

GUIDELINES ON SAFE USE OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Most students will bring a large variety of electrical items to their university accommodation. In order to maintain the safety of all residents, we would recommend that you take a little time to read these guidelines to ensure that your electrical equipment is in safe working order.

If you have any concerns, please ask your Accommodation Operations Assistant for advice or assistance.

Common things to look out for

1. Always switch off a kettle at the socket when filling and keep the electrical contacts dry. Ensure that any cable is not trailing over the cooker and please be careful not to burn yourself in the steam produced from a boiling kettle.
2. Never try to remove pieces of bread or toast from toasters using metal utensils with the mains plug still in the socket. Items in toasters can easily stick and prevent it from switching off, so it is important that you keep an eye on the toaster at all times when it's in use.
3. Using metal cooking foil underneath cooker rings or in grill pans can lead to a build-up of fat and/or carbon deposits which can cause fires, so please don't use it for this purpose. If you do use it for cooking/baking, please make sure that it doesn't touch any part of a heating element in the cooker.
4. Please make sure that once you have finished cooking, everything on the cooker is switched off. It is impossible to know if the hot plates are switched on just by looking at them and anything placed on top of the cooker apart from cooking pans may start a fire if a hot plate is switched on. Please don't use the hob area of a cooker as an extension to the general kitchen work surface.
5. Grill doors should only be closed once the grill is switched off and has cooled down. Please do not put the grill pan in and close the door when the grill is on, as this will melt the handle and could set the cooker on fire.
6. No metal items should be used in a microwave oven, as these can cause sparks which may lead to fires. Unsafe items that fall into this category would include metal pots or dishes, but also metal foil containers and items which may have metallic paint on them.
7. Electricity and water is always potentially a dangerous combination, so please make sure that you unplug a steam iron before filling with water and keep the outside of the iron dry. Take care not to bring flex into contact with the hot surface of an iron.
8. Light bulb sockets must never be used for anything other than the appropriate light bulb. If your bulb fails, it's better to leave the old bulb in position to cover the connector pins, until it can be replaced.

General Advice

1. Always remove mains plugs when cleaning portable electrical appliances or switch power off at the power socket in the case of a cooker.
2. Dry wet hands before touching electrical appliances, switches or plugs.
3. Any vents on your equipment are there to allow heat to escape after using an appliance. If you restrict ventilation, this could cause the appliance to overheat and may result in fire.
4. Remember and check over your electrical equipment regularly to make sure there are no damaged cables, breaks or cracks/frays in the cable or cracked plugs. The equipment cable should not show any metal wiring outside of the plug casing – this is dangerous!
5. **Make sure you are using the correct plugs, especially if your equipment was purchased from outside the UK – you may need an appropriate 3-pin adapter. Please only use multiway distribution boards or plug strips to a British Standard design if you want to use a number of items in one socket.**

Please remember that all portable appliances less than 12 months old will require to be checked by a qualified electrician and documentation available to show staff, on request.