

Blackfriars Hall Policy on Accommodation Arrears (Debt Recovery)

All student residents must sign the Accommodation Acceptance Form that accompanies the Blackfriars Hall Accommodation Licence Agreement. This lists the total due for the duration of their contract and includes information on term due dates and other ways of paying hall fees.

If accommodation charges are not paid, a sequence of reminders and sanctions consequent upon persistent non-payment are employed. In general, that prescribed sequence is as follows:

- Shortly after the first due date of the invoice, normally 3-4 weeks later, a debt report is run by the Blackfriars Hall Bursary, and reminder emails from the Bursary team are sent to the students owing money at their Blackfriars email address, requesting immediate payment of the amount due.
- On a practical date, normally 3-4 weeks later, a second and more strongly worded reminder email is sent to students who owe more than £800 demanding immediate payment of the amount overdue and warning that Notice to Quit may be issued if they fail to pay.
- A standard reminder is sent to students owing less than £800.
- In some circumstances, students respond with legitimate reasons for non-payment and can avoid further reminder emails and/or sanctions. They must have a legitimate case for applying for financial hardship assistance or for a payment plan with Blackfriars for this to occur. In these cases, a new payment plan will be entered onto the student's account to reflect any change in payment arrangements.
- Where residents do not have a legitimate case for a payment plan, they will be told that they will be issued Notice to Quit if they have not paid by a reasonable deadline set by the Bursary, normally in another 3 weeks' time. That notice will be rescinded if they pay by the deadline date given.
- Resident students who have paid less than the equivalent of two months' accommodation fees will be issued with a Notice to Quit and a letter (also copied to their home address and sent via email to their Blackfriars and personal email address) advising them that they must either make satisfactory arrangements to settle their debt or vacate their accommodation. The letters and Notices to Quit are hand delivered and positive effort will always be made to discuss the situation personally any student who is affected.
- For students in receipt of Notice to Quit who do not settle their debt and who remain in residence beyond the expiry of the notice period, the Blackfriars Bursary will make further efforts to prompt payment by contacting the student

in person and via email. Where no satisfactory agreement is made in respect of the debt or departure, Blackfriars may seek possession of the accommodation by means of formal legal action.

Legal action

Where it becomes necessary to do so, Blackfriars Hall will pass the details of all debtors owing over £10 to a debt collection agency employed by the Hall.

The agency will send letters to debtors warning that unless they make satisfactory payment arrangements, legal proceedings may be instigated. They will work with Blackfriars to agree and monitor payment plans made by debtors. In cases where no payment or payment arrangements are made, legal proceedings may be pursued in cases of debtors owing over £500 for whom exist legitimate addresses in the UK.

Upon receiving instructions from Blackfriars to commence legal proceedings, the debt collection agency will send the details of any relevant debtor to the Claims Production Centre (CPC) to issue proceedings within 48 hours. In addition to producing and serving the Claim Form, the CPC sends all the necessary information to the appropriate County Court. On judgement being received, Blackfriars may instruct the debt collection agency to request the court bailiffs to recover the debt in appropriate cases.

Last reviewed: 11 December 2025