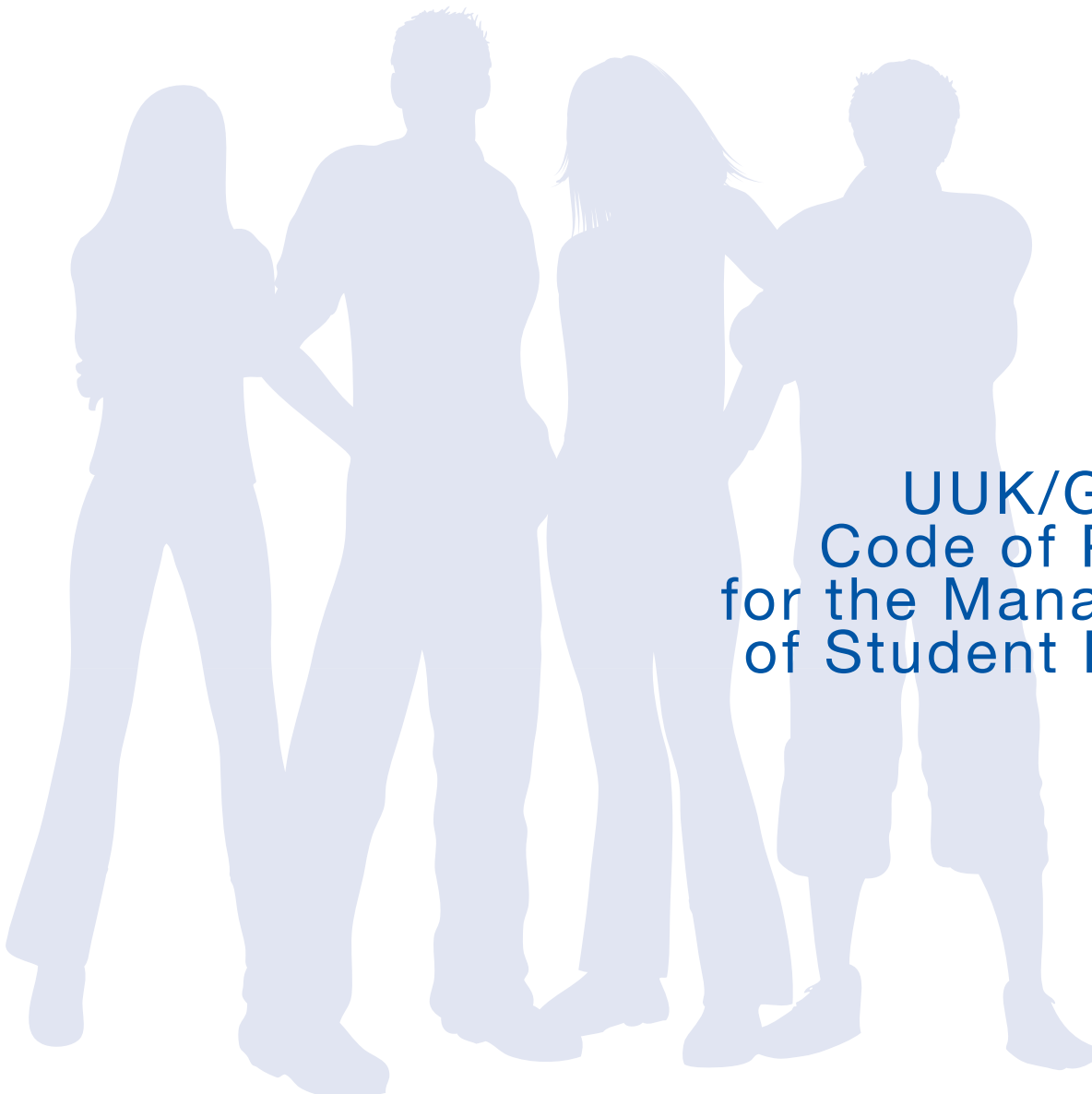




***Committed to  
better student living!***



**UUK/Guild HE  
Code of Practice  
for the Management  
of Student Housing**



# UUK/GuildHE

## Approved Code of Practice for the Management of Student Housing

### Annual Report 2007/2008

August 2008

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## 1. Introduction

1. This is the second annual report on the UUK/GuildHE Approved Code of Practice for the Management of Student Housing. It covers the period September 2007 to August 2008. Operation of the Code is overseen by the Governance Board assisted by the Sector Advisory Group (SAG). The Board and the SAG met on three occasions during the year. The revised terms of reference and membership of these bodies are at Annexes C and D.

2. There have been a number of significant developments for the Code during the reporting year including:

- Major changes in administration arrangements
- A strengthening of procedures on audit and on handling of complaints
- Development of the website
- Development of more effective monitoring mechanisms
- Closer involvement of, and participation by, the National Union of Students (NUS)
- The first annual conference on the Code
- A widened membership of the Governance Board and the SAG and clarification of their terms of reference.

3. Much progress has been made albeit the implementation of the Code overall is still in an early phase. For many higher educational establishments (HEEs) this has been in effect the first year of operation in terms of the audit cycle (see Section 4). It is anticipated that the third annual report will record further development both in the central administration of the Code and in local examples of good practice.

## 2. Coverage of the Code

4. The number of establishments now signed up to the Code is 196; 185 in England and 11 in Wales. More than 5,500 buildings are covered with some 244,000 rooms. Details of membership of the Code can be found on the website:

<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/PolicyAndResearch/Guidance/AccommodationCodeofPractice>

5. Establishments wishing to sign up to the Code are required to submit a letter from the vice-chancellor or principal formally stating that intention and undertaking to adhere by the provisions of the Code. A list of all buildings to be included in the Code is also required and it is now a requirement that establishments seeking membership should provide an audit report. Verification of eligibility and compliance is the responsibility of the Governance Board, advised by the SAG.

### 3. Publicity and Promotion

6. As noted in the first annual report, although the introduction of the Code had been publicised at national and local level, there was concern that some of the publicity had not been wholly effective. It was recognised that more needed to be done to increase awareness, particularly student awareness, of the significance of the Code for maintaining and enhancing management standards. The main focus of promotional activity should be on students as “customers” or “prospective customers”.

7. Early in the reporting year an initial set of good practice guidelines was issued to all members of the Code. Establishments were urged to adopt at least half of a number of promotional measures including publicity on student union websites, student welcome packs or newspapers and information sessions for wardens, resident tutors or equivalent staff.

8. During the year further publicity for the Code at national level included presentations by members of the SAG at the annual conferences of the Association for Student Residential Accommodation (ASRA), College and University Business Officers (CUBO) and the University Safety and Health Association (USHA). All these events were notable for the keen interest shown in the development of the Code and a useful exchange of good practice in its promotion.

9. There have been major developments of the website. This now includes an introduction to the Code, details of the functions and membership of the Governance Board and the SAG, a step by step guide to the process of joining the Code, a list of members, information for students provided by the NUS, a section on how to implement the Code including the procedures to be followed on audit and verification of compliance, annual reports, presentations made to the first annual conference, future events, and links including to the Accreditation Network UK.

10. At the first annual conference on the UUK/GuildHE Code (see paragraph 49) presentations included *Publicity and Promotion of the Code* and, by the NUS, *What the Codes mean to students and the NUS*. Arrangements have been made for a presentation at the NUS conference and for NUS officers to receive training in the promotion and use of the Code. The University Business magazine published a useful article on the Code.

11. At HEE level there has been further development in the use, in particular, of websites, welcome packs, leaflets and handbooks to promote awareness of the Code. One establishment, for example, includes details of the Code on its accommodation website with links to the UUK site, in the accommodation brochure, in the conditions of residence and as part of the on-line student induction programme. The introduction and development of the Code has also been discussed at the residential strategy and residential operations groups, the former including representation from the student union elected and full-time officers.

12. Early in 2008, having considered the overall progress made, the SAG recommended to the Governance Board that a promotional plan should be prepared. The Board approved of a plan at its meeting in March. The general aims are to:

- Raise awareness of the Code among students and accommodation managers
- Encourage other HEEs to adopt the Code
- Encourage student feedback

13. It was proposed, and the Governance Board agreed, that an external marketing company be employed to help develop:

- a national publicity campaign
- an on-line tool kit for HEEs to use in local promotion of the Code
- the content of the UUK website

and to help stimulate press coverage featuring residential staff and students.

14. Proposals from three firms were considered at the SAG meeting in April. QR8 were commissioned to develop a brand and logo for the Code. Following consideration of options devised by QR8 and their assessment by, among others, students and accommodation staff, a logo was adopted by the SAG in June. This should be very valuable in creating a clearly recognisable identity for the Code at national and local level.



15. The SAG is developing strategies for monitoring the impact of promotional activity. Possibilities currently being explored include working with the NUS on their student experience survey to include a question related to awareness of the Code, developing a proposal to include questions in the I-graduate international and domestic student barometer and local evaluation gained from member institutions.

## 4. Audit

### a) Procedures

16. It was recognised in the first annual report that there was a need to further develop mechanisms by which non-compliance with the Code could be identified; how the SAG and Governance Board should evaluate evidence of non-compliance; what procedures should be followed; and what courses of action might be taken in cases of non-compliance. Much work has been carried out on these matters during the course of the year, in particular on audit procedures.

17. As emphasised in the first annual report, it is a requirement of the Code that an establishment's internal audit procedures must include an assessment of how well the management of student accommodation satisfies the provisions of the Code. Concern was expressed that some members of the Code appeared not to have taken the necessary action. In autumn 2007, therefore, a draft audit check list and draft audit guidelines were approved for consultation. In the light of that consultation, and experience of completed audits, revised audit guidance was circulated early in 2008.

18. Feedback indicates that both the checklist and the guidance have proved useful in assisting auditors to adopt a rigorous approach to assessing compliance with the Code. Typically auditors determine an appropriate sample of accommodation based on such factors as the size of an establishment's residential estate and the number of locations involved. Meetings are held with the relevant establishment staff, including residence managers, and with student representatives. Documentation, including fire safety and the terms of tenancies, are examined, and there is a physical examination of selected buildings. A draft report is then cleared with the establishment's responsible officer and, subsequently, considered by the audit committee. The report is then transmitted to UUK/GuildHE.

19. Auditors have reported that establishments are, in general, aware of the requirements of the Code. Staff have prepared well for the audit process, are responsive to recommendations and are willing to change policies as a result of audit findings.

20. HEEs, as anticipated (paragraph 8.3 of the Code), are adapting well-established internal audit procedures to meet the requirements of the Code. In the case of the Oxford and Cambridge Colleges, however, different arrangements need to apply.

21. At Oxford, while some students are accommodated in University-provided residences, the great majority are in residential places in buildings owned and managed by some 40 self-governing Colleges. The Colleges are signed up to the Code; none, however, have internal auditors. A form of peer review has been devised, therefore, whereby three or more Colleges group together and test each other's compliance with the Code. The checking process is not directly reciprocal (ie College A does not audit College B and vice versa) so that the possibility of mutually cursory auditing is reduced. Membership of groups can be changed as another safeguard and also to provide fresh insights into best management practice. The process is financed jointly by the Colleges on an annual subscription basis. Colleges that choose not to be involved will have to demonstrate to the Governance Board that they have engaged their own auditors.

22. To complement this procedure, a firm of auditors will undertake an audit of a sample of Colleges each year with the number of rooms being audited being equivalent to the number audited annually at other large universities. In addition, any Colleges that had received a complaint under the Code would be included whether or not they had undergone a recent audit. A workshop *Preparing for your audit* designed to familiarise all concerned with the new procedures was held in May.

23. Cambridge Colleges are due to adopt a similar approach to that being followed in Oxford.

24. During the course of the year, discussions have been held with the Council for Higher Education Auditors (CHEIA). They have provided valuable advice on a number of aspects of the auditing process, notably on the draft audit guidance, training and improvement of contact arrangements for internal audit in HE establishments. CHEIA is now represented on the Governance Board for the Code.

25. In the light of experience to date, and advice from CHEIA on the adoption of a risk-based approach, it has been agreed by the Governance Board that a full audit should be carried out every three years with a lighter touch audit in intermediate years.

26. Auditors are to assess whether an establishment is in compliance with the mandatory elements of the Code and whether it is following good management practice in accordance with the aspirational elements of the Code. However it is apparent that some clarification of the distinction between mandatory and aspirational aspects of the Code is needed.

27. Any infringement of a mandatory element of the Code is examined individually by the SAG which also considers what, and how quickly, remedial action has been taken. A report is then made to the Governance Board.

28. Other procedural issues emerging from audits include whether it would be advisable to adopt some form of scoring system, and/or to prioritise between different elements of the Code and/or to determine different overall levels of compliance (ie to adopt a rating system). These possible developments will be further considered by the SAG.

29. Several areas of good practice in procedure have been identified, and consideration is being given to establishing a database of practice with regard to, for example, self-assessment, preparing a file of all supporting evidence in advance of audit, and the retention of records of all fire safety assessments and other vital documents.

## **b) Findings**

30. Some 60 establishments have completed full audits for either 2007 or 2008. Analysis of the reports shows that auditors made a total of 516 recommendations – ie an average of 8.6 per establishment. Table 1 below gives details by risk level and year. “Risk” here refers to the risk, as assessed by auditors, of non-compliance with the Code, the level of risk being determined as high, medium or low. It is not a measure of risk to, for example, personal safety nor does it equate to the assessment of risk under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System introduced by Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004. It should be

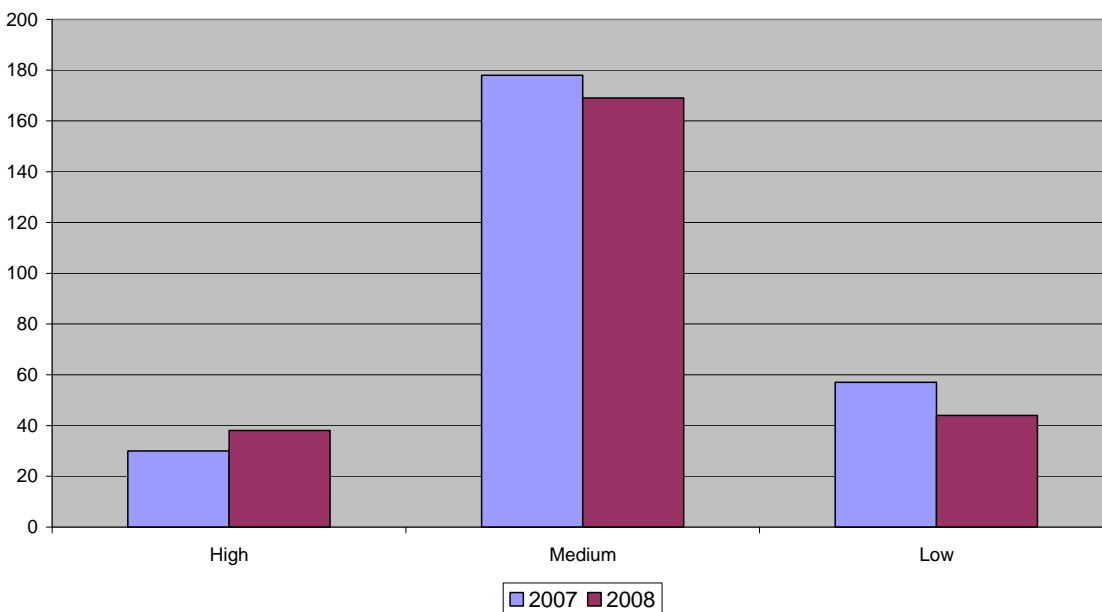
noted also that there will be some variation in auditors' assessment of risk – because of different interpretations of what constitutes a high or medium risk for example, and because the wide differences in the location and nature of HE campuses may well give rise to different perceptions of relative risk for some elements of the Code.

**Table 1 Areas identified for improvement analysed by risk**

Risk	2007	2008	Total
High	30	38	68
Medium	178	169	347
Low	57	44	101
<b>Total by Year</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>516</b>

31. All of the recommendations rated as high risk have been reviewed by the SAG with regard to the nature of the risk involved, an assessment of the management response and the timescale for remedial measures. The SAG concluded that in every case managers had commissioned the appropriate action within acceptable timescales. All of these cases will be followed up as part of the next annual cycle.

**Summary by Risk 2007 - 2008**



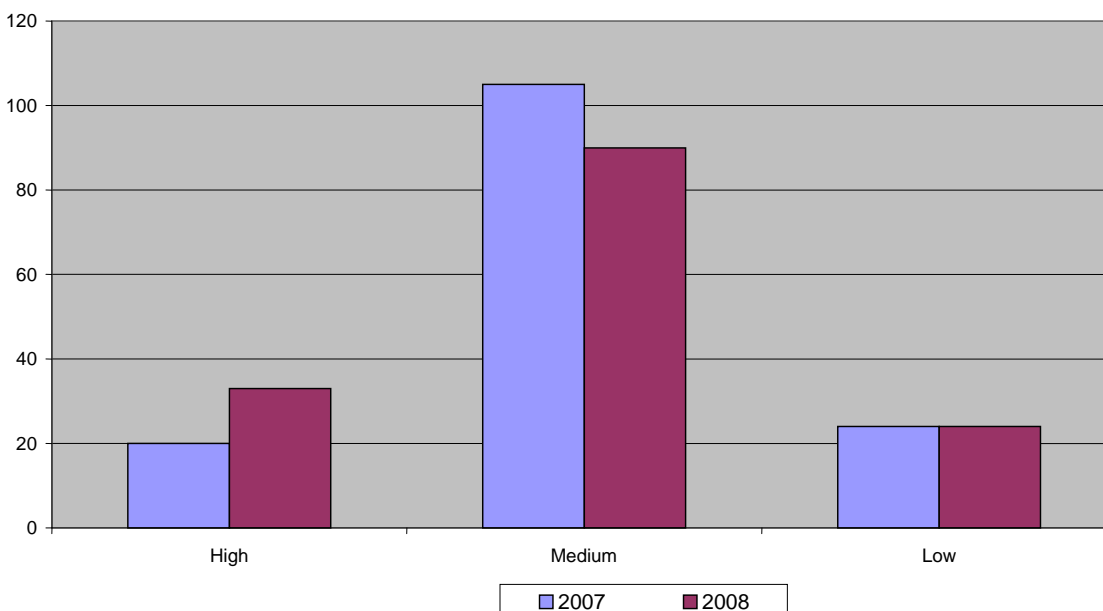
32. Particular attention was paid to recommendations involving those elements of the Code which are mandatory and recorded as high risk. Table 2 below shows the total number of recommendations for mandatory elements by level of risk. It is apparent that the large majority of recommendations identifying a high risk involve mandatory elements of the Code.

33. The database provides a summary information report on the audit records for each establishment. Where auditors have made recommendations identifying a high risk concerning mandatory elements of the Code, the report includes the improvements required by the auditors, the management response and the timescales. An example of a report derived from the database is at Annex A.

**Table 2 Recommendations concerning mandatory elements of the Code**

Risk	2007	2008	Total
High	20	33	53
Medium	105	90	195
Low	24	24	48
<b>Total by Year</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>296</b>

**Summary for Mandatory Code Elements**



34. Annex B provides an analysis of audit reports for 2007 and 2008 in terms of identified areas for improvement and level of risk for the seven sections of the Code. Risk assessment, fire evacuation testing procedures, use of CCTV, service level statements for reporting and remedying building effects, and snow and ice clearance policies were the most frequently cited areas for improvement. The SAG will use this material to identify sector-wide issues and appropriate action, including prompting further guidance from the professional bodies concerned.

35. As noted earlier (paragraph 19) auditors reported that HEEs are aware of the requirements of the Code and are responsive to their recommendations. Among specific areas rated highly for compliance with the Code were environmental policies, in particular those for recycling and transport. Areas where improvements could be made most commonly concerned user instructions for HEE-supplied electrical

appliances, snow and ice clearance policies, reporting lines for complaints procedures, and ensuring that all residences subject to compliance with the Code are monitored effectively.

36. During the audit of one establishment, for example, it was noted that the doors from the common room were not DDA compliant (the doors had been altered), minor faults with the fire alarm testing were identified (new arrangements have been made for testing, logging of tests and staff allocation) and not all electrical certification was readily accessible (certificates have been located and details are held on site and centrally).

37. This establishment summarised experience of the audit process as useful – while there were no major problems, some deficiencies had been identified and remedial action taken. Audit was regarded as having been a positive and helpful experience.

38. A number of audit reports highlighted areas of good practice followed by HEEs in meeting the requirements of the Code. These included:

- staff awareness of the content of the Code and its implications for clear management procedures
- undertaking self-assessments prior to audit, ensuring that the necessary evidence is readily available and well-organised

39. In order to promote and share best practice, the SAG has plans to organise training and development workshops through the professional representative bodies.

## **5. Complaints**

### **a) Procedures**

40. As the first report noted, the great majority of HEEs involve students in complaints procedures. In all cases there are appeal mechanisms to senior bodies within an HEE albeit arrangements vary widely between establishments. During the year the SAG has devised formal arrangements for handling complaints received which involve, or appear to involve, infringements of the Code, and for recording and assessing the management action taken in response. It is now established practice for all member contacts to provide information on any formal complaints made with regards to an establishment's alleged non-compliance with the Code that is not resolved locally by the accommodation service or by a senior body within the institution.

### **b) Findings**

41. At the time this report was prepared seven formal complaints had been received. It is not clear that in all of these cases an infringement of the Code has occurred and one case is not yet fully determined. However, the SAG and Governance Board have considered four of the cases and have concluded that establishments have responded appropriately in dealing with the matters prompting complaint.

42. In one case a complaint made under Section 7 of the Code (Anti Social Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures) related to a new HEE policy of “zero tolerance” for tampering with the fire alarm system. A smoke detector had been found covered in the complainant’s room; the complainant argued that the penalty imposed was too harsh. Following an unsuccessful internal appeal the resident complained to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). The OIA upheld the complaint on the grounds that the HEE’s procedures were deficient. In light of the OIA recommendations the relevant regulations have been revised for the new academic year and a full review is being made of the student disciplinary code.

43. In a second case a complaint was made under Section 5 of the Code (Communication between Management and Student/Advanced Information). The complainant believed that the information they had been given about accommodation had been misleading insofar as the HEE had not provided certain services relating to their specific preferences. Accommodation office staff gave the student ongoing support and negotiated with academic staff and the faculty to resolve the issue. Negotiations were held also with various accommodation providers but nothing that was available was considered suitable by the complainant. The complaint was then referred to the HEE’s complaint review panel which concluded that everything possible had been done to assist the student.

44. In the context of assessing an establishment’s compliance, the Code (8.5) refers to *significant* complaints, “significant” being understood as “complaints that have escalated to a senior body within the establishment, or have been referred to the Office of the Senior Adjudicator”. In the light of experience, some further definition of what constitutes a *significant* complaint would be desirable. The SAG is exploring alternative definitions.

45. The promotional campaign (see paragraphs 12 - 15 above) is intended to increase students’ awareness of the Code and of their rights to complain. It may be expected therefore that the number of recorded formal complaints is likely to increase – at least in the short term.

46. Procedures are now in place to monitor infringements of the Code year on year so that any serious and persistent problems will be readily identified and scrutinised by the SAG and the Board. As is made clear in the Code, if there is evidence of serious and persistent management failure the Board may determine an HEE is no longer compliant with the Code in respect of some or all of its student accommodation.

## **6. Management arrangements**

47. As anticipated in the first report, significant changes have been made to the administrative arrangements for, and financing of, the Code. As agreed by the Board at its meeting in November 2007, CUBO now administers the Code. A national administrator has been appointed and charges per bed space introduced.

48. There is now a clearly established annual cycle for the Code, and revised establishment registration, quality assurance and audit processes are in place. The website has been revamped and major changes

made to the establishment database. The membership of the Governance Board and the SAG has been enlarged and the terms of reference of both bodies have been revised. These developments have put the operation of the Code on a much firmer basis.

## 7. Activities

49. A principal event during the year was the first annual meeting and conference on the Code. This was held at Imperial College, London on 7th March 2008. Over 70 delegates and speakers attended the event. Presentations on various operational aspects of the Code were made by a number of HEEs, the NUS and by a firm of auditors. The event attracted a very positive feedback from delegates and prompted a number of proposals for further activity of this kind.

50. Presentations on the Code were made by members of the SAG to a number of annual conferences including those of CUBO, ASRA and USHA. Meetings on specific aspects of the Code were held with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), NUS and the Accreditation Network UK (ANUK).

## 8. Further development

51. A second annual conference focusing on the practical application of the Code is scheduled for November of this year. Presentations on the Code are to be made to conferences of the CHEIA, a conference arranged by the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and to the HMO Network, among others.

52. Two codes of practice for accommodation managed and controlled by educational establishments were approved by Parliament in April 2006, this Code and the *Accreditation Network UK (ANUK)/Unipol Code of Standards for Larger Developments for Student Accommodation Managed and Controlled by Educational Establishments*. There is general agreement that at some stage it would be desirable for the two Codes to be merged into a single Code and there are meetings between the managements of the two Codes and some common representation on governing boards.

53. As the Codes currently serve rather separate purposes and there is some diversity in assessment methods no *formal* convergence between the Codes has yet taken place. However the ANUK Code is being modified to include a star rating system for value-added items such as sustainability and pastoral care, and discussions are proceeding with a view to assessing the scope for making a similar change to the UUK/GuildHE Code. Attention will be paid to the scope for, and merits of, making other equivalent changes to both Codes and the potential for a staged approach toward convergence will be examined further during the year.

54. As already noted in this report (paragraph 26 above) work will proceed on clarifying the distinction between mandatory and aspirational elements of the Code and on defining what constitutes a significant complaint in terms of compliance with the Code (paragraph 44 above). Particular attention will be directed to monitoring promotional activity and to assessing the effectiveness of efforts to increase awareness - particularly student awareness - of the Code. It is expected that there will be further refinement of the audit checklist.

55. A general review of the Code's provisions will be undertaken. This will, among other matters, assess what modifications, if any, may be needed to reflect changes in legislation in areas such as prevention of discrimination and freedom of information. In the light of questions raised by member establishments during the year, there is a need to clarify some detailed points eg what is, or is, not required for a window to be "securable". Particular attention will be paid to developing requirements in the fields of environmental protection and energy efficiency, account being taken of the Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE) report on the sustainability of 1960s buildings.

## **Annexes**

**A. Example of summarised information report derived from the audit database**

**B. Detailed analysis of audit recommendations by section of the Code**

**C. Terms of reference and membership of the Governance Board**

**D. Terms of reference and membership of the Sector Advisory Group**

**E. Background to the Code**

**F. Outline of legislation**

## Annex A

### Audit Categorisation 2008

35	Mandatory	Audit Categorisation	Amount
University of XXXX	Yes	High Risk	3
		Medium Risk	3
	No	High Risk	1
		Medium Risk	6

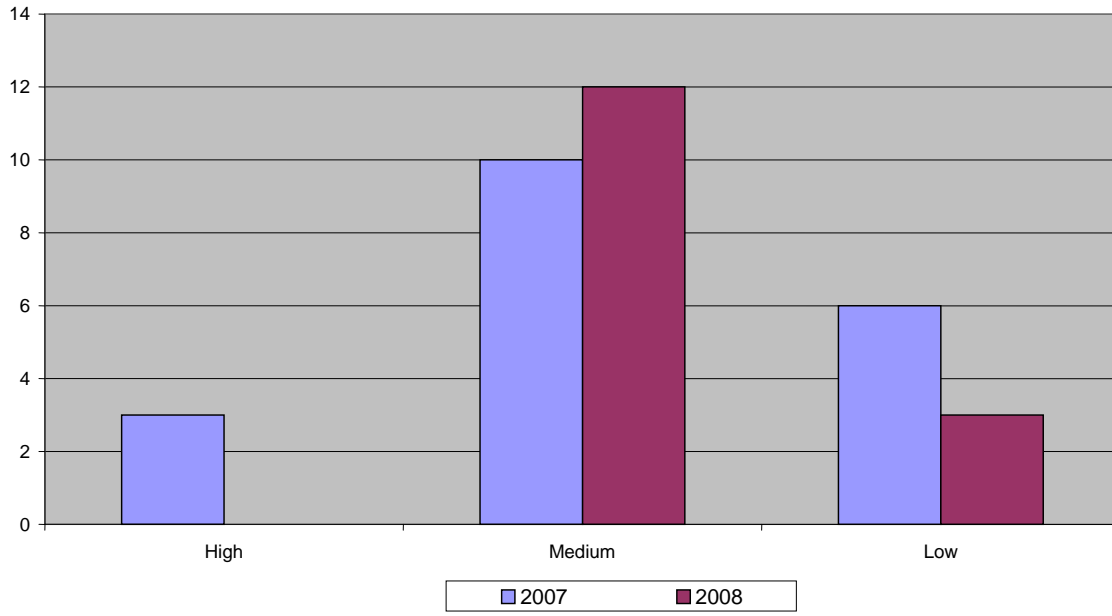
#### Mandatory High Information

Code	Recommendations	Management Actions	Timescales
2.10	Records of testing and item performance (PAT/CORGI etc), specification of other services and emergency procedures etc, need to be consolidated to support achievement of required standards.	Records of testing and equipment performance and emergency action will be stored on a central shared drive.	Jan 2009
2.11	The standard essential information covering inventories, gas, electrical and water equipment availability and usage for both items provided by the college and by the students etc. should be finalised as a matter of priority and be available to all.	Hall Guide draft to be produced using template of existing guide and approved by senior management. Publish agreed document for start of 08/09 both on the web and booklet.	Sep 2008
2.2	Risk registers should be prepared and kept up to date for student accommodation and the existing risk assessments and contingency plans should be brought together to support properly coordinated analysis and response.	H+S group to discuss content and source data of register. Working group will establish content, and structure of register and identify any gaps. Group will submit draft register for approval, and publish Sept 2008.	Sep 2008

## Annex B

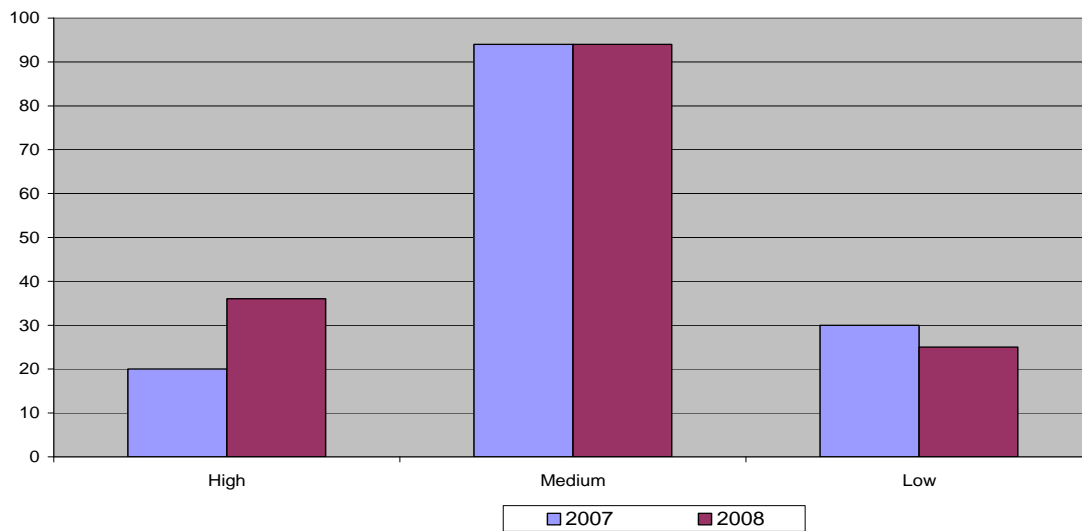
### Detailed analysis of audit recommendations by section of the Code

#### Section 1 - General



#### Section 2 Health and Safety standards procedures

##### Health Safety and Standards Procedures

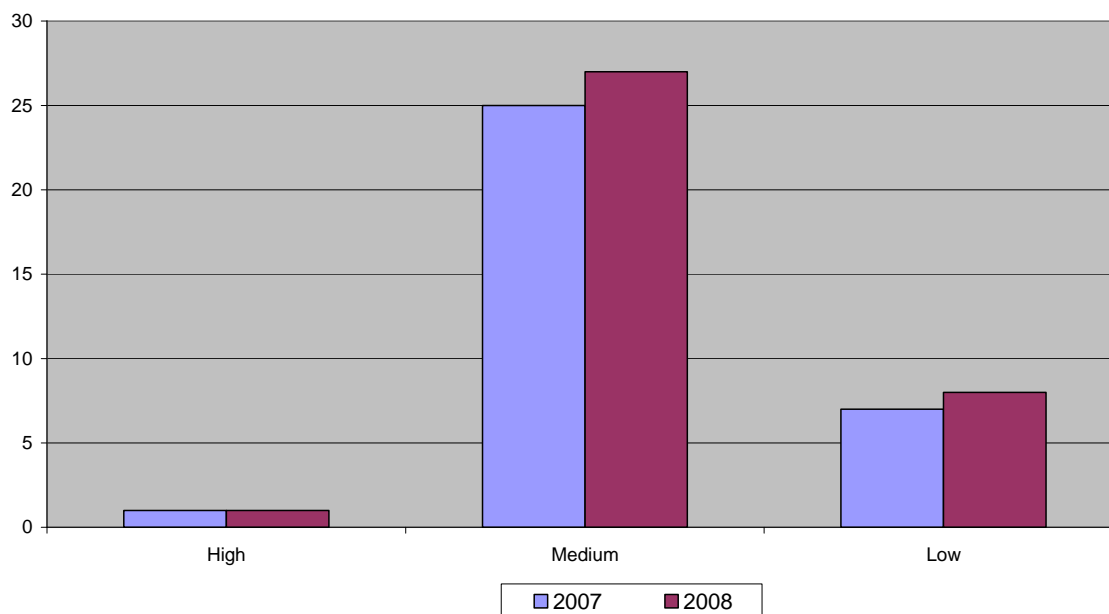


**B1. Section 2 areas for improvement were identified as follows (references are to paragraphs of the Code):**

	<b>No. of establishments</b>
• fire, outbreak of disease or major breakdown (2.2)	24
• fire evacuation practices (2.7)	16
• use of CCTV (2.29)	16
• instructions for the safe operation of all gas and electrically operated equipment (2.12)	15
• inspection and testing of all building electrical installations (2.16)	13
• inspection and maintenance of portable appliances (2.18)	13

**Section 3 Maintenance and repair regimes**

**Maintenance and Repair Regimes**

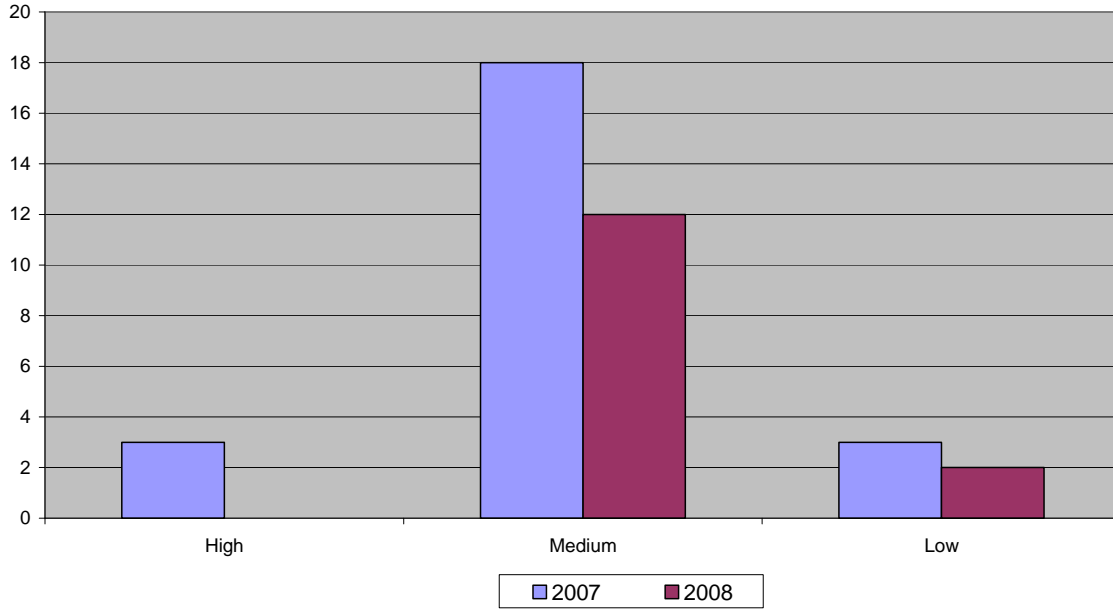


**B2. Section 3 areas for improvement were identified as follows:**

	<b>No. of establishments</b>
• availability of a service level statement on reporting, and rectification of building defects (3.2)	23
• policies on snow and ice clearance (3.7)	22

**Section 4 Environmental Quality**

**Environmental Quality**



**B3. Section 4 areas for improvement were identified as follows:**

- adequate provision of hot water and ventilation in each bedroom, social space, kitchen and bathrooms (4.1)
- collection of domestic refuse generated from residences (4.2)

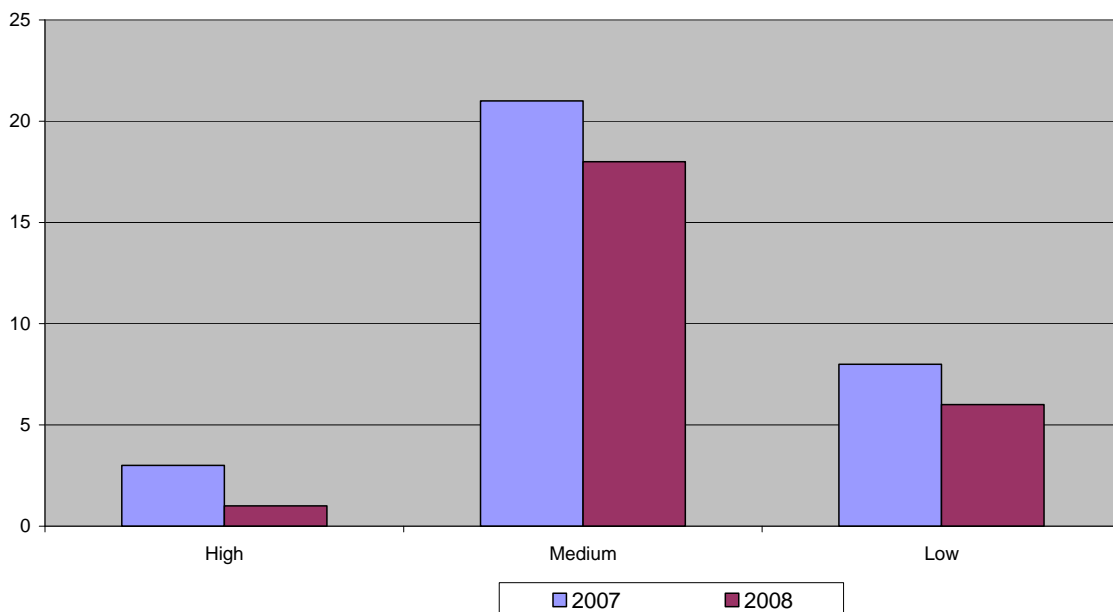
**No. of establishments**

14

11

**Section 5 Landlord and tenant relationship**

**Landlord and Tenant Relationship**

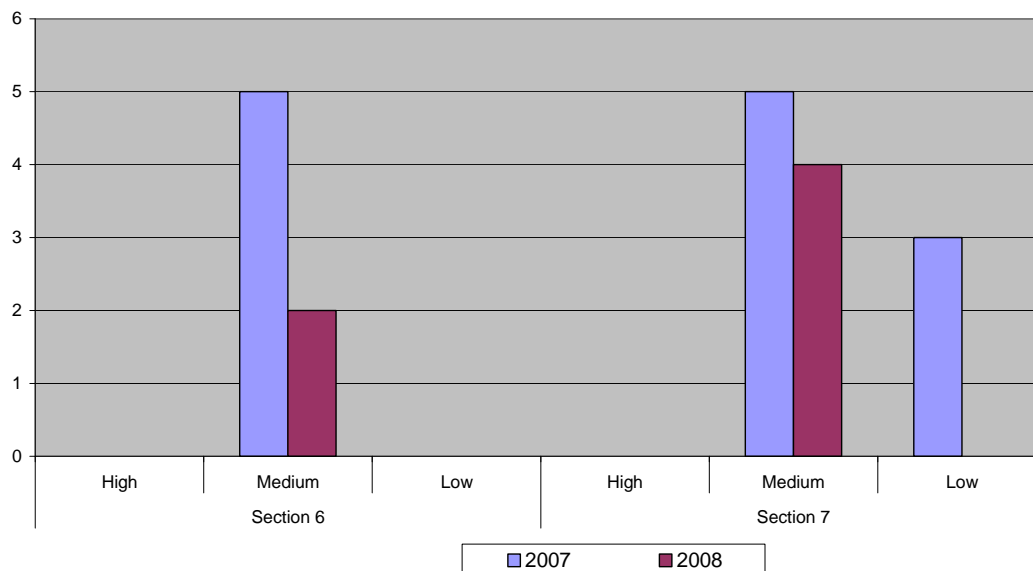


**B4. Section 5 areas for improvement were identified as follows:**

	<b>No. of establishments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clear and coherent policies and procedures on the relationship between managers, as landlords, and students, as tenants or licensees (5.1)</li> </ul>	11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complaints procedures (5.26)</li> </ul>	12

**Section 6 Student Support & Section 7 Anti-Social Behavior and Disciplinary Procedures**

**Welfare (6) & Anti Social Behaviour (7)**



**B5. Section 6 and Section 7 areas for improvement were identified as follows:**

	<b>No. of establishments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>encouraging students to register with their local HEI health service or local GP (6.3)</li> </ul>	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>properties managed so as to help prevent, or deal effectively with, any anti-social behavior by tenants or their visitors</li> </ul>	4

## **Annex C**

### **The Governance Board**

#### **Role**

The Governance Board will oversee the operation of the Code and issue guidance as necessary on day-to-day management issues. It will conduct an annual review of the Code, taking account of HEEs' experience, audit findings, complaints raising issues with regard to compliance with the Code and reports from other bodies. The Board will receive recommendations from the SAG with regards to the development and promotion of the Code, membership requests and compliance-related matters.

#### **Terms of Reference**

- To ensure the Code remains relevant and effective
- To ensure the delivery of the annual report and the statutory instrument to the DCLG
- To process membership requests and all membership compliance-related matters.
- To monitor the performance of the administration and financial arrangements of the Code
- To make proposals to the DCLG on proposed Code developments
- To monitor the effectiveness of the promotion of the Code and associated activities including the annual meeting.
- To approve amendments where appropriate to the annual cycle of the Code.

#### **Membership**

- Independent Chair (1 representative)
- Universities UK/GuildHE (2)
- College and University Business Officers (CUBO) (3)
- Association for Student Residential Association (ASRA) (3)
- Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE) (3)
- Association of Managers of Student Services in Higher Education (AMOSSHE) (2)
- University Safety and Health Association (USHA) (1)
- Representative of Auditors (1)
- Accreditation Network UK (ANUK) (3)
- National Union of Student (NUS) (2)
- Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) (2)
- Local Authorities (2)

#### **Modus Operandi**

- The Governance Board will be chaired on behalf of UUK by a nominated representative
- Secretarial support will be provided by the CUBO Administrator.
- The work of the Governance Board will synchronise with the annual cycle of the Code
- The Group will meet 3 times a year, with formal minutes being recorded
- Experts can be invited on to the Group for specific issues

## Annex D

### The Sector Advisory Group

#### Role

The SAG's authority lies in its ability to articulate, monitor and improve the Code of Practice's key operational processes, membership compliance and Code content. This particularly informs the production of an annual report and any proposals for changes to the statutory instrument as required by the Housing Act 2004.

#### Terms of Reference

- To ensure the delivery of the annual report and any proposals for changes to the statutory instruments to the Governance Board.
- To make recommendations to the Governance Board with respect to membership requests and all membership compliance related matters.
- To monitor the performance of the administration and financial arrangements of the Code
- To make recommendations to the Governance Board on proposed Code developments
- To maintain a holistic approach to administrative process improvements for the Code
- To manage the promotion of the Code and associated activities including the organisation of an annual meeting.
- To monitor and propose amendments where appropriate to the annual cycle of the Code.

#### Membership

Membership of the Group shall be comprised of nominated representatives from each of the following organisations, together with the National Administrator:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE)                     | 2 |
| • College and University Business Officers (CUBO)                           | 3 |
| • Association for Student Residential Accommodation (ASRA)                  | 2 |
| • University Safety and Health Association (USHA)                           | 1 |
| • Association of Managers of Student Services in Higher Education (AMOSSHE) | 1 |
| • National Union of Students (NUS)  | 2 |

#### Modus Operandi

- The Group will be chaired on behalf of UUK by a nominated representative selected from within the Group.
- Secretarial support will be provided by the CUBO Administrator.
- Each organisation will report issues experienced by its membership with the operation and application of the Code.
- Each organisation will ensure that its membership is kept apprised of changes to the Code and that appropriate training is delivered to its members.
- The work of the Group will synchronise with the annual cycle of the Code.
- The Group will meet 3 - 4 times a year, with formal minutes being recorded.
- Experts can be invited on to the Group for specific issues.
- Task teams or working groups will be established to progress specific issues as they arise in addition to ensuring relevant stakeholders are consulted on a regular basis.

## Annex E

### Background to the Code

1. 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 provided<sup>1</sup> 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)

2. A wide range of bodies in the HE sector, in addition to UUK and GuildHE, contributed to its preparation: AUDE, ASRA, CUBO, USHA, the Association of Heads of University Administration (AHUA), the Association of University Chief Security Officers (AUCSO) and the Association of Managers of Student Services in Higher Education (AMOSSHE). The DCLG (then the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister), provided valuable advice and support. The NUS, the Accreditation Network UK (ANUK) and the Higher Education Regulatory Review Group (HERRG) also contributed to the preparatory work.

3. 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 historic buildings, 21<sup>st</sup> Century purpose-built, college rooms, “traditional” halls of residence, flatted accommodation)
- distinctive management arrangements including, for all HEIs, independent governing bodies
- the relationship between university, or college, authorities and students as tenants, or licensees, differing in some important respects from the landlord/tenant relationship in the privately rented sector

4. 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*”<sup>2</sup> in order to satisfy the criteria for formal accreditation.

5. Two codes of practice for accommodation managed and controlled by educational establishments were approved by Parliament in April 2006:

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<sup>1</sup> In terms of the legislation “managed and controlled” by higher education *establishments* (HEEs). See Annex F, Paragraph 2 of this report.

<sup>2</sup> Paragraph (x) in the preamble to the Code

- *The Universities UK/GuildHE<sup>3</sup> 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*

6. Both Codes give educational establishments signing up to them exemption from the definition of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) 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 Annex F below).

7. 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 inconsistencies between them.

8. 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.

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<sup>3</sup> GuildHE – at that time the Standing Conference of Principals (SCOP)

## Annex F

### Outline of legislation

1. 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*”.
2. 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.
3. 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 this report therefore, are to higher education *establishments* (HEEs) rather than HEIs.
4. 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.