**Unipol House Hunting Behaviour Survey 2025 – Project Brief**

**About Unipol**

Unipol is a specialist National student housing charity based in Leeds, established in 1975 by the University of Leeds and Leeds Beckett University and their respective Students’ Unions. Its mission is to make student housing better.

Since then it has expanded and now operates an approved code under the Housing Act 2004, the ANUK/Unipol National Codes for providers of purpose-built accommodation which cover 400,000 beds.

It also provides sector training, student advice, research and is also a housing provider to 3,500 students.

**Project Aims & Objectives**

With the Renters’ Rights Bill making its final steps through Parliament Unipol has decided to carry out some research through a survey to look at student house hunting behaviour.

The timing of this survey is important in that it will form a baseline set of results prior to the adoption of the impending Renters’ Rights Bill, and will help to inform both best practice in supporting students with finding housing and also assist institutions in carrying out a housing needs assessment and their strategic planning.

The main aim of this project is to understand students’ perception towards house hunting at a critical point before significant policy change. This survey will look at student’s key considerations when looking for housing, when they choose to both look and sign for housing, and their knowledge of advice and support available to assist with this process.

Across the range of insights, this survey seeks to understand, each will inform a larger piece on student housing support within the context of the educational experience:

* House hunting process – Covers priorities, preferred property types, number of houses viewed, and timing of the search.
* Decision-making & reflections – Includes what students would change in hindsight and reasons behind their final property choice.
* Rent & affordability – Looks at current rent paid, what’s considered affordable, whether rent includes bills, and perceptions of rising costs.
* Contract awareness – Encompasses contract checking, use and issues with guarantors, and knowledge of rights under the Renters’ Rights Bill.
* Living arrangements – Who students live with, how groups form or change, and if they leave tenancies early.
* Property search methods – Use of information/advice, role of social media, and Unipol’s involvement in relevant cities.
* Tenancy details – When contracts are signed, tenancy start/end dates, and patterns around early departures.
* Commuters – why are students commuting, and how does this impact the student experience
* Cost of living and affordability – how much do students work, and why are they working?
* Demographics – how does region, level of study, domicile and other characteristics shape and affect the student housing journey

This survey will learn from the previous years but will contain a broader set of questions and enable us to measure and identify trends over time.

**Benefits for Participating Universities**

Taking part in the house hunting behaviour survey offers universities valuable insights into students' housing experiences, challenges, and preferences. The findings can inform policy, support services, and accommodation strategies—helping to enhance student satisfaction, wellbeing, and retention.

Your participation contributes to a stronger evidence base for improving the student housing journey.

**How to Participate**

All universities in England are invited to participate. This survey should be made available to all students at the University, regardless of whether they commute or live away from home during term time as we want to capture a full picture of what student living means in 2025.

Participating Universities will be provided with a survey link to disseminate to their students. Social media and promotional assets will also be provided to assist with this.

**Please register your interest** [**HERE**](https://www.unipol.org.uk/advice/students/house-hunting-behaviour-survey-2025/) **and one of the survey team will be in touch shortly**

For any questions or further information, please contact Jess Carrier [j.carrier@unipol.org.uk](mailto:j.carrier@unipol.org.uk)

**Timetable**

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| May to end June | Survey launch, fieldwork, data collection, periodic progress updates |
| End June | Data collection complete  Reporting and analysis, including analysis of previous data  Quantitative analysis and reporting begins |
| Mid August | Draft reporting concluding |
| Early September | Launch |