

## Damp

### What is damp?

Damp is moisture which affects your house. It can damage the property and can have an impact on your health.

### How do I know if my house has damp?

Signs of damp include

- Mould growth
- Patches of damp which get darker when it rains
- Running water on windows and walls
- Crumbling plaster
- Peeling paint and wallpaper
- Decaying skirting boards and floors

### What causes damp?

Damp is caused by a variety of reasons which include a lack of ventilation and humid living conditions. This may be a result of lifestyle choices, like drying clothes indoors, or structural issues, like poor quality repairs.

### What should I do if my house has damp?

- Check your tenancy agreement: see if your terms are designed to reduce damp e.g. opening windows and not being allowed to dry clothes indoors. If complying with these terms is difficult please seek advice as this may affect your tenancy agreement.
- Make changes to reduce moisture: e.g. use an extractor fan or leave internal doors open.
- Use a dehumidifier: be aware that this will increase your electric bill unless you come to an agreement with your landlord.

### Damp caused by structural reasons - what should I do?

- Check your tenancy agreement - please speak to a RUSU Adviser if necessary
- Inform your landlord - best done in writing. [Shelter](http://england.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/repairs_and_bad_conditions/common_problems/damp_and_mould_problems_in_rented_homes) has a template letter on their website: [http://england.shelter.org.uk/get\\_advice/repairs\\_and\\_bad\\_conditions/common\\_problems/damp\\_and\\_mould\\_problems\\_in\\_rented\\_homes](http://england.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/repairs_and_bad_conditions/common_problems/damp_and_mould_problems_in_rented_homes)
- If your landlord does not acknowledge your concerns, take action to reduce the damp or says that the damp is caused by your use of the property then you can speak to your local authority's Environmental Health department. An Environmental Health inspection should help to identify if there are health and safety hazards in your home. This is usually a free service.

- If damp and mould is causing a health and safety hazard, the local authority can take action against the landlord. They can also advise tenants if there is any action they can take to improve the situation.

If you would like further advice or to speak with somebody in person then a Students' Union Adviser may be able to help. The specialist advisers offer a confidential service, independent from the University so they can discuss your case with you in private.

Contact us by email at [advice@rusu.co.uk](mailto:advice@rusu.co.uk), or visit us in the RUSU building.

You can book an appointment or attend a drop-in session. Drop in runs on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday (11.00am-1.30pm) and Wednesday (2pm-4.30pm)