

Student Accommodation FAQs (updated May 2026)

The following comprise some of the more commonly asked questions regarding our accommodation offering and the Licence to Occupy (LTO).

ACCOMMODATION RANGE AND REGULATIONS

What kind of accommodation is available at Clare Hall?

Clare Hall is currently home to approximately 130 students, most of whom live in shared standalone houses with between 4 – 15 occupants.

About 115 students live on College grounds or within 400m of our Main Site; the remainder live in external accommodation, up to a mile away.

The majority of our rooms have shared bathrooms, but there are some ensuite rooms available.

A small number are suitable for double-occupancy, and there are several bespoke student family flats.

How is accommodation allocated?

For each upcoming academic year, the College allocates accommodation first to existing students who have not yet stayed in College accommodation for longer than the academic year they commenced their course and one further year.

Thereafter, the allocation process for new students usually commences at the beginning of June, and accommodation is offered to new students on confirmation from our Tutorial Office that they have met all conditions of study with Clare Hall.

The only exceptions to this are on specific request from Tutorial.

Information on the rooms and flats that are available at the time is sent with the accommodation application documents. Completed applications are allocated on a **first-come, first-served** basis.

Please note that all accommodation is **subject to availability** and accommodation is **not guaranteed** for all applicants.

Do you have accommodation for disabled students?

Clare Hall has a very limited number of rooms specifically adapted for students with access disabilities. At the beginning of the accommodation allocation process each year, we provisionally reserve a selection of rooms with useful features (e.g.: ground floor, no steps, wet area bathrooms) for priority allocation to students with **registered** medical conditions; the Accommodation Manager works closely with the Tutorial Office during the allocation process to identify such students.

Students requesting accommodation requirements due to a medical condition should register with the ADRC. The college uses the independent review by the ADRC contained within the Student Support Document as relevant evidence in support of the request. Students should contact the Tutorial Offices at the earliest possible time to notify them of such a requirement, with details of the medical condition, and the application will be reviewed accordingly.

The Tutorial Office will liaise with the Accommodation Office directly if the request is successful.

Information on the ADRC can be found [here](#).

Where possible, ADRC-registered students with a specific accommodation requirement are offered rooms for the academic year that they commence a reservation, and if they are a PhD student, for one further academic year.

How many people will I share with?

Our smallest shared property houses 4 students, and our largest buildings house 15.

Kitchens, living rooms, and numbers of bathrooms are scaled accordingly, so the larger properties have as much cooking or living space per person as the smaller ones.

Can my partner live with me in College?

It is possible – subject to agreement – for a partner to accompany a student in some situations and subject to the availability of a suitable room.

However, this is not guaranteed in all cases, and should be discussed with the Accommodation Manager when requesting a room at Clare Hall.

Council Tax may be liable on the property depending on your partner's employment status.

Can you accommodate student families?

We have three purpose-built, 2-bedroom family apartments located on our main College site and two of these can accommodate up to a family of four.

The accommodation is prioritised for student families, and they are not offered to single occupancy applications until all confirmed students with families have been accommodated.

From the academic year 2024/25, PhD students with families are offered accommodation for the academic year that they commence a reservation, and for one further academic year of accommodation.

Are the student reservations continuous through the academic year, or do they terminate at the end of each term?

Accommodation reservations are continuous and usually available from the week before the official Michaelmas term commences to 31 July each year. Contracts will be issued with these dates unless requested otherwise by applicants.

Please note that requests to arrive earlier than October are usually only permitted for those who are required to start their courses before the beginning of term.

As the reservations are continuous, residents are not required to vacate rooms and remove their belongings over holiday periods, although we do request that residents notify the Porters' Lodge if they are staying away from College so that their emergency contact records can be updated.

What happens if I choose to work away or have field work during my studies?

Students choosing to leave accommodation part way through the year to work away or undertake an internship (and noting the required notice-periods in Clause 9.8 of the Clare Hall 'Licence to Occupy'), do not receive an automatic extension of their accommodation upon return.

What does a Licence to Occupy mean?

A Licence to Occupy (LTO) means the College remains the owner of the building and room in which you reside, but grants you the right to their use.

You do not have any right to alter the structure or fabric of the building, its furnishings, appliances, and so on. As such, from a legal perspective, you are not a tenant within the buildings and the College is not your landlord.

Does the College put my deposit in a protection scheme?

Clare Hall does not place deposits in an assured protection scheme, but they are not used for any other purpose than offsetting the costs of damage arising during occupation. Fair wear-and-tear is allowed for. Deposits are returned to students within 28 days, following completion of the Housekeeping departure inspection.

A list of probable damages charges is available within the Licence to Occupy published on the website, but each case is taken on individual merit.

AMENITIES

What will my room come with?

All rooms have a bed-and-mattress, a desk, lamp, bin, and storage facilities (cupboard / wardrobe / chest of drawers). Some rooms have sinks, and a few are ensuite.

You are of course permitted to bring personal belongings with you and may also even bring some of your own furniture too should you wish, however College furniture **will not** be removed to accommodate any items. Any such furnishing **must** satisfy the requirements of “The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988”

Students are not permitted to use any cooking equipment or fridges in their rooms (including kettles). These will be removed and either placed in the shared kitchens or stored centrally until the end of the reservation period, if found by College staff during inspections.

What is included in the shared access student kitchens & communal areas

The kitchens are fully equipped with cooking equipment and utensils, crockery and cutlery, microwaves, kettles and toasters.

Students are permitted to bring additional equipment to use in the kitchens, but any electrical items **must** be PAT tested by the Maintenance team.

The Maintenance team usually attend the student households to complete PAT testing in the first couple of weeks of term, however you can specifically arrange this with them by completing a Maintenance enquiry form. This is on the Porters Lodge page of the Clare Hall website.

The dining and living room areas in the student households are furnished with tables, chairs, sofas, bookcases and side tables.

Does the College have laundries?

We have two shared-access laundries in College, located at the West Court site and on the main College site. There are no additional charges for the use of the washers and dryers, as this is included in the accommodation charge.

Each student household has one washer/tumble dryer in the shared access kitchen area.

What does the College do for me?

The College ensures its infrastructure is safe to use and complies with the relevant national legislation. The College conducts fire alarm testing and flushing of vacant rooms’ sinks weekly (Tuesdays), cleans the common areas (kitchens, lounges, bathrooms), and provides soap, toilet paper, and washing-up liquid. Most student houses have their own washing machine and there are communal laundry machines at two points on our estate, unlimited use is included in the accommodation charge.

Do I need a TV Licence?

If you plan to watch live television or any BBC service within your room, you will need to purchase your own TV License (see [TV Licence - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)). The College has licenses for TVs in shared areas (e.g.: common rooms) **only**.

Do you provide Internet?

Yes, the College supplies internet via the University Information Service across its estate, included with your accommodation charge. Speeds are not readily available from UIS but the network functions reliably and suits the needs of most students regardless of demand.

Can I bring or buy my own electrical appliances?

With the exception of electric heaters and electric blankets, appliances may be bought and used in our accommodation, provided they are PAT tested and conform to UK electrical safety regulations.

A member of the Maintenance Team will be able to arrange appropriate testing of equipment, and this can be arranged by completing the enquiry form on the Porters’ Lodge page of the Clare Hall website.

However, cooking appliances are **not** permitted to be used in individual student rooms (including kettles), these can only be used in the household kitchens.

Does the College have storage areas that can be used by students?

We have a small storage space on the main College site that is managed by the Porters' Lodge, and residents can contact them to enquire about availability of space. If storage is possible, the Porters will provide labels and relevant documentation and assist with arranging a mutually convenient time to leave these in the area.

PROBLEM-SOLVING

What if there's a maintenance problem with my room / house?

The College Maintenance team is responsible for the upkeep of our buildings, and we have a bespoke fault reporting form on the Porters' Lodge page of our website. Urgent issues are resolved as they arise, including overnight.

Non-urgent issues are dealt with between 08.00 – 17.00 hours, Monday to Friday.

What if I have issues with my housemates?

In the first instance, as postgraduate students, you will be expected to attempt dispute resolution yourselves. However, if a problem is serious or persistent, the College can help via the Tutorial Office. Criminal offences – which are very rare – should be reported immediately to the Police and Porters' Lodge.

I'm struggling to pay my accommodation charge. Who can help?

Contact tutorial.office@clarehall.cam.ac.uk where a member of the Tutorial team will work with you to understand your situation and clarify the support available via College.

Please note: late or missed payments are taken seriously but many of the unintended consequences can be avoided through timely and clear communication with the College.

OTHER CONCERNS

Can I smoke or vape inside Clare Hall?

No. Smoking and vaping are strictly forbidden across our entire estate, inside and outside.

Can I bring my pet?

Requests to bring an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) onto University and/or College property will not normally be granted but would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Can I have a guest to stay?

You may have a guest to stay, on up to nine nights in a term, but on no more than three consecutive nights. You must be in residence when your guest stays, and you **must** inform the Porters' Lodge of their arrival/ departure as this information is required for the resident's records that will be used in the event of an emergency. Camp beds are available at a charge from the Porters' Lodge if required.