

Where Next?

Turning Ideas into Action

Blueprint for a #HomeAtUniversity

The Big Idea

You've explored all eight rooms of the Blueprint.

You've seen the challenges that care-experienced and estranged students can face, the impact that housing has on student success, and the practical ways universities are responding.

Now comes the most important question: What happens next?

Because the Blueprint wasn't designed to be something you simply learn about. It was designed to help you create change.

Why This Matters

A safe and stable #HomeAtUniversity isn't just about accommodation.

It's about whether students can:

🎓 Stay and succeed in higher education

🧠 Focus on their studies and wellbeing

👉 Feel a sense of belonging

🏠 Navigate university without housing insecurity

And while the Blueprint is focused on care-experienced and estranged students, many of the approaches you've explored benefit a much wider group of students too.

Better accommodation systems. Earlier support. Fewer barriers. Clearer information. Stronger transitions.



When universities build a better home for students with the least support, they often improve the experience for everyone.



Continued

What You've Explored:

In The Content Of This Suite, You've Visited Eight Rooms

Room 1: Guaranteed Year-Round Accommodation

Ensuring students have somewhere safe and stable to live throughout the year.

Room 2: Personal Housing Plans

Helping students plan and avoid housing crises.

Room 3: Record Keeping

Using data and insight to understand need and improve support.

Room 4: Removing the Rent Guarantor Barrier

Ensuring students aren't locked out of housing because of their circumstances.

Room 5: Accommodation Measures Supporting Arrival

Enabling students to settle in and feel at home from day one.

Room 6: Student Belonging through Community

Fostering connections in accommodation and on campus that support retention.

Room 7: Compassionate Accommodation Communication

Creating inclusive and student-centred communications.

Room 8: Accommodation Scholarships

Reducing financial pressure through free or subsidised housing.



Each room addresses a different challenge and potential improvements. Together, they create the conditions for students to stay, belong, and succeed.



Continued

What Good Looks Like

Building a #HomeAtUniversity isn't about implementing everything at once. It's about making progress.

That might mean:

 Improving an existing accommodation offer

 Raising awareness of services that are already available

 Removing a specific barrier  Gathering better data

 Building stronger partnerships across the university

 Embedding support into policy and practice



The key shift: From “Do we already do this?” to “What could we do better?”

Your Next Step: Start with the Blueprint Audit Workbook

Now that you've read through each room, the best place to begin is the Blueprint Audit Workbook.

The Audit Workbook helps you:

 Assess your institution against all eight rooms

 Identify areas of strength

 Spot gaps and opportunities for positive action

 Understand where your university currently sits



Before deciding what to change, it's important to understand where you are now. Think of the Audit Workbook as your baseline.



Continued

Then Build Your Blueprint Action Plan

Once you've completed your Audit Workbook, it's time to decide what happens next.

The Blueprint Action Planner helps you:

-  Prioritise areas for improvement
-  Plan conversations with decision-makers
-  Set realistic goals and actions
-  Coordinate activity across your Officer team



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

You Don't Have to Do This Alone

Not every institution will have:

- A visible care-experienced and estranged students' network
- Strong local data
- Existing campaigns
- Dedicated staff capacity

That's okay.

The Blueprint brings together:

- Student lived experience
- Research and evidence
- Sector-wide practice
- Case studies from across the UK

The goal isn't to wait until problems become visible. It's to use the best available evidence to build a better system.



Use local insight where it exists. Use national evidence and Blueprint resources where it doesn't.

Building Change That Lasts

Meaningful change often takes longer than a single Officer term. That's why the Blueprint includes a Handover Document to help Officers:

-  Track progress
-  Share key contacts
-  Record ongoing work
-  Ensure projects continue year after year



The aim isn't just to start change. It's to make sure that change lasts.

Share What's Working

The Blueprint isn't a finished project. It will be a dynamic movement across Students' Unions and universities.

The Unite Foundation wants to hear:

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

💡 What innovative approaches are emerging?

🚀 What practice goes beyond the Blueprint itself?

At the end of the academic year, you'll have the opportunity to complete an **SU Annual Return**, helping to share learning from across the sector. Your experiences can help shape future resources, influence sector conversations, and inspire other institutions.

We can also host free webinars for you to come together with your peers in other SU and share triumphs and challenges. Get in touch with us on any aspect of the Blueprint.

What This Means for SU Officers

You don't need to solve every issue in one year. You don't need to be an accommodation expert. And you don't need lived experience to make a difference.

What you can do is:

👂 Listen 📖 Learn 🔍 Identify gaps 📣 Raise issues 🤝 Build partnerships

🏛️ Influence decisions 🌱 Leave things better than you found them

That's how lasting change happens.

Key Takeaway

The goal of the Blueprint isn't simply to improve accommodation. It's to create the conditions for care-experienced and estranged students to thrive.

A safe and stable #HomeAtUniversity supports:

Access Retention Success Wellbeing Belonging

And ultimately, a university experience where students are defined by their potential, not limited by their circumstances.



Continued

What Next?

1. Complete the Blueprint Audit Workbook

Understand where your institution currently sits against the eight rooms.

2. Build your Blueprint Action Plan

Identify your priorities and plan your approach.

3. Start the conversation

Work with students, university staff, and decision-makers to drive change.

4. Capture and share your progress

Use the Handover Document and SU Annual Return to keep momentum going and help shape the future of the Blueprint.

Building a #HomeAtUniversity doesn't happen all at once. It happens one room, one conversation, and one improvement at a time.