

Student Accommodation

Background

Certain student accommodation managed and controlled by higher educational establishments is exempt from the HMO licensing regime if the educational establishment appears on the specified list set out in the schedule to The Houses in Multiple Occupation (Specified Educational Establishments) (England) Regulations 2018. However, other student accommodation managed or controlled by private companies (and not on the specified list) is not exempt from licensing.

Therefore student accommodation managed or controlled by a party that is not an exempted higher educational establishment will be subject to HMO licensing.

Prior to making a designation for the additional licensing, the Council considered responses made by the non-exempted organisations representing student accommodation providers during the consultation stage. Following this consultation, the council decided to offer a discounted fee to providers of certain student accommodation providing they are members of the ANUK/Unipol national codes. The reasoning for this is that these buildings should provide accommodation that is modern, well built and well managed.

Even so, the council will need to ensure that these buildings meet Camden's HMO standards and licensing conditions. The National Codes Administrator (NCA) have only carried out verification visits to about a third of Camden developments covered by national codes. The advantage of the Camden scheme is that officers will visit all properties before licensing.

Fees and discounts

At the time of writing, there is a set fee of £545 per licence plus a unit fee of £54.50 within the licenced premises.

A discounted fee of £6 per unit rather than £54.50 per unit will apply where:

- The provider is accredited under one of the ANUK/Unipol national codes of standards for large accommodation, and
- The provider is able to show proof of Building Regulation approval contemporaneous with the build or conversion, which must be after the 1991 Building Regulations, and
- Detailed architects drawings of the building are provided at the time of application. These must accurately show the room dimensions. Also the location of elements of an automatic fire detection system, including detectors, alarms, sounders, call points, control panels, Locations of emergency lighting and fire-fighting equipment should also be indicated, and
- An up to date fire risk assessment is provided.

In addition, a further discount of £95 per licence application will apply where the provider is the licence holder and is accredited under one of the ANUK/Unipol national codes of standards for large student accommodation.

What unit of accommodation requires a licence?

Purpose built or recent conversions (meeting the 1991 Building Regulation Standard or after

If the building contains a mixture of the cluster flats and self-contained studios, each cluster flat within the building with three or more occupants will require a separate licence. The studios themselves will not require a licence. It is each individual flat which falls into the definition of a licensable unit, not the whole building.

In this case, the fee will be £545 for each cluster flat and £6 per unit within the flat.

Older conversions

If the building has been converted entirely into self-contained units and does not meet the 1991 Building regulations (or after) (known as a section 257 HMO), a licence application will be required to cover the common parts of the property. The fee for the common parts licence will be £545 for the whole building.

However,

- Where the building contains cluster flats, each cluster flat within the building with three or more occupants will require a separate licence as each flat is licensable in its own right.

In this case, the total fees payable would be £545 for the licence for the whole building, plus £545 for each cluster flat plus £54.50 per bedroom within the flat.

- Where the building contains studios or other flats not occupied by three or more persons there is no requirement for separate licences for those units of accommodation. However a fee of £54.50 per unit within the property will be payable plus the £545 for the licence for the whole building.

If the building is comprised of a mixture of cluster flats and studios or other unself-contained accommodation, the studios and unself-contained accommodation will be included on the common parts licence for the whole building and there will be a charge of £54.50 per unit of accommodation. The cluster flats with three or more occupiers will require a separate licence.

A further discount of £95 per licence application will apply where the provider is the licence holder and is accredited under one of the ANUK/Unipol national codes of standards for large accommodation.

Application

Where there are multiple licences, for example where there are cluster flats, it may be possible for a single online application to be made for each building which would then need to be replicated by Council staff. However the correct fee (for all the licensable flats within the building) must be paid. Please contact the HMO licensing team for further details on 0207 974 5969.

Failure to comply

The Council will follow the standard procedures for inspecting and issuing a licence. Officers will liaise closely with the NCA and will alert them to any significant breaches of the code or failure to comply with the HMO standards or conditions.