



UNIVERSITY of SUFFOLK

Student Accommodation - Accreditation Scheme

Code of Practice

October 2016 v5.0

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1.0 - Introduction to the Scheme

The Code of Practice was originally developed on a multi-agency basis between University of Suffolk (the University) and other statutory bodies within Suffolk and Norfolk. The purpose of the Code of Practice (CoP) was, and still remains, to ensure that a robust framework exists for supporting the availability of good quality, safe, well-integrated and well-managed accommodation for the University students.

This CoP replaces the 2010 version and, while the basic principles and specifications contained within the original CoP remain in place, this version reflects changes that have been introduced in the light of operational experience.

The most fundamental of the changes being made are the segregation of management components from the accreditation of accommodation and simplification of the Scheme fee structure.

Applicants who can successfully demonstrate that they meet the core standards of management and undertake to uphold these standards throughout the five-year term for which membership is granted, are described as (Members)

Achieving membership status will give landlords and agents exclusive access to the new Suffolk Studentpad website for advertising University accredited accommodation.

The CoP specifies the minimum standards that are required to both attain membership and to achieve the accreditation of accommodation. These standards must be maintained in order that members and accommodation remain within the Scheme.

The primary interface between the University and Members will be with the Student Accommodation Office (SAO).

Scheme related fees which previously consisted of separate charges for accreditation and annual management, have been simplified to reflect the changes in processes.

There is now no fee for applying to become a Member of the Scheme.

The original accreditation fee, which previously covered the five-year term of property accreditation, payable in advance, together with the separate annual management charge have now been combined. The new Scheme fee will be charged annually to both assist with financial planning and to make membership more financially attractive to landlords and agents.

For property to be advertised on the Suffolk Studentpad Website it must be accredited and as such will need to meet or exceed the standards specified within the CoP.

The separate Local Authority fees for inspecting accommodation that a Member wishes to have accredited will still apply and will be in accordance with the current schedule of rates which is available on request.

Achieving membership of the Scheme represents a quality mark for Members and as such, Members will be committed to providing and maintaining the high standards of management and accommodation specified within this CoP.

2.0 - Joining the Scheme

2.1 - Benefits of Membership

There are many advantages to being a Member of the University Scheme; these include:

- The status of being publicly recognised as a good provider.
- Being distanced from incompetent or unscrupulous providers.
- Being given access to the official university accommodation website for advertising accredited accommodation.
- Reasonable advice and assistance, if needed during the term of the tenancy. This will not include any type of monetary assistance by the University but may, include advice on managing student behavior, advice on where to direct a student who requires welfare or financial advice, advice on council tax issues and/or advice on changes in relevant legislation or university regulations.
- Arbitration in disputes between Member and student.
- Reasonable access to the University Student Support Services and the Students' Union.

The University places a high value on its relationship with Members and its service to students and endeavours to ensure that students living in accredited accommodation benefit from the standards, expectations and recommendations specified within this CoP. The CoP has been developed based on statutory requirements but also on the experience of students living in independent accommodation, away from the family home, often for the first time.

The Management of Accommodation section of this CoP provides detailed and specific advice to promote clarity and good relations between student tenants and Members. In the case of any dispute this CoP will be used as a point of reference for managing the expectations of both parties.

2.2 - Becoming a Scheme Member

Applying to become a Member and joining the Scheme is the first stage in the process of being able to advertise accredited accommodation. Landlords and agents who can meet the management requirements may apply to be a Member of the Scheme.

In order to become a Member, applicants will be required to complete an application form providing landlord or agent information, management details and a declaration to establish that they are a "fit and proper person" worthy of being considered for membership.

Applications for membership will be reviewed by the SAO and if successful the applicant will be granted the status of being a Member. Membership will remain valid for five years from the date of approval unless terminated for a serious breach of compliance with the CoP.

Members of the Scheme are approved on the understanding that, as well as fulfilling the membership criteria, they will comply with the requirements of the CoP and any other licence or approval requirements enforced by the Local Authority.

Membership application forms are available from the SAO.

2.3 - Accreditation of Accommodation

Once membership has been granted, access will be given to the Suffolk Studentpad website which is the only platform for advertising accredited accommodation. Once access to the system has been granted Members may enter details of accommodation that they wish to have considered for accreditation. Advertisement details may also be added at this stage.

All property details entered onto the system by Members will be subject to review by the University and, if considered to be appropriate, subjected to an accreditation inspection by the Local Authority (LA). The relevant LA will assess all prospective properties on behalf of the University against both

HMO and the University CoP standards. There is a fee attached to each inspection that will need to be paid to the University in advance of the inspection instruction being issued to the LA.

The LA inspection fee is non-refundable and does not include any HMO fees that may additionally be required. Properties that fail LA inspections will not be accredited and Members will be provided with a report detailing areas that need to be addressed before any re-inspection can be undertaken. Additional Local Authority fees will apply to re-inspections.

The standard that Members are asked to achieve may be more than that which is enforceable in law.

Following LA inspection, if a property meets accreditation standards and the annual University Scheme fees have been paid, a property will be awarded accreditation and at that point it can be released for advertising.

Members should note that it is the Member who must ensure that accommodation is safe and that the law is complied with.

The University will control the accommodation accreditation application process to ensure, as closely as possible, that the availability of accredited property follows trends in demand without creating an unrealistic oversupply.

Attaining membership status constitutes a formal arrangement between a Member and the University in which members undertake to comply with and maintain the standards specified within the CoP relating to both management and accommodation, comply with statutory requirements and pay the annual Scheme fees.

Achieving accreditation for accommodation does not imply that the University will guarantee levels of occupancy, or agree to underwrite any voids.

Applicants and Members should refer to the fee document for further information.

Non-payment of any fees will be taken as an indication to the University that the Member no longer wishes to be part of the scheme and as such any properties being advertised on behalf of a Member will be taken off-line.

2.4 - Notice of Accreditation

The Local Authority supporting the Scheme has undertaken to inspect all properties on behalf of the University. Where properties have been inspected and found to be satisfactory for their purposes, then the property will be considered for formal accreditation.

If, following consideration of the accreditation report, the accommodation meets all requirements, the University will produce a 'Certificate of Accreditation' for display in the Member's offices and the accredited accommodation. Accreditation remains valid for five years from the date of issue.

A condition of membership is that a Member will only direct students to accredited property that is advertised on the Suffolk Studentpad website.

2.5 - Membership Termination & Accreditation Refusal or Withdrawal

The University reserves the right to refuse membership of the Scheme on any grounds and to withdraw both membership and accreditation status on the grounds of non-compliance with this CoP. In the event of a termination being implemented, students within the affected accommodation will be advised.

Grounds for the withdrawal of membership and accreditation include, but are not limited to, loss of the "fit and proper person" status, serious and/or repeated failure(s) in management processes, failure to continually comply with required property standards, non-payment of fees and any action(s) that brings the University or the Scheme into disrepute as determined by the University in its sole discretion.

The University will immediately withdraw accreditation for one or more of the following reasons:

- If the Member is convicted of an offence relating to harassment or unlawful eviction, mortgage fraud, housing benefit fraud, or a breach of the conditions attached to a housing grant or if it transpires that he has been so convicted, in the last ten years.
- If the Member or members organisation is taken into administration.
- If the Member has not complied with the requirements of any Statutory notice served by the Local Authority or any other regulatory body and this has resulted, during the last five years, in either the Member's prosecution or works being carried out in default.
- If the Member has been convicted of an offence which could be seen as being reasonably relevant to the letting of property to young people.

In the event of either membership or accreditation being withdrawn, Scheme fees will not be refunded and the University reserves the right to claim compensation from the Member for any loss arising directly or indirectly from any non-compliance with the CoP.

2.6 - Promotion of Accredited Accommodation

The University undertakes to promote accredited properties within the Scheme to students through the Suffolk Studentpad website. Students have access to this site which will be the only method for advertising university accredited properties. The website will also give students access to the CoP and relevant supporting advice.

Individual adverts will only become live once accreditation is achieved, the format of the advertisement has been approved by SAO, all of the mandatory test and inspection certification has been uploaded to the Suffolk Studentpad website and the appropriate annual Scheme fee has been paid.

Students will be able to search on the Suffolk Studentpad website for accommodation which matches their requirements. They are advised to contact the SAO for further advice if none of the choices are suitable.

First year students or 'Freshers' are offered Halls of Residence accommodation in the first instance.

2.7 - Charges

Separate charges will apply to cover the costs of both the initial Local Authority accreditation inspection and for the costs of Scheme membership which includes the advertising and promotion of accommodation. Fees should ideally be paid by BACS transfer.

Annual Scheme fees will now be based on a charge per room basis but only for accommodation that is advertised on the Suffolk Studentpad website. Accredited accommodation may be uploaded on to the Suffolk Studentpad website by members and held there without advertising ready for future inclusion.

No Scheme fees are charged for accredited accommodation that is held on the Suffolk Studentpad website for the potential future release for advertising. If a Member requests that such accommodation is subsequently released for advertising Scheme fees will apply prior to release

Full year Scheme fees are applicable regardless of the date that accommodation is accredited and advertised.

2.8 - Scheme Management

The SAO undertakes to respond to all communications from Members within three working days or within such time as is reasonably possible. Resolution time for queries and problems is dependent

upon the complexity of the issue and may take up to two weeks and in a very small number of cases longer, in which case the Member is kept informed of progress. Emergencies and serious concerns about student welfare are addressed on the same day or as soon as is practicable.

3.0 - Management of Accommodation

3.1 - Advertising Content & Tenant Introductions

Members will ensure that:

- An accurate description of the property, its contents and images are uploaded to the Suffolk Studentpad website. The SAO manages the Suffolk Studentpad website content and maintains editorial control.
- Members must update property details as soon as possible following any changes in provision or amenities. Any changes made will automatically appear on the Suffolk Studentpad website, management section, for SAO vetting and approval.
- All prospective tenants must be given the opportunity to view the property, with consideration being given to any existing tenants.

3.2 - Tenancy Information

The tenancy agreement is a contract between the Member and the student, however the University strongly advises Members that:

- A copy of all contractual matters is provided to prospective tenants and they will be granted a minimum of 24 hours to seek independent advice on the contractual terms;
- No monies for deposits or rent are demanded prior to the signing and exchange of any letting agreement;
- Unless otherwise approved by the SAO, all tenancy agreements should be in the form of individual Assured Shorthold Tenancy agreements;
- Any contractual documentation is presented clearly and uses easily understandable phraseology. It should not include any unfair contract terms, or create any significant imbalance between the two parties. Where legal statements are made then an explanatory sheet could be issued to clarify points of practice;
- No signing fee should be charged to the student;
- No reservation fee is charged to new or existing students to secure a room for the following September;
- The tenancy agreement should be for a maximum of 44 weeks unless otherwise agreed with the student;
- If the student starts a tenancy after the beginning of the academic year his/her tenancy agreement must still conclude at the end of that academic year, (usually the end of June but this varies depending on course of study) unless otherwise agreed with the student;
- The tenancy agreement contains sufficient information regarding the process if a student withdraws or is withdrawn by the University. This eventuality may make the Member liable for any remaining Council Tax;
- The tenancy agreement includes specific rules relating to:

- Behaviour
- Having guests to stay
- Smoking and drug use
- Damage to the property (by tenant or their guests)
- Conduct towards other tenants in the property
- Energy usage
- Car parking (whether there is any and how it is controlled)
- Noise
- Parties
- Neighbour relations
- The process if the student withdraws from his/her course before the end of year
- Implications of late or non-payment of rent

3.3 - Rents and Charges

Clear and precise statements should be provided including annual rental values, dates and how payments will be made. The value and purpose of any deposits held should be clearly stated, and clarification of which Tenancy Deposit Scheme is to be used.

All rents should be inclusive of utility bills, licences and reasonable broadband access. Full time students are exempt from Council Tax payments. Where a Member provides adequate occupancy information the SAO will submit council tax exemption certificates to the LA on behalf of the Member.

We recommend that students who receive a termly grant or loan pay their rental termly. Where courses are paid monthly these students should be given the option to pay rental monthly, the SAO can confirm how regularly students receive their payments.

A realistic maximum weekly figure for utility bills may be stated in the tenancy and if the bills rise above this figure, the additional cost may be allocated evenly between the tenants at the end of the tenancy agreement. If tenants have left during the normal period, the remaining tenants must not be penalised for their absence nor incur their costs. All proposed additional charges should be notified to the SAO prior to inclusion.

Proof of utility costs should be provided to tenants on request. If additional charges are to be made, copies of all bills for the tenancy period should be given to the students, at the time of charging.

Should any other charges require to be made, they should give specific detail and any division of payments should be stated to demonstrate fairness.

Receipts should be issued for all payments of rent, deposit or charges.

Rental must not be increased during the academic year. The SAO should be notified in advance of any planned rental increases for the following September intake.

3.4 - Deposits

From 6th April 2007 the government introduced a Tenancy Deposit Scheme. There are three types of schemes available, the Custodial Scheme and two types of Insurance Scheme:

The required scheme for the University accredited accommodation is the Custodial Scheme, known as Deposit Protection Service (The DPS), this is where the Member or agent pays the deposit to the DPS at no cost to themselves. It is then kept with the DPS until the end of the tenancy. Agents who are members of ARLA may use the TDS protected scheme connected with this organisation.

Members must provide individual tenants with information regarding their deposit within 14 days of the day they paid their deposit. The following website provides a guide of what should be included:

www.gov.uk/tenancy-deposit-protection/overview

Summary of information to be provided:

- Contact details of the Member or Member's managing agent.
- Which tenancy deposit scheme they are using and contact details for the Scheme.
- The Insurance certificate and /or pin number for each individual tenant.
- Information about the purpose of a tenancy deposit.
- How deposits can be returned at the end of the tenancy.
- What to do if there is a dispute about the deposit.

Members should ensure that there is an adequate period between tenancies (no less than 4 weeks) to ensure that end of tenancy inspections can be carried out, deposits returned and maintenance and cleaning completed before the next tenancy commences

At the end of the tenancy Members must provide a written breakdown of the specific costs if they intend to retain any part of the deposit.

Members are only entitled to retain amounts owing to damage caused to property or rent owed. Wear and tear is not covered.

Deposits should be returned within 10 days of the end of the tenancy.

3.5 - Management of Properties

All properties must have a designated manager. For individual houses or flats this may be the Member. Applicants to the Scheme are required to submit a description of their proposed management services to the SAO as part of the application process.

Managers should ensure they have guidelines in place to deal with theft within the property, disputes between residents, damage to accommodation and other residents' property, welfare issues, noise, alcohol and drugs, etc. These guidelines should be provided in writing and communicated properly to each tenant e.g. via a start of term briefing.

Student tenants must have access to a 24 hour, 7 day a week emergency contact number, which is not connected to an answer phone, and will be answered at all times.

Managers should ensure any students who require additional help, either financial or welfare, are given details on how to access the University support services.

Where access is required for the cleaning of communal areas, a schedule should be provided detailing entry times during the year. If unforeseen circumstances result in changes to this schedule, 24 hours notice should be given, or other reasonable arrangements agreed with the residents.

Managers must make tenants aware of planned maintenance via electronic or paper notices.

Managers, because they have regular contact with students, must comply with the requirements of being a "fit and proper person". Cleaning and maintenance staff do not need to be checked unless they also perform a support role or have regular contact with students in the absence of the Manager. Members should not knowingly employ anyone who has a criminal record to fulfil such roles without discussing it with the SAO.

Managers are to ensure fire exits and routes are clearly and permanently signposted and pointed out to students. Purpose built blocks should ensure a fire evacuation drill is carried out every 6 months.

Students should be made aware of the recycling policies in the property and, where applicable, the days refuse is collected.

Members are encouraged to ensure that fittings are energy efficient, e.g. light bulbs in communal areas, fittings in communal hallways on timers and heating controls secured.

Properties should be managed to ensure as far as possible no unauthorised heating/lighting equipment is in use and students should be made aware of these restrictions.

Managers should make students aware that televisions in study bedrooms require an individual television licence paid for by the student.

Students should be warned against exploiting the shared internet connection for inappropriate or excessive use. The University can provide guidance on reasonable bandwidth provision.

In the event of lost keys or entry fobs, students must be able to contact the Manager to arrange access to their property and room.

The Manager is encouraged to arrange regular house/property meetings for all students in residence. Actions should be recorded and all attendees kept up-to-date on progress of actions. The SAO recommends that serious issues are reported to the SAO as soon as possible.

All properties should have an information notice board either in the common area/s or the entrance hall. This should be kept up-to-date with relevant information and emergency contact details.

3.6 - Additional Requirements for the Management of Purpose Built Blocks

All the points in the previous section apply; in addition

All communal areas of purpose built blocks should be cleaned as part of the inclusive rental. Where access is required for cleaning of communal areas, a schedule should be provided of entry times during the year and, if unforeseen circumstances result in changes to this schedule, 24 hours notice should be given or other reasonable arrangements made with the residents.

Managers of purpose built blocks should permit planned social events provided they are reasonable and organised with due consultation and notice. The University Students' Union can offer advice on event management.

Properties of 100+ study bedrooms should employ one or more Resident Student Wardens (RSW) to give 24 hour assistance to resident students. The ratio of RSW to tenants and their role should be agreed with the SAO.

If contractors are to be on the site for any period of time, it is the Manager's responsibility to ensure they are identified, behave appropriately and do not use students for instruction, to advise or sign-off.

Large properties over 100 study bedrooms must have on site management and security equipment, intercom entry, computerised entry system and CCTV.

3.7 - Summary of Standard Procedures for New Tenants

Members will ensure that:

Any statutory notices relevant to repossession of the property are served on incumbent tenants to avoid any undue delay to incoming tenants;

The property will be fully ready for occupation at the commencement of the tenancy;

Prospective tenants will be allowed to view the property and room prior to being issued a contract. In the case of international students where an advance viewing is not possible the Member should provide the student with detailed photographic and written information that is sufficient to enable a student to make an accurate assessment of the accommodation being offered.

Clear details are presented or displayed within the property of how to contact the Member or his/her nominee in the case of emergency and details of contingency plans that are in place when the member is unavailable. The emergency number must be 24 hour and not connected to an answer phone overnight and weekends;

A comprehensive inventory is provided of all items provided in the property with some indication of condition to allow proper assessment of any dilapidation or damage. This should be agreed and signed by both parties as soon as possible after occupation;

Where access for routine inspection is required of the house or any part of it, not less than 24 hours notice is given. All other access should be for repairs or emergencies only;

Where access is required for viewing purposes, 24 hours notice shall be given or other reasonable arrangements agreed prior with the residents;

Members and their employees should conduct themselves in a courteous, considerate and professional manner at all times and encourage their student tenants to do likewise;

Student tenants understand that the SAO may wish to visit the property as part of its standard programme of house visits;

Reasonable access is arranged on request for:

- Environmental health officer
- Fire officer
- Trading standards officer
- Police officer

There is an ongoing commitment to safety and security by circulating any information provided from time to time by Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, Suffolk Constabulary, Suffolk County Council and other Suffolk Local Authorities.

3.8 - Responsibility to the Neighbourhood

A notice should be provided which describes the refuse storage arrangements for the dwelling and the refuse collection arrangements for the locality.

Members should ensure that any front gardens are kept tidy and that litter is cleared away. Similarly rear gates and alleyways should be kept in a clean and tidy manner. The SAO can advise on persistent littering by student tenants.

Members are the first port of call in responding to complaints about the behaviour of tenants. For persistent problems, Members should notify the SAO, who may liaise with the appropriate statutory body and the Students' Union.

3.9 - At the End of the Tenancy

Members should ensure that:

Tenants are issued with details of any liabilities they have incurred. Clear guidelines should be issued on what cleaning and other arrangements are necessary;

Deposits are only used for the purpose for which they were levied;

Where monies are withheld for reasonable costs incurred by the Member, a supporting statement of those costs is provided on the return of the deposit within the required timescale;

There is an adequate period between tenancies to ensure that essential maintenance work can be carried out and a deep clean completed.

3.10 - Dispute Management

Should a dispute between a Member and student occur, then it is expected that Members will deal with that dispute in a reasonable manner by:

- Responding reasonably and promptly to any complaints raised by tenants or their representatives and seeking to resolve directly;
- Ensuring a written response to correspondence from tenants or their representative within 1 week of receipt;
- Seeking assistance/guidance from the SAO if the matter cannot be resolved through direct negotiation with the student;
- Ensuring that all settlements and agreements reached are actioned within a reasonable time of the settlement being agreed.

3.11 - Complaints and Appeals

Members will undertake to acknowledge complaints about a breach of the CoP; and to respond to repairs in the time scales specified within the CoP.

The University will undertake to assist in resolving any breach directly with the Member.

If a serious breach of the CoP cannot be resolved, then accreditation and all advertising for that Member or agent may be suspended until the matter has been resolved. The final decision on suspension will remain with the University. This procedure does not affect any statutory rights that may be consequent to any action taken by one of the statutory bodies.

4.0 - Specification of Standards for Accommodation

4.1 - Key Requirements of the Code of Practice

Accredited accommodation must fulfil the standards described below. Documentary evidence is required for the certifiable aspects of the Scheme.

Housing law distinguishes between houses occupied by a single household and houses occupied by more than one household (houses in multiple occupation). For the purposes of the Scheme all properties are dealt with as HMO's and the relative legislative requirements for HMO's will apply even for those properties in single occupation.

4.2 - Repair and Physical Condition

All dwellings must meet the decent homes standard, which requires that a dwelling meets the following four criteria:

- Meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing;
- Is in a good state of repair;
- Has modern facilities and services;
- Provides a good degree of thermal comfort.

Dwellings should be managed and kept in a good state of repair, in accordance with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (England) Regulations 2005 which came into force in April 2006 and the Housing Act of 1988 amended 2004.

4.3 - Electrical Installation

Because of the associated risks of fire and electrocution, a condition of the CoP is that an inspection report be provided by a competent electrician. This may be provided by either a member of the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contractors or a member of the Electrical Contractors Association. The report should have been carried out within the last 5 years and shall state that the electrical installation is safe to use.

4.4 - Gas Appliances

All gas appliances and flues shall be subject to a service check by a Gas Safe Register, registered installer every 12 months. All certificates must be uploaded onto the Suffolk Studentpad site prior to expiry of the preceding certificate. Failure to do this will automatically remove the property from the website.

A carbon monoxide detector must be fitted in an appropriate location in every room where a gas appliance is situated.

4.5 - Energy Performance Certificate

A valid Energy Performance Certificate must be made available to all tenants. Houses require an EPC from 1st October 2008. There is a national register of Domestic Energy Assessors who will issue this certificate. Full guidance is given by the government;

The EPC must be uploaded onto the Suffolk Studentpad site when preparing an advertisement and subsequently prior to expiry of the preceding certificate. Failure to do this will automatically remove the property from the website.

An EPC is only required for a property which is self-contained, and it is valid for 10 years.

An EPC is not required when a tenant rents a room and shares facilities (i.e. each room does not require an EPC) however the property as a whole does still require an EPC.

All certificates must be uploaded onto the Suffolk Studentpad website prior to expiry of the preceding certificate. Failure to do this will automatically remove the property from the website.

5.0 - Fire Safety

The following are minimum fire safety requirements, dependent on the size of property and number of tenants.

All newly built or refurbished accommodation must comply with the *Part B1 Approved Document of the Building Regulations 2006 Edition* **and** the following minimum standards.

If they require further advice, Members are advised to contact the Private Sector Housing Department of their Local Authority or Suffolk Fire and Rescue.

5.1 - Lodgings

Lodgings are where 1 or 2 individual students rent individual rooms in a property where the Member also resides as their main residence. Each student will have a lockable study bedroom and unrestricted use of a kitchen, bathroom, dining room and lounge area. Lodgings do not have to provide meals, but may do so if agreed between student and Member.

Fire Provision Must Include:

- Mains wired interlinked optical type smoke detectors/alarms in common parts and in all habitable rooms and a heat detector in the kitchen (BS 5839-6:2004 LD2, Grade D)
- Sound general construction to partition walls, floors and ceilings
- Provision of a fire blanket and dry powder fire extinguisher in the kitchen

5.2 - 1 or 2 Bedroom Self-contained Flat or 2 Bedroom Shared Flat

- Mains wired interlinked optical type smoke detectors/alarms in common parts and in all habitable rooms and a heat detector in the kitchen (BS 5839-6:2004 LD2, Grade D)

- Smoke stopping doors (standard/existing doors fitted with smoke seals to the top and both sides and a self-closing device)
- Sound general construction to partition walls, floors and ceilings
- Provision of a fire blanket and dry powder fire extinguisher in the kitchen
- Escape windows (to current building regulation standard)

5.3 - 2 Storey Properties with no Floor Area Over 200m²

Up to and Including 3 Tenants

- Mains wired interlinked optical type smoke detectors/alarms in common parts and in all habitable rooms and a heat detector in the kitchen (BS 5839-6:2004 LD2, Grade D)
- Smoke stopping doors (standard/existing doors fitted with smoke seals to the top and both sides and a self-closing device)
- Sound general construction to partition walls, floors and ceilings
- Provision of a fire blanket and dry powder fire extinguisher in the kitchen
- Escape windows (to current building regulation standard)

4 Tenants and Above

- Fire alarm system with optical type smoke alarms in common parts and habitable rooms, heat detectors in kitchens, break glass call points and control panel (BS 5839-6:2004 LD1, Grade A)
- 30 minute fire resisting structure to walls and ceilings separating habitable rooms from other habitable rooms, kitchens and the common escape route.
- Fire doors with 30 minute fire resistance, complete with intumescent smoke seals and an overhead self-closing device (FD30S)
- Emergency lighting to common parts (BS5266)
- Fire escape signage
- Provision of a fire blanket and dry powder fire extinguisher in the kitchen and a 9 litre water extinguisher to each floor level

Or

- A fire sprinkler system (BS 9251:2005) with relaxations on the above requirements

For all over 200m² a risk assessment based on layout and travel distances would be completed by the fire service.

5.4 - Purpose-Built Halls of Residence Style Properties

Specific requirements are dependent on the individual property in consultation with the local authority and fire service. Developers are recommended to consult with the SAO and all other relevant bodies before progressing new design development.

A general indication of fire requirements would be:

- Fire alarm system with optical type smoke alarms in common parts and habitable rooms, heat detectors in kitchens, break glass call points and control panel (BS 5839-6:2004 LD1, Grade A) connected directly to Suffolk Fire and Rescue
- 30 minute fire resisting structure to walls and ceilings separating habitable rooms from other habitable rooms, kitchens and the common escape route
- Fire escape lift
- Fire doors with 30 minute fire resistance, complete with intumescent smoke seals and an overhead self-closing device (FD30S)
- Emergency lighting to common parts (BS5266)
- Fire escape signage
- Provision of a fire blanket and dry powder fire extinguisher in the kitchen and a 9 litre water extinguisher to each floor level

Or

A fire sprinkler system (BS 9251:2005) with relaxations on the above requirements.

6.0 - Amenities

6.1 - Schedule of Bathroom and Kitchen Amenity Provisions in Relation to the Number of Tenants

1 to 5 Tenants

A minimum of 1 bathroom and 1 WC. The bathroom is to consist of a fixed bath and/or shower and the WC may be situated within the bathroom. If the WC is separate from the bathroom there must be a wash hand basin (WHB) within the same room as the WC.

Where there are 5 tenants the bathroom and WC must be separate, although the bathroom may also contain a WC.

At least 1 kitchen, not more than 1 floor distance from the furthest bedroom. (In the case of a traditional dwelling where there may be more than 1 floor distance, an additional kitchen should be provided, or, a dining room provided on the same floor as the kitchen, this must be discussed with the SAO.)

6 to 10 Tenants

A minimum of 2 bathrooms **and** 2 WCs with WHBs (one of the WCs may be contained within one of the bathrooms, the other must be separate). The bathrooms are to consist of a fixed bath and/or shower and the WC may be situated within the bathroom with a WHB. If the WC is separate to the bathroom a WHB must be within the same room.

At least 2 kitchens, not more than 1 floor distance from the furthest bedroom. (In the case of a traditional dwelling where there is more than 1 floor distance, a dining room should be provided on the same floor as the kitchen, this must be discussed with the SAO.)

Or

1 large kitchen with dining room, containing 2 full sets of the required kitchen facilities.

11 + Tenants

A minimum of 3 bathrooms **and** 3 WCs with WHBs (one of the WCs may be contained within one of the bathrooms). The bathrooms are to consist of a fixed bath and/or shower and the WC may be situated within the bathroom with a WHB. If the WC is separate to the bathroom a WHB must be within the same room.

An additional bathroom and separate WC must be provided for every further 5 tenants or part thereof.

At least 3 kitchens (ratio 1 set of the required kitchen facilities per 5 persons or part thereof), not more than 1 floor distance from furthest bedroom. (In the case of a traditional dwelling where there is more than 1 floor distance a dining room should be provided on the same floor as the kitchen, this must be discussed with the SAO.)

Or

1 large kitchen with dining room, containing 3 sets of the required kitchen facilities (ratio 1 set of the required kitchen facilities per 5 persons or part thereof) dependent upon the actual number of tenants.

6.2 - Water Closets

In accordance with the above schedule, the minimum number of WC's required must be in accordance with the above schedule; the minimum number of WC's required must either open off a hallway, landing or passageway, or be entered via a ventilated lobby. They must not open off a

bedroom, or directly off a kitchen or living room. (This requirement is not applicable to en-suites). A wash hand basin shall be provided in the same room as the WC. All surfaces should be clean and be capable of being kept clean.

6.3 - Bathroom or Shower

In accordance with the above schedule, the minimum number of bathrooms or shower rooms must either open off a hallway, landing or passageway or be entered via a ventilated lobby. They must not open off a bedroom, or directly off a kitchen or living room. (This requirement is not applicable to en-suites). All surfaces should be clean and be capable of being kept clean. Fire detectors should not be placed directly outside the door of a bathroom or en suite room.

6.4 - Kitchen

The kitchen, whether shared or within a self-contained dwelling, must be equipped with the following facilities:

- Cooker
- Electrical sockets
- Extractor hood/fan
- Sink and drainer, with adequate and constant supply of cold and hot water
- Fridge-freezer, the fridge should contain 1 shelf per student and the freezer 1 drawer per student
- Microwave
- Kettle
- Iron
- Ironing board
- vacuum cleaner
- Storage space, at least 1 base cupboard per student and sufficient work surfaces once facilities have been put in place
- Appropriate refuse disposal facilities
- Washing machine (if not part of a laundry provided within the accommodation).

The layout of the kitchen will not be prejudicial to safety. All surfaces shall be clean and be capable of being kept clean. All items must be fit for the purpose and supplied in sufficient quantity for the number of tenants, as set out in the schedule above.

6.5 - Bedrooms

Bedrooms must have natural light and be supplied with sufficient artificial lighting. The study bedroom will contain the following facilities:

- A bed (double only if intended for couple occupation)
- Mattress
- Wardrobe or similar clothes storage space
- Chest of drawers
- Desk or desk surface
- Adjustable desk chair
- Electrical sockets, minimum of 2 double sockets next to/above desk, 1 double socket adjacent to TV socket and 1 double socket next to bed
- Broadband access, whether this is hard wired or wireless. If hard wired this socket must be adjacent to desk
- TV socket
- Desk angle-poise lamp or directional ceiling lighting
- Shelving
- Pin-board
- Curtains or blinds

- Adequate circulation space.

It is required that all doors and drawers can be fully opened, that at least one length of the bed is open and that the head height is not unduly restricted in the circulation area of the bedroom.

Bedroom doors must be fitted with escape sash locks to ensure quick and easy escape in event of fire.

6.6 - Sitting Rooms & Dining Rooms

For shared and self-contained dwellings there must be a sitting room/common room with at least the following facilities:

- The same number of easy and comfortable lounge seating as residents,
- A dining table and dining chairs with at least the same number of places as residents.
- A television which is licensed by the Member.

6.7 - Overcrowding

The Member shall not knowingly allow a house to be statutorily overcrowded. Sharing of rooms is prohibited unless the tenants are co-habiting and the room is large enough for two people. Each bedroom shall be directly off a circulation area and shall not be needed to be used as a thoroughfare to access other parts of the property.

6.8 - Gardens & Yard Areas

Suitable receptacles shall be provided for local authority waste collection; additional waste bins may be required for properties housing 4 or more tenants. A clothes line shall be provided.

6.9 - Furniture & Appliances – Safety

All furniture and furnishings will comply with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988.

All electrical appliances should be PAT tested and checked to make sure that they are not chipped, broken, or otherwise showing undue wear and tear, and to make sure that the correct fuse has been used. It is the member's responsibility to include in their tenancy any further PAT test requirements they may have of students using their own electrical equipment.

6.10 - Appliances & Instructions

Within the dwelling the following must be provided, with simple instructions provided on the use and any necessary user maintenance of any of the following:

- Broadband internet connection (if not a wireless system a hardwired socket should also be included in the lounge/common area)
- Vacuum cleaner
- Shower
- Cooker
- Microwave oven
- Toaster
- Kettle
- Washing machine
- Iron
- Hot water and heating controls

Students should be instructed in person on how to correctly use the heating and hot water controls; any rules on the use of these appliances must be clearly set out by way of a poster either on or adjacent to the boiler or appliance.

6.11 - Heating

Programmable central heating shall be installed so that there is a radiator in every room. All radiators must be fitted with Thermostatic Radiator Valves.

Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and paraffin heaters are not permitted.

Where there is a loft this shall be insulated with a minimum of 270mm of loft insulation. All hot water pipes should be lagged.

6.12 - Security

Doors not forming part of a means of escape shall be fitted with door viewer, door-bar or chain and be 44mm thick and in good repair.

All ground floor windows shall be fitted with security locks to the opening sash.

Any first floor windows accessible from a flat roof shall be fitted with security locks to the opening sash.

Any window above first floor level shall be fitted with window opening restrictor.

All bedroom doors shall be fitted with a lock to ensure security to property. Locks shall be escape sash locks, or similar, to ensure easy escape in the event of a fire, ensuring the lock is disengaged when the handle is depressed from the inside. No habitable room door should be fitted with a bolt or lock that requires a key to lock it from inside the room.

7.0 - Maintenance and Repair

The member should ensure that the property and its contents comply with the requirements in this CoP. In some cases certificates will have been obtained. There should be an ongoing commitment to make sure that the property and its contents are maintained in a satisfactory condition as far as is reasonably practicable.

Where access is required for planned maintenance, 24 hours notice shall be given or other reasonable arrangements agreed with the residents.

Out buildings, yards, and forecourts shall be kept in good repair and be clean. Gardens shall be kept safe and tidy. Boundary walls shall be kept safe. All external guttering and drainage shall be kept in good repair.

7.1 - Testing, Maintenance and Record Keeping of Fire Precautions

Alarms installed to BS5839: Part 6 should be tested monthly and the inside of smoke alarms should be cleaned using a vacuum cleaner annually to ensure that dust is not blocking the sensor.

Fire warning systems installed to BS5839: Part 1 should be tested at least weekly using a different call point for each successive test. The duration of the test should be sufficient to check that the system is operating satisfactorily. Any defects should receive immediate attention. The date, result and the signature of the person carrying out the test should be recorded.

Fire warning systems installed to BS5839: Part 1 shall be overhauled and tested annually and a form to BS7671 for 'Fire Detection and Alarm System Periodic Testing Certificate' should be obtained from the contractor responsible for the work.

Emergency lighting systems installed to BS5266 shall be tested by a competent person at regular intervals not exceeding six months. Any defects should receive immediate attention. The date, result and signature of the person carrying out the test should be recorded.

Where provided, firefighting equipment shall be examined annually by the manufacturers or other competent persons and maintained and tested in accordance with BS5306-3.

7.2 - Response to Disrepair

Where a complaint about disrepair is received the following service standards should be met:

- Emergencies - Remedy within 24 hours
- Urgent repairs - Remedy within 3 working days
- Priority repairs - Remedy within 7 working days
- Non priority repairs - Remedy within 28 working days or longer if necessary

Emergencies include:

- Total loss of electric power
- Unsafe lighting socket or electrical fitting
- Gas leakage
- Blocked or leaking foul drain
- Toilet not flushing
- Leak from water or heating system
- Blocked flue to open fire or boiler
- Insecure external window, door or lock

Urgent repairs include:

- Partial loss of electric power, e.g. light socket
- Blocked sink, bath or basin
- Tap which cannot be turned on or off
- Loss of space heating or hot water supply
- Loose or detached banister or hand rail

Priority repairs include:

- Leaking roof

The above are examples but do not form an exhaustive list.

Planned or routine maintenance should be carried out with respect and consideration to the convenience of the tenants.

Where possible; reasonable notice should be given to tenants for the commencement of works or visits by contractors.

Following works, all debris and waste materials should be cleared from the building in a clean and tidy manner. It is expected that all tradesmen will behave in a courteous and professional manner at all times.

All repairs reported should be recorded in a log which can be used to confirm dates of referral.

8.0 - Design Standards for New Purpose Built Properties

Spatial Requirements

The following is provided as guidance:

For a Shared House or Cluster-Flat:

- Single person bedroom 12.50 m²
- Single person bedroom with en suite 14.00 m²
- Studio 18.00 m²
- Single person disabled bedroom & en suite 20.00 m²
- Kitchen 1 to 5 persons 17.50 m²
- Kitchen each extra person 4.00 m²
- Dining Kitchen, 1 to 5 persons 29.00 m²
- Dining Kitchen, 6 to 10 persons 45.00 m²
- Living/Dining rooms, 1 to 5 person 29.00 m²
- Living/Dining rooms, 6 to 10 persons 49.00 m²

The law of overcrowding is subject to review and for that reason current overcrowding standards have not been included in this code.

For Traditional Halls Design with Common-Rooms:

- Single person bedroom 12.50 m²
- Single person bedroom with en suite 14.00 m²
- Studio 18.00 m²
- Single person disabled bedroom & en-suite 20.00 m²
- Common Room Inc. Dining/Living/Kitchen 93.00 m² (10 persons)
- Common Room Inc. Dining/Living/Kitchen 130.00 m² (20 persons)

New Developments Must Also Include the Following Facilities and Areas:

- Waste area (multiple bins for recycling)
- Secure laundry facilities
- Secure cycle storage as per planning requirements
- Broadband access
- Secure building electronic access points, possibly card swipe
- Secure design to minimise unauthorised access, windows, alarmed fire doors, etc.
- CCTV, to entrance and principle ground floor common space
- Management arrangements to be defined

Notices to Display in the Property

- Accreditation notice
- Emergency contact details for management & maintenance
- Useful University contact information
- Current gas appliance report
- Current electrical installation report
- Fire certificate
- Fire extinguisher operating instructions
- Refuse collection details
- Energy Performance Certificate
- Cleaning schedule