

Keeping Student Communities Safe Across The North East



Student Safety 2022



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Starting university or college can be a wonderful and exciting experience, but it can also bring its own unique challenges. It is completely natural to feel nervous or overwhelmed during your first few weeks.

Whether you're a new student or have already settled into student life, following some of these simple steps can reduce your risk of becoming a victim of crime.

Familiarise yourself with the local area as soon as you can.

Build relationships with your flat mates and swap mobile phone numbers. Save the numbers of reputable taxi firms in your phone. Remember there are no Ubers in Aberdeen.

Find out where your local Police Station and Hospital are and save the police non-emergency number 101 in your phone.



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Socialising

Keep these simple steps in mind while having fun:

Plan your night out, including how to get home, having sufficient money to get back!

Try and be sensible about how much alcohol you drink - a drunk person is much more vulnerable and an easier target for criminals. Alcohol lowers your guard and can affect your judgement and decision making.

If you leave a drink unattended then don't go back to it and if you feel very drunk or unwell, ask a trusted friend or a member of the club or pub management for help.

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.

Personal attack alarms are good but don't carry weapons or pepper sprays as this is illegal in Scotland.

In Scots Law it is rape if you have sexual intercourse with anyone who is unable to give their consent because they are too drunk or under the influence of drugs.

If walking home alone, keep to well-lit, busy areas and never take isolated shortcuts. If alone in the dark, try to avoid badly lit areas, parks, alleyways and underpasses. Avoid using your phone in isolated places, as it can distract you from your surroundings.



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 potential consequences of making offensive or intimidating comments. Online abuse such as 'cyber bullying', may be treated as a criminal matter.

Criminals seek out information on social networking sites to target individuals and properties, so take some basic precautions:

Use privacy settings and don't post offensive or intimidating comments.

Think about the pictures you upload and who may share them.

Be careful how much you reveal about where you are and what you're doing.

Remember, perspective employers may view your social media profiles.

Remember, what goes online stays online.

Never share private, personal or confidential information or material online which you wouldn't be happy for your family or friends to see.



Safety and Security

At Home and on Campus

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. Make sure your door entry system is working and doors are kept locked.

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 will only direct a thief to your property.

Keep all high value items such as tablets and laptops well out of sight when not in use.

Report any suspicious activity to campus security or the police.

Don't keep flat keys and car keys on the same key ring.

Halls of residence and flats can be an attractive target for criminals. Be aware and take some precautions.



Renting or Sharing

If you are moving out of student accommodation or moving to a new flat, check its security before moving in. When living with a group of friends there will always have to be compromises; just make sure it's not on the security of the 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. Are there locks on doors and windows and do they work? Does the property have an alarm? How many different people have keys?

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. Make sure potential landlords have the appropriate local authority licence.

Landlords of student flats may 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.

Ask for ID from the landlord - Check the landlord's driving licence and/or passport to establish if they are who they say they are.

Prospective tenants should also check that the landlord is a member of the National Landlords Association (NLA) via the NLA's landlord accreditation website www.landlords.org.uk.

Never pay a deposit without viewing the property and ensuring the rental agreement and the property are genuine.

Don't sign a contract until you are absolutely sure that the property is right for you.



Mobile Phone Security

Keep your phone locked at all times - Lock screen with passcode, pattern, fingerprint or facial recognition. Lock when idle for 30 seconds to one minute.

Keep your devices updated - Make sure that your devices are updated with the latest software. Here's how:

**IOS - general - software update.
Android - about phone - system update**

Connect to secure wi-fi - Beware of networks that aren't password protected and use a VPN, avoid coffee shops and airport wi-fi.

Encrypt your data - Your smartphone holds a lot of data. If it is lost or stolen your emails, contacts, financial information and more can be at risk.

To protect your mobile phone data:
Install anti-virus software. This can protect against viruses, malware and hackers.

Don't jailbreak or root your phone. This is when you unlock your phone and remove safety features making it less secure and easy to hack.

Enable apps to find and track mobile phones.

For more information about staying safe whilst using your Apple or Android device visit

www.cyberstreetwise.com or www.getsafeonline.org.



Bike Security

Always secure your bicycle if leaving unattended. Police Scotland have seen a big increase in bike theft over the last few years. To prevent your bike from being stolen consider:

Double locking is the best protection for locking any bike. Whatever the type of lock, look for the Secured By Design or Sold Secure logo. Locks displaying either of these logos have been tested by the Police.

Secure your bike as close to the stand as possible to give thieves little or no room to manoeuvre. Lock the frame and both wheels to the cycle parking stand.

Locks are considered vulnerable when they come into contact with the ground, so keep them off the floor.

Register your bike through an approved scheme such as The National Cycle Database - BikeRegister.

Make sure your bike has adequate insurance cover with your home insurance.

Ensure that any quick release detachable items such as wheels, saddles and lights are either secured or removed and taken with you.

Whatever the type of lock, look for the Secured By Design or Sold Secure logo. Locks displaying either of these logos have been tested by the Police.



Support and Wellbeing

Samaritans

www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you/contact-us

A free, confidential emotional support service that is available 24/7, 365 days a year for anyone in the UK and Ireland.

Breathing Space

<http://breathingspace.scot/>

A free, confidential service for anyone in Scotland experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety. Has a helpline and a webchat, see the website for times available.

Papyrus

Provides confidential advice and support and works to prevent young suicide in the UK.

CALM

www.thecalmzone.net/

A campaign to try to reduce suicide rates, particularly in men. CALM has a helpline and webchat available 5pm-midnight, 365 days a year.

Choose Life

www.chooselife.net/ask

Provides links to a list of services for anyone feeling low, or struggling in a crisis.



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Further information, advice and guidance

NCSC Sextortion Emails

www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/sextortion-scams-how-to-protect-yourself

Phishing - Spot and report scam emails, texts, websites

www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/phishing-scams

Revenge Porn Helpline - Sextortion

www.revengepornhelpline.org.uk

Get Safe Online

www.getsafeonline.org/

Victim Support Scotland

<https://victimsupport.scot/>

Take Five

www.takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/

Money Mules

www.moneymules.co.uk/



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