



**Welcome to
student life**

Keep Safe

Online - Identity - Home - Party - Property

Student safety guide



**POLICE
SCOTLAND**
Keeping people safe



Welcome to Student Life

Starting university or college means some huge life changes - making new friends, studying in a new town, going out to new places and living independently for the first time. However, some of these changes might also increase your risk of becoming a victim of crime.

Start out in the safest way possible.

Take some simple steps to protect yourself, your property and above all keep safe.

Safety and Security at Home and on Campus

Halls of Residence can be an attractive target for criminals. Be aware and take some common sense precautions.

- Make sure all valuables are out of sight.
- Don't let anyone into the building unless you know them or have seen identification.
- Don't let anyone you don't know follow you through a controlled doorway.
- If you're ordering a takeaway, don't give the delivery driver the keypad number for the door.
- When leaving accommodation, lock all doors and windows.
- Don't put your name or room number on your keyring. It could direct a thief to your property.
- Report any suspicious activity to campus security or the police.

Renting a Property/Flat Sharing

It's essential that you properly research a potential property.

- When viewing accommodation, take someone along, or tell them where you're going and when you'll be back.
- Think about the level of security and general area. Are there locks on doors and windows and do they work?
- Meet all potential flatmates in advance.
- Get to know your neighbours. If you're on good terms with them they may look out for your property whilst you're out.
- Don't leave keys in locks or in places an intruder could easily find them.
- Don't keep flat keys and car keys on the same key ring.
- Make sure your door entry system is working and doors are kept locked.
- Don't give keys to tradesmen – they could make copies.
- Go to your local police office for more advice.

Make sure potential landlords have the appropriate local authority license. Commonly landlords of student flats need a licence for a 'House in Multiple Occupation', which aims to ensure that the accommodation is safe, well managed and of good quality. Visit www.scotland.gov.uk for more information.

Protect Your Valuables

You can take steps to secure your valuables at home, on campus and while out:

- Security mark valuable items. This makes them harder for thieves to sell and easier for police to return.
- Place your mobile phone, laptop, tablet, camera and other property on the National Mobile Property Register www.immobilise.com.
- Don't leave possessions unattended, even in the library.
- Take out contents insurance for your property.

Protect your mobile phone:

- Keep it out of sight and don't attract attention to it when not in use.
- Use the security lock.
- Keep a record of the 15 digit IMEI number which is unique to the device and record on www.immobilise.com. To find the IMEI number, dial *#06#.
- If lost or stolen, contact the police and service provider immediately.

More than 500,000 bikes are stolen in the UK each year, often having been poorly secured or not secured at all. Help protect your bike:

- Photograph your bike and record its details at www.bikeregister.com.
- Keep a note of your bikes serial number (found on crankshaft).
- Security mark your bike's frame with a UV pen or other method.



- Insure your bike, either on contents insurance or separately.

More than half of all bikes stolen are taken from the owner's property. Always keep your bike out of sight.

If your bike is stored in a common stairwell:

- Lock it with two locks to a secure banister or ground anchor.

If your bike is stored in a shed or garage:

- Fit a good quality padlock to the door, using non-return screws.
- Ensure windows are secure and covered.
- Install a shed/garage alarm.
- Lock it with two locks to a ground anchor.

When out and about on your bike:

- Lock your bike up **every time** you leave it using secure locks (i.e. D-locks or thick cable locks).
- Ideally, use two different types of lock – this makes it harder to steal.
- Fasten your bike through the frame and wheel to a fixed object.
- Lock your bike in a busy, well-lit place, in view of people or CCTV cameras.
- Make the lock and bike hard to move when parked.
- Remove bike accessories.
- Vary your routine - lock up your bike in different ways & places.

Party Safe

Socialising is a major part of student life. Keep these simple steps in mind while having fun:

- Plan your night out including how to get home.
- Stick with friends and avoid leaving parties or nights out with strangers.
- Be sensible about how much alcohol you drink - a drunk person is much more vulnerable and an easier target for criminals.
- If you leave a drink unattended then don't go back to it.
- If you feel very drunk or unwell, ask a trusted friend or a member of the club or pub management for help.
- Look after bags and valuables. Don't attract attention to a phone, especially if you're under the influence of alcohol.
- Keep enough money to pay for your journey home.
- Stay alert at cash machines. Hide your PIN, be aware of who's behind you and don't flash your cash. Avoid using them if you've had too much to drink.
- Always call and book a taxi from a licensed private hire / taxi firm and make sure the vehicle pulling up is definitely your hire before you get into it.
- Where possible, avoid travelling alone.
- If walking home, keep to well-lit, busy areas and never take isolated shortcuts.
- Walk facing traffic so a car cannot pull up behind you.
- Personal attack alarms are good but don't carry weapons or pepper sprays as this is illegal in Scotland.
- Have keys ready when you're approaching the car or your accommodation.
- Don't drive under the influence.



Remember

Enjoy your night out safely

- Stay with friends.
- Always charge your mobile phone.
- Find a licensed taxi at a designated taxi rank.
- Enjoy yourself responsibly - pace yourself.
- Look after one another.
- You can learn more at www.scotland.police.uk.

Substance Abuse

Using illegal drugs has serious repercussions. Don't risk your health and even your life. And why jeopardise your future career opportunities with a drug conviction? It doesn't matter which drug or how little.

Don't take New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), sometimes misleadingly known as 'legal highs'. They can contain harmful and toxic chemicals and have been linked to many deaths. You don't know what you're getting or what effect it will have on you. Some have been found to contain controlled drugs, meaning you could be charged with drug possession even when you thought it was legal.

Find out more at www.knowthescore.info or www.choicesforlifeonline.org.

Don't risk your life!

Social Networking

Social networking is a great way to keep in contact, especially if you're away from home. However think carefully about what you say and the trouble you could find yourself in if you make offensive or intimidating comments. Online abuse and 'cyber bullying' may be treated as a criminal matter. In addition, criminals seek out information on social networking sites to target individuals and properties, so take some basic precautions:

- Use privacy settings.
- Don't post offensive or intimidating comments.
- Think about the pictures you upload and who may share them.
- Don't share private, personal or confidential information or material online which you wouldn't be happy for your family to see.
- Be careful how much you reveal about where you are and what you're doing.

Identify Theft and Online Scams

Identity theft occurs when your personal identification information is used without your knowledge or permission. Criminals use it to obtain credit cards, products and services, loans and mortgages and commit other types of fraudulent or even criminal acts in your name, leaving you responsible for the consequences.

Identity thieves don't just steal your money; they steal your name and reputation for their own financial gain. This can seriously jeopardise your financial future.



Phishing is when criminals use fake e-mails or web links to get personal information, such as passwords, usernames, or bank account details. A compelling reason is often given to persuade you to go to a website or click on an e-mail link, often supposedly from a well known company. The websites often appear genuine but are designed to trick people into entering personal details. The criminal can then access your identity, steal from your bank account or infect your computer with a virus which allows them to control your system.

Things to look out for:

- Email uses generic terms like 'Dear account holder'.
- Email is threatening and states that urgent action is required.
- Email contains an unrecognisable link.
- Spelling errors contained within the email.
- Email address is different from trusted company website.
- E-mails from a company you have no business with.
- No padlock sign on website and no https:// at the beginning of web address.

Protect yourself:

- Keep browser software updated and use spam filters.
- Avoid risky sites, including supposed investment sites.
- NEVER click on an e-mail link from an unknown source.
- Never give out your personal details or passwords.
- Don't leave personal documents lying around.
- Shred personal correspondence before disposing.

For more information about online safety and security go to **www.getsafeonline.org**.

Money Mules are exploited by criminals to use their bank account to transfer money from one country to another, usually from where the criminal lives. Normally the mule is offered a cash incentive. Recruitment is often through:

- Unsolicited e-mails asking for assistance.
- Contact via social networking sites.
- False vacancies on websites posing as legitimate businesses.
- Classified adverts in the press and online which look legitimate.

Risks attached:

- You're breaking the law and could be charged with a criminal offence.
- Your bank account will be suspended.
- All of the money involved will be seized from your account.
- If convicted it may be difficult to get credit, a bank account or a job.

Avoid becoming a victim:

Offers of large amounts of cash for very little work or no prior experience could indicate a fraudulent scheme.

Be cautious of overseas offers - they can be difficult to verify.

Always research any company that offers you a job.

NEVER give your bank details to anyone unless you know and trust them and even then be cautious.

Further advice about protecting yourself from identity theft and scams is available in the 'Little Book of Big Scams'.

Contact Us

Police Scotland is here to help and we are dedicated to keeping people safe. If you require non-urgent police assistance call 101, or in an emergency dial 999.

For more information and safety advice visit **www.scotland.police.uk**

If you have information about crime or criminals then report it anonymously on 0800 555 111 or at **www.crimestoppers-uk.org**



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