



Welcome to our Promise

This is our commitment to our owners and our students. The contents of this “Charter” are our promises to them so that we can all work in harmony to deliver the very best student care and accommodation available.

This is a “lifestyle” and we promise to help all our students get the best attention possible during their study, which will prepare them for an exciting life ahead.

We are all in this together and we know you will have a lot to contribute as our concept and success evolve. It will be your duty to assist in revising this document every year so we are always ahead of the market in delivering for the “Next Generation”.

We are counting on you all to make this “Charter” a success.

Best wishes

Urban Student Life

July 2017

“The Best Business we can possibly
have is by recommendation”

Mission Statement

At USL we aim to provide all our students with the highest standard of student accommodation and care within the direct let market. We will deliver better than “Benchmark” room rates through quality service and innovation. Our business as a management company will grow to take account of the ever-changing student accommodation market and we expect to operate 6,000 bedrooms in the UK and mainland Europe by 2018.

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Respect for All

USL operates an International Business and we have the great pleasure of welcoming many nationalities and cultures into our home. Enjoy the colour and experience of this privilege.

The respect we show our visitors is one of the cornerstones of our future success and it is our desire as USL ambassadors to make everyone welcome.

Consider the guidance below and work with these as your basics;

Language

A warm and familiar approach using first name terms where possible. Introductions must be distinct and clear.

Greet in English if possible and show your efforts to be flexible in other languages if there are difficulties in communication.

Use helpful controlled physical gestures.

Body Language

Maintain a dignified posture in all situations.

Smile, an action understood by everyone. Use it to full effect.

Listen, learn how to listen in order to fully understand both requests and comments.

Stop!, stop what you are doing wherever possible when you are approached by a student and satisfy their requests if possible. It is important we see our residents as our future.

Efficiency and Delivery

Be efficient, it is the most reassuring aspect of our work and builds trust.

Reliability, ensure you carry out your commitments and promises to residents.

Information, ensure all information provided by you is accurate and appropriate.

Cool. Always keep a cool and collected approach. Team spirit, support your colleagues and ensure the USL team spirit is a recognisable part of our strengths over our competitors.

Appearance

Uniform

Your uniform must be impeccable and complete every day.

Pause before coming to work and recognise the detail in your presentation. (Self check) Name badges with language ability must be on view at all times.

Hygiene

Perfect hygiene is required from all USL ambassadors. A hygiene kit including toothbrush, toothpaste, and deodorant, hairbrush or comb and electric razor will form part of a USL ambassadors locker contents.

Shoes and footwear must be polished or brushed free from dirt or stains, checked daily.

Guest Perceptions

No gum chewing or eating behind a service point in view of our guests.

Visible tattoos and face piercings (excluding earrings) are not permitted.

Never remain seated when talking to a guest who is in front of you.

Ensure you have a notebook and pen with you at all times, it is essential we critique our own performance at each moment. (Bring these notes to your next team meeting).

Concierge

Cleanliness

Always ensure that the area around the site is clean and tidy with particular attention paid to the entrance and arrival areas.

Ensure all lighting around the Hotel is functional and serving its purpose of visibility and security.

Courtesy

Offer assistance with doors and luggage whenever possible. Give guidance to students who have cars and parking requirements. Ensure disabled students are given every priority. Explain as much as possible about their orientation into the local area.

USL Concierge Sales

The concierge is a key function in the USL sales process so ensure that the full service pack explaining all USL supplementary services is explained and made easily available for purchase. All Concierge staff will support and familiarize themselves with suppliers who support our network i.e., Urban Cycle etc, (See page 10 Guest and Student Information)

The Concierge network is renowned for its efficiency and resourcefulness so it will be your duty to ensure that every USL concierge formulates best practice learning from one another.

Multi-skilled

Every concierge should be multi-skilled and be able to carry out the function of check-in and check-out in addition to their concierge duties.

The safety and collection of all mail and parcels for every student is the responsibility of the concierge.

Ensure student safety is an ongoing review for all USL ambassadors.

The concierge should ensure that only approved leaflets and promotions are available in the Hotel lobby.

The concierge should ensure that delivery vendors are controlled and signed in and out of the Hotel on each occasion.

The concierge should keep all residents informed of any local events, which may be of interest to the residents or indeed affect noise or traffic around the site.

Check-in and Check-out Procedures

Individuality

Each of our residents must be treated as individuals with their own account.

Even students sharing rooms or clusters must be treated with individuality and discretion at all times.

All reception and concierge staff will be fully trained in our property management system, which recognizes each guest as an individual. Please ensure you are fully conversant in our systems.

Welcome

Check-in periods are “high activity” periods and we will ensure there is a supporting “Boarding party” to assist with all busy periods particularly at the beginning of term.

Where possible all check-ins will be done in advance and it is our wish to complete online registration, print keys, check rooms, check advance service orders delivery and label envelopes before the arrival of our guests.

This will ensure that we are available for “Welcome”, sales and support on the days of arrival as well as answering any questions that our guests may have.

Some selective information may not have been exchanged at point of booking and it is essential that we cross reference identity and validation on arrival as well as obtaining any additional information required to fulfill our USL Brand Promise and Sales Strategy.

Ensure all arrivals are advised of our “Open Evenings and Introduction Events” which will inform them about the quickest way of settling in to their new environment and meeting new friends.

Ensure you have a good supply of local maps always to hand for arrivals as well as a “Poster” version available for reference in the lobby.

Luggage

Ensure all luggage is labeled on arrival and give guidance on “USL Storage” facilities where applicable.

Fire Procedures

Give all arrivals an outline of our fire escape and evacuation procedures. This will be followed up by documentation contained in each room.

Telephone & Call Handling

Concierge and reception will also be a responsible part of the team handling phone calls and reservations and as such will need to be aware of telephone protocols.

- Answer the phone within 5 rings.
- Answer with “Concierge desk, “John” speaking may I help you?”
- Address the student or caller by name “May I ask who is calling please?”
- Assist and transfer the call where applicable.
- Where a line or number is engaged please offer to take a message or take a number and have the call returned when it clears.
- If assistance is needed then please provide this with an accurate time for completion or response.
- If you are busy and have to call back please ensure you take a note of the name, time and number and respond within a promised time frame.
- When calling any guest or student please ensure you always call with the following introduction “Hello this is John calling from the concierge desk, is it convenient to talk at the moment”. If it is then proceed with the nature of your call, If it is not convenient then offer to call back at an arranged time.
- A wake up service is offered to our guests and will be programmable within an automated service.

Guest & Student Information

“Think Hotel not Hostel”

Every guest must think of us as a hotel and we are duty bound to provide our guests with all relevant information regarding their visit with particular reference to the duration of their visit.

Each room will require a “Directory of USL Services” and this will be taken from the template of all USL services along with the “local” services, which will be introduced by our concierge and welcome team.

Our services are designed to appeal to all residents and students and are for their comfort, efficiency and well being.

In addition to those listed below each team must listen to the requirements of our students and keep adding to the list of services as communication develops between “Ambassador and Guest”. Examples of this would be registered and licensed taxi numbers, train times, local markets, safe shopping areas, safe cafe’s and public bars, value for money and traditional restaurants etc.

- ❖ Urban Locker - Secure Storage Service
- ❖ Urban Fresh - Room Cleaning Service
- ❖ Urban Snooze - Linen Service
- ❖ Urban Clean - Laundry Service
- ❖ Urban Health - A local Health clinic Registration
- ❖ Urban Office - Printing and Reprographic services
- ❖ Urban Faith – Introduction to local place of prayer
- ❖ Urban Bike - Dedicated Bicycle Hire
- ❖ Urban Fit - Health Centre and Gym introduction (Special rate)
- ❖ Urban Travel - Student Travel and Concessions booking service
- ❖ Urban Insurance - Student Insurance Package
- ❖ Urban Money - Assistance in establishing local bank services
- ❖ Urban Motor - Driving School Services

Urban Faith

At USL we understand that many of our students may be studying away from home and as such will not have the Family guidance and spiritual nourishment that they have been used to on a regular basis.

We have incorporated Urban Faith into our philosophy in order that every student can find time and a place to reflect in peace on their activities and new friendships.

In some locations, our “Place of prayer” is a quiet room with books and symbols of the many faiths from around the globe. We are happy to welcome all faiths into our property and ask that students use this room for contemplation renewing their personal vows and commitments.

Services may be arranged at key festival times in order that students need not feel separated from their religious community.

Our service to students would not be complete without the opportunity for students who need assistance, guidance or therapy to speak with a USL ambassador who will be as helpful as possible in directing the student to the most suitable councilor for support and confidentiality.

Housekeeping

All our housekeeping services are carefully controlled through a contract process. This process involves Health & Safety training in COSHH and the use of equipment.

Our standards are designed to be efficient, flexible unobtrusive, discreet and security conscious.

Many of our residents and students require a wide variety of services and it is vital that each member of the housekeeping service team is thorough about their “tasks” and gives the maximum attention to detail required to reach our set standards.

Specifically

All housekeeping staff must be in uniform and immaculately presented at all times.

Remain alert at all times to ensure we protect privacy and security.

Always greet guests when met in corridors.

Establishing occupation of a room, which requires “Urban Fresh” should be done with a firm knock on the door followed by “Good morning, housekeeping services here, may I help you?”

Do not enter rooms if it is clear the resident is in occupation.

Always record any unusual activities or noises, smells.

Keep all emergency exits clear

Keep all corridors clear and pick up any litter in your section or path.

Report any persistent untidiness or bad behaviour.

Never tamper or discard any personal effects of residents (unless they are a potential hazard to other residents)

Do not open doors to allow a guest access to a room that has lost their key. You should point out that to ensure guest safety “I am not authorized to open room doors, the concierge or reception will be happy to assist you”.

Ensure any damage or recklessness is reported to the reception immediately.

The discovery of any “illegal” substances or materials should be reported to reception without tampering with the discovery.

Report all maintenance defects with particular attention paid to lighting and security issues.

Reception

Along with our concierge the reception team must provide the warmest of welcomes to all visitors.

Both reception and concierge will be given full training within the property management system, which is the core service and control tool of the department.

It is preferred that all our reception and concierge staff speak at least 2 languages.

One of the key functions of reception is to ensure that all of our guests are operating within the Individual accounts assigned to them.

Guest accounts will need to be reconciled on a weekly basis.

We need to ensure that the bookkeeping is accurate and is regularly reviewed.

Each of our residents must be treated as individuals with their own account.

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Selling ahead for next year

“The best Business we can possibly
have is by recommendation”

It is vital to consider each day that each of our residents or students may have a relative who can enjoy our services. As such, our guests may recommend our business to another person close to them. This means quite simply that each student can double our business going forward by recommendation!

Why would they do this and why would this very simple aspect of our business mean so much to us...and them? The answer is simple.

If we make them happy then why would they not recommend us and hey! they may even stay another year in our “Hotel”. Hang on to your guests and make them come back time and time again. Give them reasons to do so, deliver great service, remember their birthdays and how much you helped them in their first year at University away from home.

Be part of the business and commit to some basic sales techniques.

- Enjoy what you do
- Deliver great service
- Always be selling to the requirements of our guests
- Be perceptive and be in “their shoes” understanding their needs
- Listen first and then ask questions
- Ensure you go the extra mile and always be positive
- Solve problems quickly
- Know your USL products, culture and brand value

Car Parking & Security

Car Parking

Many of our sites have car parking (chargeable) and we endeavor to provide guidance to value for money and effective car parking for all students and guests. We recommend sites that are monitored by CCTV and are fully floodlit.

We do not accept responsibility for cars on their contents so it is not advisable that any ambassador takes possession of car keys but simply assists with directions to the car park or with luggage.

Please ensure all our guests are advised not to leave any valuables in view within their car.

London is perhaps a notable exception where many students and guests decide to leave their car at home due to the excellent network provided by London Transport on Buses and Underground.

The concierge and reception will always have copies of the underground map, times of last services on the “Tube” and local bus timetables.

Urban cycle is an option for all our residents and we are committed to providing this service.

Security

One of the cornerstones of the USL brand is our commitment to security and the safety of all our students and residents.

All of our sites will be conveniently located close to the centre of studies or easily accessible by public transport.

Access to the site will be by key identification and student photographic evidence.

Stop and secure checks of students and residents can be made by USL ambassadors at any time cross referencing key and key holder.

All USL ambassadors will be trained in evacuation and safety procedures All USL ambassadors will be trained in Fire Fighting Techniques and First Aid.

External security companies may be contracted by the site team for specific periods and events, which may require greater than normal control. All of these contractual arrangements need to be authorized in the first instance with the Operations Director who may seek financial authorization from the owning company.

Food & Beverage Services

Many USL properties will have vending machines, ice machines and essential “shop” items available within the premises.

Franchise

Supporting this we also intend to offer 3rd party catering or franchise arrangements for sites where the need for food and beverage facilities is required.

Whilst these franchise arrangements will be the responsibility of “Our contracted operator” we must buy into the fact that the franchise success is also our success and as such we need to encourage visitors to utilise and enjoy the facilities provide.

Take-Away Food & Beverage

“Take Away” food and beverages are part and parcel of student life and we always permit deliveries and “take” away” food to enter the building. The clearing of this debris (post consumption) is entirely the responsibility of the student or guest. We should ensure that each site is fully serviced with bins and black bags to accommodate this predictable “clean-up”

USL Ambassadors are not permitted to sell food & beverage products. Nor are they allowed to leave their “location” of duty in order to deliver any goods bought online. Students and visitors must visit reception to collect and “settle” for their own orders.

USL Ambassadors may offer information on catering venues provided they “fit” with the brand values and standards.

Quality of Services

Any vending or franchise services which consistently break down or offer poor service must be dealt with by the on site team. If the matter is not resolved it must be brought to the attention of the Operations Director to ensure that contract services and obligations are reviewed to our full satisfaction.

Hygiene

All Ambassadors must ensure that hygiene issues which are the responsibility of the local management team or franchise operator must follow stringent procedures with records and testing available for inspection at any time by a visiting director.

Parties or Events

Should any student or visitor wish to arrange a “party” or in house event, which would involve more than 10 persons them USL Ambassadors must become familiar with the arrangements in order that control is exercised over the event and noise or nuisance, does not filter into other residents. This fact will be communicated within the House Rules and the beginning of tenancy.

Bi-Weekly Meetings & Introductions

Introductions

The USL brand is a very inclusive brand and as such we wish to ensure that all of our residents and students enjoy their time with us.

We also wish to ensure that everyone is kept informed about our products and services which include “Welcome parties” and “Seasonal introductions” where neighbor gets the chance to meet neighbour.

These are very informal affairs but All USL Ambassadors must take part in the introduction and arrangement process as part of their ambassadorial duties.

Bi-Weekly Meetings

We also wish to ensure that all students and residents have a “vehicle” to voice their comments and we must ensure that these comments are listened to and where possible actioned on if there is a general consensus.

As such, weekly meetings on “House Matters” will be chaired by a USL Ambassador or manager to which all residents are invited. These meetings should last no more than 1 hour and should serve to facilitate the avoidance of build up in any area of disappointment of house management and services.

Every quarter, the owner of the site will be invited to join the group so more in depth or investment issues can be raised by the residents.

There will be a Health and Safety meeting held each month along with follow up training procedures explained for all staff on new products and equipment.

Feedback and Comments

There will also be an online comments system introduced at each property as well as a backup system relying on comment cards. All USL Ambassadors must be fully conversant in e-mail and administration basics to ensure no comment is overlooked or forgotten.

Comments will be summarized by the Manager and reviewed at the regular meetings with full action feedback and reports given.

**“We build on our strengths by
recognizing our weaknesses”**

Health & Safety

All USL properties will comply with national & local authority regulations on Health Safety & Fire regulations. This would include but not exclusively feature the following;

- Smoke or heat detectors in all rooms
- Full evacuation alarm sounders
- Inventory list of all in house guests including disabled and or hard of hearing residents
- Fire exit push doors on every corridor
- Emergency lighting
- Fire fighting extinguishers and equipment
- Emergency evacuation box to include roll count, loudhailers, Hi-Viz Jackets
- All USL employees are regularly Fire trained
- All USL employees are First Aid trained

USL Ambassadors must ensure that all electrical equipment brought into the property has suitable compliance for safe usage.

Health & Safety Committee

Each property will operate a Health and Safety committee consisting of management, USL Ambassadors and long stay students. The purpose of the committee will be to discuss and monitor Health and Safety matters and make recommendations about how performance could be improved.

Hazard Spotting

It will be the responsibility of all USL Ambassadors to maintain their workplace and that of their colleagues in a clean, tidy and safe condition. Particular attention must be paid to hazard spotting which would include fire doors that have been wedged open, spillages on floors and loose trailing wires. Many of these matters can be remedied immediately and it is all our duty to deal with these in a timely and safe manner.

Protective Clothing

Where appropriate you must wear the protective clothing given to you for specific tasks and ensure that you comply with all rules and regulations given to you for that task. Details of the Health and Safety at Work Act of 1974 will be available in all properties at reception.

What we provide our Owners and Investors

The owner and management co-relationship is one which we view as both long term and transparent around a 360o cycle. It will be crucial in the minds of our teams to be trusted and trained to maximize profitability from their assets. As such we will provide owners with access to the following so you they remain fully briefed and confident that at USL we will deliver on our promise.

Everything they need will be published on a secure web portal where they will have 24/7 access, at www.urbanstudentlife.com/investorsportal

Getting the inside view

Firstly you know that we are committed to the well being of our students and our buildings. Our range of services and security measures are way beyond our competitors and we intend to retain this edge through our “Student Focus Groups”. Each of these groups will meet every 3 months to ensure we are listening and you, as an Ambassador are able to consider the output from these meetings. These minutes will be published online within 48 hours of each meeting.

What’s the competition up to?

Within each of our Management teams at each location there is a fact finder who will report to the group on where the “product” lies within its neighbourhood and the competition around us. This will allow investors and owners to reflect on our market positioning and feel comfortable about levels of investment to ensure we stay at or improve our agreed status.

Trends

We will pool our information from across the group and ensure that “Best practise” and statistical information is available for all our clients. This information will be both informative, whilst remaining confidential for each Investor and owner. This information will include all revenue streams, average rates, investment initiatives and results along with commentary from the board of USL.

“Innovation Locker”

It’s good to know what we are thinking and towards this collaboration we will be holding monthly “innovation” meetings within our management so that we never miss out on the future. A free thinking session, recorded, minuted and published will be available for review every month.

The Detail

The devil is in the detail and we will publish all unit information on the financials about your property “live” on the portal so you can see where we are going and where we have come from, daily, weekly and comparatively on a year to date basis.

Comment Now!

Don’t wait for the next meeting, give us your thoughts and input as soon as you have read our reports. Our Portal will also allow you to send notes instantly to be picked up by our team and ensure your guidance is considered.

Golden Rules

The following guidelines and contractual obligations are for each USL site General Manager and form the core services disciplines for each location.

There are some “Golden Rules” for all property Managers.

1. Security, Health & Safety and the “Well being” of our students paramount.
2. Communication within the first 6 months of opening or take-over is VITAL to ensure each unit manager is on track. It is imperative each general manager communicates with the group operations director by phone or e-mail each day. “It is our desire to guide and foster not stifle and fluster”.
3. General managers of “multi-unit” operations must find time to be in each unit each day.
4. Files must be created for each room & bed occupant as a due diligence creating a care culture for each Student.
5. Think “Hotel” service not Hostel.
6. Be accountable for every pound spent, treat it as you would your own. Waste is unacceptable.
7. A little maintenance every day avoids the disruptive breakdowns, keep on top of your tasks!
8. Manage your team and keep them informed, that way they will support you when you need them most.
9. 360o Honesty is expected at all times, mistakes are expected dishonesty is cancerous.
10. Weekly reporting on each unit “A week in the life” is expected and reviewed by board members so make it concise, accurate (no hearsay), factual, sales led, and informative.

Maintenance

Repairs in room must be carried out between 9am and 7pm (Unless the tenant requires emergency assistance).

All maintenance requests must be in writing and logged on a work schedule.

All routine maintenance requests must be completed within 24 hours of reporting. In the case of more complex repair and maintenance an accurate timescale must be given and agreed between the student and Ambassador.

Routine investigations or spot checks can be carried out on rooms however these must be recorded at reception before access is gained to any room.

A planned maintenance schedule will be in operation at each property and it is the duty of the property manager and his maintenance team to ensure the work is completed in a timely manner.

All maintenance operatives must protect the area they are working in with sheeting or tarpaulins.

All maintenance operatives must ensure that a note is displayed on the exterior of the room they are working in to ensure that students and guests are aware of their presence.

All maintenance operatives must clean up thoroughly after they have finished their repairs.

If any guest's personal items have to be moved the operative must ensure that they are placed exactly as they were found. If in any doubt a witness should be obtained before works commence.

If major works are to be carried out please advise reception that will make the appropriate arrangements for alternative accommodation.

Any public area maintenance must be clearly signposted and safety warnings displayed. A suitable apology for inconvenience must also be displayed.

No "noisy" work should be carried out before 9am or after 7pm.

All maintenance operatives must ensure they are suitable clothed and wearing protective masks and or goggles.

Recruitment

Every USL employee is a USL Ambassador.

All recruitment must be in accordance with the property budget plan.

All candidates must be interviewed and have all references checked.

A full security check will be conducted on all employees.

USL will contract-out certain services and these employees will be treated as part of the USL team to ensure our service and dedication to our clients is seamless.

The General Manager of the property must obtain written authority from the Operations Director before any employee is given an offer in writing.

All candidates must display suitable experience and the unique skill of being able to “listen & serve” candidates and employees should be able to converse in at least 2 languages.

All employees will be given job chats after 2 weeks in employment and thereafter every 3 months for the duration of their employment.

All employees must be given a personal training plan by their General Manager within 3 months of starting employment.

All employees must be part of a team culture fostering support and good relations with one another.

The staff handbook will be issued to all employees to ensure they are aware of their employment rights and entitlements.

USL is committed to equal opportunities.

All USL Ambassadors are advised that it is their role to foster good relations with the immediate community around their location as part of their duties.

Careers with USL

At USL we are always looking for talent, people who care and people who can inspire others to reach the highest standards of service and hospitality.

Every USL Ambassador must identify “New talent” and ensure that they are brought to the attention of the management company. We aim to operate a planned recruitment programme which will take into account our expansion programme so even if a vacancy doesn’t exist it is likely there will be an opportunity very soon.

So let’s work together to keep a good pool of staff on “alert” to join the ever-growing role call of USL Ambassadors.

All potential candidates should be encouraged to apply to;

Andrew Buchanan

Director of Operations Urban Student Life

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Tel: +44-(0)-7739990564