be prepared to provide evidence of your situation.

For these reasons, I am kindly requesting [a no-penalty release from my tenancy contract / a refund for the rent and deposit I have paid for the upcoming period [include to/from dates] / a suspension of all payments until the situation improves (a rent holiday) / a reduction in rent / a new payment plan that takes into account my altered circumstances / an extension of my tenancy at no extra cost / the option of relocating to a more isolated location, free of charge - delete as appropriate], since I am at increased risk due a pre-existing health condition / unable to work / assisting the NHS / need to extend my stay / etc. You undoubtedly play a critical role in the area's residential ecosystem and I hope you will support me in showing flexibility regarding my residential contract.

An increasing number of us are unable to top up our income with part time jobs because of the widespread business closures. [Therefore, while I will be receiving the final student loan payment, I no longer have a job to top up my maintenance loan and as it stands, maintenance income is not in line with the rising cost of living. – delete as appropriate] In addition, full-time university students will usually not be entitled to housing benefit or help with housing costs through Universal credit. The government and the National Residential Landlords Association are asking landlords to show compassion and so I am asking for yours. On March 24, Unite and Liberty Living made a welcomed announcement, showing these measures are within your powers to enact. As you might have heard, all Landlords and letting agents, whether they are small, self-employed businesses or large, national companies, are able to apply for a number of government initiatives that will see them through the current crisis, [including mortgage holidays where a buy-to let mortgage is held] and other measures to protect their income if they experience financial difficulties due to COVID-19.

I am a student at the University of Brighton, which has agreed to release students living in their accommodation from third term tenancy fees. Our representatives, Brighton Students' Union, have launched an open [letter](#) to all private landlords asking them to voluntarily enact these measures, in addition to directly lobbying MPs and local councillors, as well as the [Government](#), to provide you with greater support in doing so. They have already witnessed positive responses and I am hopeful you will adopt this good practice for the sake of the student community. I am counting on your support and I hope you will provide it. John Healey MP, Shadow Housing Secretary, has joined these calls in [writing](#) to Government Ministers to ask them to take wider actions in supporting students facing such uncertainty.

I sincerely hope, for everyone's sake, that the stability we once knew will return as soon as possible. However, we must do our best to navigate this new reality, together. At the moment, it is still possible to avert a crisis for more than 40,000 student renters across the city, as long as swift action is taken. Student anxiety is at an

all-time high. We need to be pragmatic and continue to support each other as best we can. I hope you can consider this and work with me to seek an immediate resolution. Please do let me know if you prefer to communicate on this matter in another manner, keeping in mind social distancing. I would be grateful for your prompt reply on these points.

Very best wishes,

[Your name/s]