

Unipol Student Homes

Housing Management Officer (Nottingham)

35 hours per week – 2 year fixed term

You will manage a portfolio of properties under Unipol's own housing management system for student residents and also will help promote and maintain student housing standards within Nottingham.

The Housing Management Officer (HMO) is an important resource within the Nottingham operation. As an HMO, you will need to acquire experience of housing within the City and local knowledge in respect of knowing the Nottingham market and training and support will be provided. Specific experience of student housing and the maintenance of standards is desirable. You will use flexibility, initiative and considerable organisation of own workload, under the guidance of the Senior Housing Management Officer.

You will be expected to play a full role in interacting with other staff in Nottingham as well as other HMO's in Leeds, and the Senior Housing Management Officers who also deals with certain health and safety routines and the Housing Manager who oversees all housing management logistics.

This post is responsible for:

a) managing a bespoke portfolio of shared student houses within Nottingham. All aspects of student housing management can be found within this portfolio: first year undergraduates, undergraduate returners, postgraduates and research students. Certain health and safety routines carry a high level of personal responsibility and must be carried out with accuracy and rigour.

b) Undertaking Code Inspections under the direction of the Unipol Codes Administrator and following up Action Plans and ensuring that compliance has been achieved (*estimated at 20% of the post*)

It is essential that you should have a full, current, valid driving licence and be willing to drive to fulfil the duties of the role. A mileage allowance and car parking costs will be provided as part of the post. The job involves visiting a number of Unipol properties across the city and it is not time efficient to use public transport or a bicycle and there will be a requirement, at times, to carry stock. The post is based in Nottingham and some travel to Leeds will be required for training and wider team meetings.

The post will require considerable flexibility in working hours and will involve some late night working and weekend work.

All those working in Unipol are employed jointly by the University of Leeds.

University Grade 5 (£22,214 - £25,728 p.a.) according to qualifications and relevant experience.

Informal enquiries may be made to Liz Hodgen tel +44 (0)113 205 3415, email jobs@unipol.org.uk.

Ref: CSUNI1028

Click here for further information about Unipol <http://www.unipol.org.uk/home>
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Job Description

Reports to: Housing Manager

Main duties and responsibilities

Housing Management

You will be responsible for the effective day to day management of all the properties allocated to you and carry out the following duties to ensure that those properties are properly managed.

You will:

- Have responsibility for advertising the property, liaising with the Lettings Officer and Accommodation Bureau staff in ensuring the property is properly advertised and is removed when let;
- Ensure that the UnipolHousing.org website is up to date with Unipol properties whether available now or let.
- Ensure that properties are fit to view and undertake visits to properties with potential tenants
- Maintain an appointments diary for viewings and a lettings spread sheet, with details of any appointments and sign-ups
- Take an active role in approaching students who call into the Housing hub and promote Unipol properties to them
- Communicate regularly with Unipol tenants to chase up those who made initial enquiries and see if they have been successful in finding a property
- Ensure that Unipol's To Let boards are erected on appropriate Unipol properties, within NCC guidelines, giving details of the number of bed spaces within each property and ensure that To Let boards are removed from properties once let
- Ensure Unipol property lists are printed and displayed in the Housing hub , regularly checking to ensure stocks are maintained
- Update the information displayed on the plasma screen in the Housing hub, to maximise its use as a marketing tool
- Ensure that email lists are utilised to send details of Unipol properties to all students (liaising with universities and colleges to obtain this information)
- Take first line responsibility for ensuring the Unipol Rent Online system is accurate and regularly updated, and that potential tenants are able to secure accommodation using this system when away from Nottingham
- Provide a good service to Unipol tenants and promote Unipol as a responsible landlord so that tenants are encouraged to reside with Unipol
- Undertake visits of properties with potential tenants and promoting those properties with a view to letting them

- Undertake "viewing days" and "open days" as requested by the Senior Housing Management Officer
- Take responsibility for tenant screening, including refusing to let a house to any person not a student (with the permission of the Assistant Chief Executive -Housing Services) or who has treated a property badly in the past or who owes money to Unipol.
- Ensure that Unipol has an adequate number of keys (or fobs) in order to provide each tenant with a front door key and for Unipol to retain two spare keys to be entered correctly in the key book. At the end of the let to take responsibility for the collection of keys, logging them into Unipol and having locks and additional keys cut for new incoming tenants where keys are not returned
- Sign up students as tenants and ensuring that the legal implications of the let are explained to students. Getting all the tenant details forms completed, ensuring that all tenants receive the appropriate tenant information
- Explain to new tenants how a property and the appliances and amenity levels function
- Ensure that relevant buildings comply with the requirements of the Unipol Code and the National Code of Standards for Larger Developments and bringing to the attention of the Senior Housing Manager any problems or related issues where compliance with these Codes is problematic or not possible
- Maintain all property records in the standard file format and for entering all tenant details on the computer and informing the Finance Manager of any changes in the letting arrangements within the property
- Collect deposits from new tenants and arranging for inspections at the end of the let, together with explanatory letters to ensure the return of those deposits or their retention for specific purposes, following procedures set by the Tenancy Deposit Scheme.
- Undertake visits to properties under management on a regular basis to ensure that tenants are abiding by the terms of the tenancy agreement and arranging for the completion of any necessary repairs arising from the visits. Completing property inspection reports on all inspections made and ensuring they are filed in the property records
- Take details of repairs from any tenants and log those details into the repairs system for action
- Take responsibility for organising repairs on behalf of Unipol, using Unipol's approved contractors in Nottingham and ensuring that complete records of each repair undertaken is placed in the main property files. This will include liaising with tenants about access for repairs and ensuring that works are undertaken at times that have been arranged and checking all works undertaken, to ensure that they have been satisfactorily completed and that the works are of the right quality and represent good value for money
- Take responsibility for undertaking fire alarm tests and emergency lighting tests and ensure that each test is recorded appropriately in a log

- Take responsibility for other safety checks in the property as determined by Unipol's Health and Safety Policy for Housing and maintaining an up to date knowledge of that Policy
- Deal with any tenant issues or antisocial behaviour and referring complex or difficult cases to the Tenancy Support Officer for further intervention and action.
- Ensure that summer lets within the portfolio are promoted and publicising maximising lettings of rooms for the summer period
- Promote use of Rent Online on the Unipol website, updating adverts where use of the system would encourage lettings

Promoting Property Management Services to Owners

As part of Unipol's property management service you will work closely with the Senior Housing Manager to undertake any tasks required to bring properties into full management including responding promptly to enquiries about the property management scheme and sending Unipol reports, information and assessment sheets to interested parties.

Unipol Property Purchase

You will assist in finding properties in Nottingham to buy under the guidance of the Assistant Chief Executive - Standards and Projects.

Health and Safety

Unipol has a detailed Health and Safety Policy for Housing and the Housing Management Officer is responsible for knowing its contents and ensuring that all properties managed by them are managed in accordance with that policy and, where problems or difficulties are identified, drawing this immediately to the attention of the Housing Manager.

There are a number of health and safety routines that carry a high level of personal responsibility and a number of health and safety routines that require rigorous monitoring by the Housing Management Officer to comply with legislative and regulatory requirements to ensure that:

- general planned preventative maintenance takes place as required
- fire servicing and testing takes place and that each test is recorded appropriately
- emergency light testing takes place and that each test is recorded appropriately
- external lighting is providing the correct level of illumination
- waste disposal is taking place properly and that all bin areas are clean and tidy
- CCTV is working and is being used correctly to identify problems

Security and Out-of-Hours

You will be expected to attend any emergencies, if possible, that occur out of hours. Unipol contracts certain out of hours services to an external provider for routine out of hours matters (for example: forced entry, lock outs, malfunctioning alarm systems) and the Housing Management Officer will liaise with and make proper use of these services.

Tenancy Support

You will ensure that students living in Graystacks do so in a harmonious and pleasant environment and to promote that environment and that if problems arise within aspects of their day to day lives related to their occupancy of a property then these will be addressed efficiently and sympathetically. You are responsible for operating systems in respect of tenancy support including: inter-tenant friction, anti-social behaviour, the effects of crime or fire, mental health and serious illness and for servicing network of referral agencies in Nottingham in respect of these areas.

This post entails working with the Tenancy Support Officer to:

- deal with tenant relationships at Graystacks
- support Residents' Assistants and the Housing Management Officer managing Graystacks to improve tenant-related matters
- support the Deputy and Assistant Chief Executives in dealing with complaints
- deal with any community issues that might occur
- lead on tenancy relations matters including the support of special student groups including families, international students, students with disabilities, families and students under the age of 18
- follow up all significant incidents that takes place within a Unipol dwellings and follow up all instances where tenants have suffered from a burglary, fire or flood or any other serious incidents by initially visiting the tenants and providing support and assistance, as required and following up that initial meeting with at least a further meeting to see that the tenants have settled after such an event
- respond to any enquiry or concern from the parents or guardians of any tenant, taking care to observe the relevant legislation on confidentiality and data protection
- operate Unipol's Communicable Diseases Policy in Nottingham
- keep records and maintain a database of cases undertaken and students seen in respect of any problems
- ensure the promotion and productive use of mediation in tenant and community relations
- maintain Graystacks social networking sites to encourage social networking and communication
- contribute to publications dealing with tenancy relations, including tenants' newsletters
- assist with the social programmes
- capture and monitor data relating to tenants' satisfaction
- ensure Unipol's involvement with others relating to community safety & security

In the event of a major incident or emergency taking place at a Graystacks, if you attend the site and assist, additional anti-social hours payment will be made in respect of any time taken on fulfilling these duties.

Social Media

Facebook Groups

- Set up a Facebook Group each year for tenants at Unipol purpose built properties in Nottingham
- Encourage all new tenants to join the Facebook Group prior to the start of their tenancy date via a link in emails.
- Accept the Group requests as & when they arrive.
- Update Facebook Groups with regular articles about events for tenants and in and around Nottingham
- Keep the Digital Marketing Co-ordinator updated with information about development, events etc so that promotional material can be created.
- Monitor tenants' posts to check for unsuitable items, or items that may need dealing with ie repair requests, internet issues and then advise tenants of the correct ways to report these (ensuring reports of this nature are not dealt with on the Group itself).

Facebook Pages

- Monitor Unipol accommodation Facebook Pages.
- Update Facebook Page with regular articles and events in and around Nottingham & general lettings information.
- Liaise with the Digital Marketing Coordinator regarding articles to be posted so that they can be scheduled in. Schedule posts, regular articles and events in and around the Universities, Colleges and Nottingham. Schedule items for all students related to tenancies, deposits etc. Add items landlords may also find interesting. Advertise open days, freshers fair & other related events.
- Ensure Residents' Assistants and Hub Staff are all scheduling suitable items.
- Keep the Digital Marketing Coordinator updated with lettings info so as to ensure promotional content/ads can be created accordingly.
- Respond to Facebook messages and answering queries, ensuring they are responded to in good time.

Garden Maintenance

Unipol's generally undertakes garden maintenance for its managed properties, but where this responsibility remains with owners Unipol will monitor that works are being properly undertaken. You will monitor a number of gardening maintenance contracts dealing with any problems or issues identified.

Unipol Codes

You will assist in the compliance testing for the Nottingham Code where a sample of properties are inspected on a three year cycle and will undertake Code inspections as requested by the Unipol Codes Administrator.

You will:

- undertake a number of inspections of properties located within Nottingham dependent. It is anticipated that inspections will take up about one day a week (about 5 inspections) or 20% of the load of the post
- make appointments to inspect the property that is convenient to both the inspector and the supplier
- ensure a pre-inspection checklist is sent to the landlord and that essential health and safety and regulatory documentation is checked prior to the inspection and request full documentation where any suspected breach is suspected
- ensure that for each inspection undertaken a report is written in a specified standard format which draws to the attention of owners to any improvements they need to make to meet Code standards and an Action Plan is served on the owner and where possible agreed
- give positive feedback to owners where compliance has been affirmed
- ensure Action Points are followed up and checked upon (this may involve a visual inspection of the works undertaken)
- attend the Nottingham Audit panel which meets under an independent Chair four times a year
- assist with an annual compliance test involving a cross sample of existing owners together with obtaining tenant feedback
- ensure that the outcomes of compliance tests and the dates of inspections made are placed on the Unipol data base
- assist with an annual garden and yards survey to ensure that gardens are properly maintained and that all rubbish has been removed from yard areas and producing an annual report following this exercise

Following up Action Plans and Ensuring that Compliance has been Achieved

You will:

- ensure that any follow-up action is undertaken diarising any outcomes and return visits for subsequent checking and undertake any necessary re-inspections within a defined timescale to ensure that the Plan targets are met within the agreed timescales
- report back to the Unipol Codes Administrator any failures to perform together with a recommendation for them to decide about how to proceed

Financial Systems

You will liaise carefully with the Finance Manager and follow Unipol's financial systems in all respects. If in doubt about those systems, particularly involving any cash transactions, you will have responsibility to ask the Finance Manager to outline

and explain those systems so that no doubt can arise as to the procedures to be operated. You will also ensure that all financial matters are reported properly to those operating Unipol's financial systems.

Training

Training of Landlords and Managing Agents - from time to time Unipol organises training events for these clients may require input from the HMO.

General

You will:

- take part in dealing with callers to the office and assist them with their enquiry whether about Unipol housing, accreditation or house hunting services and undertake responses to Web Chat
- undertake such general duties within Unipol as from time to time may be required and shall accept periodic revisions of this job specification where transferable skills are utilised
- maintain a working knowledge of Unipol's computer operations and shall have a working knowledge of Microsoft Office software

University Values

All staff are expected to operate in line with the university's values and standards, which work as an integral part of our strategy and set out the principles of how we work together. More information about the university's strategy and values is available at <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/comms/strategy/>.

Person Specification

Essential

- Experience of working in property management (preferably within Nottingham)
- Some local knowledge of the Nottingham market
- Knowledge of local property resources, including contractors
- Customer care experience or have transferable skills in this area
- Experience of working in a busy and demanding environment
- Excellent communication skills, both written and oral
- A current, valid driving licence
- Good organisation skills and a flexible attitude
- Ability to organise own workload, under the guidance of the Manager
- Awareness of the Unipol Code and its purpose

Desirable

- Specific experience of student housing management, although training will be provided in this area
- Experience of working with students or young people
- Experience of operating computer record systems
- Mediation skills
- Experience of successfully letting properties

Additional Information

Working at Leeds

Find out more about the benefits of working at the University and what it is like to live and work in the Leeds area on our [Working at Leeds](#) information page.

Candidates with disabilities

Information for candidates with disabilities, impairments or health conditions, including requesting alternative formats, can be found on our [Accessibility](#) information page or by getting in touch with us at disclosure@leeds.ac.uk.

Criminal record information

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

A criminal record check is not required for this position. However, all applicants will be required to declare if they have any 'unspent' criminal offences, including those pending.

More about Unipol

Housing Management

Three years ago Unipol widened its service provision in Nottingham to include property management. Unipol has an office located near to Nottingham Trent University in an area popular with students in Shakespeare Street where the service is based.

Unipol currently manages Graystacks an 84 beds pace development, 9 self-contained flats in iD apartments, 88 bed spaces in Norwich Union House and 89 bed spaces in a number of off-street properties (shared student houses). The service is going well with high customer satisfaction and occupancy.

It is planned that the property management load should increase to 300 tenancies by the start of the 2017-2018 letting year. Because of Unipol's good reputation in the City, which is inseparable from high property standards, it is essential that properties are well managed.

Additional staff are provided in respect of the housing management load at key times of year for viewings, inspections, tenancy turnover and tenancy preparation.

The property management operation in Nottingham benefits from Unipol's already well-established management systems and back-office support. Unipol has its own dedicated property management software and there is support from specialist staff on financial matters (including rent collection), health and safety (which will fit into Unipol's wider policies and databases) and tenancy support.

Background Information Unipol Codes

The term landlord is used in respect of any housing supplier.

Unipol operates a number of Codes which accredit landlords, managing agents and properties. These Codes operate within a number of geographical arena. Some Codes are specific to a given location and others are operational across the UK. Each Code has a specific purpose and relates specifically to property standards, housing standards and levels of customer satisfaction within the student private rented sector.

In all cases when Code standards are met, landlords, managing agents and properties are badged by the relevant Code logo (which comprises of a "thumbs up" logo with the relevant by-line underneath it pertaining to each Code).

Code standards, whilst fitting into a general framework, often differ in detail to reflect the precise niche requirements of a given location, type of housing stock, size of

building or type of operator. Although the standards have differences they are never inconsistent or contradictory.

The administrative procedures behind the operation of the Codes: promotion, membership, inspection, verification, action plans (to rectify shortcomings) public recognition of membership and the complaints and tribunal systems; also fits within a general framework but there are important differences for each Code which reflects the precise nature of the Code, its purpose and operation.

All of Unipol's Codes are built around, and reflect, the ANUK four core values. The operation of the Codes team across all areas is overseen by the Assistant Chief Executive - Standards and Projects who co-ordinates and audits the performance of each Code.

The Codes ownership is as follows:

Local Codes

The Unipol Code for Shared Student Housing in Leeds and Nottingham together with the Supporters of the Unipol Codes are owned by Faye Swanwick the Unipol Codes Administrator.

The Unipol Code for Shared Student Housing Bradford together with the Supporters of the Unipol Code for Shared Student Housing in Bradford is owned by Joanne MacNaughton, Accommodation Services Officer - Bradford.

National Codes

The ANUK/Unipol Code of Standards for Larger Residential Developments for Student Accommodation Managed and Controlled by Educational Establishments and The ANUK/Unipol Code of Standards for Larger Developments for student accommodation not managed and controlled by educational establishments are owned by Simon Kemp the National Codes Administrator.

Together these Codes currently cover approximately 258,000 bed spaces.

General Information

Unipol is a housing Charity established in 1973 by the University and the then Polytechnic in Leeds in co-operation with their Student Unions. In 1997, Unipol became an incorporated Charitable Company with a Board structure.

Unipol provides assistance in finding and supplying housing for students in Nottingham, Leeds and is the main private sector service supplier for the University of Bradford and Bradford College, Leeds Beckett University, the University of Leeds, Nottingham Trent University, The Northern College of Contemporary Dance, Leeds City College, Leeds College of Art and Leeds College of Music.

Unipol fulfils four distinct but connected roles:

- Unipol runs a number of successful voluntary accreditation schemes for owners letting to students that covers 79 of student housing need in Leeds, 65% in Nottingham and 99% in Bradford. The Codes are designed to maintain and improve property and management standards. Unipol also supports the University of Exeter in running their accreditation scheme.

Unipol has a stake in two Government Approved Codes of Practice dealing with larger student developments in the United Kingdom. Unipol currently accredits an estimated 271,000 student bed spaces (expected to rise to 300,000 over the course of 2017).

- it runs three Housing Hubs providing a forum in which owners can advertise their properties. Although owners are asked to pay a fee for Unipol's services the Housing Hubs are partially funded by the institutions listed above. Unipol's websites, which centralises all private sector vacancies, are a major source of information and advice for students and receives around 100 million hits a year

- it has its own Housing Section which develops, takes into ownership and manages refurbished properties and lets them directly to students. Unipol is currently responsible for housing around 3,000 students (including over 310 student families) located in Leeds, 270 students in Nottingham and 59 students in Bradford

- through its training arm "Unipol Training" Unipol is the main national trainer in the niche market of student accommodation, running a full annual programme. The training arm also undertakes some bespoke in house training and a number of briefings for different constituencies. Unipol has in-house training facilities in both Nottingham and Leeds.

Unipol is currently following a Forward Look designed to maintain and upgrade its services to meet the increasing needs of its student clientele and increase its own accommodation services. A copy of this can be found at <http://www.unipol.org.uk/footer/governance/corporate-documents-policies/forward-look-2015-2018> on Unipol's website.

Unipol is organised into six operational areas:

i) the Senior Management Team consists of the Chief Executive, the Deputy Chief Executive, the Director of Finance, the Assistant Chief Executive - Hub Services, the Assistant Chief Executive - Housing, the Assistant Chief Executive - Standards and Projects and the Assistant Chief Executive - IT and Communications.

The Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive are supported administratively by the Office Administrator and Homestay Coordinator *and this post fits within the Deputy Chief Executive's team.*

ii) the Nottingham Service is led by the Nottingham Services Manager and consists of a Senior Housing Management Officer and one other Housing Management Officer and a number of part time Residential Assistants (currently three).

iii) the Housing Services team is currently in a state of transition and the organisation is mid-way through merging the housing services team with the Housing Hub teams in Leeds and Bradford.

The Housing Services team is overseen by the Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services and consists of the Housing Manager, the Housing Services Coordinator,

the Development Manager and a Maintenance Coordinator with overarching operational and management functions.

In Leeds and Bradford day to day housing management is carried out by two housing management teams under Two Housing Team Leaders with two Senior Housing Management Officers, three Housing Management Officers and an Assistant Housing Management Officer. The team is supplemented by Residents' Assistants (currently 17) and a number of part time Housing Assistants (varying from two in term time to seven over the summer). The Housing Assistants are overseen by the Senior Housing Management Officer (Procurement) and the Residents' Assistants are overseen by the relevant Housing Management Officers.

The Housing Hub operations are overseen by the Assistant Chief Executive - Hub Services and she is assisted by the Hub Marketing Officer and a number of Housing Hub Assistants (currently six).

Located within the housing management team but directly answerable to the Deputy Chief Executive is the Tenancy Support Officer.

iv) the Finance Team is headed by the Director of Finance and consists of a Finance Manager, a Senior Finance Officer and three full time and one part time Financial Assistants supplemented by consultants for project work from time to time.

v) the organisation has a technical services arm that is led by the Assistant Chief Executive - IT and Communications who oversees an IT Manager, two ICT Officers, an Applications Developer and two part time support staff to ensure that the organisation maintains high quality IT and web services.

vi) The Student Interface and Standards Team is headed by the Assistant Chief Executive - Standards and Projects who oversees all accreditation and tribunal systems which is coordinated by a Unipol Codes Administrator and a National Codes Administrator together with a Code Complaints Investigator. The conferences and training operation (with the Training and Events Officer) digital media with the Digital and Social Marketing Coordinator) all work within this area.