

## Controlling your post

One of the big problems with leaving home can often be controlling the post. Letters to the home can contain important personal details, be crucial when setting up new bank accounts and services, and be impossible to get back. Changing an address before leaving home will always mean using a temporary address. This could be a friend, family, or even a PO Box.

Depending on your situation, it may simply be impossible for you to exercise any control over your post. However, if you do have limited control over your post, you can consider the following options:

### Changing the address for your mail

This means calling the important providers with new address details. You need to be aware that:

- o Some providers will send an e-mail confirming a change of address. Is this email address secure?
- o Providers can make mistakes: the address change may not take effect immediately or at all.
- o Data breaches shouldn't happen, but do occur. Does the new address you've chosen belong to someone that will be aware of your situation in case a former partner approaches them?
- o You don't always need your physical mail. Scanning and keeping a copy of the most recent letter will often contain all the reference numbers and information you need to talk to the provider later (see 'Cloud Storage' ).

### Why change your postal address now?

As always, this depends on your circumstances. If you are able to do things like set up a private bank account, or even organise renting a new property, then it's important that there is no possible trace of this that can go to your old home. Even if you change to your new address straight away, systems take time to update and letters can cross in the post: this can be quite a risk to take.

Of course, if you do not have the freedom to take these steps, then there is nothing to gain by worrying about your post.

## **Royal Mail redirection**

This costs £33.99 for three months, but can let you redirect mail to a PO Box number if you don't want to send anything to friends or family. It is meant to take 5 working days to set up, although the post office recommends doing it three weeks in advance: we recommend five weeks if you can.

The benefit is that you can redirect mail for you and your children whilst leaving mail for a partner untouched.

Unfortunately, mail relating to benefits cannot be redirected. Also, if you redirect mail in joint names, your partner may be able to redirect it back.