



# Student Accommodation Accreditation Scheme

2014 Update



Colchester  
Student  
Accommodation  
Accreditation  
Scheme

<b>CONTENTS</b>	Page
<b><u>The Student Accommodation Accreditation Scheme</u></b>	<b>3</b>
Aim of the Scheme	4
<b><u>Definition of Terms</u></b>	<b>4</b>
How the Scheme is implemented	5
<b><u>Procedure of Inspection for Landlords and Managing Agents</u></b>	<b>5</b>
<b><u>Guidance and Legislation</u></b>	
Legislation	7
Anti Social Behaviour	8
Amenities	8
Fire Safety	10
<b><u>The Student Accommodation Accreditation Scheme (SAAS) CBC and Student Lets agreed standards</u></b>	<b>11</b>
<b><u>MINIMUM FIRE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SCHEME</u></b>	<b>15</b>
<b><u>APPENDICES</u></b>	<b>22</b>
<u>Example Property Plans</u>	23
<u>Legislation</u>	30

This Student Accommodation Accreditation Scheme (SAAS) was introduced in Colchester by Colchester Borough Council, Essex University and private landlords in early 2000 and has been reviewed a number of times. This is the latest edition of the scheme (2014) and brings the scheme up to date. The scheme aims to do this by ensuring that:

- achievable standards are attained in the quality of housing; and
- the agreements and responsibilities between the landlord and the tenant are clear and are maintained by both parties.

The scheme is applicable to properties already let at the time of inception of the scheme by the landlord, or to properties that the landlord intends to let. Landlords wishing to take part in the scheme will have to conform to the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) laid down in Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004, (for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)) Management Regulations and the standards in this scheme.

This is a voluntary scheme which landlords of privately rented accommodation are encouraged to join in order to meet a higher standard. The benefits of this scheme are:

- Market advantage when letting a dwelling to all students.
- Expert guidance and advice from Private Sector Housing officers.
- Accredited dwelling certificates and plans including mapped fire safety.
- Accreditation for 5 years.
- Positive promotion of the private rented sector.
- Advertising and direct link details of the scheme provided on the Council's web site.
- Education sessions and landlords forum.

**To obtain these benefits the scheme must be joined.**

The scheme document which provides guidance and standards should not be relied on exclusively by landlords who must ensure that they comply with their legal obligations in respect of the health, safety and welfare of their tenants. Landlords must comply with all legislation relating to property management and pay particular attention to the legislation set out in this document and the appendices. The list is not exclusive, and legislation may change. **It is the landlord's responsibility to keep themselves abreast of any changes.**

Landlords who wish to include their properties in Accreditation must conform to this scheme, the standards set within And must be a fit and proper person. The details of all scheme members will be kept on an Accreditation Register at both Colchester Borough Council (CBC) and their contact details will be available for viewing.

This current edition of the Student Accommodation Accreditation Schemes has been prepared by Colchester Borough Council with a review from the National Landlords Associations.

The scheme may be reviewed from time to time. Current Review January 2014.

## AIM OF THE SCHEME

[back](#)

To raise the quality of supplied accommodation for students in the Colchester Borough. To ensure:

- CBC engages with private landlords and their tenants and provide advice and support for tenanted property management.
- Achieve and maintain property condition standards as set out in this scheme and law within the private sector for student accommodation.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

[back](#)

The term '**Landlord**' shall mean the person, firm, trust, association or company which grants a lease (which includes tenancy agreements) or licence to a tenant and is accordingly responsible for the landlord's obligations under the lease which has been granted in accordance with English law.

The term '**Tenant**' shall mean the person (student or students for the purpose of this scheme) who is given by the landlord the right to occupy the property on an exclusive basis in return for rent and in accordance with English law.

The term '**Accreditation**' shall mean a residential property that has been assessed and approved under the Student Accommodation Accreditation Scheme and is owned by a suitable landlord and an Accreditation Certificate issued.

The term '**Accreditation Certificate**' The certificate issued by Colchester Borough Council following the application and inspection where all the requirements of the Housing Act 2004 and the Accreditation Scheme have been met.

The term '**Accreditation Scheme**' The Scheme administered by Colchester Borough Council achieves certain standards for let residential property for students (and others), which sets out the responsibilities and agreements between the Landlords(s) and the Tenant(s).

The term '**Accreditation Register**' A register held by Colchester Borough Council showing the details of all scheme members and their relevant accredited properties.

The term '**Applicant**' A landlord(s) applying directly or through their agent for a residential property to be Accredited under the Student Accommodation Accreditation Scheme (SAAS).

The term '**Application**' The completed application form submitted with the appropriate documents and fee to Colchester Borough Council.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Signatories to the scheme will ensure that no person or group of persons applying for or services will be treated less favourably than any other person because of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religious belief or social status, having regard to the Equality Act 2010.

## HOW THE ACCREDITATION SCHEME IS IMPLEMENTED

[back](#)

Once an application is received, a Private Sector Housing officer will carry out an inspection of the property. This inspection will include a fire risk assessment, inspection of the condition of the property, management regulations check (for HMOs only) and an assessment under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), as well as the scheme standards.

The scheme inspection process has a fee which is payable every five years and the amount is dependant on property type and size. This is reviewed at the beginning of each year; for the current cost scale please see our website: [www.colchester.gov.uk/privatesectorhousing](http://www.colchester.gov.uk/privatesectorhousing)

Once the fee is paid the officer will visit, by arranged appointment, to carry out the inspection, write a report, draw up plans (plans are for HMOs only) and supply where required a schedule of works. This process includes follow-up inspection for completion and issuing of the Certificate. Colchester Borough Council administers and manages the inspection scheme, and issues the Accreditation Certificates.

Inspections can be carried out throughout the year. Any works identified during the inspection will need to be completed within a specified period of time; normally this will be a period of 3 months, although minor works should be completed before the start of the next term. It should be noted that where a category one hazard is identified under the Housing Act 2004 the Council must take action and where a high category two hazard exists the Council will also take action. The fee is not re-fundable once the Officer has carried out the inspection, written the report, drawn plans and schedules.

## **PROCEDURE OF INSPECTION FOR LANDLORDS AND MANAGING AGENTS**

[back](#)

1. The applicant must submit a valid application for accreditation to Private Sector Housing (PSH) to make an appointment for an inspection of the property. Private Sector Housing can be contacted as follows:

Private Sector Housing      Telephone: 01206 282581  
Email: [housing.private@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:housing.private@colchester.gov.uk)

2. Requests for inspection will normally be acknowledged and arranged within one week. Inspection dates will be dependent upon the applicant and tenants providing full access to the property at a mutually agreed time, but will normally be made within one calendar month of request. The Council will make an appointment and send a confirmatory letter, declaration and request payment. The applicant will be asked to ensure that access is available to all of their property on the proposed day and that where there are tenants in occupation they are given the appropriate statutory notice in advance of the inspection, that being a minimum of 24 hours.
3. Ideally by the date of the inspection, the applicant must supply the Council with copies of the following documents:
  - (a) A current Electrical Inspection Condition Report and test certificate no more than 5 years old.\*\*
  - (b) A Portable Appliances Test on all electrical goods that are supplied by the landlord. To be completed every three years.\*\*
  - (c) A current landlords gas safety certificate on all gas appliances within 12 months.\*\*
  - (d) Where a fire alarm system is fitted, a copy of the latest servicing, maintenance and inspection certificates plus a copy of the fire alarm tests and any remedial action undertaken.\*\*
  - (e) Where an emergency lighting system is fitted, a copy of the latest servicing, maintenance and inspection certificates plus a copy of any remedial action undertaken.\*\*
  - (f) Self-certification that all furniture and electrical equipment supplied by the Landlord complies with current legislation.\*\*
  - (g) a copy of each tenancy agreement that applies to the property.\*\*

**\*\* - If the property is required to have fire safety detection and protection installed or the property is an empty property that is being converted to a HMO etc then the document certificate will need to be supplied at the end of the work upon final inspection.**

**Please note: If you require assistance in obtaining documentation for the property. Student Lets Ltd have qualified Contractors who can carry out the testing and supply documents.**

4. All inspections will be carried out in accordance with this scheme, the Housing Act 2004 Part 1 (HHSRS) and where the property is a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO), the management regulations. During the inspection, the Officer will inspect the whole of the property and complete a standard report form, initial plan of the property and schedule of works for the scheme, HHSRS and the management regulations where required.
5. Providing that the applicant has paid the inspection fee, the officer will provide the applicant with a copy of the written report, certificate, plan (for HMOs only) and guidance on their property and also confirm to the Student's Union's student accommodation (Student Lets) by email the suitability (or otherwise) of the property for full Accreditation, within two weeks of the inspection if no work or documents are required.

Where works are required to meet HHSRS requirements and/or management regulations, the Officer will provide along with the report an initial plan and schedule of works to the Applicant, which will need to be carried out in the specified time. The schedule of works may also include any items needed to comply with the scheme standards.

6. The Applicant will need to complete any necessary works identified, before the property can be fully accredited. All Applicants covered by the scheme will be given a period of time to complete the work in accordance with our Enforcement Policy. A check will be made to see if the work has been completed satisfactorily. If the applicant fails to complete the necessary works, the property will not be accredited and the Council may need to take appropriate enforcement action to achieve the minimum legal standards and/or the management regulations. However, it should be noted that this is the last option with regards to dealing with the work.
7. Once the property meets HHSRS standards and **all requirements** of the Student Accreditation Scheme, the Officer will inform the Student's Union's student accommodation (Student Lets) by email or letter of its suitability. The Council will confirm that the applicant's property has been accepted for accreditation and will issue a plan with fire safety documented (for HMOs only), guidance and the Accreditation Certificate which lasts for 5 years.
8. Please note if the property is an HMO, whether it is accredited or not, it will be added to the HMO programmed inspection list at Colchester Borough Council and will be inspected in 5 years. Licensable HMOs will be inspected within the 5 year period.
9. To help with understanding of the inspection process, law, the standards within the scheme and what may be needed or expected within a particular property, the following pages are designed to give landlords some idea of what we look at; what standards are expected and guidance that is available; and how to carry out work to comply. Some of the information will be links to the relevant guidance whilst other information is included within this document.

## Legislation

The following pieces of legislation govern how Private Sector Housing works. As they are lengthy they are not included in this document, however, they can be viewed, each title is linked to the on-line version. These documents are kept up to date by the government and if in doubt contact one of the Officers in the team for clarification.

- [Housing Act 2004](#) This act covers all domestic properties and is the principal legislation.

The following Documents apply to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). That is a property where there are three or more people forming two or more unrelated households living in the property.

- [The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation \(England\) Regulations 2006 SI 372](#)
- [The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 SI 373](#)
- [The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation \(Additional Provisions\) \(England\) Regulations 2007 SI 1903](#)
- [The Houses in Multiple Occupation \(Certain Converted Blocks of Flats\) \(Modifications to the Housing Act 2004 and Transitional Provisions for section 257 HMOs\) \(England\) Regulations 2007 SI 1904](#)

Landlords must also comply with the Gas Safety (Installations and Use) Regulations 1998. If you are a managing agent you also have this responsibility. Below is the link.

- [Landlord's legal responsibility for gas](#)

## Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)

Although the vast majority of students are well behaved in the areas that they live , occasionally anti social behaviour can occur. The local authority is unable to make a landlord take responsibility for their tenant's behaviour, although we would liaise with the landlord if a complaint is received about a tenant or tenants. Any complaint regarding a University student staying in private accommodation will be dealt with in accordance with our procedure (which can be provided upon request). However the following agreement has been made with all interested parties.

**The University, Police, and Colchester Borough Council's Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) and Environmental Protection teams have agreed that where action is being taken by the Police, the ASB team or Environmental Health the relevant enforcement agency will provide a copy of the relevant documentation to the Discipline Office at the University. On receipt of this the University will send a formal letter to the student(s) concerned to the effect that if further action is required by the relevant agency, they will be in breach of University Regulations and subject to disciplinary action by the University.**

For Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) there are legislative standards to be met governing this type of property and local authorities in Essex have got together to set up an amenity standard document to help landlords comply with the legislation. It applies to all houses in multiple occupation across Essex County. Whilst this information does not apply to a small 2 bedroom properties where they do not meet the test to be a HMO, studio flats and bedsits with one room or let bedroom in family homes it is still a good guide to follow.

The whole document is not included but can be viewed upon request or found on our website [www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk). What are listed below are the basic tables for amenities within bathrooms and kitchens. Please note that the amenity standards give more detail and cover other areas within the property. If you are in doubt about anything with regards to the standards please open the document below and or contact one of the Private Sector Housing Officers at the Council. In the appendices there are plans giving examples of requirements within properties from flats up to three storey properties.

- [Essex Amenity Standards for HMOs COP Final v1 3](#)

### Bathroom Amenities

<b>SCHEDULE OF AMENITY STANDARDS IN RELATION TO NUMBER OF PERSONS</b>	
1 - 4 persons	<p>No requirement for wash hand basins (WHB) in sleeping rooms.</p> <p>At least 1 bathroom and 1 WC (the bathroom and WC may be combined).</p> <p>WHB not required in bedrooms.</p>
5 persons	<p><b>1 WHB may be required in each sleeping room plus</b></p> <p><b>1 bathroom AND 1 separate WC with WHB</b>  <b>1 bathroom/shower and 1 separate WC with WHB (the WC can be contained within a second Bathroom)</b></p>
6 -10 persons	<p>1 WHB may be required in each sleeping room plus</p> <p>2 bathrooms AND  2 separate WCs with WHBs (but one of the WCs can be contained within one of the bathrooms).</p>
11 – 15 persons	<p>1 WHB may be required in each sleeping room plus</p> <p>3 bathrooms AND  3 separate WCs with WHBs (but two of the WCs can be contained within 2 of the bathrooms).</p>

### Kitchen Amenities

Kitchens must be of an adequate size and shape to enable safe preparation of food by the number of occupiers and the following standards for shared kitchens apply:

Number of persons sharing	Room size
Up to 5	9.3 sq m minimum
6-10	18 sq m or 2 kitchens minimum

A set of cooking facilities is to comprise the following:

Number of Occupiers	Facilities	Specifications
1	Cooker	In bedsits only: a cooker with a 2-ring hob, oven and grill. This must be permanently and safely installed on a fixed worktop. A microwave may be provided as a substitute for half the required rings.
Up to 5		Four-ring hob, oven and grill.
1	Worktop	1500 mm x 450 mm (0.6 sq m). Worktop must be fixed and made of suitable impervious material.
Up to 5		1500 mm x 450 mm (0.6 sq m) of clear worktop per user. Worktop must be fixed and made of suitable impervious material.
All	Sink & Splash back	A sink on a base unit with constant hot & cold water and suitable drainage connection; 300 mm tiled splash back or its equivalent to be provided to the sink/drain, worktop and any cooker without an integral splash back.
1	Electrical sockets	One double power point immediately above the work surface, for the use of electrical kitchen appliances, in addition to any serving major appliances provided by Landlord.
Up to 5		A minimum of three double power points immediately above the work surface for electrical kitchen facilities in addition to any serving major appliances provided by the Landlord.
1	Food storage cupboard	A single unit cupboard per unit of accommodation (the sink base unit is not acceptable for this purpose)
Up to 5		A single unit cupboard per unit of accommodation (the sink base unit is not acceptable for this purpose). Cupboards can be provided within each unit of accommodation or in the shared kitchen.
		Other cupboards for the storage of other items necessary for the preparation and cooking of food.
All	Floor covering	Impervious and washable floor covering to cover the floor area of the kitchen.
1	Fridges	One fridge.
Up to 5		Equivalent of 2 worktop height refrigerators with freezer compartments; or of a size proportionate to the number of

		occupiers. Fridges can be provided within each unit of accommodation.
All	Fire Blanket	Provide a fire blanket for use in bedsit/kitchen (for chip pan fires, etc where water is unsuitable).

***For all HMOs with 6 or more persons a second set of kitchen facilities is required in the property. However, discussion can be had with Private Sector Housing Officers about how this requirement can be met***

## Fire Safety within dwellings

[back](#)

Fire safety is nearly always one of the hazards that comes up in properties that come on to the Accreditation Scheme. What level is required is always individual to each property. What is required at one property may not be relevant to another. Under the HHSRS, and the management regulations (for HMOs), an assessment will be carried which will highlight what is required and needed, having regards to current guidance, legislation and the scheme standards. A fire risk assessment will be drawn up as part of the process.

In the appendices to this document are a number of planned drawings that give examples of fire safety in different types of property based on legislation, guidance and scheme standards. The drawings are not exhaustive but may help you understand what Private Sector Housing Officer would be looking for within a dwelling. Note that these are just examples so if you are unsure then talk to an Private Sector Housing Officer of the Council. It should also be pointed out that there is a different level of fire protection depending on whether a property is “shared” or not. Being a “shared” property is dependant on a number of criteria and must be agreed with the Private Sector Housing officer.

In general the property must be provided with adequate means of escape in the event of fire. Appropriate fire precautionary equipment must be provided in communal areas (including kitchens, entrance halls, landings and hallways) and be of such type, number and location as is considered necessary to minimise any fire hazard following consultation by the Local Authority with the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service.

The factors affecting means of escape are varied, and owing to the wide variation in properties it is not appropriate to detail specific requirements. Reference should be made to the “*Housing – Fire Safety guidance*” issued by LACORS which is used by all Essex local authorities. Landlords of HMOs should consult with the Local Authority for specific requirements in each case.

**In the case of licensed HMOs, certain licence conditions are mandatory and in such cases, irrespective of any other requirements, the following must also be provided to any shared property: kitchen: (i) a half hour fire resisting door to any hallway forming part of the means of escape and (ii) a suitable fire blanket. (iii) for ‘shared’ HMOs solid wooden doors that are close fitted to the doorsets to all bedrooms and living rooms.**

- [LACORS Fire safety guidance in residential premises](#)
- [Clarification Document LACORS Fire Safety guidance in residential premises](#)

Finally coupled with the legislation and inspection are the Student Accommodation Accreditation Standards. Combined these help you make your property an Accredited student place with the university, and a property that complies with the legislation. The Student Accommodation Accreditation Scheme (SAAS) has standards that are required to be met irrespective of those required by the legislation. In certain

circumstances these may be above what the legislation requires but they are reasonable and good practises to follow.

## **Student Accommodation Accreditation Scheme**

[back](#)

Private landlords play an important role in providing accommodation for students. Although it is recognised that many landlords are doing a good job, the quality of rented housing can vary widely. Whilst some properties offer excellent accommodation which is safe and well managed, some properties are neglected and even dangerous. This can make it very difficult for students and their parents to know what they will be getting when they take on a house in multiple occupation, shared house, lodgings or small flats.

The Student Accommodation Accreditation Scheme provides a way of giving recognition to landlords who have taken a responsible approach to renting, and is a means of identifying those student properties which meet these Accreditation Standards. The Accreditation Scheme has been developed by Colchester Borough Council in association with landlords and has now been updated.

### **Limitations of the Scheme**

Officers of the Council will best endeavour to ensure that any property is suitable and that all parties abide by the terms and conditions of the Scheme. It is not in the best interests of the Scheme for Tenants or Landlords to do anything which lowers the standards of accommodation. However, clearly circumstances can change at any time after the application has been received or the inspection has been carried out. For this reason, the organisations responsible for inspections are unable to accept any liability for the state of the premises or the actions of the Tenants, owner or manager of the property.

### **Please Note**

**Nothing in the Scheme alters the rights and responsibilities of the Landlord or Tenant as set out in landlord and tenant law. Colchester Borough Council do not accept liability for any loss a landlord may incur as a result of a decision to refuse or revoke the Accreditation of a property, and they do not absolve the owners, Landlords or Tenants from exercising due diligence in ensuring that their property is safe and up to the standards required.**

### **Applications and Inspections**

Landlords should make an application for Accreditation through Colchester Borough Council completing the application form and payment of the fee for the inspection (once every five years). Once registered with either group, an inspection of the property can be arranged with the local authority.

Licensed HMOs will not normally require an extra inspection for accreditation as those properties will have to, by law, be licensed by the local authority. However they will need to be accredited and landlords should apply for Accreditation with Colchester Borough Council. There is no additional inspection fee for Accreditation where an HMO has been licensed.

### **Introduction**

Accredited accommodation is the preferred option for all shared property let to students at the university. The scheme does not apply to bed and breakfast accommodation. The scheme will normally apply to accommodation that is occupied both on a shared or single occupancy basis within an HMO, resident Landlord or single family dwelling.

## Objectives of the Scheme

The terms and conditions of the Scheme must be met before a property can be included in the Scheme. The main objectives of the Accreditation Scheme are:-

- (a) To encourage good practice and the provision of good quality private rented accommodation for students, lecturers and families of students.
- (b) To improve liaison (and encourage co-operation) between Landlords, the Council and the University.
- (c) To provide Landlords with a clearly-defined set of standards to which to aspire
- (d) To give official recognition to those Landlords whose properties achieve the agreed standards
- (e) To provide students (and their parents/guardians) with confidence that the properties have complied with these (Accreditation) standards at the time of Accreditation.
- (f) To promote the fact that tenants have responsibilities (as well as rights) and that landlords have rights and not just responsibilities.**

## Management of Properties.

As part of the student accommodation accreditation scheme Student Lets are now offering management of the properties on behalf of the landlord. This is a scheme offered to all Landlords and may be beneficial to new Landlords and Landlords who live outside the borough of Colchester or the County of Essex. The management is aimed squarely at student accommodation. For further information please contact Student Lets Ltd on (01206) 878978

**Please Note: Colchester Borough Council is unable to recommend this specific management service. Other management companies are available who provide this service for rented properties.**

## Accreditation

The initial inspections for Accreditation and re-accreditation are carried out by Colchester Borough Council (CBC) (see pages 4-6). Inspections will only be carried out upon receipt of a valid application, including the appropriate fee. Accreditation will be conditional upon the terms of the Scheme being satisfied and the landlord providing all the necessary documentation, including that relating to gas and electrical safety certificates. Accreditation will be valid for a period of up to **5 years** and will only be renewed if it is established that the property and Landlord continue to comply with the terms and conditions of the Scheme.

During the accreditation term of five years the property will be inspected by a representative of the Student's Union's student accommodation Student Lets Ltd. During this period the Student Lets team will ensure that any required documentation is maintained and received and ensure that general maintenance of the properties are maintained. Any complaints regarding deficiencies and condition will be referred to Colchester Borough Council.

## Accreditation Certificate

The Certificate must be displayed in a conspicuous position within the premises and will contain the following information.

- (a) The full postal address of the property
- (b) The name and telephone number of the Landlord/agent
- (c) The date the certificate was issued
- (d) The maximum number of lettings and occupants
- (e) Plan details of any conditions attached to registration (or any issues, such as fire safety/internal layout, which students should be made aware of) (plans only for HMOs)
- (g) The expiry date for Accreditation
- (h) The telephone numbers of Private Sector Housing (for queries and complaints)

## **Planning Permission and Building Regulations Approval**

Landlords must consult the Council's planning department about all matters requiring planning consent. Inclusion of a property within the Accreditation Scheme does not imply, in any way, that planning consent has been, or will be, granted for the use of the property for any particular purpose.

Where structural alteration is required to the property, it is the owner's responsibility to consult with the Council's Building Control team at the Rowan House, 33 Sheepen Road Colchester, Essex CO3 3WG.

## **Fire Risk Assessment**

**Landlords must carry out a suitable and sufficient Fire Risk Assessment. However, guidance can be sought from Private Sector Housing. If, under the initial inspection of the property, work for fire safety is required to comply with the scheme, legislation and guidance, this will count as a risk assessment. The Student's Union's Student Accommodation (Student Lets) reserve the right to audit or inspect the premises and relevant documentation at any time.**

## **Public Liability Insurance**

**Landlords are required to ensure that the property has a valid public liability insurance certificate to a value of at least £1 million at the time of accreditation and must make this document available to any prospective tenant.**

## **Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)**

**Landlords must ensure that their property has an up to date EPC and this must be made available for prospective tenants to view. A copy must be supplied to CBC at initial inspection.**

## **Tenancy Deposit Protection**

Landlords must ensure that their tenant's deposits are protected in a relevant Government authorised scheme run by either the TDS (the Tenancy Deposit Scheme), the DPS (the Deposit Protection Scheme or the TDSL (Tenancy Deposit Solutions Ltd). Landlords and managing agents should be aware that failure to place the deposits in one of the schemes could lay them liable to have to pay back a year's rent and be unable to serve section 21 eviction notices

## **STANDARD OF ACCOMMODATION**

### **1. State of Repair**

The property must be suitable for occupation, free from hazards and maintained in a good state of repair at all times

## 2. Cleanliness

At the beginning of the tenancy:

- The property must be reasonably clean, free from insect infestations (such as fleas, bed bugs or cockroaches), and free from rats or mice
- The carpets must be in a reasonable condition and properly fixed with no substantial dirt marks or stains
- The carpets in the hall and on the stairs and landing must be secure and not contain any holes
- The walls and ceilings must be in a state of reasonable decorative order
- All curtains, blankets and linen supplied by the Landlord must have been laundered.

## 3. Gas Safety

All gas appliances (including cookers) must be maintained in a safe condition and inspected at least once every 12 months by a contractor registered with the Gas Safe Register™, and in accordance with Gas Safety Regulations. The annual Gas Safety Certificate must be available for inspection by tenants, and by representatives of the Council and the Student's Union's Student Accommodation (Student Lets). The Gas Safety Certificate must be valid at the time of accreditation. **A new certificate must be produced annually and a copy supplied to Student Lets Ltd.**

## 4. Electrical Safety

Each study/bedroom shall be provided with a minimum of two double 13 amp power sockets (or equivalent), suitably sited to permit the safe use of appliances.

Students are responsible for ensuring the safety of all electrical items that they bring onto the premises.

The electrical installation in the property must have been inspected and tested by a qualified electrician, using the format of a Electrical Inspection Condition Report used by the ECA, NICEIC or one of the other government bodies within the **five** years immediately prior to the application for accreditation. Any defects which are highlighted as "code 1 or 2s" must be remedied (and suitable certification provided to this effect) before the Electrical Inspection Condition Report can be accepted as satisfactory.

A Portable Appliances Test certificate is also required for all electrical goods that landlords supply to tenants. The inspection and test must have been carried out in the last three years by a qualified electrician. Please note if all the supplied appliances are fixed and fused in to the electrical wiring then a PAT is not required.

In addition to the above requirements, the landlord will be required to complete a visual self-certification of the electrical safety on an annual basis, and keep a record.

## 5. Fire Safety

Landlords can find detailed advice in the guidance for sleeping accommodation under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order. Suitable and sufficient measures must be defined in the Fire Risk Assessment. Guidance can also be found in the LACORS Fire Safety guidance. It should be noted that under the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, the Local Authority are the lead authority when it comes to inspecting fire safety in domestic dwellings. Within the following pages there are standards, guidance and a number of plan layouts of dwellings that give examples of what would be expected in various student properties under this scheme. If in doubt speak to a Private Sector Housing officer at the Council

Polystyrene ceiling tiles and surface-applied polystyrene insulation on walls will greatly assist the spread of fire, so must not be present in the property.

Landlords must ensure that they complete a regular maintenance, testing and checking schedule of the fire alarm system, and provide induction information for tenants (emergency action), including sounding an alarm for those who may not recognise it. Landlords should contact the Universities Fire Officer if a tenant requires a Personal Emergency Plan (PEP) i.e. they have an impairment of sight or hearing or physical restrictions that may impede their escape in the event of an emergency.

## **MINIMUM FIRE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SCHEME** [back.](#)

### **a) Fire Detection**

As a minimum, in all HMOs comprising one or two storeys, mains operated, interlinked smoke detectors with battery back up (to meet BS5446) must be fitted in the ground floor hall/passage; on the first floor landing; and in any communal living room. An interlinked mains wired heat detector with battery back up must be fitted in the kitchen to meet BS5446.

Additional measures may be required, particularly in more complex properties; 3 storey + HMOs, or the property is not deemed a shared HMO (see information in plans attached), but this will be determined by the Fire Risk Assessment and HHSRS inspection undertaken by the local authority.

For properties where there is a resident landlord

Where there are three or more lodgers, mains operated, interlinked smoke detectors with battery back up (to meet BS5446) must be fitted in the ground floor hall/passage; on the first floor landing; and in any communal living room. An interlinked mains wired heat detector with battery back up must be fitted in the kitchen to meet BS5446.

Where there are only two lodgers mains-wired smoke detection is required to the escape route, (hall and landing). Where there is a single student with family (single family dwelling) the same requirements as for a live in landlord with up to 2 lodgers apply.

Property rented to three or more lecturers, mains operated, interlinked smoke detectors with battery back up (to meet BS5446) must be fitted in the ground floor hall/passage; on the first floor landing; and in any communal living room. Interlinked mains wired heat detector with battery back up must be fitted in the kitchen to meet BS5446.

For houses or flats where two students (or lecturers) are sharing, mains-wired smoke detection with battery back up is required in the hallway and landing.

**Additional measures may be required, particularly in more complex properties or if the property is not deemed a shared HMO (see information in plans attached), but this will be determined by the Fire Risk Assessment and HHSRS inspection undertaken by the local authority.**

### **b) Escape Routes**

Escape routes must be kept clear of obstructions and combustible materials at all times and should be adequately lit at all times. All internal and external doors which are used as a means of escape from fire must be fully operational from the inside with a single device without the use of a key. For all HMOs comprising one or two storeys the door between the kitchen and route of escape must be a fire door providing half hour protection and have the correct door furniture including self closer, intumescent strips and smoke seals. If a shared HMO, all other doors leading on to the landing and hallway must be close fitting solid timber or panelled doors of substantial construction with no locks. Note: if not a shared HMO then 30 min protected route will be required.

The exit from a room should not normally be through any other room such as a living room, kitchen or bedroom. Where this is unavoidable, appropriate fire safety measures (specified by Private Sector Housing in consultation with Essex Fire and Rescue Service) must be introduced to reduce the risk of Injury from fire.

In many instances, an additional mains operated, interlinked smoke detector with battery back up to BS5446 will be sufficient. However, in less common circumstances (where the layout of the house presents higher risks), measures such as escape windows to upstairs rooms maybe required.

For resident landlords where there are three or more lodgers The door between the kitchen and route of escape must be a fire door providing half hour protection and have the correct door furniture including self closer, intumescent strips and smoke seals. All other doors leading on to the landing and hallway must be close fitting solid timber or panelled doors of substantial construction with no locks. Please note this property is an HMO

For resident landlords where there are up to two lodgers all doors leading on to the hallway and landing must be close fitting solid timber or panelled doors of substantial construction and the route out must not pass through any risk room. The same applies to properties where there are only two tenants letting a small residential premise and the route out of the property does not pass through a risk room.

Property rented to lecturers. The door between the kitchen and route of escape must be a fire door providing half hour protection and have the correct door furniture including self closer, intumescent strips and smoke seals. If a shared HMO all other doors leading on to the landing and hallway must be close fitting solid timber or panelled doors of substantial construction with no locks. Please note this property is an HMO. Note: if not a shared HMO then 30 min protected route will be required.

Additional measures may be required, particularly in more complex properties; 3 storey + HMOs or the property is not deemed a shared HMO (see information in plans attached), but this will be determined by the Fire Risk Assessment and HHSRS inspection undertaken by the local authority.

### **c) Fire doors**

All single and two storey HMOs, resident landlords with 2+ lodgers and properties with lecturers must have a self closing kitchen door which is 30/min standard (half hour fire protection). In all properties comprising three storeys or more, all living room doors and kitchen doors which lead directly onto the escape route must be fire doors with correct furniture. These must be 30/min standard (half hour) with intumescent strips, smoke seals and self closers fitted on to the door or frame. Please note some properties may require further fire doors depending on the type of HMO they are. If in doubt contact the Local Authority. The Local Authority will advise on what is required as part of the risk assessment and HHSRS inspection.

### **d) Fire blankets**

For all properties all kitchens must contain a fire blanket (light duty), complying with British Standard 6575 or equivalent; wall mounted approximately 1.5 metres high and in a readily accessible position closer to the room exit than the cooking facility.

### **e) Emergency Lighting**

**In certain circumstances where there is no borrowed light or the escape route is complex, for HMOs, Emergency lighting may be required. This will be assessed as part of the inspection and assessment under the Housing Act 2004 that is carried out by Private Sector Housing.**

#### **f) Recommended Contractual Terms:**

The Student's Union's Student Accommodation (Student Lets) recommends that landlords incorporate in their contract the following prohibitions:

- nothing to be left in corridors
- no use of candles, tea lights, aromatic oil heaters, incense sticks or any other device which has a naked flame..
- no cooking equipment and kettles/rice cookers except in kitchens (except in specific bedsits)
- no heaters and electric blankets
- no smoking within the entire property

#### **6. Home Security**

Suitable locks must be provided for all windows of ground floor rooms and those windows of upper floor rooms which can be accessed externally from a flat roof. Regards will need to be had to fire safety and the HHSRS. Where Egress windows are used no locks can be applied.

#### **7. Room sizes**

The minimum room sizes normally accepted under the Accreditation Scheme areas follows:

<b>Single Bedrooms</b>	<b>8.5 sqm</b>	<b>1 Adult person</b>
<b>Double Bedrooms</b>	<b>12.0 sqm</b>	<b>2 Adult persons</b>

**Local housing conditions and policies vary between district and borough councils and some may accept existing smaller rooms depending on the overall communal space available to the tenants and amenities within the HMO. The number persons allowed also relates to the amenities within the property.**

Exceptions may be made where there are mitigating factors, such as access to cupboards/storage facilities outside the bedroom.

Each property must contain either a living room or a dining room/kitchen diner of a suitable size for the residents. Ideally, there will be enough room for all the residents to sit down simultaneously.

#### **8. Ventilation**

All habitable rooms must be ventilated directly to the external air by an openable window of a reasonable size. As a guideline, we would expect the openable area to be equivalent to not less than one twentieth of the floor area of the room.

Kitchens, bathrooms and W.C. compartments must be provided with adequate natural or mechanical ventilation. If mechanical ventilation is necessary it must comply with Building Regulations.

#### **9. Natural Lighting**

All habitable rooms must be provided with an area of clear glazing in an external wall, situated in either a window and/or a door. As a guideline, we would expect the total area of glazing to be equivalent to not less than one-tenth of the floor area of the room.

All glazing to bathrooms and/or W.C. compartments must either be obscure or be capable of being made obscure (by providing Venetian blinds, for example).

#### **10. Artificial Lighting**

All habitable rooms, kitchens, bathrooms, W.C. compartments, staircases, landings and passages shall be adequately lit by electrical lighting. Although working lamps/bulbs must be

supplied at the beginning of every tenancy, the landlord will not be responsible for providing replacement lamps/bulbs during tenancy except for florescent kitchen tubes.

There must be sufficient switches, fitted at suitable locations, to operate the lighting. All staircases must have a switch at the top and bottom of each flight.

### **Note the following points 11-16 apply to all HMOs**

#### **11. Washing Facilities**

For properties occupied by up to five residents, at least one bath (or shower) and at least one wash hand basin must be provided, together with an adequate supply of hot and cold running water properly connected to a suitable drainage system.

#### **12. Toilet Facilities**

For properties occupied by up to five residents, at least one internal W.C must be provided. If there are 6-10 residents, two WCs must be provided. For properties occupied by five or more residents, the ideal is to have a W.C which is separate from the bath/shower and should contain a wash hand basin with an adequate supply of hot and cold running water.

#### **13. Kitchen Facilities**

The kitchen must have the following:

- Adequate facilities for food storage for each resident. (Normally, there should be the equivalent of a single unit cupboard for each resident).
- A fixed worktop with impervious surface and of sufficient size for the number of residents, part of which must be adjacent to the cooker.
- A sink and drainer facilities with sufficient supply of hot and cold water (cold water must be wholesome and direct from mains).
- A minimum of three double power points suitably sited to permit the safe use of appliances.
- A British Standard fire blanket (domestic size).
- A hob with three or four rings/hotplates, together with a grill and oven
- A fridge (with freezer compartment) of an adequate size for the number of residents. (Where there are more than 5 residents, two fridges with large freezer compartments or a large fridge freezer must be provided)
- A covered bin for storage of kitchen waste.
- A washing machine

#### **14. Space Heating**

Where central heating is not provided, all habitable rooms must have a fixed economic heating appliance which is capable of maintaining the room temperature at 19°C when the outside temperature is minus 1°C.

**Bottled gas heaters or stoves and free- standing paraffin heaters must not be used. Under no circumstances must any bedroom contain a conventionally flued gas fire or appliance.**

#### **15. Refuse Storage**

Arrangements must be made for the satisfactory storage and disposal of refuse sacks in covered bins/receptacles.

#### **16. Bicycle Storage**

No bicycles are to be kept in the halls or corridors of the property. If requested by the tenants (and unless this is totally impractical), adequate safe storage should be provided for securing bicycles. Not a requirement to be Accredited.

#### **17. Furniture and Furnishings**

All beds, sofas, upholstered chairs and other relevant furniture must satisfy the requirements of the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988. Further information on these Regulations can be obtained from Trading Standards Beehive Lane, Chelmsford, CM2 9SY. (Tel: 01245 341888).

### **a) Bedrooms**

The following items must be provided in the bedroom of each student:

- An adult size single bed as a minimum, complete with mattress.
- Adequate hanging/storage space for clothes.
- An adequate study desk or table, and chair.
- Adequate storage for books. (As a guideline, any shelving should be at least 6ft in total length).

### **b) Other Rooms**

The following items must be provided:

- A vacuum cleaner
- Floor cleaning equipment appropriate to the type of kitchen floor.

## **18. Garden Equipment**

If the tenants are expected to tend to the garden, adequate equipment and instructions must be provided. If an electric lawnmower is provided, a 30ma RCD trip must be fitted permanently either to the appliance or to the circuit used for outside electrical appliances.

## **19. Notices**

The following Notices must be displayed in a prominent position in the dwelling:

- A Notice or Plan describing the fire precautions, evacuation procedures, and the location of the rising main and gas point.
- The Certificate of Accreditation
- Living in Student Accommodation Guidance Document.
- A current Gas Safety Certificate
- A current Electrical Installation Condition Report

## **20. Student Lets' Administration fee.**

To help meet the cost of assessing and maintaining Student Pad, website and for general management of the scheme, the Student's Union's Student Accommodation (Student Lets) will charge a non-refundable administration fee currently £54.00. The administration fee will be charged as an addition to the normal Accreditation fee paid to Colchester Borough Council and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

## **21. Tenancy Matters**

The landlord must provide the tenants with a written tenancy agreement which sets out the conditions of the tenancy and the respective responsibilities of the landlord and tenants. Both parties must be given identical copies of the agreement.

The landlord must provide the tenants with either a rent book or another form of receipt, recording all rent paid to the landlord or the landlord's agent. It is usual for a landlord to ask for a deposit to cover loss and damage. This must not normally exceed the equivalent of more than two months' rent. All deposits must be protected by a Government approved scheme. Unless otherwise agreed and except in an emergency (such as electricity, gas or water supply failure), the landlord or their contractor must normally give the tenants at least 48 hours written notice of their intention to gain access to the property. Unless otherwise agreed, 24 hours' notice will be required where access is required for the purpose of allowing prospective tenants to view the property.

Unless otherwise agreed (and except in an emergency), access to the property should only take place between 8.00 am and 8.00 pm, Monday-Saturday and between 10.00 am and 6

pm on Sundays and Public Holidays. The landlord must follow the correct legal process of eviction.

## **Disciplinary Procedure for the Scheme**

Landlords must comply with the current Scheme and all legal and statutory duties. Landlords who fail to do so will be considered to be in breach of the scheme. This procedure has been developed for instances where it is identified that a landlord has breached any clause laid down in the scheme.

A breach of the scheme is likely to arise from the following sources as reported to the Private Sector Housing or Student Lets Ltd.

- On notice from a tenant
- Identified by an inspecting officer from Private Sector Housing or Student Lets
- Made aware by the Landlord
- From a source, other than already listed

If a breach has occurred, and the signatory does not dispute the breach, the following stages will be followed: Stage one: a letter shall be sent with a reasonable time-scale for the breach to be rectified. Stage two: if action is not taken by the Landlord within the time-scale provided Private Sector Housing will visit and inspect and require any breach to be rectified by way of an informal notice. If this is still not completed in the original time scale then enforcement action may be taken by means of regulations, notice or revocation of the Accreditation. Once the breach has been rectified the Private Sector Housing team will re-inspect the property to check for compliance.

If the breach has occurred, and the Landlord disputes the breach, the Private Sector Housing Officer shall offer the Landlord or the Tenant referral to the Private Sector Housing Manager to review. Landlords who are found to be in breach of the scheme shall no longer be eligible for any of the benefits of the Scheme and Accreditation may be revoked.

## **Refusal of Accreditation**

The Student's Union's Student Accommodation (Student Lets) will endeavour to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that participating Landlords are fit and proper persons. The following circumstances are likely to lead to a Landlord being refused accreditation (or to the accreditation of a property being revoked) if they come to light.

(a) The Landlord (or their agent, if they have one) has been convicted, during the last ten years, of an offence of harassment or unlawful eviction, mortgage fraud, housing benefit fraud, or a breach of the conditions attached to a housing grant

(b) The Landlord (or their agent, if they have one) has failed to comply with the requirements of any statutory notice served by the Council and this has resulted, during the last five years, in either their prosecution or works being carried out in default.

(c) The Landlord (or their agent, if they have one) has used the Accreditation Certificate or their involvement in the Scheme, during the last five years, in a manner which is either fraudulent or intended to deceive.

(d) The Landlord (or their agent, if they have one) has been convicted of a criminal offence which could be construed as being relevant to the letting of property to young people and which has not been 'spent' within the meaning of the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

(e) Failure to maintain the standards required under the terms of the scheme.

## **Appeals Mechanism**

In the event of a Landlord being dissatisfied with the decision reached on their application (either because they have been disqualified or it has been decided that the terms and conditions of the Accreditation Scheme have not been satisfied), they can apply to the Nominated Council Representative for a review of the decision. The nominated person is Beverley Jones, Head of Professional Services.

If the original decision is upheld, the landlord has the right of appeal to an Appeals Panel comprising the Council's representative (different from the reviewer), the representative is Beverley Jones Head of Professional Services, together with one private landlord and a representative of the Student's Union's student accommodation (Student Lets) office, that being the Student Lets Manager.

Appendix 1 Plan examples of fire safety and amenities within certain types of properties.

- [PLAN 1: SHARED FLAT - ground or first floor flat](#)
- [PLAN 2: SHARED VICTORIAN HOUSE - 2 storey](#)
- [PLAN 3: BED-SIT VICTORIAN HOUSE - 2 storey](#)
- [PLAN 4: SHARED MODERN HOUSE - 2 storey](#)
- [PLAN 5: BED-SIT MODERN HOUSE - 2 storey](#)
- [PLAN 6: SHARED HOUSE - 3 storey](#)
- [PLAN 7: BED-SIT HOUSE - 3 storey](#)

[Appendix 2: Legislation](#)

### Example 1: SHARED FLAT - ground or first floor with egress windows

HMOs described as Shared houses are where the whole property has been rented out by an identifiable group of sharers such as students (not 1<sup>st</sup> Year Students), work colleagues or friends as joint tenants. Each occupant normally has their own bedroom that does not have a lockable door. They share the kitchen, dining facilities, bathroom, WC, lounge and all other parts of the house. All tenants will have exclusive legal possession and control of all parts of the house, including all the bedrooms.

There is normally a significant degree of social interaction between the occupants and they will, in the main, have rented out the house as one group. There is a single joint tenancy agreement with vicarious responsibility and therefore the landlord does not decide who lets a room should someone leave. In summary, the group will possess many of the characteristics of a single family household, although the property is still an HMO as the occupants are not all related.

#### Fire safety

Grade D LD3 Alarm System

Interlinked heat detector in kitchen area.

Interlinked smoke detector in the hallway.

Interlinked smoke detector in lounge.

Fire blanket in kitchen located 1.5 metre off ground between cooker and exit.

30 minute fire door to kitchen or to open plan rooms with a kitchen and to the front door leading on to the common access route.

No requirement for a protected route, but doors must be close fitting solid timber or panelled of substantial construction. Doors of flimsy construction or hollow infill-type doors (commonly known as 'eggbox') or with non fire-resisting glazing will not be accepted.

Keyless exit

#### Egress windows

Escape must be to a place of ultimate safety.

Must be 0.33m<sup>2</sup> of unobstructed openable space.

Minimum dimensions are 450mm wide and 450mm high.

Note: to reach 0.33m<sup>2</sup> when one dimension is 450mm, the other will be 750mm.

No greater than 1100mm off the floor.

Cannot be used in second floor flats or above 4.5 metres.

Ground area must be level and free from obstructions.

All rooms must have no locks on doors.

All windows must have no key locks.

All tenants must be able-bodied.

#### Amenities - for up to 5 Tenants

One each of the following

BATHROOM: WC, bath or shower, wash hand basin

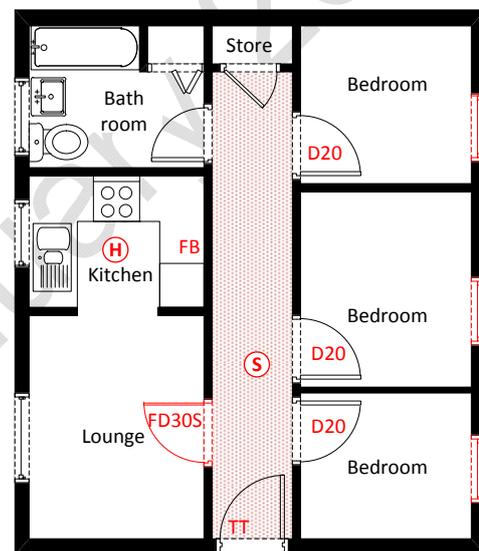
KITCHEN: fridge, freezer, four ring hob, oven, grill, sink

1m of work top per tenant, 1 unit storage per tenant (500mm wide base unit or 1000mm wide wall)

HEATING

Fixed form of heating, in all rooms throughout property.

**Note: once you have 5 tenants the WC should be in a separate compartment. For more than 5 tenants, a second WC and WHB is required (however the WC can be contained within a second bathroom). For both kitchens and bathrooms, once you have 6 or more persons the amenities start to double**



#### KEY

(S) Smoke detector

(H) Heat detector

FD30S 30 minute fire door with intumescent strip, smoke seal & self-closer

D20 Door made of a solid construction

TT Thumb-turn lock, no key to inside

FB Fire Blanket

NOTE: These examples are based on the Essex Amenities Standards, The LACoRS Fire Safety Guidance, The Housing Health and Safety Rating System and the University of Essex Accreditation and Standards. The drawings are purely examples to give some idea as to what could be expected in various Student HMOs. Therefore the drawings are not exhaustive. These examples are based on a variety of flats, 2 and 3 storey properties. If the property is more than 3 stories or outside these basic examples, then differing levels of fire safety will be required.

For further information and guidance call 01206 282581 or email [housing.private@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:housing.private@colchester.gov.uk)

## Example 2: SHARED VICTORIAN HOUSE - 2 storey

HMOs described as Shared houses are where the whole property has been rented out by an identifiable group of sharers such as students (not 1<sup>st</sup> Year Students), work colleagues or friends as joint tenants. Each occupant normally has their own bedroom that does not have a lockable door. They share the kitchen, dining facilities, bathroom, WC, lounge and all other parts of the house. All tenants will have exclusive legal possession and control of all parts of the house, including all the bedrooms.

There is normally a significant degree of social interaction between the occupants and they will, in the main, have rented out the house as one group. There is a single joint tenancy agreement with vicarious responsibility and therefore the landlord does not decide who lets a room should someone leave. In summary, the group will possess many of the characteristics of a single family household, although the property is still an HMO as the occupants are not all related.

### Fire safety

Grade D LD3+ Alarm System with additional detection to kitchen and lounge

Interlinked heat detector in kitchen area.

Interlinked smoke detector in the hallway and landing.

Interlinked smoke detector in lounge.

Fire blanket in kitchen located 1.5 metre off ground between cooker and exit.

For Student Accreditation 30 minute fire door to kitchen or to open plan rooms with a kitchen.

Property must have a route that leads to a place of ultimate safety.

Doors leading onto the escape route must be close fitting solid timber or panelled of substantial construction. A protected loft hatch.

Doors of flimsy construction or hollow infill-type doors (commonly known as 'eggbox') or with non fire-resisting glazing will not be accepted.

Any internal windows in the escape route, including above door fanlights, must be either Georgian Wired safety glass or covered with 12.5mm plaster board to both sides.

Where there is no borrowed light emergency lighting may be required.

Keyless exit

### Egress windows

Escape must be to a place of ultimate safety.

Must be 0.33m<sup>2</sup> of unobstructed openable space.

Minimum dimensions are 450mm wide and 450mm high.

Note: to reach 0.33m<sup>2</sup> when one dimension is 450mm, the other will be 750mm.

No greater than 1100mm off the floor.

Cannot be used in second floor flats or above 4.5 metres.

Ground area must be level and free from obstructions.

All rooms must have no locks on doors.

All windows must have no key locks.

All tenants must be able-bodied.

### Amenities - for up to 5 Tenants

One each of the following

BATHROOM: WC, bath or shower, wash hand basin

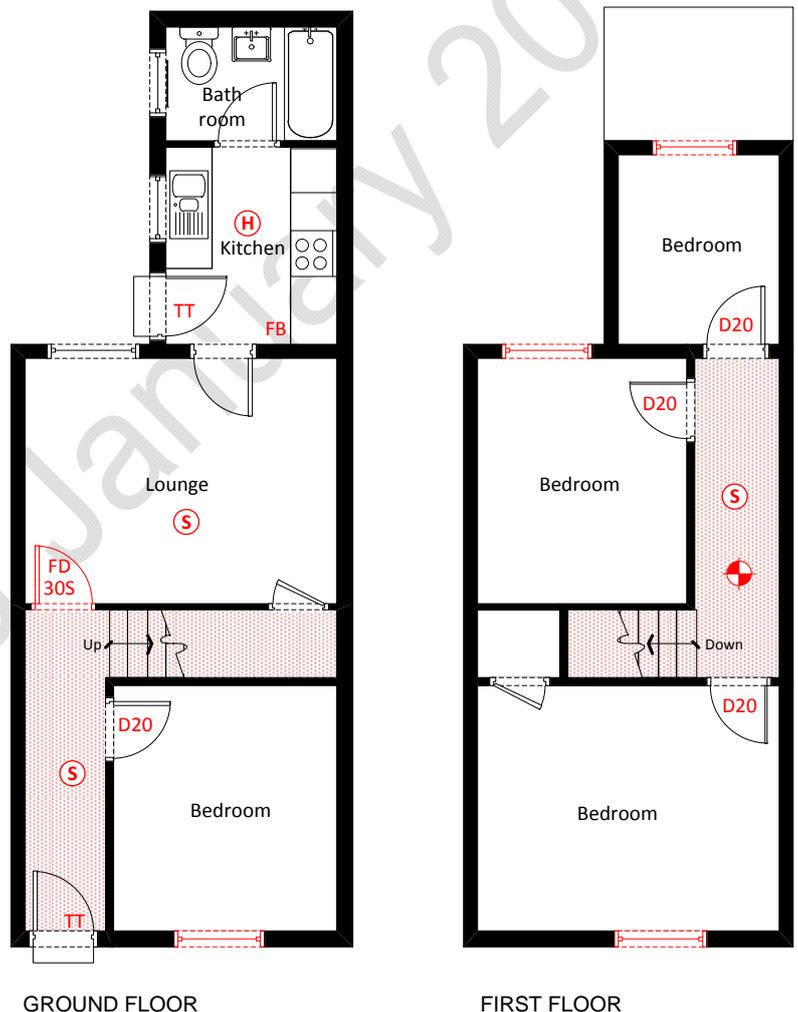
KITCHEN: fridge, freezer, four ring hob, oven, grill, sink

1m of work top per tenant, 1 unit storage per tenant (500mm wide base unit or 1000mm wide wall)

HEATING

Fixed form of heating, in all rooms throughout property.

**Note: once you have 5 tenants the WC should be in a separate compartment. For more than 5 tenants, a second WC and WHB is required (however the WC can be contained within a second bathroom). For both kitchens and bathrooms, once you have 6 or more persons the amenities start to double**



### KEY

(S) Smoke detector

(H) Heat detector

D20 Door made of a solid construction

FD30S 30 minute fire door with intumescent strip, smoke seal & self-closer

TT Thumb-turn lock, no key to inside

(E) Emergency lighting

FB Fire Blanket

NOTE: These examples are based on the Essex Amenities Standards, The LACoRS Fire Safety Guidance, The Housing Health and Safety Rating System and the University of Essex Accreditation and Standards. The drawings are purely examples to give some idea as to what could be expected in various Student HMOs. Therefore the drawings are not exhaustive. These examples are based on a variety of flats, 2 and 3 storey properties. If the property is more than 3 stories or outside these basic examples, then differing levels of fire safety will be required.

For further information and guidance, call 01206 282581 or email housing.private@colchester.gov.uk

## Example 3: BED-SIT VICTORIAN HOUSE - 2 storey

Bedsit type HMOs are properties converted into a number of separate non-self-contained lettings. Typically there will be individual cooking facilities within each bedsit, although there may be cooking facilities shared within a single kitchen. Toilets and washing facilities will mostly be shared. Some Bedsits have no communal living or dining rooms.

Bedsit HMOs will normally be let to separate individuals who initially have no relationship with each other and will live independently, with little or no communal living between tenants. Each letting will have its own individual tenancy agreement and there will usually be a lock on each individual letting door.

### Fire safety

Grade D LD2 Alarm System

Interlinked heat detector in kitchen area.

Interlinked smoke detectors in the hallway and landing and any basement or cellar.

Interlinked smoke detectors in lounge and all bedrooms.

Property MUST have a 30 minute minimum protected route, therefore, walls and floors must be of sound construction.

Fire doors 30 minutes protection on all exits on to the protected route. Doors must have the correct furniture (rising butt hinges are not acceptable) and able to withstand 800 degrees Celsius. Door gaps need to be maximum 3mm on the sides and top with 6mm gap at the base.

Fire blanket in kitchen located 1.5 metre off ground between cooker and exit.

Any internal windows in the escape route, including above door fanlights, must be either Georgian Wired safety glass or covered with 12.5mm plaster board to both sides.

A protected loft hatch

Where there is no borrowed light emergency lighting may be required.

Keyless exit

### Amenities - for up to 5 Tenants

One each of the following

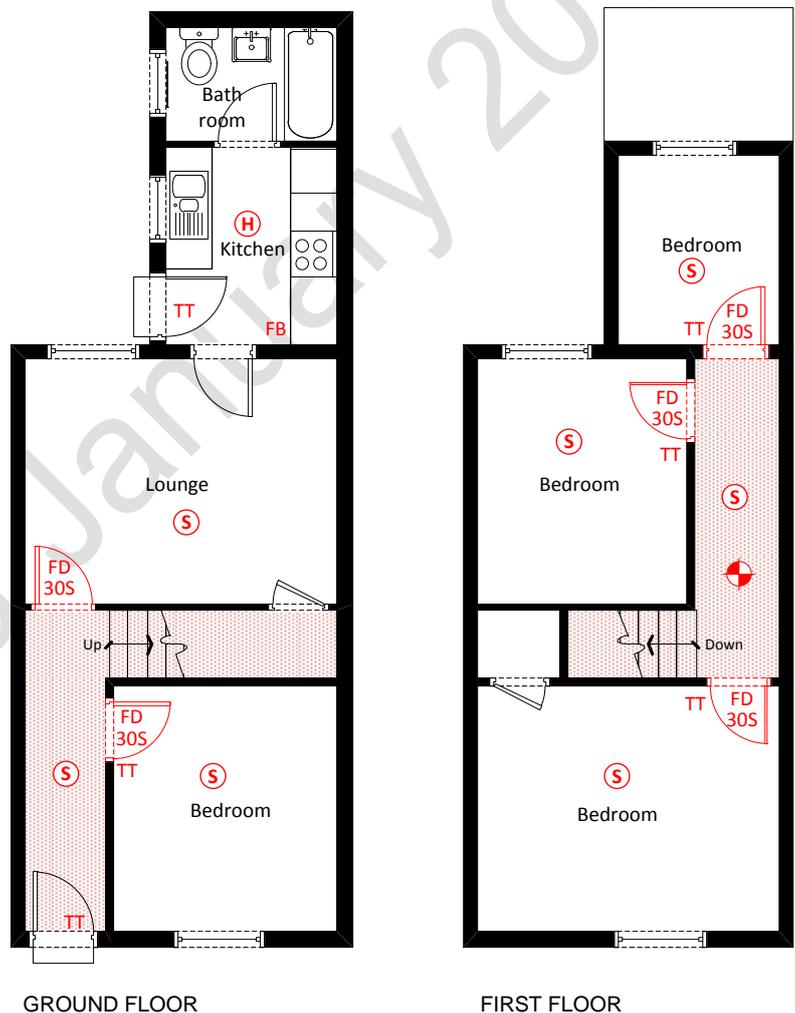
BATHROOM: WC, bath or shower, wash hand basin  
KITCHEN: fridge, freezer, four ring hob, oven, grill, sink

1m of work top per tenant, 1 unit storage per tenant (500mm wide base unit or 1000mm wide wall)

### HEATING

Fixed form of heating, in all rooms throughout property.

**Note: once you have 5 tenants the WC should be in a separate compartment. For more than 5 tenants, a second WC and WHB is required (however the WC can be contained within a second bathroom). For both kitchens and bathrooms, once you have 6 or more persons the amenities start to double**



### KEY

- (S) Smoke detector
- (H) Heat detector
- FD 30S 30 minute fire door with intumescent strip, smoke seal & self-closer
- TT Thumb-turn lock, no key to inside
- ⊕ Emergency lighting
- FB Fire Blanket

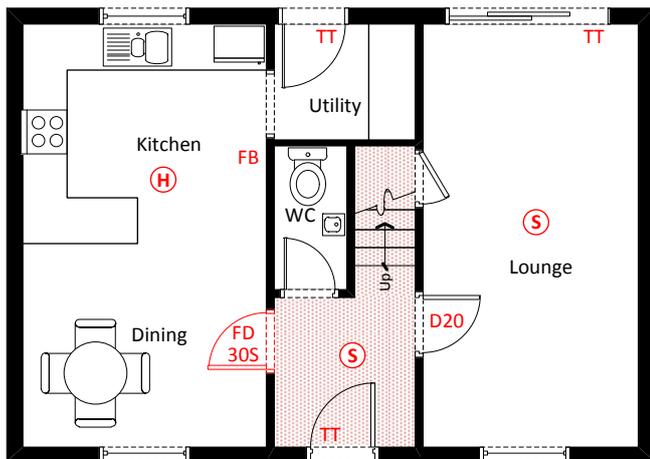
NOTE: These examples are based on the Essex Amenities Standards, The LACoRS Fire Safety Guidance, The Housing Health and Safety Rating System and the University of Essex Accreditation and Standards. The drawings are purely examples to give some idea as to what could be expected in various Student HMOs. Therefore the drawings are not exhaustive. These examples are based on a variety of flats, 2 and 3 storey properties. If the property is more than 3 stories or outside these basic examples, then differing levels of fire safety will be required.

For further information and guidance call 01206 282581 or email housing.private@colchester.gov.uk

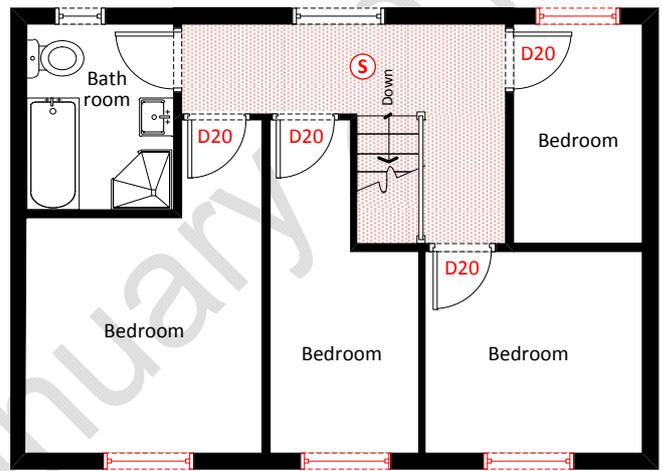
## Example 4: SHARED MODERN HOUSE - 2 storey

HMOs described as Shared houses are where the whole property has been rented out by an identifiable group of sharers such as students (not 1<sup>st</sup> Year Students), work colleagues or friends as joint tenants. Each occupant normally has their own bedroom that does not have a lockable door. They share the kitchen, dining facilities, bathroom, WC, lounge and all other parts of the house. All tenants will have exclusive legal possession and control of all parts of the house, including all the bedrooms.

There is normally a significant degree of social interaction between the occupants and they will, in the main, have rented out the house as one group. There is a single joint tenancy agreement with vicarious responsibility and therefore the landlord does not decide who lets a room should someone leave. In summary, the group will possess many of the characteristics of a single family household, although the property is still an HMO as the occupants are not all related.



GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR

### Fire safety

Grade D LD3+ Alarm System with additional detection to kitchen and lounge  
Interlinked heat detector in kitchen area.

Interlinked smoke detector in the hallway and landing.

Interlinked smoke detector in lounge.

Fire blanket in kitchen located 1.5 metre off ground between cooker and exit.

For Student Accreditation 30 minute fire door to kitchen or to open plan rooms with a kitchen.

Property must have a route that leads to a place of ultimate safety.

Doors leading onto the escape route must be close fitted solid timber or panelled of substantial construction.

Doors of flimsy construction or hollow infill-type doors (commonly known as 'eggbox') or with non fire-resisting glazing will not be accepted.

Any internal windows in the escape route, including above door fanlights, must be either Georgian

Wired safety glass or covered with 12.5mm plaster board to both sides.

Where there is no borrowed light emergency lighting may be required.

A protected loft hatch

Keyless exit

### Egress windows

Escape must be to a place of ultimate safety.

Must be 0.33m<sup>2</sup> of unobstructed openable space.

Minimum dimensions are 450mm wide and 450mm high.

Note: to reach 0.33m<sup>2</sup> when one dimension is 450mm, the other will be 750mm.

No greater than 1100mm off the floor.

Cannot be used in second floor flats or above 4.5 metres.

Ground area must be level and free from obstructions.

All rooms must have no locks on doors.

All windows must have no key locks.

All tenants must be able-bodied.

### Amenities - for up to 5 Tenants

One each of the following  
BATHROOM: WC, bath or shower, wash hand basin

KITCHEN: fridge, freezer, four ring hob, oven, grill, sink

1m of work top per tenant, 1 unit storage per tenant (500mm wide base unit or 1000mm wide wall)

HEATING

Fixed form of heating, in all rooms throughout property.

**Note: once you have 5 tenants the WC should be in a separate compartment. For more than 5 tenants, a second WC and WHB is required (however the WC can be contained within a second bathroom). For both kitchens and bathrooms, once you have 6 or more persons the amenities start to double**

### KEY

(S) Smoke detector

(H) Heat detector

D20 Door made of a solid construction

FD30S 30 minute fire door with intumescent strip, smoke seal & self-closer

TT Thumb-turn lock, no key to inside

FB Fire Blanket

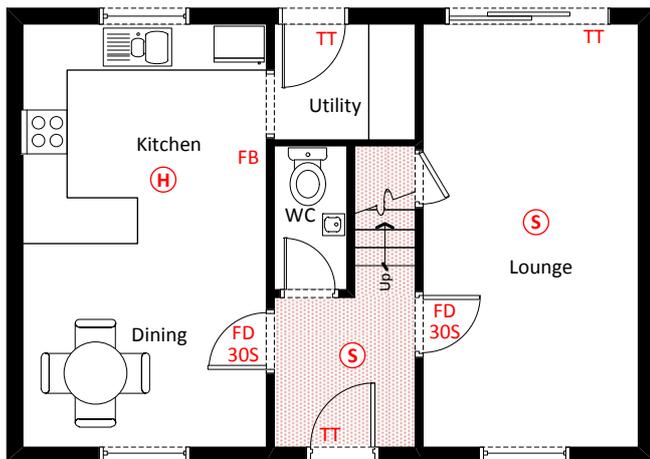
NOTE: These examples are based on the Essex Amenities Standards, The LACoRS Fire Safety Guidance, The Housing Health and Safety Rating System and the University of Essex Accreditation and Standards. The drawings are purely examples to give some idea as to what could be expected in various Student HMOs. Therefore the drawings are not exhaustive. These examples are based on a variety of flats, 2 and 3 storey properties. If the property is more than 3 stories or outside these basic examples, then differing levels of fire safety will be required.

For further information and guidance, call 01206 282581 or email housing.private@colchester.gov.uk

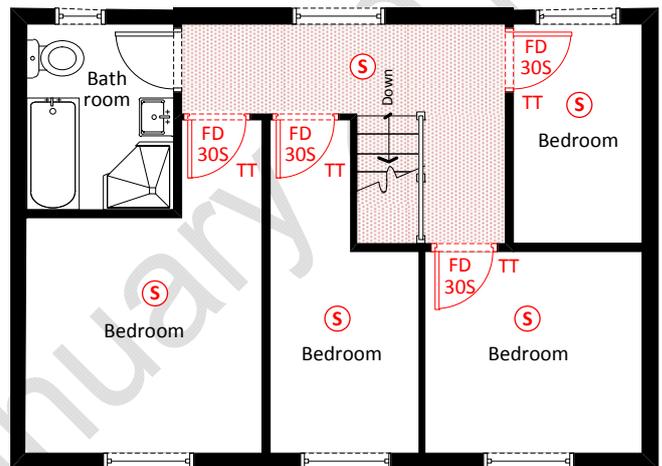
## Example 5: BED-SIT MODERN HOUSE - 2 storey

Bedsit type HMOs are properties converted into a number of separate non-self-contained lettings. Typically there will be individual cooking facilities within each bedsit, although there may be cooking facilities shared within a single kitchen. Toilets and washing facilities will mostly be shared. Some Bedsits have no communal living or dining rooms.

Bedsit HMOs will normally be let to separate individuals who initially have no relationship with each other and will live independently, with little or no communal living between tenants. Each letting will have its own individual tenancy agreement and there will usually be a lock on each individual letting door.



GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR

### Fire safety

Grade D LD2 Alarm System

Interlinked heat detector in kitchen area.

Interlinked smoke detectors in the hallway and landing.

Interlinked smoke detectors in lounge and all bedrooms.

Property MUST have a 30 minute minimum protected route, therefore, walls and floors must be of sound construction.

Fire doors 30 minutes protection on all exits on to the protected route. Doors must have the correct furniture (rising butt hinges are not acceptable) and able to withstand 800 degrees Celsius. Door gaps need to be maximum 3mm on the sides and top with 6mm gap at the base.

Any internal windows in the escape route, including above door fanlights, must be either Georgian Wired safety glass or covered with 12.5mm plaster board to both sides. Where there is no borrowed light emergency lighting May be required.

Keyless exit

A protected loft hatch

### KEY

(S) Smoke detector

(H) Heat detector

FD30S 30 minute fire door with intumescent strip, smoke seal & self-closer

TT Thumb-turn lock, no key to inside

FB Fire Blanket

### Amenities - for up to 5 Tenants

One each of the following

BATHROOM: WC, bath or shower, wash hand basin

KITCHEN: fridge, freezer, four ring hob, oven, grill, sink

1m of work top per tenant, 1 unit storage per tenant (500mm wide base unit or 1000mm wide wall)

HEATING

Fixed form of heating, in all rooms throughout property.

**Note: once you have 5 tenants the WC should be in a separate compartment. For more than 5 tenants, a second WC and WHB is required (however the WC can be contained within a second bathroom). For both kitchens and bathrooms, once you have 6 or more persons the amenities start to double**

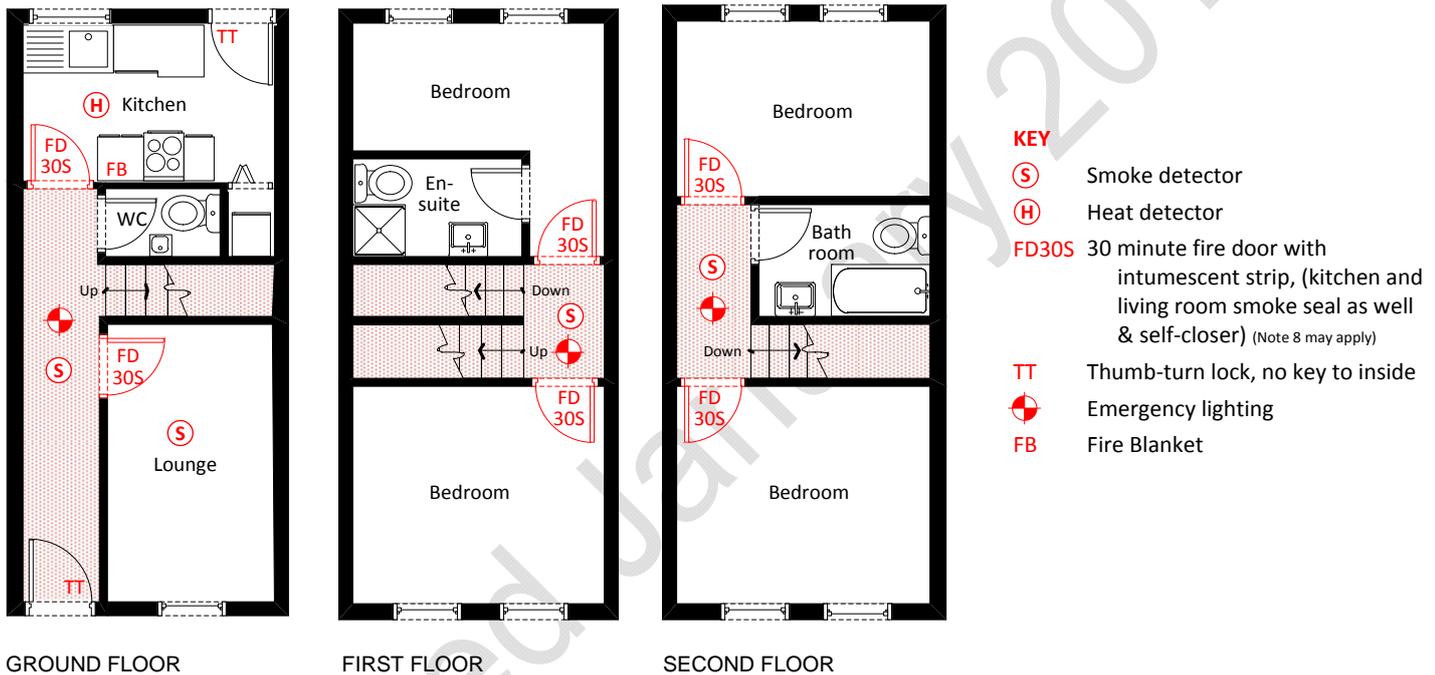
NOTE: These examples are based on the Essex Amenities Standards, The LACoRS Fire Safety Guidance, The Housing Health and Safety Rating System and the University of Essex Accreditation and Standards. The drawings are purely examples to give some idea as to what could be expected in various Student HMOs. Therefore the drawings are not exhaustive. These examples are based on a variety of flats, 2 and 3 storey properties. If the property is more than 3 stories or outside these basic examples, then differing levels of fire safety will be required.

For further information and guidance, call 01206 282581 or email housing.private@colchester.gov.uk

## Example 6: SHARED HOUSE - 3 storey

HMOs described as Shared houses are where the whole property has been rented out by an identifiable group of sharers such as students (not 1<sup>st</sup> Year Students), work colleagues or friends as joint tenants. Each occupant normally has their own bedroom that does not have a lockable door. They share the kitchen, dining facilities, bathroom, WC, lounge and all other parts of the house. All tenants will have exclusive legal possession and control of all parts of the house, including all the bedrooms.

There is normally a significant degree of social interaction between the occupants and they will, in the main, have rented out the house as one group. There is a single joint tenancy agreement with vicarious responsibility and therefore the landlord does not decide who lets a room should someone leave. In summary, the group will possess many of the characteristics of a single family household, although the property is still an HMO as the occupants are not all related.



### Fire safety

- Grade D LD3+ Alarm System with additional detection to kitchen and lounge
- Interlinked heat detector in kitchen area.
- Interlinked smoke detector in the hallway and landing.
- Interlinked smoke detector in lounge.
- Fire blanket in kitchen located 1.5 metre off ground between cooker and exit.
- Property MUST have a 30 minute minimum protected route, therefore, walls and floors must be of sound construction.
- Fire doors 30 minutes protection on all exits on to the protected route. Doors must have the correct furniture (rising butt hinges are not acceptable) and able to withstand 800 degrees Celsius. Door gaps need to be maximum 3mm on the sides and top with 6mm gap at the base.
- Any internal windows in the escape route, including above door fanlights, must be either Georgian Wired safety glass or covered with 12.5mm plaster board to both sides. Where there is no borrowed light emergency lighting will be required.
- Note 8 under LACoRS may apply to the protected route with the agreement of the inspecting Officer and risk assessment, each property assessed on its own merits..
- Keyless exit
- A protected loft hatch

### Amenities - for up to 5 Tenants

- One each of the following
- BATHROOM: WC, bath or shower, wash hand basin
- KITCHEN: fridge, freezer, four ring hob, oven, grill, sink
- 1m of work top per tenant, 1 unit storage per tenant (500mm wide base unit or 1000mm wide wall)
- HEATING
- Fixed form of heating, in all rooms throughout property.

**Note: once you have 5 tenants the WC should be in a separate compartment. For more than 5 tenants, a second WC and WHB is required (however the WC can be contained within a second bathroom). For both kitchens and bathrooms, once you have 6 or more persons the amenities start to double**

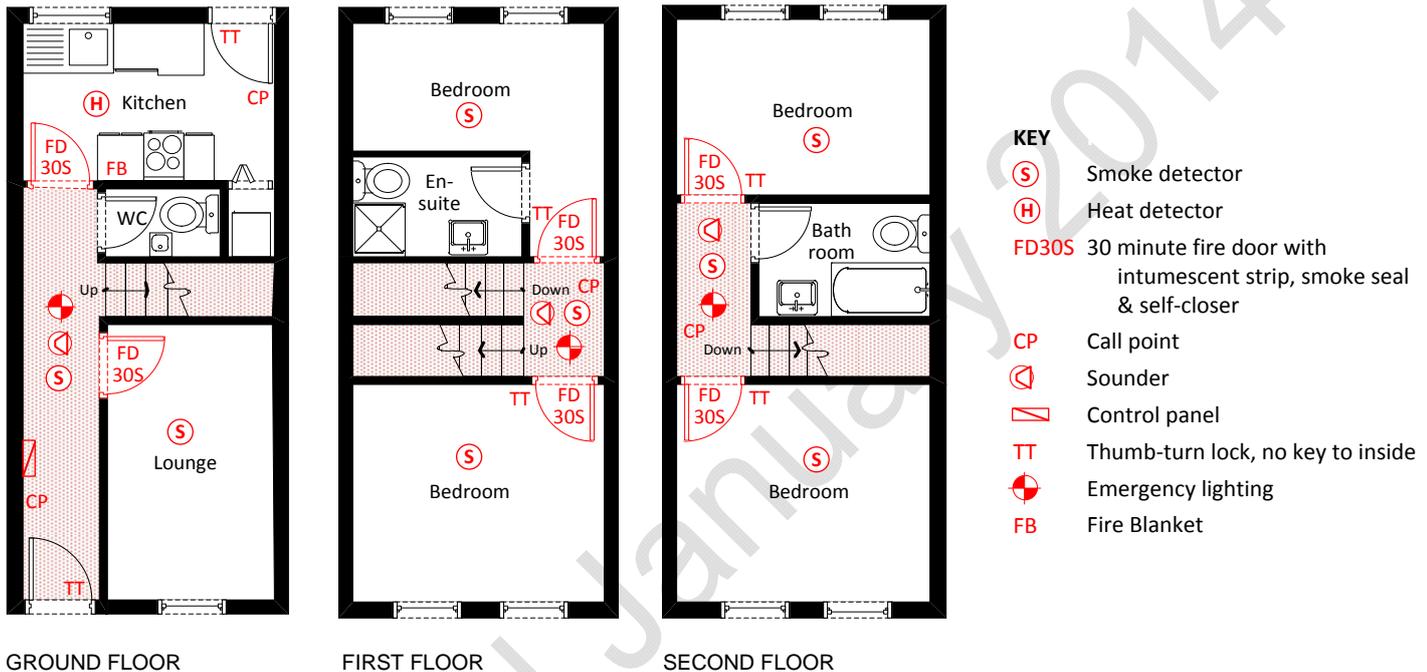
NOTE: These examples are based on the Essex Amenities Standards, The LACoRS Fire Safety Guidance, The Housing Health and Safety Rating System and the University of Essex Accreditation and Standards. The drawings are purely examples to give some idea as to what could be expected in various Student HMOs. Therefore the drawings are not exhaustive. These examples are based on a variety of flats, 2 and 3 storey properties. If the property is more than 3 stories or outside these basic examples, then differing levels of fire safety will be required.

For further information and guidance, call 01206 282581 or email [housing.private@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:housing.private@colchester.gov.uk)

## Example 7: BED-SIT HOUSE - 3 storey

Bedsit type HMOs are properties converted into a number of separate non-self-contained lettings. Typically there will be individual cooking facilities within each bedsit, although there may be cooking facilities shared within a single kitchen. Toilets and washing facilities will mostly be shared. Some Bedsits have no communal living or dining rooms.

Bedsit HMOs will normally be let to separate individuals who initially have no relationship with each other and will live independently, with little or no communal living between tenants. Each letting will have its own individual tenancy agreement and there will usually be a lock on each individual letting door.



### Fire safety

#### Grade A LD2 Alarm System

Grade A: a fire detection and alarm system that is designed and installed in accordance with the recommendations of BS 5839: part 1 (2002), except clauses relating to alarm audibility, alarm warnings for the hearing-impaired, standby supplies, manual call points and radio-linked systems, which are replaced by part 6. This comprises a system of electrically operated smoke and/or heat detectors which are linked to a control panel. The control panel must conform to current BS 5839: part 4 (or equivalent). In general the system must incorporate manual call points which should be located next to final exits, and, in larger multi-storeys properties, on each landing. The alarm signal must achieve sound levels of not less than 65dB (A) in all accessible parts of the building and not less than 75dB (A) at all bed-heads when all doors are shut, to arouse sleeping persons.

LD2 coverage: a system incorporating detectors in all circulation spaces that form part of the escape routes from the dwelling and in all rooms or areas that present a high fire risk to occupants i.e. risk rooms.

Control Panel located by the front door. Linked with call points on all floors and exit points. This is to be interlinked with all detectors and sounders

Interlinked heat detectors in kitchen areas.

Interlinked smoke detectors in all hallways and landings.

Interlinked smoke detectors in lounge and all bedrooms.

### Property MUST have a 30 minute minimum protected route, therefore, walls and floors must be of sound construction.

Fire doors 30 minutes protection on all exits on to the protected route. Doors must have the correct furniture (rising butt hinges are not acceptable) and able to withstand 800 degrees Celsius. Door gaps need to be maximum 3mm on the sides and top with 6mm gap at the base. Fire blanket in kitchen located 1.5 metre off ground between cooker and exit.

Any internal windows in the escape route, including above door fanlights, must be either Georgian Wired safety glass or covered with 12.5mm plaster board to both sides.

Where there is no borrowed light emergency lighting will be required. Keyless exit

A protected loft hatch

### Amenities - for up to 5 Tenants

One each of the following

BATHROOM: WC, bath or shower, wash hand basin

KITCHEN: fridge, freezer, four ring hob, oven, grill, sink  
1m of work top per tenant, 1 unit storage per tenant (500mm wide base unit or 1000mm wide wall)

### HEATING

Fixed form of heating, in all rooms throughout property.

**Note: once you have 5 tenants the WC should be in a separate compartment. For more than 5 tenants, a second WC and WHB is required (however the WC can be contained within a second bathroom). For both kitchens and bathrooms, once you have 6 or more persons the amenities start to double**

NOTE: These examples are based on the Essex Amenities Standards, The LACoRS Fire Safety Guidance, The Housing Health and Safety Rating System and the University of Essex Accreditation and Standards. The drawings are purely examples to give some idea as to what could be expected in various Student HMOs. Therefore the drawings are not exhaustive. These examples are based on a variety of flats, 2 and 3 storey properties. If the property is more than 3 stories or outside these basic examples, then differing levels of fire safety will be required.

For further information and guidance, call 01206 282581 or email housing.private@colchester.gov.uk

## Appendix 2 Legislation

[back](#)

### Legislation

Landlords must comply with all Legislation relating to property management and pay particular attention to the Legislation set out below:

- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Housing Act 1996
- Housing Act 2004
- Protection from Eviction Act 1977
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988
- Trades Description Act 1967
- Misrepresentation Act 1967
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Building Regulations (2006) Part P(Electrical Safety in Dwellings)
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Equality Act 2010

**N.B.** This is not an exclusive list; legislation may change and it is the landlord's responsibility to keep themselves abreast of any changes.