

Blueprint for a #HomeAtUniversity

Introduction: Building the Foundations

The Big Idea

What does it really mean to feel at home at university?

Not just having a room – but having stability, security, and somewhere you belong.

The big idea behind the Blueprint is simple:



Every student should have a safe and stable #HomeAtUniversity – so they can succeed.

Why This Matters

University systems are frequently built upon an assumption that students come from a safe and stable home that they will return to between semesters.

For care-experienced and estranged students, that safety net often doesn't exist.

That can mean:



Housing insecurity year round



Much greater financial pressure



The stigma of feeling different and not belonging at university



Statistically significant risk of dropping out

Nationally, care-experienced students and estranged students drop out in their first year at nearly twice the rate of other students. According to HEPI research, care experienced and estranged students are 50% more likely to say they have considered withdrawing from study than their peers.



Without a safe and stable home, success at university becomes significantly harder.

About the Unite Foundation

Since 2012, the Unite Foundation has been changing this by:



Providing free, 3-year accommodation scholarships for almost 1,000 care-experienced and estranged students so far



Supporting a community of care experienced and estranged students: All of Us



Commissioning research to inform universities, policy makers and national governments on how accommodation measures can transform academic progression and success for these marginalised students.



At the heart of our work is the knowledge that when these students have a safe and stable home, they can thrive.

Introducing the Blueprint

The Blueprint for a #HomeAtUniversity takes what works and turns it into a practical framework for universities.

It's built around eight key "rooms", each representing a part of a supportive student experience:



Guaranteed access to year-round accommodation



Personal housing plans



Record keeping and using data



Removing the rent guarantor barrier



Strong accommodation arrival support



Student belonging through community



Compassionate Communications within accommodation systems



Financial stability through accommodation scholarships



Together, these rooms answer one question: What does it take for students to truly feel at home?



Continued

What This Is (And Isn't)

The Blueprint isn't a checklist.

It's a way of:

 Spotting gaps and opportunities within your current services

 Identifying what good looks like for care experienced and estranged students

 Taking practical steps to implement improvements



You don't need to have everything in place; every step forward makes a difference.

What This Means For SU Officers

You are key to making this real. As an SU officer, you can:

 Ask where the system isn't working

 Amplify student experiences

 Identify gaps between policy and practice

 Advocate for change within your institution

You won't be doing it alone. The Unite Foundation provides tools to support you, including:

 A set of helpful 'Explainers'

 An Audit Toolkit

 An Action Planner

 A Handover Tool to sustain progress

Key Takeaway

This isn't just about accommodation. It's about:

Fairness

Belonging

And whether all students have the chance to succeed



A home at university shouldn't be the exception, it should be the expectation.



Continued

Be Part of the Bigger Picture

This work doesn't stop at one university. The Unite Foundation wants to hear from you:

✔ What's working well? ⚠ Where are the pinch points?

★ What practice goes beyond the Blueprint?



By sharing your journey, you help shape the future of support across the sector.



Next: Room 1

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