

## Tips & Tricks for Housing and Student Life

*This document was drafted by and for MADE students, with additions from the program's Study Advisors.*

### Housing

The MSc MADE program is based in Amsterdam, which is a popular city to live in and also home to one of the largest student populations in the Netherlands. This means that finding a place to live in can become very challenging. It is important that you start looking for housing options as soon as you seriously consider to join MSc MADE.

#### MADE Housing Support Community

We want to support you best we can. This document should already help you get on your way. Additionally, we have set up some other structures to help you connect and boost your search.

- We have compiled a [list](#) of housing associations and housing platforms available in Amsterdam. This list shows realistic information on what they require and their waiting lists.
- When you are admitted to MSc MADE, you will receive an invitation to join our "house hunt chat" (student-owned and -led).

#### Important tips for your house hunting journey

1. Consider to widen your search range to the surrounding cities/municipalities (e.g. Amstelveen, Diemen, Utrecht, Zaandam, Haarlem, or even Rotterdam, Delft, Leiden)
2. Join Facebook groups for people from your nationality that live in Amsterdam, reach out for questions about moving to Amsterdam and for help finding a room.
3. Things to prioritize for any temporary room: feeling of safety, condition of the room, public transport.
4. Things to prioritize for a permanent room: registration, price, services, location, and all things in point 3.

#### **We cannot stress this enough:**

It can be easier to find a temporary room in a sublease while you search for a permanent one. Keep your options open and don't stop searching.

#### Student housing in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, house rental in general is divided into two sectors: social housing and the free sector (private market). The main differences between the two sectors are that social housing has a rent threshold, tenants must fulfill specific requirements, apply for rent

benefits etc., where in the private sector these do not apply.

Student housing can be provided either as student social housing from housing organizations, or through the private market where housing corporations usually provide some studios designed for students. There is generally no housing available through the educational institution. Usually student social housing works with a registration time build-up scheme, but in the private sector there can be other schemes like lottery, so it is important to understand how each platform works and what are your chances of finding accommodation through them. A lot of the time, students have to tap into the private sector to find housing in Amsterdam.

**Social housing corporations:** De Key, Duwo, Stadgenoot, Kamer Amsterdam of Ymere

- Sign in at their platforms through [www.studentenwoning.mijndak.nl](http://www.studentenwoning.mijndak.nl) and [www.room.nl](http://www.room.nl).
- React in May and June (July and August are often too late).
- Already renting with Duwo or Idealis in Delft or Wageningen? Contact Duwo directly about the possibilities of moving to Amsterdam.

### **Priority for international students**

As an international student, you can get a priority when looking for a room in Amsterdam. Log in to 'My ROOM' and click on 'Suitable range'. Here you'll find the available rooms you can respond to. You can respond to all ads. However, to increase your chances of finding a room, it's strongly advised to respond to ads that give you a priority as an international student. If you filter on 'priority', you'll get a selection of all the priority rooms for you. If you're interested in a room, click on 'Respond' at the bottom of the page.

### **Housing through Wageningen University (in Wageningen)**

MSc MADE has the unique characteristic of being a joint master degree from two universities and takes place outside of both campuses. Most MADE students understandably prefer to find a room in or close to Amsterdam. In Amsterdam, MADE students have to find housing independent from the institutional support that comes from partnerships between each university (WUR and TU Delft) and the local student housing corporations that procure housing in Wageningen and Delft.

However, the housing shortage in Amsterdam may leave you no other option than to look for housing further away. While the commute from Wageningen to AMS Institute is not ideal (about 1,5-2 hours), it is an option. As a MADE student you can benefit from the same support other students from WUR receive. Be sure to check out the information provided through the [website](#), or sent to you by the Student Service Centre (SSC).

For international students looking for a room in Wageningen, priority arrangements are in place. These don't guarantee housing, but do increase your chances when you respond to housing **between mid July and August**.

## Keep in mind when renting

A few things to keep in mind when renting in the social sector:

- If you meet specific conditions, you can apply for a rent benefit (huurtoeslag) to subsidize your monthly rent. Most social student housing make sure that the rooms they offer are eligible for a rent benefit (in the private sector this is not always applicable).
- Although there are priority arrangements for first year foreign students through platforms such as Room.nl, it is only for a very limited amount of dwellings, which students from major universities in Amsterdam such as UvA and VU, college universities and other institutes have to compete for.

A few things to keep in mind when renting in the private sector:

- Check whether the rent is inclusive (inclusief) or exclusive (exclusief) of gas, water, electricity and other bills etc. (rent usually does not include municipal taxes for waste collection “afvalstoffenheffing”, which is based on the amount of tenants in each household and is due once a year)
- Landlords will usually ask you to pay a deposit, which is usually worth one to two months of rent.
- In case you need free legal advice, reach out to <https://www.juridischloket.nl/>
- In case you need advice on tenant rights, your contract or any housing related support, contact !WOON.
- An important aspect of the private sector that tenants need to be aware of is rental fraud. A detailed overview of a tenant's housing rights in Amsterdam can be found here and also tips on how to avoid scams can be found here and here.

## Basic checklist for a good (permanent) room

To keep your head cool here is a basic checklist of elements that a room needs to be good to rent. The search for a room can be challenging, and as a result you may feel stress. This can lead you to try unconventional solutions, to accept rooms that can be a bad deal or worse, to get scammed. Keep your head in the game :)

1. The owner offers you a contract. This can be for different periods of time, monthly, six months, yearly, for two years or indefinite. Most contracts can be canceled with a month's notice, so we strongly suggest that you always take a contract for two years, or for one year with the option to extend to two.
2. It is possible to register with the municipality. This is not always the case, for instance when you sub-lease. This is not only important to acquire your citizen service number ('BSN'), but also for you to get post and a General Practitioner near you. See chapter on Registration below.
3. You can meet the landlord or the agent in person. Don't trust contacts that don't want to meet you in person.
4. Only give money after the contract has been signed and after you have been given the key to the room and tested the key on the door. Don't trust anyone that doesn't want to let you do this before you pay them.

5. Always double check with friends that are also house-hunting, if a deal or a room seems too good or if it is suspicious.
6. When everything seems to be in order, check the address through [Kadaster](#) to make sure that the name of the person that owns the place is in the contract. Reach out to Dutch or second year students if you need help with this.
7. If your contract is in Dutch, use online document translation.

## Registration with the municipality where you live

### Dutch citizen service number (BSN)


Everyone moving to the Netherlands for four months or longer from abroad is required to register their home address in the municipal Personal Records Database (BRP). After registering, you receive a Dutch citizen service number (burgerservicenummer: BSN). A BSN is a number with which you can be identified by a number of government and non-government organizations and you need it to work, open a bank account, take out healthcare insurance or apply for benefits.

Make sure to check the [documents](#) needed for the registration beforehand, as you need to ensure that they are valid and translated (if needed) for your appointment. Depending on your situation, you may also need to provide other certificates issued in foreign countries. During your appointment, the municipality will let you know which additional documents you need. You will have 3 months to arrange these documents.

Each municipality has their own system for registration. You may need to make an individual appointment (online or by calling), sometimes student registration days are organized. Check out the website of your municipality to find out. Once you get your BSN, make sure to apply for a [DigiD](#), as you need it to identify yourself when you arrange matters online, such as with the government, educational institutions, healthcare organizations or your pension fund.

### Registering with the Municipality of Amsterdam

It is required to register within five days of arriving in Amsterdam. The Municipality of Amsterdam organizes student registration days/weeks at the start of the academic year. The dates will be announced on the city's website. At other times, you need to arrange your appointment [online or by calling](#) the municipality. It can take from a few days to 1-2 months to find an appointment, so make sure you arrange this as soon as possible (you can even call from abroad).



*\*Tip: You can try calling them during any morning, when they often get cancellations, and get an appointment sooner than your original appointment.*