

ASK us about...



BIRMINGHAM  
CITY  
University

Money Matters



# Students & Council Tax

## Money Matters

**ASK**

ADVICE SUPPORT KNOWLEDGE

Student Services



### **I live in a University hall of residence – do I have to pay Council Tax?**

No – University halls of residence are exempt buildings under council tax law so whilst you're in halls you won't need to pay.

### **My housemates and I are all students – do we have to pay Council Tax?**

No – any household that is made up entirely of full-time students is exempt from council tax. Your landlord or the Council may ask you to prove that you are a student (see below).

### **I'm a full-time student but I live with my partner, who is not a student. Do I have to pay council tax?**

If you are the home owner or the tenancy agreement is in your name, you must pay Council Tax. If you are on a low income you may be able to claim Council Tax Benefit.

### **We are 4 full-time students sharing a house but one of us has just withdrawn from his course. What will happen about council tax?**

As soon as there's a non-student in the property it stops being automatically exempt from council tax. The students in the house are still exempt but your non-student housemate will receive a bill. If he's the only non-student in the house, he's entitled to a 25% discount off the bill. If he's on a low income he can also contact the local Neighbourhood Office (details in the phone book) to apply for Council Tax Benefit.

### **I'm an international student, do I have to pay?**

If you are an international student and your husband or wife has come to the UK with you on a visa that means they cannot claim benefits (usually listed as 'no recourse to public funds' on their visa) your property should be exempt from council tax. If you are in this situation and have children with you, you should still be exempt. However, if you and your husband/wife live with other adults who are not students you should seek advice.

### **Do I have to pay council tax during the holidays?**

No – you remain a student for council tax purposes from the first day of your course until you complete or leave the course, including vacation periods.



**I've failed part of my course and have to repeat a year – will I have to pay council tax?**

If you are still undertaking a full-time course of study, even if you only have exams to take and are not actually attending, you will still be classed as a student until you eventually complete or leave the course. Therefore you will not have to pay council tax.

**I'm going on a placement as part of my course – will I have to pay council tax?**

If your course contains periods of placements (e.g. - nursing or teaching) you're still a student whilst you're away from the University so you won't have to pay council tax. Even if you're taking a placement year as part of your course, you'll still be classed as a student so won't have to pay.

**I've been having some problems so I've decided to take an 'interruption of studies' and come back to my course next year. Am I still a student whilst I'm away?**

If you are taking an interruption of study that has been agreed with the University, you will continue to be classed as a student during the period in which you are not attending if you are ill, are looking after someone who is ill or are catching up with modules as long as this does not last for more than a year.

**I've withdrawn from my course in the middle of the year, what do I do?**

You're liable for Council Tax as soon as you fully withdraw from your course. Let your local authority know your change in status.

**I'm a part-time student – do I have to pay council tax?**

Yes, part-time students are not exempt from paying council tax. However, if you have a low income you may be eligible to claim Council Tax Benefit.

**What is Council Tax Benefit and how do I claim?**

Council Tax Benefit (CTB) is a means-tested benefit to help reduce the amount of Council Tax you have to pay. It can only be claimed by someone who is liable to pay Council Tax so won't apply to most full-time students. You can get a CTB claim form from your local Neighbourhood Office – their details can be found in the phone book.

## How can I prove to the Council that I'm a student?

To gain an exemption or reduction in your Council Tax bill because you are a student, you need to provide evidence that you are enrolled on a relevant course. To do this, you need to ask your Faculty Office for a 'Council Tax Certificate' to send to the Council as evidence of your status.

## I'm a lone parent - I live with my children who are under 18. Do I have to pay council tax?

No – any household that's made up entirely of students and/or people under 18 is exempt from council tax. The council may ask you to provide proof that you are a student.

## I own my house – doesn't that mean I have to pay council tax?

There are a variety of situations for homeowners and listed below are some of the most common:

*I live alone* – no council tax will be payable, as your household is made up entirely of students.

*I'm the only adult but I have children under 18 living with me* – no council tax will be payable as your household is made up entirely of students and under 18s.

*I own the house jointly with my partner* – if your partner is a non-student s/he will be liable for the council tax bill. If there are no other adults in the property your partner will receive a 25% discount.

*I am a lone parent and one of my children is over 18 and not in full time education* – in this case the house becomes liable for council tax. As you are the homeowner, you will be liable to pay the bill. If there is only one over 18 in the property you can claim a 25% discount and you can also apply for Council Tax Benefit.

*I rent a room in my house to another full-time student* – if everyone living in your house is a student you won't have to pay council tax.

*I rent a room in my house to a non-student* – this means you will be liable for council tax. If you only have one non-student tenant you will be eligible for a 25% discount on your council tax but if you have 2 or more non-student tenants you will be liable for the full amount.

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