

UUK/GuildHE Approved Code of Practice for the Management of Student Housing

First Annual Report

August 2007

Introduction

1. This first report on the operation of the UUK/GuildHE Approved Code of Practice for the Management of Student Housing is in five parts. Part 1 sets out the background – the purposes of the Code, the contributors to its preparation, factors affecting its scope and content and its relationship with other codes under the provisions of the Housing Act 2004. Part 2 briefly describes the legislative position and provides some necessary definitions. Part 3 gives an account of the operation of the code in its first year with regard to publicity, compliance, audit and complaints. Part 4 describes the management arrangements for the Code and Part 5 indicates expected developments of the Code and a timetable for 2007/8.

Background

2. The UUK/Guild HE Code was established to serve two principal purposes:
 - to set out the main elements of good management practice for student housing in a “source document” which would provide an initial bench mark for assessing and enhancing the management, and quality, of student accommodation provided¹ by higher education institutions
 - to meet the requirements of the Housing Act 2004, and subsequent statutory instruments, which introduced a licensing requirement for houses in multiple occupation (HMOs)
3. A wide range of bodies in the HE sector, in addition to UUK and GuildHE, contributed to its preparation: the Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE), the Association for Student Residential Accommodation (ASRA), College and University Business Officers (CUBO), the University Safety and Health Association (USHA), the Association of University Heads of Administration (AUHA), the Association of University Chief Security Officers (AUCSO) and the Association of Managers of Student Services (AMOSSHE). The Department for Communities and Local Government (then the Office of the Deputy Prime

¹ In terms of the legislation “managed and controlled” by higher education *establishments* (HEEs). See paragraph 11 of this report.

Minister), provided valuable advice and support. The National Union of Students (NUS), the Accreditation Network UK (ANUK) and the Higher Education Regulatory Review Group (HERRG) also contributed to the preparatory work.

4. In producing the Code close regard was paid to certain characteristics of student housing provided by higher education institutions (HEIs), in particular:
 - the wide variety of types of housing (including ancient and historic buildings, 21st. century purpose-built, college rooms, “traditional” halls of residence, flatted accommodation)
 - distinctive management arrangements including, for all HEIs, independent governing bodies and access to a formal university complaints procedures with recourse to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)
 - the nature of the relationship between university/college authorities and students. This encompasses a wide range of mutual obligations and responsibilities within which accommodation quality is seen, by managers, as an important part of the “core business” of an HEI. There is thus a clear difference with the landlord/tenant relationship that pertains in the privately rented sector.
5. These characteristics had practical implications for the specification of a Code on best management practice. A generic approach was adopted to allow for the variety of building and accommodation types and for the nature of HEI management. Thus the Code indicates “*the main principles which should be observed and the essential requirements which must be met*”² in order to satisfy the criteria for formal accreditation.
6. Two codes of practice for accommodation managed and controlled by educational establishments were approved by Parliament in April 2006:
 - *The Universities UK/GuildHE³ Code of Practice for University Managed Student Accommodation.*
 - *The Accreditation Network UK (ANUK)/Unipol Code of Standards for Larger Developments for Student Accommodation Managed and Controlled by Educational Establishments*
7. Both Codes give educational establishments signing up to them exemption from the definition of Houses in Multiple Occupation in respect of the buildings listed in the Schedule to the Code. The accommodation listed does not require a licence under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004. (See paragraphs 10-13 below).
8. HEIs may join either Code, or both. Some of the detailed requirements of the Codes reflect their different priorities and origins but care has been taken to ensure there are no significant

² Paragraph (x) in the preamble to the Code

³ Guild HE – at that time the Standing Conference of Principals (SCOP)

inconsistencies between them. As the Codes are likely to be modified in response to emerging issues both the ANUK Committee of Management and the UUK/GuildHE Governing Board will endeavour, under the terms of an agreed protocol, to ensure that the Codes remain broadly consistent.

9. A further Code was approved specifically for larger developments of student accommodation operated and managed by private sector providers. This code is also operated by ANUK/Unipol.
10. The Codes are designed as statements of good practice which are subject to change and refinement in the light of experience. They should serve to reinforce and, where necessary, encourage better management of accommodation provided by HEEs and major private suppliers. Together with the licensing requirement for HMOs for privately rented property, they should help to effect a sustained improvement in the management of all forms of student housing.

Legislative requirements and definitions

11. Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004 introduced a new definition of a house in multiple occupation (HMO); in essence a house or flat occupied by more than one household where the households share one or more basic amenities. The majority of student accommodation whether provided by HEIs or the private sector is covered by this definition. Again, in general terms, the Act provides that such houses are subject to a system of licensing. Certain categories however may be excluded from the definition and thus from licensing. Such categories exempt from licensing are, in the terms of the Act, "*excepted accommodation*".
12. Among these categories of exception is accommodation "*managed and controlled*" by higher or further education establishments where the accommodation is used solely or principally by persons for the purpose of undertaking a full time course of further or higher education. Exception is on the basis that each establishment and its buildings so excepted is managed in conformity with *an approved code of practice*. Codes set out standards of conduct and practice to be followed with regard to the management of HMOs or of accommodation excepted from the definition of HMO.
13. It should be noted that the Act uses the term *establishment* rather than the more usual term (in the sector) of *institution* and that the relevant regulations refer to specified *establishments* and to specified *buildings*. It is these that constitute "*excepted accommodation*". References in the remainder of this report therefore, are to higher education *establishments* (HEEs) rather than HEIs.
14. Excepted accommodation may be provided directly by an HEE or by a private supplier. But given the diversity of modes of ownership and management of student accommodation across the higher education sector it is not always easy to assess whether an HEE or a

private supplier is managing and controlling a particular building. ANUK and Universities UK therefore agreed on a points mechanism for assessing who manages and controls a particular building. Following this system, buildings have been deemed either to be managed and controlled by an HEE or by another provider.

The Code in operation

Coverage

15. The UUK/Guild HE Code, first published in February 2006, came into force on 6 April 2006⁴. This Report therefore, covers the first year - the initial phase - of the Code's operation. Initially, 155 HEEs were listed as either accredited to the UUK or ANUK Codes. Additional educational establishments were included in the Code in August 2006⁵. By August 2007 191 establishments were signed up to the UUK/GuildHE Code, of which 182 were in England. The colleges of Oxford and Cambridge universities constitute separate establishments for the purposes of the Code. Once the 81 Oxbridge colleges have been taken into account there are 103 English universities and HE colleges signed up to the UUK/GuildHE Code of Practice: this is about 80% of the higher education institutions funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England. It should be noted that some institutions do not provide any student accommodation. A list of the English establishments covered by the Code is provided in Annex A.
16. HEEs are required to supply, and keep up to date, a list of all buildings that are included in the code. A comprehensive list of all buildings is maintained on the UUK website at <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/acop>. There are currently 5700 buildings managed and controlled by English establishments in the Code, providing accommodation for around 230,000 students. There are a further 300 buildings in Wales accommodating around 13,000 students.

Publicity

17. At national level the introduction of the Code has been publicised by UUK and GuildHE and by the bodies contributing to its preparation listed in paragraph 3 of this report. These bodies have arranged a number of conferences and seminars to familiarize HE staff with the new arrangements. The Code is available on the UUK website – among others. The Department for Communities and Local Government has given both the UUK and ANUK Codes extensive publicity including a leaflet *Guide to Student Accommodation*.

⁴ By virtue of the Houses in Multiple Occupation (Specified Educational Establishments) (England) Regulations 2006 (S.I. No. 2006/647)

⁵ The Houses in Multiple Occupation (Specified Educational Establishments) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2006 (S.I. No. 2006/2280)

18. At local level a survey conducted at the end of the first year shows that two thirds of the responding HEEs had included information on the Code in student welcome packs while 43% had posted information on their websites. A number had placed a hard copy of the Code in residences. In the majority of cases students' unions have been involved – through consultative groups or committees - in raising awareness of the Code. Other means of disseminating information on the Code included:

- In accommodation leaflets sent with application forms
- Information in college, hall or residence handbooks
- References in residence or accommodation agreements
- Hard copy made available to view in accommodation offices
- References in tenancy agreements
- Via (the student members of) college committees

18. HEEs have put considerable effort into publicizing the Code. It is less clear at present how effective these efforts have been, and this is a matter of concern for the Code. During the Code's next phase of development the Sector Advisory Group will collect evidence on the effectiveness of publicity in each institution and disseminate good practice and advice. For instance, as welcome packs and hall handbooks may not be read from page to page it is surprising that more HEEs have not used websites to increase student awareness of the Code. Annex C gives some examples of individual responses to the survey on publicity as well as responses on liaison and student involvement, and on complaints.

19. An initial set of good practice guidelines will shortly be supplied to Code members. This is shown at Annex E.

Compliance

20. Certain issues concerning compliance with the Code have arisen during the year. They include whether certain types of flatted accommodation "qualify" under the terms of the Code, the definition of "provider" and the minimum threshold (both set out in Annex A to the Code), and specific questions concerning collegiate institutions.

21. The definition of provider (in Annex A of the Code) would appear to be sound. Less than 5% of survey respondents did not consider it a reliable means of distinguishing between accommodation managed and controlled by HEEs or by other providers. Similarly the threshold for identifying smaller properties that should not be exempt from licensing was considered appropriate by the great majority of respondents.

22. More generally there is a need to develop mechanisms by which non-compliance with the Code by individual institutions can be identified, evaluated and acted upon by the Code's management. Development of these mechanisms and procedures will take place during 2007-08.

Audit

23. Of the HEEs responding to the end of year survey a quarter had received reports from their internal auditors assessing compliance with the provisions of the Code. Of the remainder 50% had instructed their internal auditors and awaited a report. No case was reported of auditors qualifying their reports as regards compliance with the Code. Over half of all HEEs expected to have received a report by the end of July 2007.
24. The survey indicates a need to ensure that audit takes place across all institutions in the Code, and that the results of these audits are acted upon at the Code level. Model guidance for internal auditors will therefore be distributed for consultation in autumn 2007. Audit reports will be collected from Code members in the autumn. Analysis of the audit reports will enable a) the identification of areas of generic sub-optimal practice and b) further development of the model guidance. It is intended that regular collection and analysis of audit reports will form a key component of compliance monitoring in 2007-08 and beyond.
25. Member institutions are required to ensure that there are adequate internal audit requirements: this is a central element of the Code. It is therefore of concern that some establishments have not yet put the necessary arrangements in place. It will be made clear to all Code members that if no evidence is received of an audit having been conducted then they are at risk of being, after due process, ejected from the Code, and their local authority informed accordingly.

Complaints

24. The great majority of HEEs (over 80%) state (in response to the end of year survey) that they involve students in complaints procedures. In nearly all cases students can be represented by their union regarding any complaint they have concerning management by the HEE. There are appeal mechanisms involving senior bodies of HEEs. It is usual for there to be regular meetings with student representatives involving student wardens, resident tutors and accommodation managers on a range of accommodation issues including complaints.
25. It is usually the case that a student union's advice and information service has input into, and provides advocacy for, complaints from student residents. A students' union officer is usually a member of an HEE's complaints committee.

26. Complaints concerning the management (or standards) of managed and controlled student accommodation had been made in rather less than 15% of HEEs; less than 9% required reference to a senior body in the HEE concerned. No HEE had been contacted by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator regarding a complaint made concerning non-compliance with the Code.
27. Of the complaints received most concerned heating malfunction, time taken to effect repair and noise occurring as a result of building work – including repairs. A smaller number involved issues of maintenance and security. In all cases the problems were resolved; in two cases compensation payments were made to students.

Management arrangements

28. Given the existing framework of HE management (see paragraphs 8.1 and 8.2 of the Code), HEEs are the primarily accountable bodies for the operation of the Code. Overall coordination and oversight, including determination of issues concerning compliance or non-compliance with the Code is the responsibility of the Governing Board. Administration of the Code including maintaining a record of all establishments that have signed up to the Code, and the buildings covered liaison with ANUK to ensure satisfactory management of the dual-code arrangement in the sector, updating and drawing together establishments' reports, stakeholder feedback and other forms of monitoring is the responsibility of Universities UK/GuildHE (but see paragraph 37 of this report below).
29. The responsibilities of the Board are: to oversee the operation of the Code and issue guidance as necessary on management issues; to conduct an annual review of the Code taking account of HEEs' experience, audit findings, complaints raising issues with regard to compliance with the Code; to request reports from institutions on any complaints involving breaches of the code that have been reported directly to the Board or to external bodies; and having regard to audit reports and reports of complaints submitted to it, to consider cases of alleged non-compliance and if necessary undertake further investigation. The Board may make proposals to help remedy any identified defects in an HEE's management of its student accommodation. In cases of serious or persistent management failure the Board may decide that an HEE is no longer compliant with the Code in respect of some or all of its student accommodation.
30. Membership of the Board is drawn from UUK/GuildHE, the Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE), the Association for Student Residential Accommodation (ASRA), the College and University Business Officers (CUBO), the University Safety and Health Association (USHA), and the Association of Managers of Student Services (AMOSSHE), the Department of Communities and Local Government, the National Union of Students (NUS)

and the Accreditation Network UK (ANUK). The Board is chaired by an independent chair, Simon Britton (formerly Director of Estates at the University of Leicester and Chairman of AUDE). Current membership of the Governing Board is recorded at Annex D.

31. It is intended that the Board should meet three during the higher education academic and financial year (i.e. 1 August to 31 July). To date, two meetings have been held – in March and July 2007. The next meeting will take place in November 2007.
32. The Board is assisted in its work by a Sector Advisory Group which advises on the practical application of the Code. In addition to UUK, membership is drawn from professional groups representing the various disciplines with responsibility for the management of student residences within the Sector (AUDE, CUBO, ASRA, USHA, and AMOSSHE). The Group brings together residence managers' representatives with others responsible for lettings, welfare, safety, facilities management and building. This provides a sound basis for a continuous refinement of the Code by those who deliver the management of the accommodation service and who can influence policy and procedure both at a national level and within individual institutions. The Group thus forms an effective conduit between the institutions and UUK on the operational aspects of the Code.
33. At Group meetings each organisation reports on the experience of its members in operating and applying the Code. In the light of this the Group may offer advice to UUK on potential amendments and adjustments to the Code. The Group considers the Protocol between UUK and ANUK relating to their specific codes and offers advice on convergence of the codes.
34. The Group is scheduled to meet 3/4 times each year. During the year under review the Group met on 3 occasions and delivered the following:-
 - a questionnaire to elicit information for the Annual Report
 - links between Group website and the UUK website for the Code
 - administrative support for the management of the Code
 - a recommendation to the Board on future funding for administration of the Code.
35. Current membership of the Sector Advisory Group is recorded at Annex D.

Further development

36. From the outset it was expected that the administration, and perhaps some of the provisions, of the Code would require to be modified in the light of the first year's experience. This has proved to be the case.
37. It has become apparent that if the requirements, generated by the Code, for information collection, collation and analysis and, also, for further guidance to institutions, are to be met

adequately then different administrative arrangements and a specific funding stream are necessary. At the July meeting of the Board, therefore, proposals were considered for outsourcing much of the administration of the Code and the funding for this.

38. Under these proposals, now agreed by the Board, CUBO will facilitate arrangements for:

- Maintaining a full and accurate record of HEEs signed up to the Code
- Maintaining and publishing a list of the buildings covered by the Code
- Liaison with local authorities where there are queries regarding which buildings are in the code
- Collating reports received from HEEs, including auditors' reports and the responses made to any recommendations of the auditors
- Servicing the Governance Board and Sector Advisory Group
- Commissioning the UUK/GuildHE annual report on the Code
- Promoting the Code to HEEs
- Producing financial accounts

38. These activities will be underpinned by raising an annual charge for all establishments signed up to the Code. The annual charge is to be introduced with effect from January 2008 and will be underpinned by core payments from UUK, CUBO and AUDE to support code administration.

39. Some concerns were expressed at the July Board meeting that not all HEEs appeared to be doing enough to promote the UUK Code or to ensure that new student intakes were made fully aware of it. Accordingly all HEEs signed up to the Code have been advised to adopt at least half of ten examples of good practice in promoting awareness of the Code at the start of the academic year 2007/8.

40. For 2007/08 the Sector Advisory Group will:-

- Continue work on development of procedures to identify and address institutional non-compliance with the Code.
- Monitor and further develop the new system of administrative support for UUK to manage the Code.
- Assist in the preparation of guidance for internal and external auditors to be published in early 2008.
- Consider individual training modules prepared or procured by the member groups and identify where these can be either transferred or presented to multi disciplinary groups.

- Meet separately with the NUS and DCLG to discuss areas where the Code can be developed.
- Develop the terms of reference for any research projects that the advisory group believes the sector bodies could commission.
- Identify those areas where it might be difficult to ensure consistency, from a student's point of view, between the UUK code and the ANUK code, and consider how best to resolve them.

41. Meetings of the Governing Board are to be arranged for November 2007, March 2008 and July 2008. The Sector Advisory Group will meet between Board meetings to take forward the development of the Code and advise on ongoing administration and operational issues.

Annex A

List of Members of the UUK/GuildHE Code of Practice for the Management of Student Housing

Anglia Ruskin University
Aston University
Balliol College, University of Oxford
Bath Spa University
Birmingham College of Food Tourism and Creative Studies
Bishop Grosseteste College
Blackfriars Hall, University of Oxford
Bournemouth University
Brasenose College, University of Oxford
Brunel University
Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College
Campion Hall, University of Oxford
Canterbury Christ Church University
Christ Church, University of Oxford
Christ's College, University of Cambridge
Churchill College, University of Cambridge
City University, London
Clare College, University of Cambridge
Clare Hall, University of Cambridge
Corpus Christi College, University of Cambridge
Corpus Christi College, University of Oxford
Coventry University
Cranfield University
Cumbria Institute of the Arts
Darwin College, University of Cambridge
De Montfort University
Downing College, University of Cambridge
Edge Hill College of Higher Education
Emmanuel College, University of Cambridge
Exeter College, University of Oxford
Fitzwilliam College, University of Cambridge
Girton College, University of Cambridge
Goldsmiths College (University of London)
Gonville and Caius College, University of Cambridge

Green College, University of Oxford
Greyfriars Hall, University of Oxford
Harper Adams University College
Harris Manchester College, University of Oxford
Hertford College, University of Oxford
Homerton College, University of Cambridge
Hughes Hall, University of Cambridge
Imperial College London
Institute of Education, University of London
Jesus College, University of Cambridge
Jesus College, University of Oxford
Keble College, University of Oxford
Keele University
Kellogg College, University of Oxford
King's College London (University of London)
King's College, University of Cambridge
Kingston University
Lady Margaret Hall, University of Oxford
Lancaster University
Leeds Trinity and All Saints
Linacre College, University of Oxford
Lincoln College, University of Oxford
Liverpool Hope University
Liverpool John Moores University
London School of Economics (University of London)
London South Bank University
Loughborough University
Lucy Cavendish College, University of Cambridge
Magdalen College, University of Oxford
Magdalene College, University of Cambridge
Manchester Metropolitan University
Mansfield College, University of Oxford
Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology, University of Cambridge
Merton College, University of Oxford
New College, University of Oxford
New Hall, University of Cambridge
Newman College of Higher Education
Newnham College, University of Cambridge
Northumbria University

Nuffield College, University of Oxford
Oriental College, University of Oxford
Oxford Brookes University
Pembroke College, University of Cambridge
Pembroke College, University of Oxford
Peterhouse, University of Cambridge
Queen Mary (University of London)
Queen's College, University of Cambridge
Regents Park College, University of Oxford
Richmond, The American International University in London
Ridley Hall, University of Cambridge
Robinson College, University of Cambridge
Roehampton University
Royal Agricultural College
Royal College of Music
Royal Holloway, University of London
Ruskin College, Oxford
Selwyn College, University of Cambridge
Sheffield Hallam University
Sidney Sussex College, University of Cambridge
Somerville College, University of Oxford
Southampton Solent University
St Anne's College, University of Oxford
St Antony's College, University of Oxford
St Benet's Hall, University of Oxford
St Catherine's College, University of Cambridge
St Catherine's College, University of Oxford
St Cross College, University of Oxford
St Edmund Hall, University of Oxford
St George's, University of London
St Hilda's College, University of Oxford
St Hugh's College, University of Oxford
St John's College Durham (Independent)
St John's College, University of Cambridge
St John's College, University of Oxford
St Martin's College
St Mary's University College Twickenham
St Peter's College, University of Oxford
St Stephen's House, University of Oxford

Staffordshire University
Templeton College, University of Oxford
Thames Valley University
The Arts Institute at Bournemouth
The College of St Mark & St John
The Guildhall School of Music and Drama
The Norwich School of Art and Design
The Queen's College, University of Oxford
The University of Birmingham
The University of Bolton
The University of Hull
The University of Liverpool
The University of Manchester
The University of Northampton
The University of Nottingham
The University of Salford
The University of Sheffield
The University of Warwick
The University of Winchester
The University of York
Trinity College, University of Cambridge
Trinity College, University of Oxford
Trinity Hall, University of Cambridge
University College for the Creative Arts
University College London
University College, Falmouth
University College, University of Oxford
University of Bath
University of Brighton
University of Bristol
University of Buckingham
University of Central England in Birmingham
University of Central Lancashire
University of Derby
University of Durham
University of East Anglia
University of East London
University of Essex
University of Exeter

University of Gloucester
University of Kent
University of Leicester
University Of Lincoln
University of London
University of Luton
University of Newcastle Upon Tyne
University of Oxford
University of Plymouth
University of Portsmouth
University of Reading
University of Southampton
University of Sunderland
University of Surrey
University of Sussex
University of Teeside
University of the Arts London
University of the West of England, Bristol
University of Westminster
University of Wolverhampton
University of Worcester
Wadham College, University of Oxford
Wesley House, University of Cambridge
Westcott House, University of Cambridge
Westminster College, University of Cambridge
Wolfson College, University of Cambridge
Wolfson College, University of Oxford
Worcester College, University of Oxford
Writtle College
Wycliffe Hall, University of Oxford
York St John University College
Cardiff University
Swansea Institute of Higher Education
Trinity College Carmarthen
University of Glamorgan
University of Wales Bangor
University of Wales Institute, Cardiff
University of Wales, Aberystwyth
University of Wales, Newport

University of Wales, Swansea

Annex B

End-of Year Survey Questions and Outcomes

What steps have been taken to inform students of the existence and provisions of the Code?

On HE website	43%
Welcome Pack	64%
Copy in residences	17%
Other	46%

Are student representatives involved in complaints procedures?

Yes	83%
No	17%

Has an internal audit been conducted and a report received on compliance?

Yes	28%
No	72%

If No, have instructions been issued to auditors requiring an audit of compliance?

Yes	51%
No	49%

Will an internal audit be completed and report published by 31 July?

Yes	53%
No	47%

Have any complaints been received under the Code concerning the management (or standards) of managed and controlled student accommodation signed up to the Code?

Yes	15%
No	85%

Were any complaints under the Code referred to a senior body in your institution?

Yes	8%
No	92%

Has your institution been contacted by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator in relation to a complaint made under the Code?

Yes	0%
No	100%

Does Annex A of the Code provide a reliable means of distinguishing between accommodation “managed and controlled” by educational establishments, and other providers?

Yes	96%
No	4%

Is the definition in paragraph 8.8 appropriate for identifying smaller properties that should not be exempt from licensing?

Yes	93%
No	7%

Annex C

Responses to the End of Year Survey

A1. Responses to the end of year survey (referred to in this report) illustrate, in a varying degree of detail, how HEEs management procedures follow, or in some cases are being amended so as to follow, the requirements of the Code. Some offer examples of best practice – although not all will be appropriate throughout the HE sector. Others suggest that for some HEEs more needs to be done to ensure that the existence of the Code is well known and that the procedures it entails are well embedded in day to day accommodation practice.

A2. Some direct quotes from the responses are below. In some cases references to individual HEEs have been deleted and, as indicated in square brackets, wording has been added so to preserve the sense of the response. It will be for the Governing Board to consider whether these and subsequent survey responses provide a basis for refining the Code and/or disseminating advice to HEEs.

A.3 Quotes from responses are under three headings: publicity; liaison arrangements and student representation; and handling of complaints. There is a brief comment at the end of each section.

Publicity for the Code

“The Students’ Union was advised when the Code was first introduced and was consulted with regard to the Residential Services Complaints Procedure. This was amended to include reference to the SU Advice Centre for independent advice or representation with regard to complaint handling”.

“[Monitoring of] the implementation, operation and complaints procedures required by the Code [are now part of] the remit of Hall Committees and involves the VP Welfare at the Students Union.”

“[The Code is] discussed at Accommodation Management Group Meetings which reps from the Guild of Students attend. The Code will be a fixed agenda item on the agenda for these meetings from September 2007 for regular updates on the Code, issues and any complaints in relation to the Code”.

“[Familiarisation with the implications] of the University's adoption of the Code is part of the Student Warden's training week at the start of the new academic year”.

“Student representatives were consulted on contents of accommodation handbook; level of charges and charging mechanisms reviewed annually with students”.

“Practical aspects discussed with representatives. Opportunities given to student representatives to join in deliberations of handling changes to procedures brought about by introduction of code. All changes to terms of tenancy and tenancy agreements have been done in consultation with student representatives”.

“The Code is brought to the attention of all students on arrival”.

Comment

Most of these individual responses suggest that publicity for the Code has become an integral part of the HEE’s accommodation service activities. And in some instances there is evidence that changes have been made to procedures to better meet the Code’s provisions. However the last quote raises the question “how?” and while the overall results of the survey as regards publicity (paragraph 17 of this report) are encouraging it would seem that:

- The effectiveness of publicity may depend to some extent on the general level of liaison and student involvement – see next section below;
- Where, perhaps because of the location and size of the residential estate, regular liaison is not the rule a number of means of publicising the Code should be employed.

Liaison arrangements and student involvement

“Student representatives sit on the College Committee overseeing all accommodation. All matters of concern are referred to that Committee. Regular liaison with the College Students Union also covers all accommodation matters”.

“Elected Student Representatives on Student Accommodation Committee who receive reports on Code development”

“Students are involved in annual rent negotiations which also include reviews of facilities and services provided. The College has now produced a set of Service level Agreements relating directly to these areas”.

“Primarily our residents are first year students and are encouraged to give input at every opportunity. There are weekly meetings with residents conducted by the resident tutor team (responsible for student welfare) and any issues raised are passed onto the accommodation manager”.

“The Domestic Bursar has a weekly meeting with student representatives at which issues and complaints about accommodation can be raised. The students have representation on college committees including Buildings Committee and Finance Committee. Student representatives also have regular meetings with the Principal and Treasurer”.

“The University has appointed 4 Residential Managers (RM). These appointments commence at the beginning of July 2007. The role will create an additional point of contact for residential students. In conjunction with existing services i.e. Accommodation Staff; Halls Housekeepers; Resident Tutors; Student Support; Halls Councils and the Students Union, the new RM's will work to resolve both welfare and disciplinary issues raised”.

“The SU & resident students are involved providing feedback to the College on a range of matters including [those] which effect the operation of the Code. This is through the Student Community Action Group, the Student Affairs Committee (a committee of the Board of Governors), liaison dialogue with the Director of Student Support and Director of Hospitality Services and Accommodation Officer either directly or through the Senior Residents”.

“The College involves student representatives throughout all its activities as part of the way the College is run. Student representatives sit on University Committees and Governing Body. Housing is part of regular discussion and a student housing report is submitted to the College by student representatives annually”.

Comment

These quotes illustrate good practice with a high level of student involvement in discussions of, and decisions upon, all aspects of student accommodation. The frequency of meetings and contact between managers and students varies between HEEs probably reflecting differences, for example, between collegiate institutions and others. Again there is evidence of the Code having a direct impact on procedures. It is for consideration whether some of these elements of good practice should be promoted.

Handling of complaints

“Students' Union is actively involved in the disciplinary process across halls of residence. They sit as part of the panel as well as acting as representatives of students the subject of disciplinary proceedings”

"The Students' Association is represented on all College committees, including the Building & Grounds Committee (which takes any complaint) and College Council (which hears any appeal)".

"Accommodation Office complaints procedure agreed and widely distributed to students and other relevant departments. [A] reminder of procedure [is included] in bi-monthly newsletters. From 9.07 Senior Students will be promoting use of procedure, reviewing relevant complaints received, and working through the Code ensuring compliance from student perspective".

"The Students' Union Advice and Information Service have input into, and provide advocacy for, complaints from student residents. The Accommodation Complaints Procedure is a (semi) formal part of the Institution's overarching Complaints Procedure and so, residents who are dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint can progress further through the formal procedure. A Students' Union Officer is a member of the University's Complaints Committee".

"The Student Support Forum deals with matters relating to the operation of the code and complaints with hall of residence. The Students Union has a representative on this forum and on the Student Services Committee (chaired by a college governor)"

"Student Representation Students may like to take advice or guidance on the procedure for their complaint from the Students' Union and they are entitled to be accompanied at any discussion or interview with senior Accommodation Managers by a fellow student, Resident Tutor or Vice President from the Students' Union".

"Student Welfare officer acts as the student representative in the complaints procedure and overviews our compliance to the code".

Comment

Although arrangements clearly vary between HEEs, all these examples demonstrate good practice with a close involvement of students and/or student representatives at all stages of complaints procedures. It is for consideration whether the principles set out in the Code might be elaborated in the light of such examples.

Annex D

Membership of the Governing Board

Independent Chair	Simon Britton
Association of Managers of Student Services in Higher Education (AMOSSHE)	Jayne Aldridge Raywen Ford
Accreditation Network UK (ANUK)	Simon Kemp Tom Toumazou Ian Fletcher
Association for Student Residential Accommodation (ASRA)	Bryan Carroll (A) Pru Lawrence-Archer + one other
Associate of University Directors of Estates (AUDE)	Andrew Cardy (A) Andrew Nightingale (A)
Committee of University Business Officers (CUBO)	Paddy Jackman (A) William Wilson (A) Mark Swales (A) Elizabeth Crawford
Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG)	Simon Llewellyn
National Union of Students (NUS)	Sarah Wayman Ama Uzorwuru
University Safety and Health Association (USHA)	John Donaldson (A)
Local Authority Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS)	Ruth Hammond-Laing
Universities UK	Tim Cobbett Derek Stroud (A)

(A) = Member of the Sector Advisory Group

Annex E

Good practice in publicizing the Code

- **Ensure the Code is promoted in residence handbooks.**
- **Hold information sessions for Wardens, resident Tutors or equivalent staff.**
- **Ensure posters promoting the Code are displayed at the entrance to all accommodation.**
- **Make a copy of the Code available online.**
- **Make paper copies available from the accommodation office and/or any other relevant residence offices.**
- **Ensure that the Code will be promoted in any residence induction talks or events.**
- **Include promotional material in any welcome packs.**
- **Place flyers promoting the Code in all bedrooms.**
- **Include a reference to the Code in the residence tenancy or license document.**
- **Promote via Students' Union website, welcome pack or newspaper.**