



**Open letter to Universities and  
Purpose Built Student  
Accommodation Providers (PBSAs)**

**Councillor Jon Taylor**

Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and  
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To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing to you about the uncertain financial pressures students are currently facing.

We recognise these are challenging times and how vital it is, more than ever, that we act to ensure the safety of everyone. Covid-19 has had a significant impact on so many lives across the UK, through damage to health, changes to life circumstances or financial difficulty. It has also had a devastating impact on the wider economy with many businesses closed or financially struggling. Which in turn has had an impact on student's ability to secure part-time and holiday work and many now face financial hardship.

With all this in mind, in order to protect our students during the pandemic we have a number of voluntary asks:

- Requesting that all Universities and PBSAs stay updated with implemented best practice public health guidance, communicate with tenants and provide the maximum support possible.
- Accommodation providers end all evictions, for all renters, for the duration of the crisis, and particularly for those who do not have another home. To prevent them from being made homeless in the cases where agreements continues past tenancy dates.
- Suspend all rent increases.
- Enable students who cannot occupy their accommodation to exit their contracts without penalty,

We realise this is a large financial ask, and this has had far reaching consequences for everyone. However, we are asking for your understanding and leniency towards students who may be struggling financially, or who cannot access their accommodation due to lockdown legislation. By showing flexibility in their accommodation contracts.

We are aware that many of you have already taken steps to provide support and we wanted to share with you steps we have already taken in Plymouth.

- Plymouth Marjon University has waived rent for students that have been unable to travel to the university due to lockdown.
- University of Plymouth has taken similar action through its enhanced student hardship fund.

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We know that many universities and PBSAs across the UK are also introducing measures and we hope that we can all adopt similar measures to support all students.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Taylor', written in a cursive style.

**Councillor Jon Taylor**  
**Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Transformation**