Frequently Asked Questions – FAQs

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Here is a list of common questions which are sent to us. If your query is not answered below, please do not hesitate to contact us using the contact details provided in the email we sent you.

1. **Why have I been sent a bill? I know nothing about this damage**

The information you have received is an enquiry, not a bill or an invoice. Its aim is to gain information regarding the damage in order to try and find out who is responsible. If the person responsible is not identified, then the charge will be divided equally between all residents with access to the area and will be charged at the end of your contract, (unless the person(s) have been identified. If you have any information regarding the damage which has occurred, please contact us.

2. **Can you speak to my parents regarding this issue, on my behalf?**

We can speak to your parents regarding damage charges, provided you have given us written permission to do so (e-mail is sufficient). Verbal permission is acceptable if you contact us, and then pass the phone to them to speak to us.

3. **I am responsible for the damage will you invoice me?**

If you admit responsibility for damage, you will be sent a link explaining how to pay the charge online. If others also admit responsibility, the costs will be divided and each of you will be charged for an equal share, and you will all receive the link explaining how to pay this. If everyone in your flat or block/building is to be charged, then the charge will be divided equally between all and the costs will be charged at the end of your contract.

4. **I am not responsible for the damage. I don’t think it is fair that I should be charged for other people’s behaviour.**

If the person or persons responsible accepts responsibility, then they will be charged for the damage and receive the link explaining how this can be paid. However, if the damage is in a communal area such as a corridor or kitchen and the person responsible is not found, then the charge will be divided equally between all persons with access to that area. This is because all residents are responsible for communal areas within their accommodation. We aim to be fair and reasonable when charging residents for
damage, and therefore no decision is made until all information is considered. Please refer to your Residence Contract, and Your Guide to Breaking Stuff for more information.

5. I don’t use that lift / sofa / fridge, why should I pay?

If the damage is in a communal area such as a lift or kitchen, then the charge will be divided equally between all persons with access to that area, as all residents are responsible for communal areas within their accommodation. However, if the person or persons responsible accept responsibility, then they will receive a link to follow, to pay for the damage. Please refer to your Residence Contract and Your Guide to Breaking Stuff for more information.

6. I broke it accidentally; I don’t think I should have to pay.

Unfortunately, whether damage is caused intentionally or accidentally, the item must still be paid for – it would be unreasonable for the University to pay for something you have broken. The cost is only for the repair or replacement of the item/s damaged.

7. You’re trying to charge us for all damage.

The cost of replacing/repairing the item is the same whether being paid for by the University or by the student. The University makes no profit on any repairs or replacements made and we only charge students where they are deemed responsible for the damage.

8. The charge seems very high in comparison to what I think the item is worth or what I can get on the internet.

We go through a rigorous procurement process to ensure we are getting the best value for money, which does not necessarily mean the cheapest option. Due to the environment they are to be placed in, we of course need our items to be of a high standard and hard-wearing. There is also the time taken to fix/replace the item, and VAT.

9. What are all the costs on top of the item?

In addition to the item cost there is also labour, maintenance fees and VAT. A
breakdown for any item we charge is available to you, and we only pass on what we are charged.

10. I have already been fined for this, why are you fining me again?

If you have received a fine as a result of a disciplinary, then this is unrelated to the charges for the repair or replacement of the damage, which we are now enquiring about. A fine is applied in relation to conduct, whereas a charge is in relation to the item(s) damaged. Should you wish to dispute a fine, please contact Residence Life at residentsupport@sheffield.ac.uk

11. I was not here when the damage occurred, therefore I shouldn’t be charged.

If you can provide evidence such as hotel reservations or travel tickets to show that you were away from your accommodation when the damage occurred, please forward this on to us and we can look into the possibility of excluding you from the charges.

12. It wasn’t me; it was a guest/neighbour. They should be charged.

As your Residence Contract states, you are responsible for all visitors to your accommodation and are therefore responsible for any costs incurred. If the person responsible admits responsibility to us, then they will be charged individually via the aforementioned link. Otherwise, you will be receive the link to pay directly if the damage occurred in your bedroom or en suite, or collectively charged as a flat if the damage occurred in a communal area. Please note that if the guest is not a resident, the occupants of the relevant area will be charged for the damage.