

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

Property: Zest House, 166 Gloucester Road North, Filton, Bristol, BS34 7QA

Managed by: Richmond Estates Management Ltd

Review Frequency: At least annually and following any significant change to relevant legislation, National Code requirements or the management of Zest House.

1. Purpose

Zest House is committed to providing student accommodation in a fair, inclusive and respectful manner.

This policy sets out how Richmond Estates Management Ltd will promote equality, prevent unlawful discrimination and support the needs of residents and prospective residents.

The policy has been prepared to support the requirements of Section 2 – Equality and Diversity of the ANUK/Unipol National Code of Standards for Larger Student Developments 2026–2028.

2. Our Commitment

Prospective residents and residents will be treated fairly and with dignity and respect.

Richmond Estates Management Ltd will not unlawfully discriminate against, harass or victimise a person because of a protected characteristic.

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Marriage and civil partnership.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

In accordance with the National Code, no applicant or group of applicants will be treated less favourably than another applicant or group of applicants when accommodation is allocated because of a protected characteristic.

3. Applications and Allocation of Accommodation

Applications for accommodation at Zest House will be considered fairly and consistently.

Accommodation will not be refused, restricted or allocated less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

Where a prospective resident tells us that they have a disability or particular accessibility requirement, we will discuss their needs with them and consider what reasonable adjustments may be appropriate.

Prospective residents are encouraged to tell us about relevant accessibility requirements as early as reasonably possible so that their needs can be properly considered.

4. Disabled Students

Zest House recognises that disabilities may be physical, mental, sensory or non-visible.

The National Code uses the Equality Act 2010 definition of a disabled person as someone with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Code explains that this can include physical, mental and sensory impairments, specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, mental health difficulties and chronic health conditions.

Information provided by residents or prospective residents concerning disabilities or health conditions will be treated sensitively.

5. Reasonable Adjustments

Richmond Estates Management Ltd will consider and make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of disabled students where needs identified through an appropriate assessment process are reasonable.

Depending upon the individual circumstances, adjustments may relate to:

- Physical access.
- Communication methods.
- Provision of information in an appropriate format.
- Access arrangements.

- Management procedures.
- Equipment or facilities.
- Other reasonable changes that assist a disabled resident in accessing and using their accommodation.

Each request will be considered individually.

This reflects Code requirement 2.2 concerning reasonable adjustments for disabled students.

6. Adaptations

Where an adaptation for a disabled student is agreed, Richmond Estates Management Ltd will arrange for the adaptation to be completed within a reasonable timescale.

Where appropriate, we will communicate with the resident or prospective resident about:

- The adaptation requested.
- Any assessment or information reasonably required.
- What adaptation has been agreed.
- How the work will be arranged.
- The anticipated timescale.
- Any access arrangements required.

Where a particular adaptation cannot reasonably be provided, the reasons will be explained and, where practicable, alternative reasonable solutions will be considered.

The National Code requires agreed adaptations for disabled students to be completed within a reasonable timescale following the request.

7. Charges for Adapted Accommodation

A disabled student will not be charged a higher rent simply because they require an adapted room.

A room adapted and used by a disabled student will not be charged at a rate exceeding the normal room rate for the development.

Where a room has been designed and significantly adapted and is occupied by a student with a mobility or physical impairment, it will be priced at the lowest room rate available within the Member's portfolio within the relevant local authority area, as required by the National Code.

8. Neurodiversity and Non-Visible Disabilities

We recognise that some residents may be neurodivergent or have disabilities or conditions that are not immediately visible.

Where appropriate and reasonable, adjustments to the way our accommodation services are delivered may include:

- Providing important information in writing.
- Providing clear and straightforward instructions.
- Allowing additional time to understand information where appropriate.
- Using an alternative reasonable method of communication.
- Taking identified sensory or accessibility requirements into account.
- Making reasonable adjustments to management procedures where appropriate.

Residents and prospective residents are not expected to disclose personal information that is irrelevant to the provision or management of their accommodation.

Where an adjustment is requested, we may ask for sufficient information to understand the person's needs and determine an appropriate reasonable adjustment.

9. Respectful Environment

Zest House aims to provide an environment in which residents, visitors, staff and contractors are treated with dignity and respect.

Discrimination, harassment, victimisation, threatening behaviour or targeted abuse will not be considered acceptable.

Residents are also expected to treat other residents, visitors, staff and contractors respectfully.

Where inappropriate behaviour involves another resident, the matter may be considered under the Tenancy Agreement, Resident Handbook and other applicable management procedures.

Where behaviour may constitute a criminal offence or creates an immediate risk to someone's safety, the police or other appropriate authorities may be contacted.

10. Staff and Contractors

Anyone involved in the management of Zest House is expected to apply this policy fairly and consistently.

Staff and contractors working at the property are expected to behave professionally and respectfully towards residents and prospective residents.

Relevant equality, diversity, disability and resident-support considerations will be incorporated into management practices where appropriate.

11. Requesting a Reasonable Adjustment

A prospective resident or existing resident can contact Richmond Estates Management Ltd if they require a reasonable adjustment or wish to discuss an accessibility requirement.

Where possible, a request should explain:

- The difficulty or barrier being experienced.
- The adjustment or assistance that may help.
- Any relevant timescale.
- Any other information reasonably necessary for us to consider the request.

We may discuss the request with the person concerned to better understand their needs.

Where reasonably necessary, we may request appropriate supporting information or an assessment to enable us to determine what adjustment should be made.

Requests will be considered individually and dealt with as promptly as reasonably practicable.

12. Confidentiality and Personal Information

Information concerning a disability, health condition or other personal circumstances will be handled sensitively.

We will only request information where there is a legitimate reason for doing so.

Personal information will be handled in accordance with applicable data protection requirements and will only be shared where there is an appropriate and lawful reason.

Where information needs to be provided to a contractor to implement an agreed adjustment or adaptation, only information reasonably necessary for that purpose will be shared.

13. Raising a Concern or Complaint

Anyone who believes that they have experienced discrimination, unfair treatment or a failure to properly consider a reasonable adjustment can raise the matter with Richmond Estates Management Ltd.

Concerns will be considered and appropriate steps taken to investigate and resolve them.

Residents may also use the Zest House Complaints Procedure.

Complaints page:

<https://zesthouse.co.uk/complaints>

A resident or prospective resident will not be treated unfavourably because they have raised a genuine concern or complaint.

14. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually.

It may also be reviewed following:

- A change to relevant legislation.
- A change to the National Code.
- A significant equality or discrimination complaint.
- Identification of an accessibility issue.
- A significant request for an adaptation or reasonable adjustment.
- A material change to Zest House or its management arrangements.

Where appropriate, lessons from complaints, requests for reasonable adjustments and resident feedback will be used to improve the management of Zest House.

15. Related Documents

This policy should be read alongside:

- Resident Handbook.
- Tenancy Agreement.
- Complaints Procedure.

- Health & Wellbeing information.
- Building Security Plan.
- Building Emergency and Disaster Management Plan.
- Relevant privacy and data protection information.

The Zest tenancy documentation specifically identifies the Equality and Diversity Policy as information residents will be provided with or directed to.

16. Document Control

Document: Equality & Diversity Policy

Property: Zest House

Responsible Organisation: Richmond Estates Management Ltd

Date Issued: _____

Version: _____

Reviewed By: _____

Next Review Date: _____

Signature: _____