



# What students seek 2020

# Welcome to our report

**Millennials are old news, the new generation of students are here, and they are shaking things up when it comes to what a ‘typical’ student is. Gen Z are shifting the stereotypes, making a new name for themselves, and this is the report you need to read to get the inside scoop.**

Knowing students like the back of our hands and what motivates them is top of the list for us, and it shapes all that we do – and we encourage you to do the same.

But student trends change quickly. And that’s where this report comes in.

Within you’ll get a glimpse into just how much students are changing, what’s making them tick, what they’re looking for from your accommodation, what their attitudes are to living outside halls, oh, and did we mention it’s all backed up with key insights?

This is your free, jam-packed with insights, go-to source for understanding What Students Seek.

# Contents

• Welcome and intro	3
• Who are Gen Z	5
• Social life	7
• Funds	9
• Broadband	12
• Choosing a house	14
• Transport	24
• Bills	27
• Summary	32

# Introduction

**Making lives easier  
for our customers  
is what we do.**

This is the 5th year of our What Students Seek research. The results from our reports offer insights into student trends, helping us to develop our products, services and communications - basically, it allows us to give our customers what they need!

From our research it is obvious students are changing and as landlords and letting agents, it is important, like we aim to do, to adapt to the shift in trends and behaviours.

In addition, it's a tool kit to help you understand the students that are either already in your accommodation, or those that you're looking to offer housing to.

We're confident you'll find the information from this report as useful as we have. So, grab yourself a cuppa and get to know your tenants a little bit better.



**"I love the fact that you can split payments. Before using Glide my flat mates had to transfer me money for bills, they were often late paying which meant I was paying out of my pocket. With Glide this isn't a problem!"**

**- Amy, Student and Glide customer**

# Who are Gen Z?

**These are your tenants! There's so many questions around them especially when there's so many phrases and explanations thrown around.**

Let's get to the facts, born from 1996 onwards, Gen Z are the new wave of students that have grown up in a digital centric world where easy access to the internet, gadgets and various applications is all they know.

These are the people of the future, so it's important to understand just who they are, especially as you'll be trying to attract them when letting your properties. So, what defines them?

We've ran through stats and highlighted these key themes;

## Gen Z key themes...

- Self-discovery is a major theme of student life
- Gen Z will be the most "activist" generation yet
- Staying in is the new going out
- They buy from ethical, credible and transparent brands
- They care about the environment
- Being business owners is a primary career goal
- Relationships are important to them and they like to keep building them
- They're not afraid to express their opinion and they want to stand out
- They're well researched and cynical, they will spot a fake in a second (honesty is key)
- They want things now and do not like to wait



# Expectation VS Reality



# Social life

**Is Netflix and Chill on the line up for Gen Z? Well, did you know that Gen Zers prefer to stay in and binge watch series than go out clubbing? Neither did we until now.**

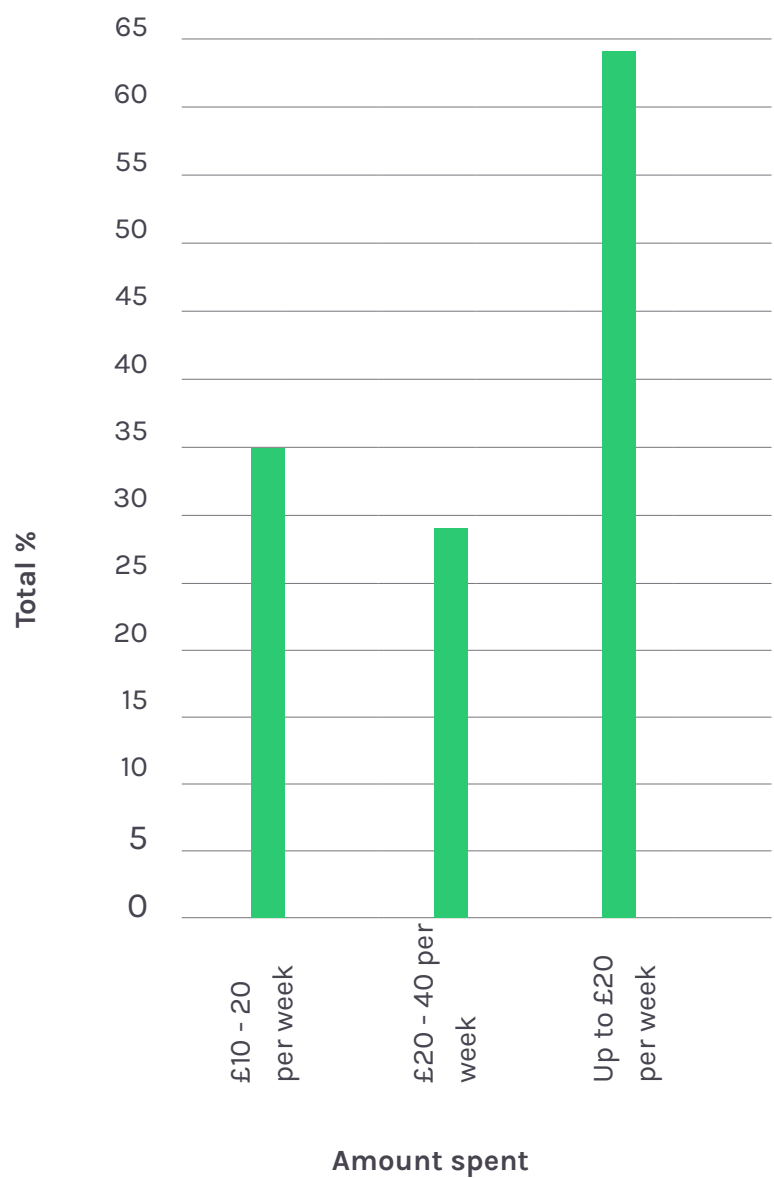
In fact, a huge 82% binge watch monthly, although normally via a tablet than on TV with the majority of students saying they don't watch TV at all.

This means there's less need to worry over ruined carpets and walls due to endless parties and students being sick everywhere after a heavy night out.

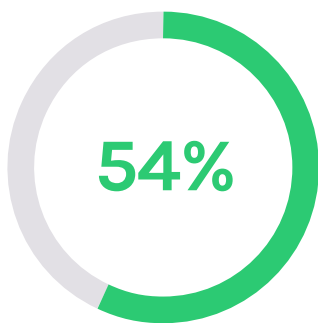
# So how much do students spend on their social life?

Surprisingly, students don't spend a great deal on their social life and seem more cautious with their spending habits, last year 'social life' was one of the biggest expenses for students. This shows that trends are changing.

When looking closer at the cities that students tend to go out most, Birmingham, Leeds and Newcastle came out on top, whereas Durham, York and Southampton spend the least.



# Money, money, money.



receive money from their parents to support studies, with the majority receiving up to £200 per month.

This is a lot higher than our 2017 report, where only 32% of students were funded by their parents.



1 in 2

students have a part time job to help fund their living costs and social life.

# Exams and coursework?

**Students have openly expressed that one of the main reasons they don't binge drink is because it means they're likely to be unproductive the following day when they'll have studying to do.**

Our results show there is an increase in students studying on campus, more students are finding exams stressful and less students say they prefer coursework over exams.

**57%** of second - and third - year students' study on campus vs 51% of other years.

**67%** of second - and third - year students are likely to find exams stressful vs 61% of other students.

**73%** of second - and third - year students said they prefer coursework over exams vs 76% of other students.



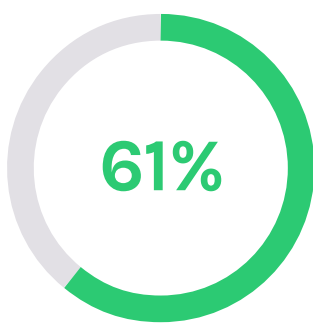
# Do you ever have issues with your broadband?

**As Gen Zers are tech savvy and spend hours on their devices each day, poor broadband will not cut it.**

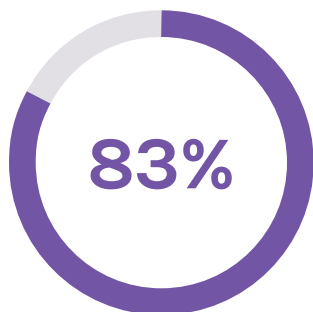
**They live in a fast-paced world and expect the same from their internet.**

When looking for properties to Let to students, researching the broadband speeds is essential for ensuring your properties allows fast internet to meet your tenants needs.

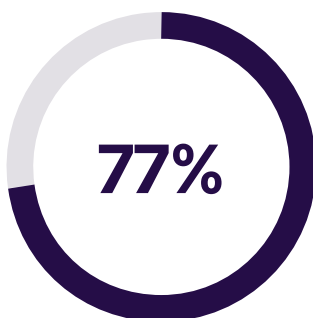
**Our report shows that students have already had issues with their internet:**



**of students have already experienced some issues, with the most common being poor connection.**



**mentioned slow speeds.**



**highlighted complete drop outs in broadband.**

# Choosing a house

**We know that Gen Z expect more now from their accommodation than students did 5-10 years ago, but what really matters to them when choosing a house?**

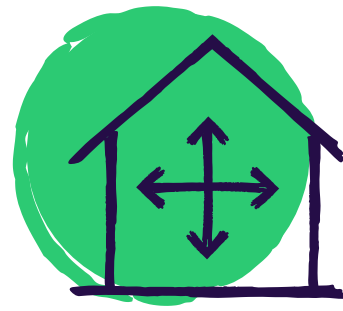
We've crunched the numbers to reveal these top 3 most important factors to Gen Z when choosing accommodation;



## 1. Price



## 2. Location



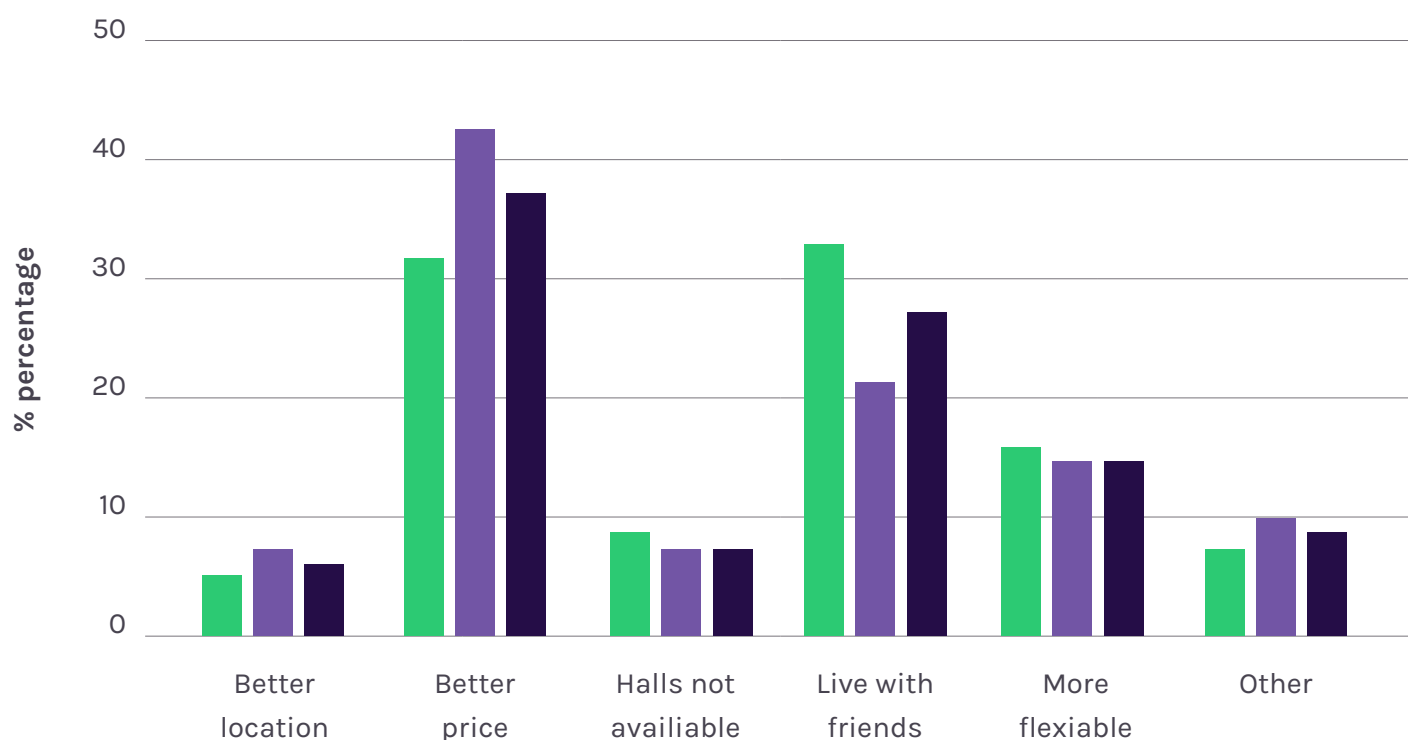
## 3. Space

**Don't risk having to increase rent:** The energy market is forever fluctuating and it's important to take this into consideration when securing bills inclusive rent prices.

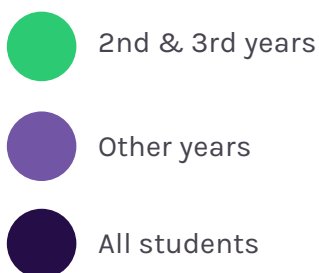
The last thing you want to do is increase your rent when the tenant moves in to cover costs, especially as it's likely they've already budgeted and even more so, that **price is the leading factor** when students search for their accommodation.

**It's clear from the report that more than half of students rent a private house or flat, and when asked why they chose living in a house over halls, the most popular answer was because of the lower rent.**

## What students look out for when choosing a house...



### Key



When comparing to results from 2 years ago, proximity to university was the highest necessity when looking for accommodation, with price not even being a top 5 consideration.

So, we know what students' priorities are when choosing their house, but how soon do they start looking?

We've pulled out the top 3...

**19%** 1-2 months before

**15%** 3-4 months before

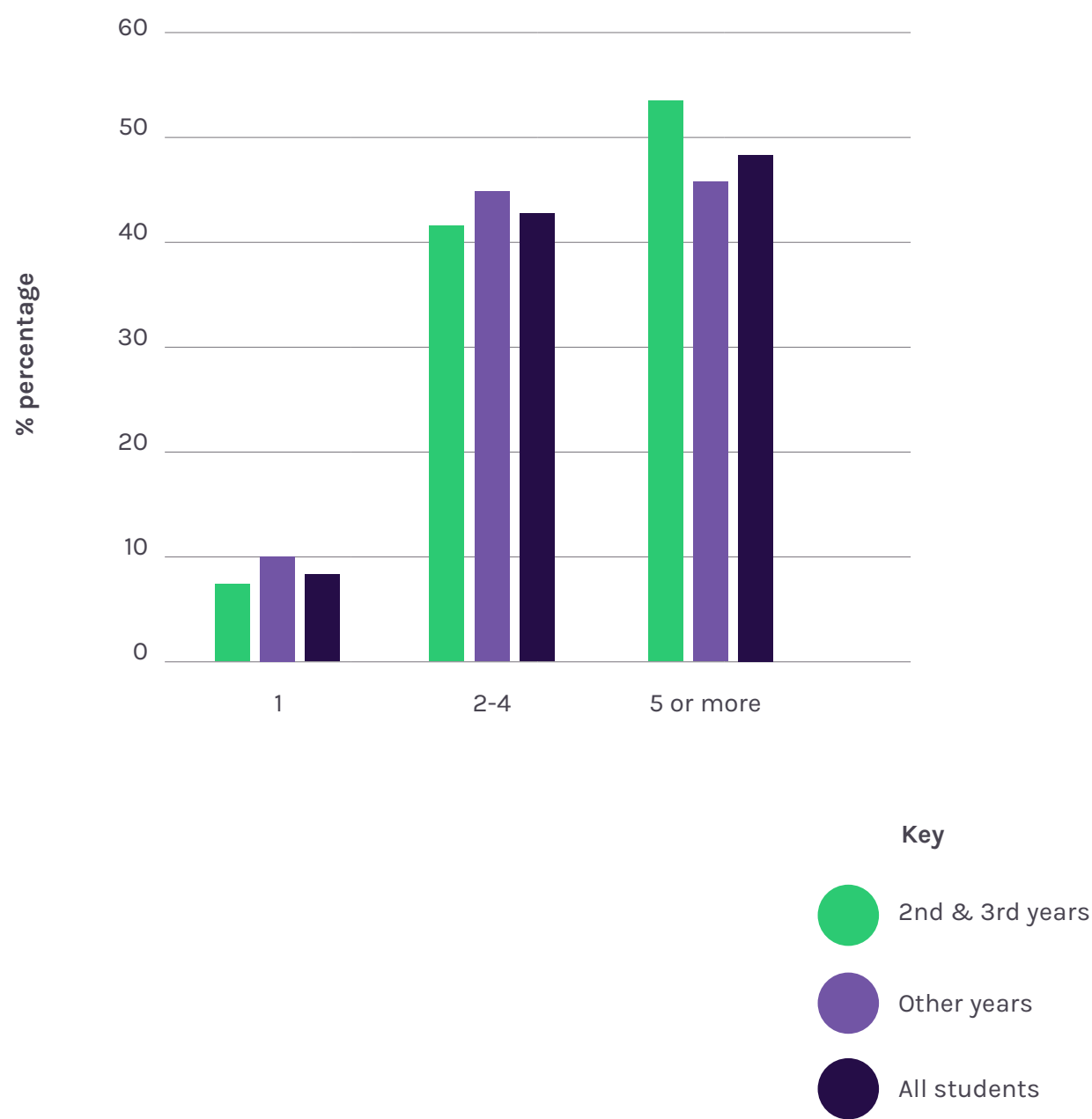
**30%** 5-6 months before



# House sharing

In 2017 our report highlighted that students prefer to live with 3-5 housemates and it seems to be a similar case this year.

The study shows that a house with at least 5 bedrooms were most popular among students, with 51% of students, particularly second and third years choosing a house of this size.



# How happy are you in your shared house?

Among those sharing a house, **76%** are happy with their housemates. Although a slightly different result with second and third years, with **71%** being less happy with their housemates, compared to other years.

What stands out the most, but probably isn't a huge surprise, is the percentage of happy students decreases when the number of people living in the accommodation increases. Two's company, three's a crowd.

Bedrooms	% Happy students
2	94%
3	86%
4	72%
5 or more	73%

From previous surveys, we observed that keeping the bills low and paying them can sometimes affect the relationship between housemates.

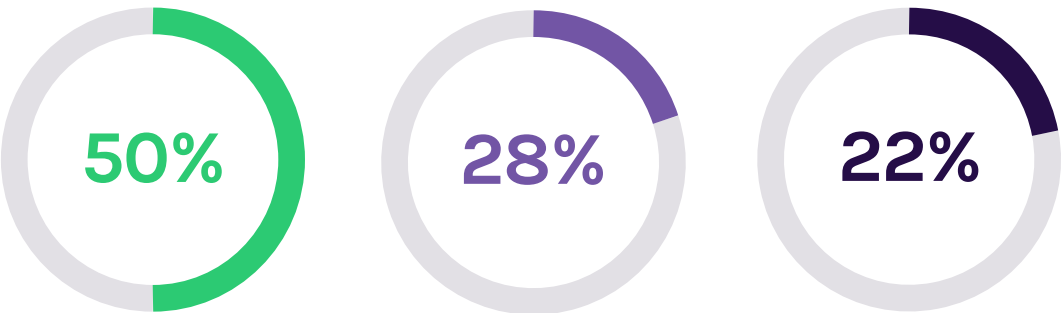
In 2017, 9% of survey participants reported they have been left to pay a bill when other housemates have not.

1 in 4

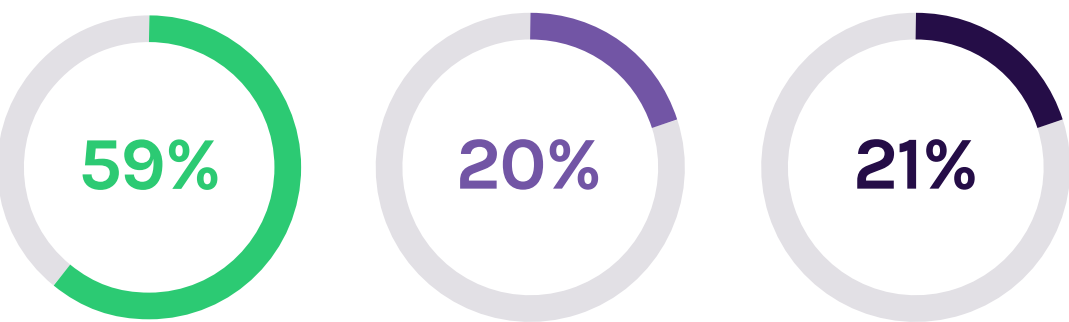
**Students said they have already argued over bills, and one in two have fallen out over the heating this year.**

# How well did you know your housemates before moving in?




## London students:



## Non-London students:

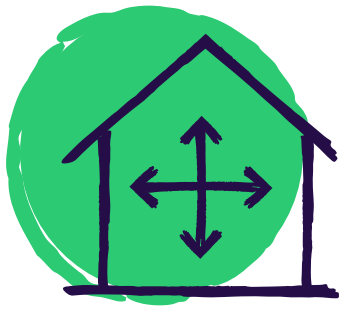


Key

-  Knew very well before moving in
-  Knew before moving in
-  Did not know before moving in

# What would you change about your accommodation?

Landlords take note, when students were asked what they'd change about their accommodation these 3 things stood out the most...



Space



Price



Location

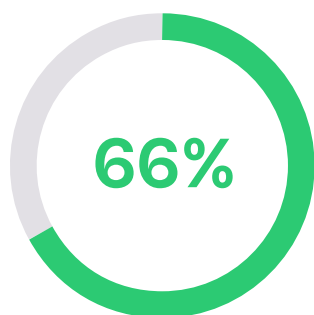
**The relationship with both housemates and landlord is also important to them, after all Gen Z like to build relationships.**

# Which mode of transport do you use?

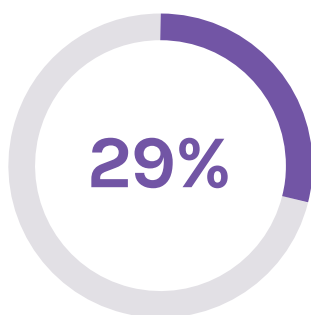
**It's commonly perceived that students take over parking spaces particularly in residential areas where undergraduates tend to live.**

However, our report suggests that this is a misconception as most students tend to walk, showing it to be the most popular mode of transport and driving not even being a top 3. And when compared to students in London, it was similar, suggesting transport in smaller cities doesn't change.

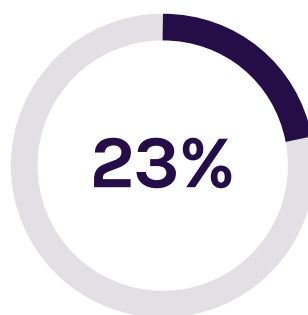
## London students:



Walk

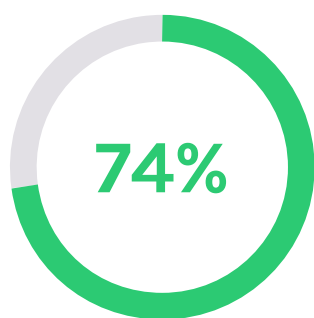


Bus

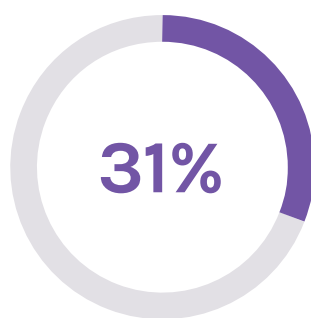


Underground

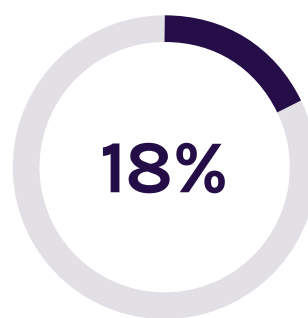
## Non-London students:



Walk



Bus



Cycle

**"The concept of splitting bills between a house in such an easy fashion is fantastic. However it is the kind, welcoming and helpful support that sells this company. Not only do they support you and understand your financial situations, they also help make a plan that works for you."**

**- Flynn Long, Student and Glide customer**

**"Using Glide makes life easier for our tenants and prevents them from arguing over bills, which is hugely beneficial and takes away the stress. It also allows us to keep all bills in one place, giving us more time to focus on running the business."**

**- Niall McTurk, Sinclair Properties, York**

# Let's talk bills inclusive.

**It's no secret that including bills in your rent makes your properties more attractive!**

More students are looking for bills inclusive rents largely due to the ease of not having to deal with different suppliers themselves.

74% of students said that having bills included in their rent is very important when searching for a property.

In 2015, 61% of students said bills inclusive was very important when looking for a house, meaning the need for bills inclusive has risen by 13% in 3 years.

# 74%

**of students said that having bills included in their rent is very important when searching for a property.**

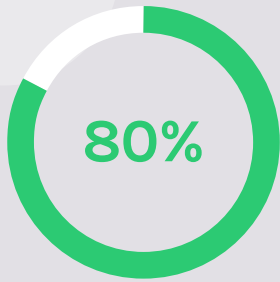
# How many bills are typically included?

As we know, bills inclusive is a popular requirement amongst students, we wanted to know how many students currently have bills included in their rents and what the most popular utilities are.

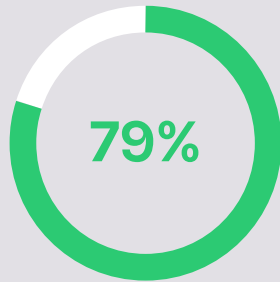
**29%** have all bills included

**71%** have four bills included

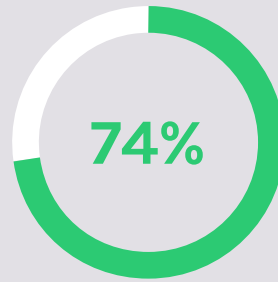
**From those who have all or some bills included, the most common bills are:**



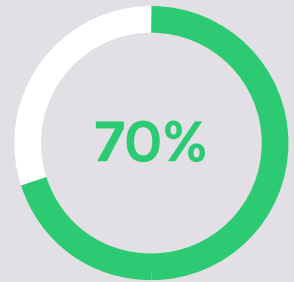
**Electricity**



**Water**



**Gas**



**Broadband**

**98%**

**of those with bills inclusive would recommend it.**

From those without bills inclusive, 69% would recommend having bills included in the rent, and 47% believe having bills inclusive is worth paying a small premium. 98% of those with bills inclusive would recommend it, while 76% support the payment of a small premium.

Therefore, if you don't already offer this then you should start thinking about it considering it's an important factor for your tenants.

We asked students what statement best represents how they feel when it comes to bills, and compared London students vs Non-London students to see if there is much difference.



What is the most appealing aspect of having bills inclusive?

The top four answers were...

**40%** only liable for my share

**21%** convenience/ease

**10%** one consolidated payment

**13%** dealing with suppliers on my behalf



# Summary

Top 3 most important factors when choosing accommodation;

1. Price
2. Location
3. Space

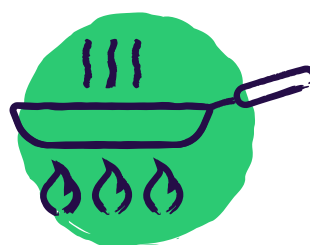
The most common bills for those with bills inclusive are:



Electricity



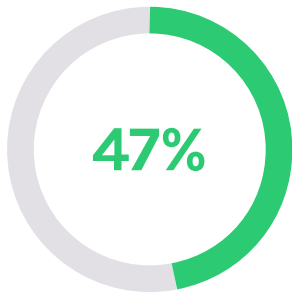
Water



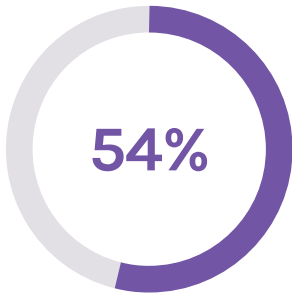
Gas



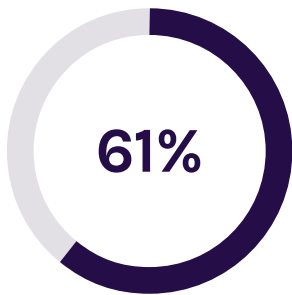
Broadband



of those without bills inclusive say it is worth paying a small premium for and 76% of those with bills inclusive agree.

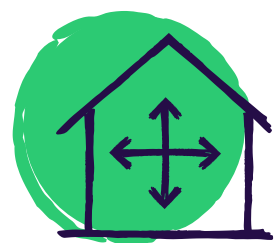


receive money off their parents to support studies, with the majority receiving up to £200 per month.



of students have already experienced some issues, with the most common being poor connection.

**Students would change the space, price and location of their student house.**






**Our findings should help you develop how you talk to your tenants, and provide you with a better understanding of what interests them so that you don't miss a trick when it comes to Letting your properties.**

# Report highlights

## Here's the key things that you need to consider:

- The need for super-fast, reliable broadband is increasing.
- Gen Z are like no other generation, communication needs to be different, have you thought about how you advertise to them? Research the platforms that interest them most.
- Expectations of living experiences are different; do you need to make changes to your properties to make them more attractive?
- We know bills inclusive is an important factor when Letting properties, if you don't already offer it, perhaps it time to start?

A young man with a green cap and a grey sweater is sitting at a table in a cafe, laughing heartily. He is wearing a watch on his left wrist and has his hands clasped. A white coffee cup is on the table in front of him. The background is blurred, showing other people and cafe equipment. There are large, stylized grey shapes in the top left corner of the image.

**Remember, Gen Z can spot a fake, so make sure you're authentic in your approach and make that extra effort to build a relationship with them which should help you stand out from the crowd.**

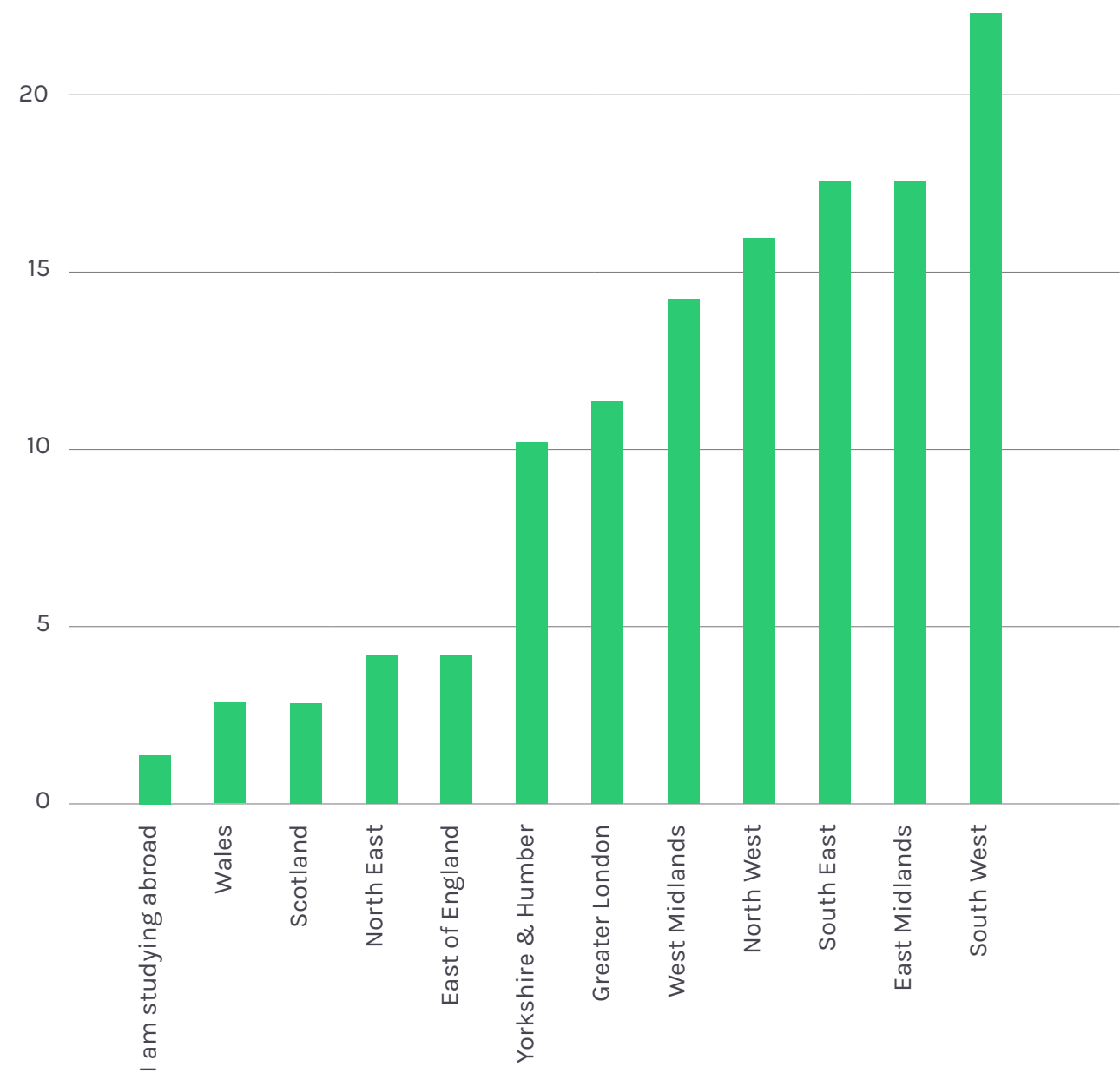
# Who did we sample for this report?

Size: 667 students

Age: 18-29

Students: 43% represent  
2nd and 3rd year students

# Where are they living?



**Want to know more about bills  
inclusive and how we can make  
managing your properties easier?**

**Get in touch today.**

**[glide@glide.co.uk](mailto:glide@glide.co.uk)**

**0333 666 5555**



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