Websites to assist you source Off Campus Accommodation

Here are some sites which you may find useful in your search for Private Rentals.

**Domain**

**Realestate.com.au**

**Gumtree.com.au**

The above websites are online portals for real estate agencies and private realtors. Searching for accommodation through these websites will provide you with comprehensive information regarding rental prices, inspection times, and location reviews.

We suggest dealing with landlords, estate agents that follow the RTA guidelines and paperwork only. Details and information relating to the Residential Tenancies Authority can be found at [https://www.rta.qld.gov.au/](https://www.rta.qld.gov.au/)

**Where do I want to live?**

Some students prefer to live right next to campus, whilst others prefer to live nearer to the beach or city. You need to think about what type of area you’d like to live in before searching for your accommodation. Living close by to public transport is important if you do not have a car.

1. **Location** – if you’d prefer to live near to campus, the closest suburbs are Robina, Miami, Burleigh Heads and Clear Island Waters. These are all within a short bus ride (5-15 minutes) away. If you’d prefer to live within walking distance from campus, Varsity Lakes and Robina are the closest.


**How much time do I need?**

We suggest that all new students who haven’t arranged any accommodation to arrive as early as possible before semester starts to get organized and find suitable accommodation.

It can take some time to arrange inspections and lodge applications for rental properties.

Accommodation is in very high demand in the weeks before the start of each semester.

**How do I arrange an inspection?**

*You must inspect a property before you lodge an application.*

If you find a property that you like, you need to arrange a day and time for inspection with the lessor or real estate agent. They will usually meet you at the property to answer any questions you may have about the
accommodation and application process.

We recommend that you inspect a few different properties –this will give you a chance to compare suburbs and properties to ensure that you are getting value for money.

**How do I lodge a rental application?**

All real estate agents and some private landlords will require you to lodge an application if you wish to move into a rental property.

You may need to supply:

- Copies of your ID
- Proof of your Income or capacity to meet your rental commitments.
- Details of your rental history (if any)
- Don’t lodge several applications at once – these forms can be legally binding and you may be at risk of incurring costs if you change your mind.

The main purpose of an application is to assess your suitability as a future tenant. You will be asked a number of questions relating to your previous rental history, income, employment history, and reference contacts.

Even if you have never rented before, or have no solid employment history, you can still apply for private accommodation. Some tips on how to increase your chances of being approved include:

1. Ensure that you have enough money in your bank account for at least 3 months’ rent.
2. Ask a parent or guardian to be your guarantor. Think of a guarantor like rental insurance. If you are unable to meet the criteria outlined in your lease, then the guarantor is legally bound to act on your behalf, and cover any rental costs/damages outstanding. Although having a guarantor is favorable to agents for students without previous rental or employment history, it is important to understand that guarantor agreements must be entered into responsibly.
3. Get a written reference from your previous household, even if just your family home. If you lived in shared accommodation, but were not included on the lease, try to obtain a written reference from the landlord.

**Supporting documentation**

To apply for accommodation through a real estate agent, you will be required to provide at least 100 points of identification.

Examples of this include:

70 points = Birth certificate, citizenship certificate, current passport*

40 points = Australian driver license, Australian boat license, employment ID card, student ID card*

35 points = Document from your current/previous employer (within last 2 years)*

25 points = Marriage certificate (maiden name), credit card, foreign driver license, Medicare card, EFTPOS card, utility/bank statement, lease/rent agreement, record of a primary/secondary/tertiary education institution attended within the past 10 years, record of professional or trade association of
which you are a member.*

If you are an international student, you should also provide a copy of your student visa.

* This is an example only; amount of points may vary with different agencies.

Tenancy Agreements and general information

The **Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA)** is a state government statutory body that makes a positive difference to Queensland’s residential rental sector as a regulator.

The RTA provides tenancy information, bond management, dispute resolution, investigation, and policy and education services. Please find the following link for general information: https://www.rta.qld.gov.au/Resources/Forms/Forms-for-general-tenancies/Pocket-guide-for-tenants-houses-and-units-Form-17a

A **General tenancy agreement** (Form 18a), https://www.rta.qld.gov.au/Resources/Forms/Forms-for-general-tenancies/General-tenancy-agreement-Form-18a also called a lease, is a legally binding written contract between you and the lessor/agent. It must include standard terms and may include special terms (e.g. keeping pets, pest control).

You and the lessor/agent must sign the agreement and you should be given a copy.

Period of tenancy agreement:

- Fixed term agreement – has a start date and an end date and you agree to rent the property for a fixed amount of time (e.g. 12 months)
- Periodic agreement – when you agree to rent the property for an unspecified amount of time (there will be a start date but no end date)

Rent

Generally you will be required to pay 4 weeks rent (for fixed term); 2 weeks rent (for periodic agreements) in advance before moving into a property.

Rental fees can be organised as weekly, fortnightly, or monthly payments. Ensure you speak to your landlord/agent about this before signing a lease.

Bond

A bond is a deposit that tenants (people renting accommodation) usually have to pay to the lessor/agent that at the end of a lease or tenancy the lessor/agent can claim money from if there is any damage to the property that was not there before you moved in.

A rental bond must be lodged with the RTA. The lessor/agent must give you a receipt and complete a Bond lodgment (Form 2) which you must sign. The lessor/agent must lodge the bond with the RTA within 10 days. You will receive notification from the RTA once the bond has been lodged.

Utilities

You can be charged full water consumption costs only if the lessor meets a specific set of conditions.

For more information, please visit – Rental bond, deposit and utilities
Entry condition report

When you move in, you must complete a condition report. This report documents the condition of the property before you move in, and protects you from being blamed for pre-existing damage to the property. Take photographs with a date recorded on the photograph of any preexisting damage.

The lessor/agent must provide you an Entry condition report (Form 1a). You need complete it and return a signed copy to the lessor/agent within 3 days. The lessor/agent must give you a copy of the final report within 14 days.

Repairs and maintenance

It is the landlord/agents responsibility to ensure that the property is clean and tidy before you move in. It is also your responsibility to keep the property clean and tidy at all times. Any damages will be deducted from your bond upon departure.

Tips for property repairs

1. Report any damages/repairs to the landlord/agent as soon as they arise.

2. Requests for repairs/maintenance should be requested in writing (via email or post). If you have an urgent repair, such as a burst pipe, no electricity, or gas leak, make sure you contact your agent directly. Your agent will usually provide you with an emergency contact number.

3. Keep a record of all maintenance/repairs that you’ve requested. This will be used as evidence if any future problems arise.

4. Take photos with a date stamp of any significant maintenance issues. E.g., cracks in the wall, leaking taps, etc. and place with entry report and keep a copy for yourself.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW AND TO REMEMBER ABOUT LEASING

✓ To protect you, ALL agreements made with landlords and agents should be in writing.
✓ You must always keep a copy of ALL written correspondence with your landlord or agent. But, if you make a verbal agreement with your landlord you still have rights and responsibilities. Always keep a file note of all conversations and agreements.
✓ Before you sign ANY agreement ensure you read very carefully through the contract.
✓ Make sure you keep all important documents like; rent payment receipts, the copy of your lease, your bond receipts, condition report, and the inventory of contents, in a safe place in case you need them in the future.
✓ Remember you can always ask for help either from government information services if you have questions or problems.