

Security and Portering Services

Personal Safety



A guide to staying safe and secure at
Cardiff University.

Security and Porter Services

Personal Safety Guide

Welcome to Cardiff



Here at 'Security & Porter Services', we pride ourselves on being friendly, helpful and approachable. We have a duty to protect Staff, Students and Visitors to the Campus. We are committed to helping you reduce your risk of crime. This 'Personal Safety Guide' is designed to ensure that you enjoy your stay and studies here as much as possible.

For International Students, Cardiff University's 'International Office' have also published a booklet with lots of information to help you while visiting the United Kingdom. This can be found at www.cardiff.ac.uk/international.

If you have any questions, queries or issues that you would like to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact us at SecurityServices@cardiff.ac.uk.

Security and Portering Services

Personal Safety Guide

SECURE RESIDENCES



A student residence, whether on or off University Campus, often contains many more possessions than an average family home. With multiple occupants having laptops, mobile phones, iPods and games consoles, student residences are extremely desirable for burglars. By following these steps you can make your residence less of a target.

- **Always remember to close and lock your windows and doors, even if you are only going out for a short time.**

About 90% of burglaries are through insecure windows or doors. Most of them occur during the evening when students have returned from lectures and leave their rooms and windows open whilst they go to the kitchen, the bathroom or a mate's room.

- **Don't leave anything on display—particularly if you live on the ground floor.**

Think of your room as a tempting shop window – any valuables left on display are only enticing potential thieves. Ensure that you hide things away and shut your curtains or blinds. If your desk is close to your window, avoid leaving items like your phone and laptop on display. If someone can put their hand into the room then they can take it. Try it for yourself – when your window is open, how far can you reach into your room?

- **Don't rely on door locks, Access Control Systems or closure devices on Building, Flat or Room doors.**

Door locks, Access Control Systems and closure devices will only work if doors are kept shut. Avoid letting people into the halls that you do not know, and never give your key, card or code to anyone else. Never hold the door open for someone behind you that you do not know—ask who they are visiting, and offer to knock for said person yourself.

Security and Portering Services

Personal Safety Guide

SECURE RESIDENCES

If you are living in the private rented sector...

1. Ask your landlord if you or they can put up net curtains – particularly on ground floor windows. This will restrict what potential thieves can see of your room. However, please do wash them from time to time – especially if your parents are coming to visit!



2. If your house has a side alleyway, make sure that it is fitted with a secure gate and a strong lock. Effective, working and properly used alley gates can greatly reduce the risk of burglary to the rear of your house.

3. If you are lucky enough to have a burglar alarm, remember to set it! If your house is not fitted with one, consider buying a dummy alarm – they are reasonably cheap and will act as a good deterrent for thieves.

4. Buy some timer switches for radios and lights. These will make it appear that you are at home when you are not. If you want to save on energy usage, you can buy a 'Fake TV Burglar Deterrent' from Immobilise (£24.99 at immobilise.com) that will mimic the light of a television screen at night.

5. Get to know your neighbours, particularly if they are full time residents! A good relationship with your neighbours means that they will likely look out for your property whilst you are away during vacation periods.

6. If you are unhappy about the condition or security of your house, the Student Support Centre <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/studentsupport> will be able to help and advise you. You can report your house to your local council who will inspect it for a number of health and safety hazards and can enforce the landlord to improve the standards if necessary.

Security and Portering Services

Personal Safety Guide

SECURE RESIDENCES

No matter where you are living...

1. Ensure that you have suitable insurance. Ask yourself how much value you would place on your belongings—does your insurance cover this amount?
2. Take your valuables home during vacation periods. During term times most burglaries are committed through insecure doors and windows, and a burglar will prefer to use this method of entry as it is both quiet and quick. During the vacation, however, they are more prepared to use force to gain entry as there are very few people around to see or hear them.
3. You can replace your possessions, but how do you replace your 10,000 word dissertation? Make sure that your coursework is backed up and stored separately to your computer.
4. Use a UV pen to mark your property with your postcode. We advise that you use a permanent residence (e.g. family home address) rather than a term-time residence as this may change quite frequently. Alternatively, you can write the name of your University along with your student ID number.

You can also register your items for free on the national property database, Immobilise, and use details of various electrical goods such as mobile phones, mp3 players, and laptops – in fact any item with a serial number. You can also register pedal cycles.

IMMOBILISE 

The UK National Property Register

www.immobilise.com

Security and Portering Services

Personal Safety Guide

SECURE CAMPUS

Never leave any of your personal items unattended anywhere on campus.

The most common offence against students on campus is the theft of unattended items, and yet it is the easiest to prevent.

University Campuses are very open sites to the public, and it is very easy for someone intent on crime to gain access to pretty much all but the most restricted

areas. Do not rely on the security of access codes or swipe card systems – how many times have you held a door open for someone without knowing who they are? Office doors are frequently left unlocked and unattended – leaving access to personal items and office computers.



Unattended theft can occur anywhere, but here are some of the more common areas where you should take extra caution.

1. At the library – Have you ever left possessions at your desk in order to save your spot whilst you find a book or grab a coffee? You may risk losing your space by taking your belongings with you, but you risk a lot more if you leave any valuables unattended.
2. On the edge of a sports pitch or in the sports changing facilities – Whether or not you think your items are safe on the edge of a pitch or astro turf, you are leaving yourself vulnerable to theft. Don't leave your belongings on the bench in the changing rooms – remember your pound for the locker and enjoy the match with peace of mind.
3. Exam rooms – Many exam invigilators will make you leave your belongings outside the room, but they won't accept responsibility if something is stolen. Bring as little as possible to an exam – all you really need is your head and a pen!

In a nutshell – err on the side of caution, and never leave anything unattended that you would be sad to lose.

Security and Portering Services

Personal Safety Guide

SECURE STREETS

We can all find it scary to walk alone, especially night. The following tips will help reduce the risk of you being a victim of crime and may make you feel safer on the streets.

If your possessions are precious to you, then keep them out of sight. Advertising your valuables makes you vulnerable to theft and so where possible it is best to keep them hidden.



1. Avoid carrying your wallet in your back pocket. Not only is it obvious to anyone walking behind you, but it is one of the easiest places to steal from.
2. When using a mobile phone, you are less aware of your surroundings. If you need to make a phone call, stand still with your back to a wall so that you can pay attention to what is going on around you. Do the same if you need to send a text – and if it is a long message, pause frequently to check your surroundings.
3. It may be useful to carry a laptop in a laptop bag, but it is also advertising that you have £1000 worth of computer equipment to potential thieves. Try to carry your laptop in a rucksack or satchel to disguise what you are holding.
4. If you have an iPod or iPhone, avoid using the famous white earphones. Again, these are just an advertisement for thieves. They may not be as cool, but black standard earphones are definitely safer.

If you ever feel unsafe whilst walking the streets of Cardiff, you can purchase a Personal Attack Alarm for just £2.50 from the Security Centre. Statistically males are more likely to be assaulted, so boys please do not think it isn't macho to carry a Personal Attack Alarm yourself!

Security and Porter Services

Personal Safety Guide

SECURE STREETS



When travelling by foot

1. Do not walk home alone after a night out. Try to stay in a group as much as possible, avoid dimly lit areas, and do not opt for quiet shortcuts.
2. Whether it is day or night, try to plan your route home and avoid stopping to look at maps and navigation software on your mobile phone.
3. Avoid using empty subways if you are walking by yourself, especially if they are long and dark.
4. Always walk with confidence, and if you ever feel vulnerable or that you are being followed, try crossing the road and aim for a busy public area where you can ask for help.

When using public transport

1. If you are taking a taxi, ensure that the vehicle is licensed by checking the plate on the rear of car and that the driver has a badge with his photograph. If travelling alone, sit in the back behind the driver and try to agree a price before starting the journey in order to avoid any issues if the fare is higher than expected.
2. If you are travelling by bus, sit close to the bus driver and in view of CCTV if possible. Avoid sitting upstairs on double-decker buses, and ensure that you check service times before leaving to avoid waiting at bus-stops for long periods.
3. The same policy applies when using trains – check your journey and be aware of any cancellations or diversions. When waiting at a train station, try to stand in well-lit areas close to other passengers.

Security and Portering Services

Personal Safety Guide

SECURE NIGHTS

Before Going Out

Let's be honest, your most important consideration before a night out is probably what you're going to wear. But alcohol can severely affect your decision making skills, and so it is really important to put safety measures in place before heading out.



Plan your evening before you go – know where you are going and pre-book your taxis in and out of the City Centre. Pre-drinking may save you money initially, but try to drink responsibly or else your night out may be over before it has even begun.

When You're Out

1. Go out in a group and with friends who you trust. Remember to look out for each other.
2. Avoid mixing your drinks. Shots can be fun but it is important to be careful—it is difficult to keep track of how much you're drinking and alcohol can affect you very suddenly.
3. Break up your evening with water. Trust us—it will do wonders for your hangover!

Getting Back

Do your best to return home in a group. If you decide to go home early, ensure that you let your friends know. Never walk back alone—take a licensed taxi and go straight home. If possible, text a friend once you're back to let them know that you have arrived safely.



Security and Portering Services

Personal Safety Guide

SECURE NIGHTS

Drink Spiking: The Myths and Facts



It only happens to girls x

Men are also at risk and should take precautionary measures as girls. ✓

It always involves a sexual assault x

Some instances involve no crime other than spiking the drink itself, and this could lead to up to 10 years in prison. Other instances have involved the theft of a mobile phone or money. ✓

It only happens to people drinking alcohol x

Drugs are mostly colourless, odourless and tasteless so can be put in any drink regardless of alcohol content. ✓

I should just stay at home and not go out to pubs or clubs x

Your chances of being a victim of drink spiking are small if you follow the tips below. Do not let a risk of crime ruin your University experience – be safe and have fun. ✓

1. Never turn your back on your drink or leave it unattended.
2. Be aware of how much alcohol you are consuming – if you start feeling more drunk than you feel you should, stop drinking and seek medical assistance.
3. Avoid accepting drinks from strangers; if you do, make sure you see it opened and that nobody interferes with it before it reaches you.
4. Drink from a bottle and cover the top with your thumb.
5. When you go out, stay with a group of friends so that you can watch out for each other and get each other home safely.

If you think you have been spiked, seek help from someone you know and trust 100%. Seek medical assistance as soon as possible and report the matter to the police.

Security and Portering Services

Personal Safety Guide

SECURE CYCLES

The vast majority of bikes stolen have been locked with chains or combination locks that are easy to cut through with bolt croppers. Use these tips to reduce your risk from theft.



Make sure that you have a good lock for your bike.

Avoid using combination or chain locks as these can be easily cut through with bolt croppers. D locks are a better option: D-Locks are available to purchase at a discounted rate of £17.50 from the Security Centre. And once you have bought a good lock...

Use it!

Always lock your bike through the frame at one of the many designated cycle racks around Campus. Do not lock your bike to walk-way handrails, trees or signposts.

Take off any removable parts.

These can include lights, quick release wheels and saddles.

Try to lock the bike in view of CCTV.

Whilst not always possible, locking your bike in front of obvious CCTV cameras acts as a strong deterrent for bicycle thieves. If you are living in University Residences, speak to your Residences Team about what facilities are available for storing your bike.

[For a useful video guide to locking your bike and keeping it safe, click here.](#)

MAKE YOUR MARK

Mark your postcode on two different areas of your bike's frame. This, in conjunction with registering your bike with services such as Immobilise, will help you to find your bike again if it is lost or stolen.

IMMOBILISE 

The UK National Property Register

www.immobilise.com

Security and Portering Services

Personal Safety Guide

SECURE CARS

Theft from cars parked at Cardiff University is rare and it is even more unusual for cars to be stolen—however it does not hurt to rule out the risk.

Always lock your car.

Even if you are only leaving it for a short period! It seems obvious, but never leave the car unattended with the keys in the ignition—even if you're only running a quick errand!



Use a steering lock.

We advise that you use a 'Sold Secure' lock, e.g. the 'Disk Lok'. This will deter potential thieves and make it very difficult for your car to be stolen.

Remove your vehicle documents from your car.

These documents will make it a lot easier for a thief to sell your car if it is stolen. If you are ever stopped by the Police whilst driving and are requested to show your documents, you will be given 7 days to take the documents to a Police Station of your choice.

Do not leave anything on display in your car.

Even if you know that something is worthless, thieves will not—and they may break your window to find out! One of the most commonly stolen items from students' cars are sports bags containing dirty clothes!

Do not leave valuables, bank cards or cheque books unattended anywhere in your car.

If a thief has already gone to the trouble of breaking your window, they will happily check both your glove box and your boot.



Take out any removable audio equipment or Sat Navs.

These items carry obvious value for thieves. If you are using a Sat Nav, remove its holder and wipe away any marks left on the windscreen—thieves may break your window to see if the Sat Nav is in the glove compartment.

Security and Portering Services

Personal Safety Guide

SECURE PHONES

Mobile phones remain an attractive item for any opportunist thief. Follow these tips to minimise the risk of having your mobile phone stole.

Record your IMEI number.

This is recorded behind the battery in your handset or can be brought up on screen by pressing *#06#. The number on the screen should match the number behind the battery.

Record the make, model and network details of your phone.

Write down any scratches or bumps that would help to distinguish your phone.

Register your phone with a property database.

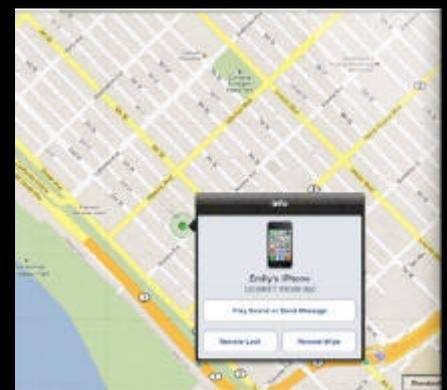
Immobilise (www.immobilise.com) offer such a service and is used by Police and lost property services alike to reunite owners and their possessions.

If your phone is stolen, ring **08701 123 123** to get it blocked within the UK on all mobile networks.

Blocking your phone will stop thieves from running up huge phone-bills—don't let them cause you any further problems!

You take your iPhone everywhere. Which means you might leave it anywhere. Whether it's at the office, in a conference room or under a cushion on your sofa, chances are it won't be lost for long. With the 'Find My iPhone' app, you can sign in to icloud.com from any computer web browser to display its approximate location.

For further information, visit <http://www.apple.com/iphone/icloud/>



Security and Portering Services

Personal Safety Guide

SCAMS

Scams are designed to be convincing. As a general rule, if something seems too good to be true, it usually is. The following scams are fairly common – but there are simple rules to avoid becoming a victim.



Protect your bank account.

Fake emails asking for your bank details are sent from around the world on a daily basis. They may plead for your help in accessing funds from a dead relative, or offer to invest millions into your business. It is best to simply delete these emails—and certainly never email back with your bank account details.

Similarly, emails are sent out from people purporting to be legitimate banks with queries about your account. In general, banks will not email you with such queries. If you are ever in doubt, contact your bank directly – either by a telephone number listed on their official website or by visiting your local branch.

Under no circumstances should you give your PIN number to anyone.

Nobody will ever require this information – not even your bank. If anyone asks you for your number, do not give it – no matter how convincing they sound.

If you ever notice any odd transactions or have reason to believe that someone has accessed your bank without your authority, you must contact your bank immediately. They will be able to help you stop any further transactions. You will also be advised to contact the Police for a Crime Reference Number.

Security and Porter Services

Personal Safety Guide

VICTIMS OF CRIME

It can be a frightening experience if you are subject to a crime or incident, however we are able to support you. If you have anything to report, please contact us as soon as possible so that we are aware of any issues or undesirable behaviour.

You can call the Security & Porter Services at any time – we are available to speak to 24/7. Please call us on +44 (0) 29 2087 4444.

If a criminal act is taking place, please call 999 immediately and ask for the Police. You should then contact us on the number above so that we can come to your assistance.

If you wish to report a non-urgent call to the Police, call 101. Rest assured that if the Police feel that your issue is urgent, then they will escalate the call.

Support Services

Victim Support is a nation-wide charity established to support victims and witnesses of crime – they are independent of the criminal justice system. They provide support whether the crime has officially been reported or not; they also run the victim/witness care schemes at court.

Log onto their website for more information, www.victimsupport.org.uk (external link) or call their national support number 0845 30 30 900.

Closer to home, our own Students' Union runs an advice centre which can offer you support. You can find further information on their services at <http://www.cardiffstudents.com/advice/>. Cardiff University also has an overnight support service called Nightline, who you can contact at 02920 870 555. Further information on their service can be accessed at <http://www.cardiffnightline.com/>.

Security and Portering Services

Personal Safety Guide

VICTIMS OF CRIME

Reporting an Incident

If you are a victim of crime, then please do report it. Around 60% of crimes committed against students are not reported. This means that the Police are unable to build up a picture of what is happening, where and at what times.

You should also report offences that occur within Cardiff University to us, the Security & Portering Services, as we also gather statistics about the crimes that take place on campus. Even if you think that there is nothing we can do about your crime, by reporting it you will help us to allocate our resources more effectively and hopefully protect students from experiencing similar situations.

When you contact the Police, they will ask you for details on:

1. Who you are
2. What has happened
3. Where it happened
4. Who the offender was
 - Think about their physical appearance – gender, age, height, hair colour, complexion, and any distinguishing features such as piercings and tattoos
 - What were they wearing?
 - Did you hear them speak? Think about what they said and whether they spoke with a particular accent.
 - Did they use a vehicle? Can you remember the registration number? What about the make, model and colour?
 - How the offence was committed

Have these details to hand as it will help the Police to build a picture of what has taken place.