

Resident Engagement Strategy

March 2024



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Resident Engagement Strategy

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out Unite Students' Resident Engagement Strategy to fulfil the requirements detailed in the Building Safety Act, demonstrating our engagement with stakeholders, primarily our residents.

Context

The Building Safety Act 2022 requires Unite Students appointed person(s) to complete and fulfil a Resident Engagement Strategy. This must ensure the following key points are met:

- Clarity within our literature and our properties of who the principle accountable person is for each property (primarily the General Manager).
- The information that will be provided to relevant persons about decisions relating to the management of the building.
- In prescribed circumstances, consult relevant persons and prescribed persons on the strategy and take any representations made on the consultation into account when next reviewing the strategy.
- The aspects of those decisions that relevant persons will be consulted about.
- The arrangements for obtaining and taking account of the views of relevant persons, and
- How the appropriateness of methods for promoting participation will be measured and kept under review.
- Act in accordance with the strategy.

Strategy

There are three key elements to this strategy:

- **Engage**
- **Inform**
- **Empower**

Due to the diverse nature of our properties the information and engagement provided to our customer base will cover the relevant general safety elements, including fire safety systems, electrical, and structural safety. Where more information is requested which is specific to a property or request, the information provided will also include what we will do to resolve any issues or requests which arise.

Engage

- We will engage with our customer base primarily through the customer website and digital platforms (which will include links embedded on the MyUnite App).
- Engagement is split into 2 pathways, reactive (on request) and proactive (publicly available, direct communication regarding issues and feedback gathering).
- Engagement will be provided in direct and clear terms.
- Where relevant, we will engage with our customer base through direct communications (e.g. to communicate a known issue)
- We may also draw on a Customer Panel where wider engagement is sought e.g. to inform a change or strategy, this will be determined by the scale and impact of any proposed changes.
- Engagement will generally be through digital platforms, where in person engagement is required, this will be carried out by the appointed person.
- To ensure our customer base understands our Resident Engagement Strategy, we will ensure a public version of this strategy is available for our residents and partners alongside how often we review this document – this is available on our website.
- Elements of this strategy will also be repeated within our Home Charter which will also be a public facing document (in property) and local engagement tool, which sets out our residents' responsibilities.
- Resident Ambassadors will be used as both a consultation panel to conduct and annual review of the strategy, and informally as a conduit for wider engagement with their peers

Inform

- The principle accountable person will engage with the regulator when appropriate or required.
- We will proactively, and on identification of a relevant concern, provide our customer base with the information required for them to understand their properties safety, taking customer accessibility needs in to account both in the communication and the action.
- The accountable person will ensure any requests for information are responded to within a reasonable timeframe (aligned to our complaints SLA) and this will include mitigation measures where appropriate.
- Where we are required to consult with our customer base, we will do so with information which is relevant to the change or concern within the property and is articulated in clear and direct terms for people who may not be familiar with technical information.
- We will also ensure that where technical documentation is provided, we supplement this with contextual information written in plain English, which takes accessibility needs in to account to ensure all of our residents are clear about what the information means for them.
- We will support residents with alternative formats, including an in-person explanation where this is needed.

Empower

- We will ensure our residents are clear on their responsibilities, such as fire evacuation and fire prevention, as well as their wider responsibilities regarding personal safety.
- We will publish, in print and digital platforms, clear contact points for the principle accountable person.
- We will provide opportunities for our customers to feedback on any refinements to this strategy on an annual basis.
- Provide a clear enquiry and escalation route for customers to either request more information or raise a complaint or concern.
- Contact will be managed primarily through digital platforms such as our website, or throughout email channels, to ensure clear records are retained.

Review of Strategy

- The overarching strategy should be reviewed annually, or as legislation, or guidance surrounding the strategy, or act changes.
- We will retain trend information of requests and feedback, in order to adjust this strategy and our approach to communication.
- Changes in our approach may be informed by our own and sector data and the requirements of the act, including any developments therein.
- Residents of our properties will be afforded the opportunity to feed into reviews, primarily through the Resident Ambassadors.
- The review of this strategy will be recorded with an internally held record of decisions informing changes.
- Details of customer feedback will be anonymised, and the feedback held for a minimum period of five years.

Appendix A

Document Management			
Document Ref / Title		Resident Engagement Strategy	
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Author(s) (name / title)		Jo Blair (as Head of Quality & Standards), Rebecca Hayhurst (Head of Resident Experience) Abigail Yeo (Performance, Quality & Systems Manager)	
Owner (name / title)		Rebecca Hayhurst (Head of Resident Experience)	
Function		Cross Functional – Operations	
Approved by (name/ title)		Rebecca Hayhurst (Head of Resident Experience)	
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Consultation			
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<input type="checkbox"/> Sales	<input type="checkbox"/> IT Service Desk	<input type="checkbox"/> IT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Legal
<input type="checkbox"/> Finance - AR	<input type="checkbox"/> Finance - Treasury	<input type="checkbox"/> InfoSec	<input type="checkbox"/> HR
<input type="checkbox"/> Finance - AP	<input type="checkbox"/> Procurement	<input type="checkbox"/> H&S	<input type="checkbox"/> Business Intelligence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Estates	<input type="checkbox"/> Environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Marketing	<input type="checkbox"/> Asset Management
<input type="checkbox"/> Digital	<input type="checkbox"/> Office Support	<input type="checkbox"/> PMO	<input type="checkbox"/> Fleet
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Finance	<input type="checkbox"/> Acquisition / Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student Support	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resident Ambassadors
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Version	Date approved	Author	Summary of changes
1.0	27/03/2024	Rebecca Hayhurst	New Policy to comply with BSA. Resident Ambassador consulted for sign off 27/03/24