

ULSU Housing Accreditation Cookie Policy

ULSU Housing Accreditation ("we", "our", "us") uses cookies and similar technologies on <https://ulsuhousingaccreditation.com/> to provide a secure, effective and user-friendly website for students, landlords, estate agents and visitors.

This Cookie Policy explains what cookies are, how we use them, and the choices available to you regarding their use. The website supports the University of Lincoln Students' Union (ULSU) Housing Accreditation Scheme and provides information relating to accredited student housing, landlord accreditation, property listings and housing support services.

What Are Cookies?

Cookies are small text files placed on your device (computer, smartphone, tablet) when you visit a website. They store information about your browsing session and help websites operate more efficiently. Cookies can:

- Enable essential website functionality
- Remember your preferences
- Improve website performance
- Support analytics and reporting
- Assist with security and fraud prevention
- Support marketing and advertising activities where applicable

The Legal Framework We Follow

We comply with the UK Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (PECR) when storing or accessing information on your device, and with the UK GDPR where cookies involve personal data. From 2025-26, the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 (DUAA) introduces limited, purpose-based exemptions to PECR for certain low-risk uses of cookies, but all other processing continues to rely on valid consent or another lawful basis under the UK GDPR.

Why We Use Cookies

We use cookies to:

- Ensure the website functions correctly and securely
- Enable access to online forms and property searches
- Process landlord accreditation applications
- Process viewing requests and contact enquiries
- Remember user preferences and accessibility settings
- Analyse website traffic and user behaviour
- Improve navigation and user experience
- Monitor website performance and security
- Measure the effectiveness of communications and promotional activities
- Protect the website from malicious activity, automated abuse and fraud

Services Covered by this Policy

This policy applies to cookies and similar technologies used across the ULSU Housing Accreditation website and associated online services, including:

- Accredited property listings
- Property search functionality
- Viewing request forms
- Landlord accreditation applications
- Student housing information
- Housing advice and guidance resources
- Contact and enquiry forms
- Associated campaign and promotional webpages

Not all services will use the same cookies or technologies.

Types of Cookies We Use

Cookies are grouped into the following categories:

- **Strictly Necessary Cookies (No consent required)**
These enable core functionality such as security, network management, and logging into protected areas.
- **Analytics / Performance Cookies (Consent required)**
These help us understand how users interact with our site, so we can improve performance and content.
- **Functional Cookies (Consent required)**
Support enhanced features or personalisation.
- **Marketing / Advertising Cookies (Consent required)**
Used to deliver personalised ads, track conversions, and measure campaign performance.

Retention: How Long Cookies Last

Each cookie's duration is shown in the below tables. Session cookies expire when you close your browser and persistent cookies last for a defined period unless you delete them earlier. We do not retain data longer than necessary for the stated purposes.

Detailed Cookie List

A. Core Platform Cookies

Name	Purpose	Duration	Category
__cf_bm	Detects and mitigates bots / malicious traffic	30 Minutes	Strictly Necessary
cf_clearance	Stores proof that a user passed a security challenge (e.g. CAPTCHA or challenge page)	24 hours	Strictly Necessary
__cfduid	Cloudflare security; identifies suspicious traffic	30 days	Strictly Necessary
_last_visit	Records last visit time	Session	Functional
_last_activity	Tracks last activity timestamp	Session	Functional
_tracker	Tracks previously accessed page	Session	Functional
PHPSESSID	Required for login session	Session	Strictly Necessary
_sessionid	Login session token	Session	Strictly Necessary
cc_cookie	Stores your cookie consent preferences.	Session	Strictly Necessary

B. Google Analytics 4 (GA4)

Purpose Summary:

GA4 collects anonymised usage and behavioural data to help us understand traffic patterns and improve site performance.

Tag / Service	Cookie Name	Purpose	Duration	Category
GA4	_ga	Distinguishes users	2 years	Analytics
GA4	_gid	Distinguishes users	24 hours	Analytics
GA4	_gat	Throttles request rate	1 minute	Analytics
GA4	ga<measurement-id>	Stores session information for GA4 property	2 years	Analytics

C. Meta Pixel (Facebook / Instagram)

Purpose Summary:

Used for conversion tracking, measuring ad performance, and creating audiences for retargeting.

Tag / Service	Cookie Name	Purpose	Duration	Category
Meta Pixel	_fbp	Identifies browser for ad targeting & conversion tracking	90 days	Marketing
Meta Pixel	_fbclid	Stores click data for ad attribution	90 days	Marketing

Meta Pixel	fr	Used by Meta for ad delivery, measurement & improvement	90 days	Marketing
------------	----	---	---------	-----------

D. Google Tag Manager (GTM)

Purpose Summary:

GTM loads and manages tags (GA4, Ads, Pixels). GTM does not set cookies by itself.

Tag / Service	Cookie Name	Purpose	Duration	Category
GTM Container	None	Loads/manages tags	N/A	N/A
GTM-triggered tags	Depends on tag	Only sets cookies from deployed tags	Varies	Analytics / Marketing

To note: GTM respects user consent and only fires analytics/marketing tags if permission has been granted.

E. Google Ads (via GTM)

Tag / Service	Cookie Name	Purpose	Duration	Category
Google Ads	_gcl_au	Conversion tracking	90 days	Marketing
Google Ads	_gcl_aw	Tracks ad click attribution	90 days	Marketing
Google Ads	IDE	Ad personalisation & remarketing	1 year	Marketing

Other Technologies We May Use

We may also use:

- Pixels
- Tags
- Local storage
- Server-side tracking tools

These technologies function similarly to cookies and are governed by PECR and UK GDPR. We will update this policy if new technologies are introduced.

Cookie Consent

When you first visit our website, you will be presented with a cookie preference banner. We will:

- Only set non-essential (analytics, marketing) cookies with your explicit consent
- Present a cookie banner when you first visit
- Allow you to reject or accept non-essential cookies
- Not pre-tick consent options
- Allow withdrawal of consent at any time

Strictly necessary cookies remain active because they are essential to website operation.

DUAA/PECR Exemptions We May Rely On

From 2025-26, changes introduced by the UK's Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 (DUAA) create purpose-limited exemptions that allow certain low-risk uses of cookies and similar technologies without requiring prior consent. However, the right to opt out is still preserved. If we rely on such an exemption, we will explain the purpose here and continue to offer controls via Cookie Settings. These exemptions are purpose-limited and consent is still required if we go beyond those purposes.

How to Manage or Withdraw Consent

You can:

- Change your preferences through our cookie settings tool
- Delete cookies through your browser settings
- Block future cookies via your browser controls
- Withdraw consent at any time

Withdrawing consent will not affect any processing already carried out before withdrawal.

Third-Party Services

We may use third-party providers to support:

- Website hosting
- Analytics services
- Form processing
- Property search functionality
- Email communications
- Security monitoring
- Embedded content

Where these services place cookies or process personal data, they will do so in accordance with their own privacy information and applicable legal requirements.

Policy Updates

We review this Cookie Policy regularly to ensure compliance with UK GDPR, PECR, and industry standards. Any material changes will be posted on this page with an updated revision date.

Contact Us

If you have any questions about this Cookie Policy or how we use cookies and tracking technologies, please contact:
Data Protection Officer

University of Lincoln Students' Union

Email: compliance@lincolnsu.com

Address: University of Lincoln Students' Union, Engine Shed, Brayford Pool, Lincoln, LN6 7TS