Accommodation Checklist

*Be prepared when you go to meet the landlord:*

*Bring your checklist! Ask lots of questions!*

*Document the state of repair of your potential rental premises, including any damages.*

*Think about what’s important to you and add to this list.*

# Location

* Is it close to the bus route?
* Reasonable travel time to campus and/or within SWHAT escort distance?
* Are there grocery stores, pharmacy and other amenities nearby?

# Safety

* Do you feel comfortable in the neighbourhood daytime and nighttime?
* Does the room/apartment have adequate locks to provide privacy and security?
* If the apartment has a security system (buzzer or key), is it working?
* Are all windows intact and lockable?
* Are there working smoke alarms on each floor and a carbon monoxide detector near sleeping areas?
* Is there more than one fire exit from the unit?
* Is there a working fire extinguisher in the kitchen?
* Is the entrance well lit and are any shrubs well trimmed?
* Who has access to the house key and when were the locks last changed?
* Do the exterior doors close properly and lock properly?

# Responsibilities

* Are you responsible for shoveling snow and is there a snow shovel provided?
* Are you responsible for lawn maintenance and is there a lawn mower provided? (Remember to ask about the summer months!)
* Are there adequate garbage and recycling containers provided?

## Facilities

* Is the parking sufficient (one space per car)?
* Will the parking area be shared with other tenants?
* Is the parking area well lit?
* Is there a storage area to use (shed or garage) and can this area be locked?
* Are there working laundry facilities on the premises or are they located nearby?
* Are the laundry facilities coin-operated?
* Is a fridge/stove/microwave provided in working order?
* Is the unit partially or fully furnished? What is included?

## Quality of Accommodation

* Is there sufficient cupboard/closet space for all of you?
* How many people share the bathroom/kitchen or fridge with you?
* Will moving in and out be difficult because of stairs?
* Is it clean, spacious, well lit, and adequately heated?
* Is there any evidence of pests? (e.g. cockroaches, mice, bed bugs –check cupboards)
* Are the ceilings high enough and in good repair (cracks, water marks, mildew)?
* Look for signs of mold on walls.
* Is the carpet/floor reasonably clean?
* Are the walls in good repair) (paint chipping? holes?)
* Is the plumbing adequate? (Check the water pressure from the taps; flush the toilet while running the shower)
* Is there a good supply of hot water? (ask current tenants)
* Are there sufficient electrical outlets? (check for three prong/grounded plugs)
* Is there a minimum 100 amp electrical service installed?
* Are the windows properly sealed with storm windows and screens?
* If your room is in the basement, do the floors squeak above you? (NOTE: basement rooms will always be colder in the winter than the rest of the house)
* Are the sewer pipes cleaned each year, to prevent back-up?
* Make sure there are no unsecured or exposed wiring, with cover plates on all light switches and outlets.

## Lease Agreements

* What is the length of term required in the lease?
* Who is responsible for payment of utilities? (heat, water, hydro, gas, cable/internet, etc.)
* Are you allowed to sublet your room? (NOTE: LL cannot unreasonably withhold their consent)
* Is the landlord asking for extra deposits? (anything beyond 1st and last is NOT allowed!)
* Will the owner or their son/daughter be living in the house as well? If so, are there special house rules?

# Cost

* Is rent due weekly or monthly and on what date?
* How much is the rent?
* Does the rent include all utilities or not?
* What is NOT included in the rent? (ask the current tenants what the monthly utility bill is like…don’t rely on the landlord for this information)
* What type of heating method is used? (Note: electric heat is very expensive)

# Household Issues

* Does the tenant have control over heating/air-conditioning?
* Does the heating/air-conditioning work?
* If there is no air-conditioning, are there screens on the windows?
* Are pets allowed?
* Where is the Fuse Box/Breaker Box located? Can everyone access this?