

YOUR RIGHT TO A QUALITY HOME

THE ACCOMMODATION CODE STUDENT

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NICOLA DANDRIDGE**
Universities UK
Chief Executive

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INTRODUCTION FROM NICOLA DANDRIDGE, UNIVERSITIES UK CHIEF EXECUTIVE

NUS:

“The Student Accommodation Code is a great example of the higher education sector coming together to improve the residential experience of students.”

UCAS:

“Accommodation is such a big part of going to university and we fully endorse The Student Accommodation Code, which gives students somewhere to turn to when things aren’t going quite as well as they could be.”

The Student Accommodation Code has been developed by Universities UK and GuildHE to encourage the highest possible standards of student accommodation provided by universities and major private suppliers. By setting high standards in the sector The Code provides a benchmark for university and college accommodation to aspire to.

The Code protects students’ rights to safe, good quality accommodation – outlining everything students can expect from their accommodation, as well as their responsibilities as tenants.

We are very proud that over 150 universities and colleges have signed up to The Code since it was introduced in 2006, demonstrating the sector’s commitment to providing good quality accommodation. With your help in the promotion and endorsement of The Code, we can continue to raise standards, enriching the residential experience for students across England and Wales.

To be as effective as possible, The Student Accommodation Code needs your active support and this toolkit gives you some advice, guidance and resources to help you do this.

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ABOUT THE CODE

Why The Code matters for universities

There are a number of reasons why The Code matters for university and further education college staff:

- It is a legal obligation - since the Housing Act 2004 universities are obliged to sign up to a code of practice that has been approved by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) or be licensed to a local authority.
- The Code will ensure the continuous improvement of accommodation standards. Through effective self-regulation it has already raised standards in the sector, and can continue to do so if universities and colleges take their commitment seriously.
- The Code can help to minimise the organisational risk to universities and colleges by ensuring housing teams are adhering to best practice at all times.

The Code covers six main areas:

- 1** A healthy safe environment – this section covers students' rights to information on essential fire safety precautions; accommodation security; and details on what furniture and facilities should be provided for them.
- 2** Timely repairs and maintenance – this section explains what repair and maintenance work is the responsibility of the university or college and what timescales they should work to when carrying out emergency or planned maintenance work.
- 3** A clean, pleasant living environment – this section outlines the services and utilities students can expect in their accommodation, including standard utilities such as heating and lighting, but also services and facilities such as rubbish and recycling collection and bicycle and car parking.
- 4** A formal, contractual relationship with the university or college landlord – this section details the information students can legally request from their landlords including rent payment schedules, cleaning schedules, and details on how to report a problem.
- 5** Access to health and wellbeing services – this section outlines the requirements for universities and further education colleges to provide information on where students can find welfare support, medical help, financial advice and counselling services.
- 6** A living environment free from anti-social behaviour – this section covers measures that universities and colleges should take to help ensure that their residences are happy and respectful environments.

Using The Code

In all instances student feedback should be raised with individual housing offices directly. However, in the event that an issue cannot be resolved by the accommodation staff, students can raise the issue formally by using the university's internal complaints procedure.

Enforcement

Each university and college is independently audited every three years to ensure that its management arrangements for student accommodation are up to the high standards expected by The Code. This ensures that The Code is entirely accountable and transparent.

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TELLING DIFFERENT AUDIENCES ABOUT THE CODE

This toolkit includes advice and tools to help you tell people about your commitment to The Code. In this section you will find guidance on the different ways you might like to engage with three key audiences: university and college staff, your current students and prospective students who might be thinking about coming to study at your institution. In section 4 you will find template resources to help you to do this.

Communicating with staff

It is essential that all university and college staff, especially those directly involved with the day-to-day running of university-managed accommodation and related services, are familiar with The Code and understand their responsibilities in terms of implementing it.

One of the most straightforward and effective ways of disseminating information to staff is via existing communications channels such as emails, university newsletters and in internal staff meetings. Below are some ideas on how to do this and supporting templates can be found in section 4.

Engaging accommodation teams

It is important to make sure that the staff involved in the running of university-managed accommodation (administrators, cleaners, maintenance workers, caterers and welfare workers) are aware of their responsibilities and understand that adhering to The Code is a priority for your university or college. Email can be a good way of doing this (and you'll find a template in section 4), but another way to alert staff to The Code and how it relates to them is to simply talk them through it. If possible, we would recommend doing this at the start of term to encourage best practice throughout the academic year. We have provided a template PowerPoint Presentation in section 4 that can be adapted and delivered to your staff.

Engaging the wider staff community

In addition, you might like to tell the wider staff at your university or college that you are signed up to The Code, to demonstrate your commitment to good accommodation. We recommend providing your communication departments with up-to-date information on The Code, as they may be able to add information about The Code into internal and external communication channels that they are responsible for, such as newsletters. It is also good practice to let them know how else you will be raising awareness of The Code. Please see section 4 for a template email that can be adapted and distributed to your communications team.

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TELLING DIFFERENT AUDIENCES ABOUT THE CODE

Communicating with current students

Promoting The Code on campus

There are numerous opportunities to raise awareness of The Code among students on campus, for example by putting posters and flyers in places frequented by them, such as the Students' Union, libraries, sports facilities, cafés and bars, as well as accommodation offices and the university halls of residence themselves. We also urge you to work with your SU representative to look at additional ways to raise student awareness of The Code.

Promoting The Code off campus

We know that students are in contact with a range of businesses and organisations outside the university or college that specifically target them such as Topshop (or any retail outlets that offer student discounts), banks (often on campus) and even insurance companies such as Endsleigh. Given the level of interaction between students and these outlets, we recommend approaching them on an individual basis to see if they are open to promoting The Code. For example, this might involve having posters and/or flyers in store or using The Code logo on their website.

Please see section 4 for a poster and flyer you can print and distribute at relevant locations.

Communicating with prospective students

We know that accommodation is an important factor for many students when deciding which university or further education college to attend so it is a good idea to make sure that prospective students are well aware of The Code so that they know about your commitment to great accommodation. Your website and prospectus are an effective way to reach them to highlight the value you place on providing quality student accommodation.

In section 4 we have included some information that you can easily adapt and add to your website and/or your prospectus. You could also:

- Include The Code logo on your site (please see section 4 for guidelines on the use of The Student Accommodation Code logo)
- Include a downloadable version of the flyer on your website
- Provide a link to The Code website www.TheSAC.org.uk
- Make The Code in its entirety available for download from your website

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TOOLS

EMAIL TEMPLATE TO STAFF INVOLVED IN THE RUNNING OF UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE ACCOMMODATION

Dear colleagues,

At <insert university> we are committed to providing our students with a high standard of accommodation. We understand how important a safe and comfortable living environment is to successful university and college life, and as such, fully support The Student Accommodation Code.

Developed by UUK and GuildHE, The Code is designed to ensure that students have the right to safe, good quality accommodation, wherever they are studying, and to make sure they get the best out of their time living in university or college residences. It sets a benchmark, which we should all aspire to.

The Code outlines important details about our responsibilities as a university or further education college, including for example, fire and safety requirements, repairs and maintenance procedures, health and wellbeing responsibilities and details on the student complaints procedure. It also provides full details on the tenants' responsibilities.

You play an important role in the management and day-to-day running of our halls of residence, and I therefore urge you to familiarise yourself with the contents of The Code and make sure you understand your individual responsibilities. It can be downloaded at www.TheSAC.org.uk and you will find a synopsis attached to this email.

I am confident that with your active support and implementation of The Code we will continue to raise the standard of the accommodation we provide.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact <insert details>.

Yours faithfully,

<insert name>

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TOOLS PRESENTATION TO STAFF

On the Universities UK website, you will find a PowerPoint presentation which you can download and adapt for your own purposes.

The presentation covers the following:

- About The Student Accommodation Code
- Why The Code matters for universities and colleges
- What The Code Covers
- How The Code is enforced and regulated
- How you can help
- What the sector says
- More information
- Questions

Please find the presentation [here](#)

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TEMPLATES

EMAIL TEMPLATE TO COMMUNICATIONS STAFF

Dear colleagues,

I am writing to remind you that the <insert university or college> is fully supporting The Student Accommodation Code. We have been committed to The Code since it was established in 2006 as part of our dedication to providing our students with good quality accommodation. We believe that our continued commitment to The Code will enable us to raise our standards further all the time.

We are hoping that you will be able to help us to publicise our continued commitment to The Code in any relevant communications activities you might be planning internally or externally.

Internal communications

To implement The Code as effectively as possible, it is essential that university and further education staff understand it and how it will affect them. We would therefore be grateful for your support in communicating it to them through relevant internal communications channels, for example through the <insert name of newsletter>.

External communications

In addition, you might be interested in covering our commitment to The Code in any external communications you have planned. Here you will find further information on The Code <insert link to the relevant section on your website> and we can also provide further information and interviews with key members of our Accommodation Services team, should this be of interest.

I am sure you will agree that highlighting our support for The Code will send a positive message to prospective and current students about the value we place on accommodation. We will therefore be putting The Code posters and flyers in key areas around campus, such as the halls of residence and the Students Union.

Yours faithfully,

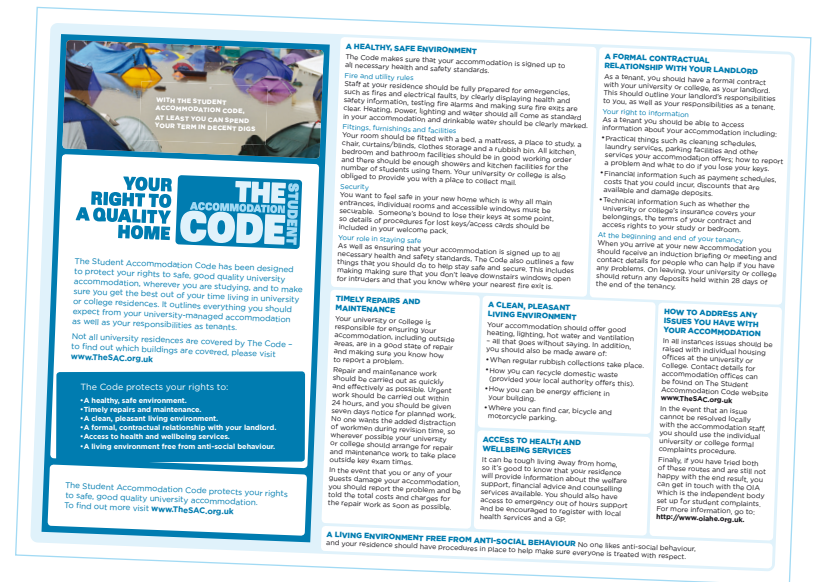
<insert name>

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TEMPLATES POSTER AND LEAFLET

On the UUK website, you will find PDF versions of this flyer and poster. Please feel free to print these off and distribute them as you see fit.

Please find the poster and flyer [here](#).



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TEMPLATES CONTENT FOR YOUR WEBSITE AND PROSPECTUS



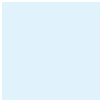
Where you live is a big part of being at university or college, which is why [<insert university>](#) is one of a number of universities and further education colleges that is signed up to The Student Accommodation Code.

The Code protects our students' rights to safe, good quality accommodation, to make sure our students get the best out of their time living in our residences. It outlines everything students can expect from our accommodation as well as their responsibilities as tenants.

The Code has already raised standards of accommodation at [<insert university or college>](#) and underpins our ongoing dedication to our students. We are fully committed to providing a safe, comfortable living environment which will help support our students in leading a successful and enjoyable student life.

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TEMPLATES LOGO GUIDELINES

	PANTONE 314 C:100 M:0 Y:0 K:30 R:5 G:124 B:176
	40% tint of Pantone Process Cyan C:40 M:0 Y:0 K:0 R:162 G:218 B:244
	15% tint of Pantone Process Cyan C:15 M:0 Y:0 K:0 R:217 G:240 B:250

These guidelines explain how universities and other stakeholders should use The Accommodation Code logo on their own materials.

These guidelines have been produced to provide an overview of the basic design elements and the way in which they can be used for maximum effect.

The logo has been produced both with and without the strapline. To enable the logotype to work across a large variety of applications, several variations have been created in positive and negative tones.

Please note: only use the single colour logotype on a colour background where the background has less than 40% black content.

Logotypes for each of the three variations have been created in spot colour, full colour process and RGB, to allow for use across all media types.

Logo with the strapline

full colour positive



single colour positive



single colour with tint positive



single colour negative



Logo without the strapline

full colour positive



single colour positive



single colour with tint positive



single colour negative



The logotype with the strapline must never be used below the minimum size of 45mm; the logotype without the strapline must never be used below the minimum size of 35mm. Please maintain the logo proportions and ensure legibility is never compromised.

To ensure the logos are free to breathe, a clear area must be maintained around it at all times. No typography, imagery or other visual information should appear within this zone. The exclusion zone around the logotype is equal to the cap height of the 'M' in HOME'.



The logotype colours have been created to work in partnership. There are three colour ways, shown above, and these partnerships should always be adhered to. Accurate breakdowns of these colours across all applications are shown. It is important to note that this is a guide. Always refer to accurate print guides when proofing colours.

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FURTHER INFORMATION AND POINTS OF CONTACT

If you would like any further information on The Code and/or guidance on how to communicate your support of it, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the communications team.

For information on The Code, please contact Hayley Daughtry at Universities UK, on:
Tel: 0114 225 4503
Email: uuk-cop@shu.ac.uk

For questions about The Code toolkit, please contact Harriet Fitzgerald at Kindred, on:
Tel: 020 7010 828
Email: Harriet.fitzgerald@kindredagency.com