

## Policy Briefing: Proposal to increase security and CCTV installation at student halls

29/11/2022

Audience: Welfare and Community Zone

### What is the current situation at UCL related to this proposal?

There is currently CCTV installed at nearly all UCL student halls. According to UCL's accommodation webpage, 25 out of 28 student halls have CCTV. Two that don't – John Tovell House and Arthur Tattersall House – are directly opposite the main Bloomsbury campus which might explain why the University do not feel additional CCTV is necessary. The third that doesn't – Bernard Johnson House – is located away from campus in East Finchley.

All the halls, with the exception again of Bernard Johnson House, have 24/7 support in the shape of Hall Wardens and Student Resident Advisors (SRAs). SRAs are recruited from the UCL postgraduate student community and live amongst students. An SRA is on duty every night from 6pm-8am, including throughout weekends and holidays. They are there to provide support in emergency situations, as well as playing a wider role with pastoral support and helping students settle in their halls. Hall wardens are UCL members of staff who also live in the halls and are there to provide support.

The UCL security team are also available 24 hours a day, providing emergency response within the campus area as well as monitoring CCTV and alarms. They can be reached through the Safe Zone app or on the emergency contact number 02076792222. At some UCL halls – John Dodgson House, New Hall, Goldsmid House, Ian Baker House, James Lighthill House, and Ramsay Hall – night porters are in place. Night porters are security who are on shift at the reception of the halls overnight.

The policy proposal says that if students lose their phones, they may have to wait 40 minutes for security to come round as part of their regular rotation. If they are called or contacted through the app the response time is much quicker.

The proposal cites a petition calling for permanent security to be brought in at student halls. At the time of submission, it had gathered 29 signatures from students living in Endsleigh Gardens and John Adams Hall. This represents 15.7% of the students living at those two halls.

### What would change if the policy was successful?

Additional security measures would be put in place at student halls. This could include CCTV being installed at the two campus halls where it is not currently in place or additional night porters at large student halls.

Additional security could have the benefit of helping students living in those halls feel safer and get quicker access to emergency support from security guards. It could be argued, however, that it is not an efficient use

of resources to have security stationed at all UCL halls, and that the system with SRAs and security stationed on campus ready to provide emergency support is sufficient. It would also cost UCL substantially more to have more security guards stationed as night porters in student halls, raising the question of where funds would be allocated from.

Some student halls are intercollegiate and managed by the University of London or managed directly by the private property management corporation Unite Students. UCL does not have control over the security arrangements for these halls, although could lobby for changes to be made.

What is the relevant national / international context to this situation?

N/A

Are there any legal implications to this policy proposal?

N/A

Does this relate to any existing SU policy?

N/A

Are there any financial, resource or stakeholder / public relations issues with this policy proposal?

N/A

Are there any sustainability implications to this item for discussion?

N/A

Are there any equity and inclusion implications to this item for discussion?

N/A

What would the next steps be if the proposal passed?

Students Union UCL would lobby the UCL accommodation team for additional security measures to be put in place at student halls. This could include CCTV being installed at the two campus halls where it is not currently in place or additional night porters at large student halls.