

THE RISE OF STUDENT LETTINGS

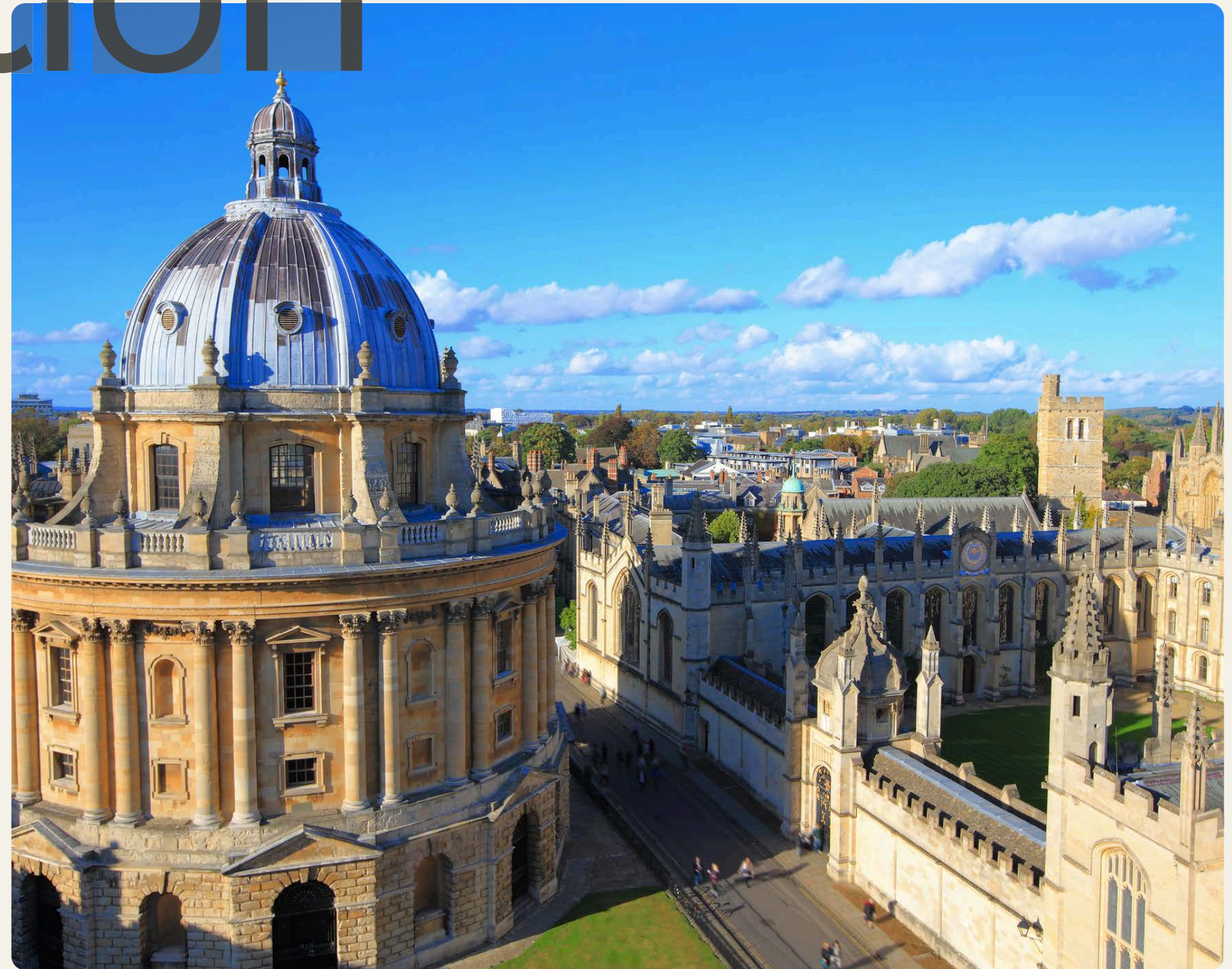


*A practical guide for property investors,
landlords, and developers navigating
the student housing market*

Introduction

The UK continues to lead as the educational hub for students across the globe with its premier universities, rich cultural heritage, and unparalleled academic opportunities. From the historic halls of Oxford and Cambridge to leading institutions in London, Manchester, and Edinburgh, the UK brings a blend of tradition and innovation to its students and their educational experience.

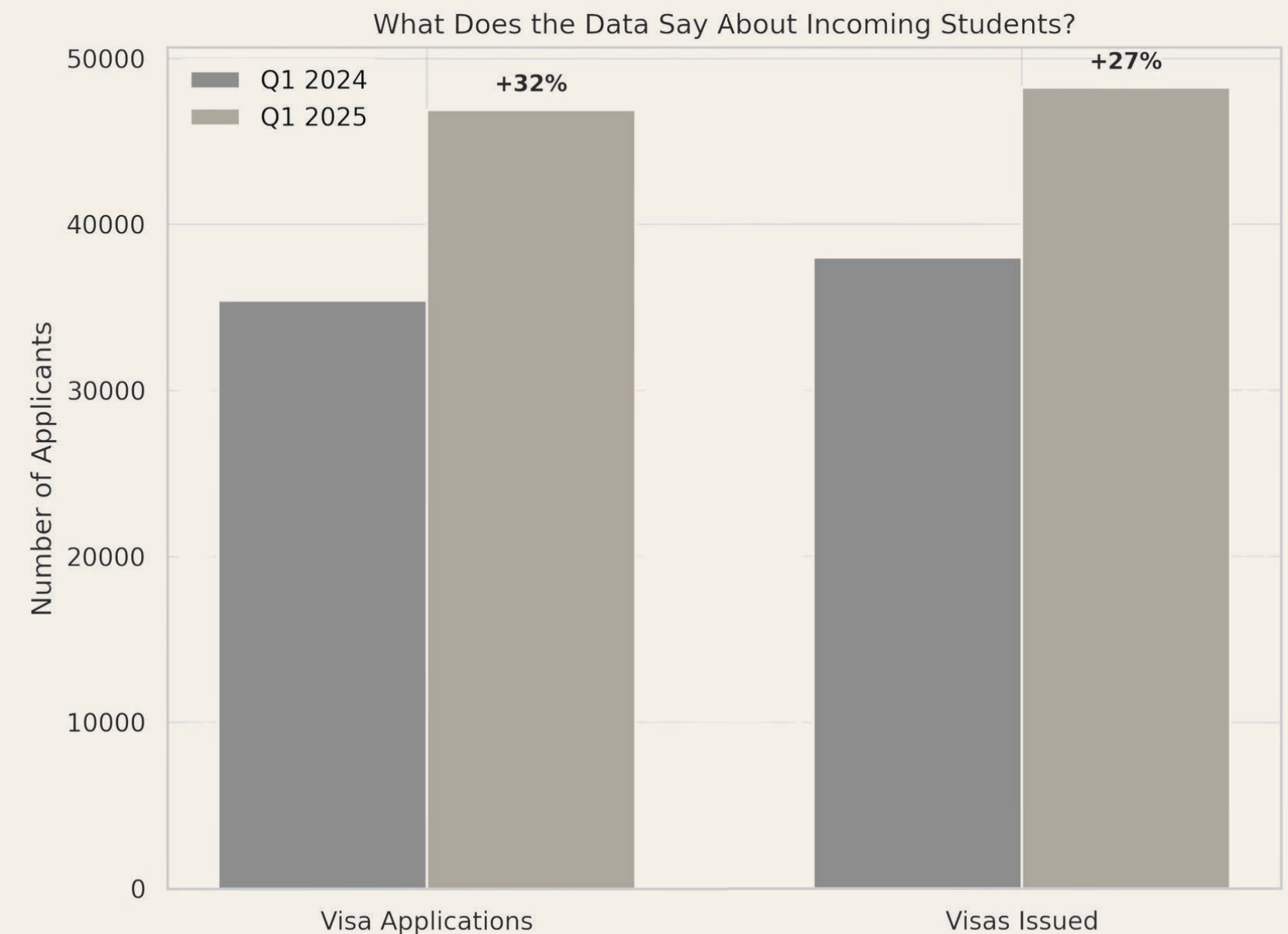
The UK also offers its global students standout research facilities, short-term educational programs and a great chance to network with international students and markets. The graduate route visa also allows students to work for up to three years after successfully completing their degree, making the UK an ideal education destination for students.



What does the data say about incoming students?

According to a data analysis done by UK independent think tank HEPI, there is a recovery rate in Q1 2025, and it's off to a stronger start than 2024, with nearly a 32% increase in application and a 27% increase in visas granted in 2025. The issuance rate in both of these quarters was 88%, meaning the increased number of issued visas reflects stronger demand rather than changes in approval rates.

- Q1 2025 Applications: Nearly 47,000 main applicants (+32% vs Q1 2024)
- Q1 2025 Issuances: Over 48,000 students issued visas (+27% vs Q1 2024)
- Strong approval rates: 88% issuance rate maintained in both quarters
- Broad-based recovery: 14 out of 22 major source countries showed growth



Source: HEPI analysis and UK Home Office Immigration Statistics

Cities that students prefer



London attracts the highest number of international students, and some of the top choices amongst students are Imperial College London, University College London (UCL), King's College London, and the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).



Manchester attracts close to 40,000 students at the University of Manchester, and nearly about 38,000+ students at Manchester Metropolitan University, offering a wide range of educational & vocational programs, easy transport links, and a thriving student life.



Birmingham is another city students prefer for multiple universities and excellent transportation links. Cities like Nottingham, Bristol, and Leeds also remain some of the top choices for students, offering specialised programs and a vibrant student life.

Supply and demand in student housing

While the UK is expecting an increased number of international students in the coming August–September, student-ready accommodations are still catching up to demand. According to Knight Frank data, the supply shortage caused rents to rise by 8% in 2024.

Many properties in prime student areas suffer from poor furnishings, outdated appliances, or a lack of modern amenities that today's students expect. It also presents an opportunity for landlords who understand the student-market demands and invest in professional presentation. Properties that meet student expectations consistently outperform—letting faster and commanding premium rents.

According to research done by Savills, UK PBSA (Purpose-built student accommodation) investment reached £3.5 billion in 2024 - a 13% increase compared to 2023. The sector will continue to see this growth in 2025/26.

Properties that focus on student needs can command rental premiums of 15-25% compared to standard furnished properties, with faster lettings and minimum void periods.



What students & their families expect today

Today's international students and their families make substantial educational investments, which can which can exceed £30,000 annually in tuition fees. Families and students are looking for accommodation that matches up to the quality: a space that is comfortable, functional, tech-equipped, and supports their academic and personal needs.

Role of international parents in picking accommodation

International parents play an important role in selecting and researching properties for students, focusing on factors like proximity to institutions, safety, functionality, and immediate usability of the space. Premium rents can be seen as an important investment for their children's educational journey, given the property demonstrates attention to detail and care needed for their children. This creates an opportunity for landlords who understand the importance of meeting parents' expectations, which can help them with meeting the steady demand and premium pricing.



Must-have amenities at student accommodations



Furnishing checklist

- High-quality bedframe and mattress
- Ample storage including wardrobe
- Study table and ergonomic chair in a dedicated study area
- Proper window dressing for privacy and control lighting



Kitchen checklist

- Modern appliances like microwave, refrigerator, cooker, etc.
- Storage space for dining essentials
- Easy-to-clean surfaces

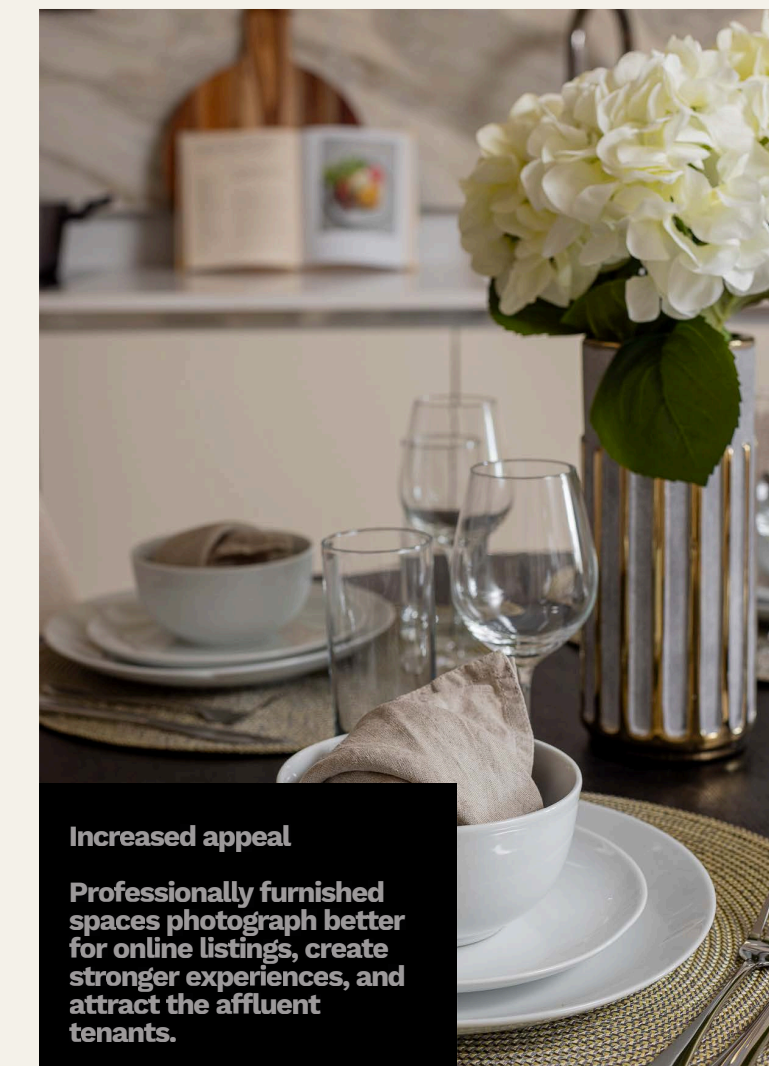
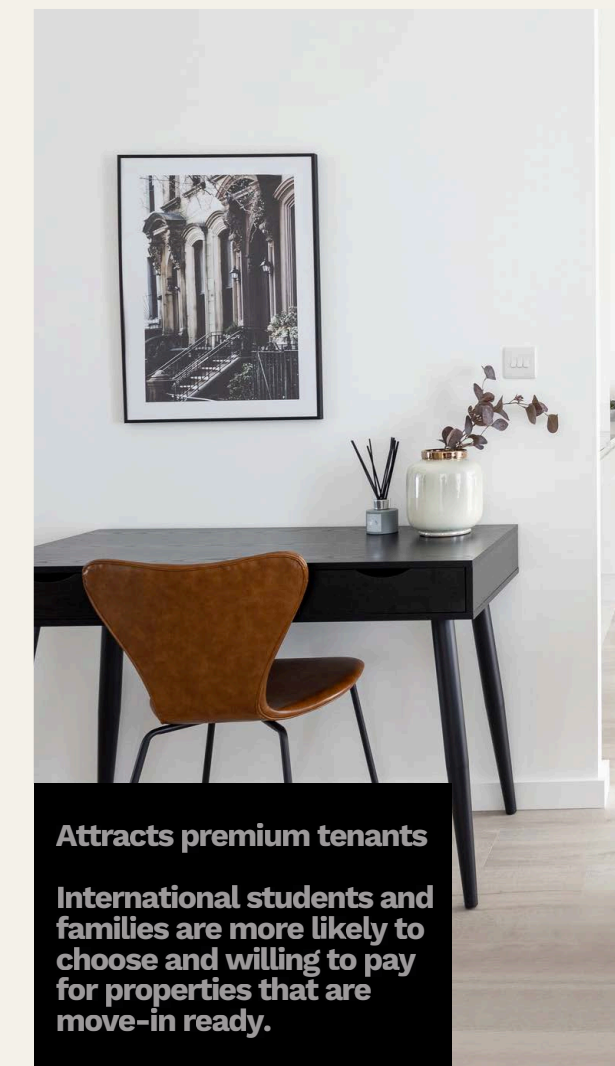
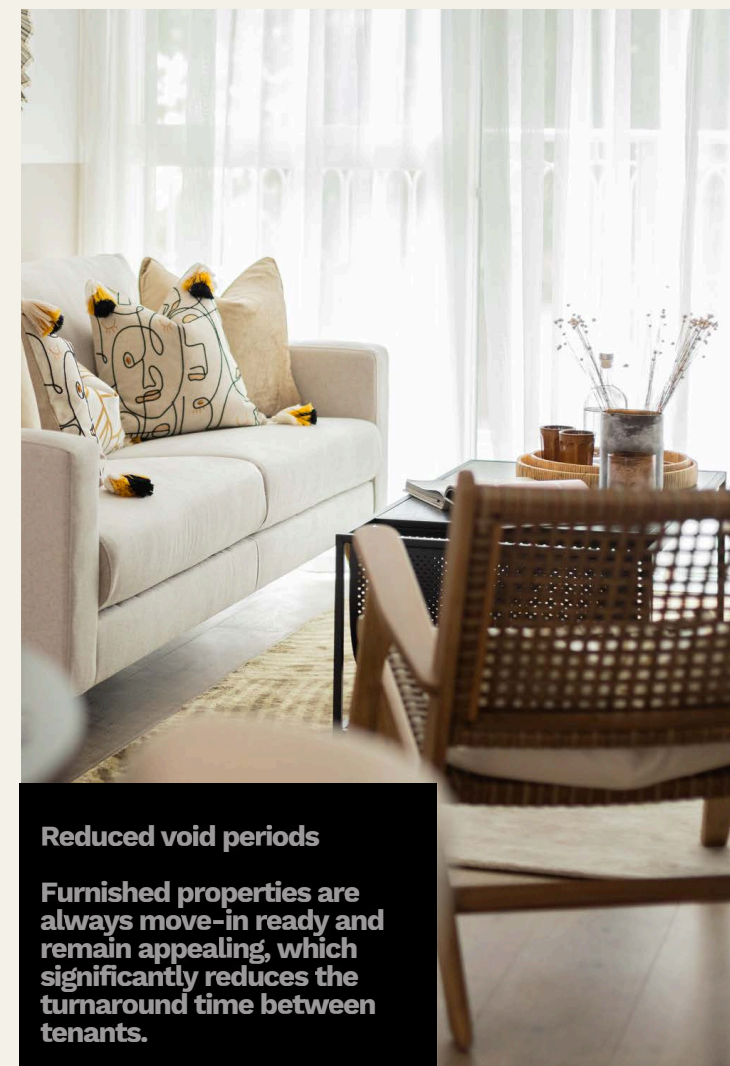
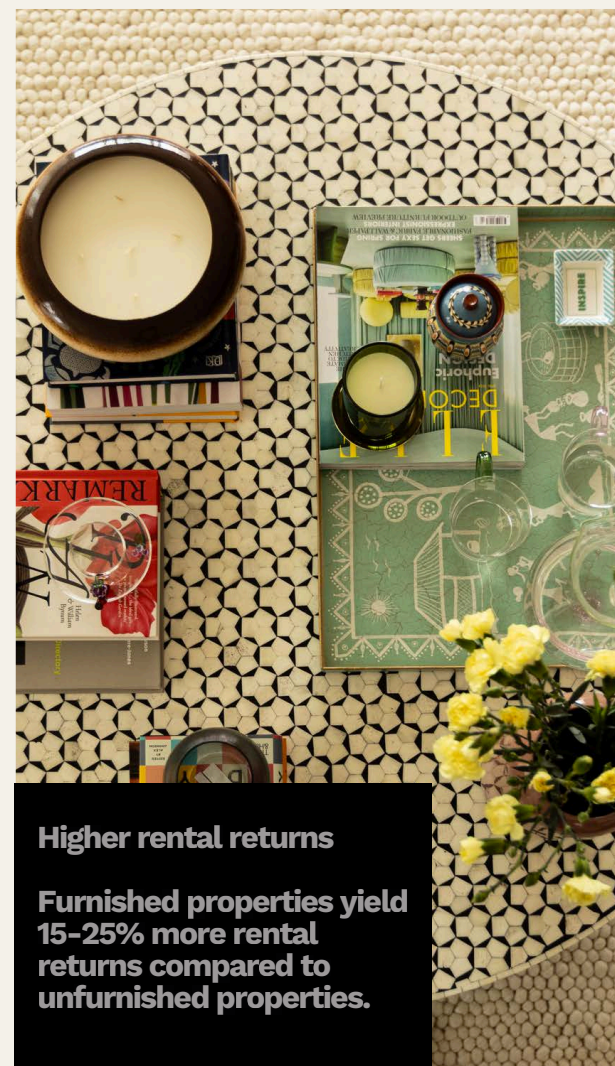


Other important checklist

- High-speed internet connection
- Ample lighting throughout the space
- Adequate modern electrical outlets near study areas and beds
- Heating systems

Why furnishing matters

The student accommodation market has a set cycle, with most lettings starting in the month of September as the new semester starts. The months leading up to September—especially summer—are crucial for landlords and investors securing quality tenants, and reducing void periods.



Tailored student furniture packs: The smart solution

Furnishing your student accommodation doesn't have to be slow, DIY, or stressful if you collaborate with the right partner. Our tailored student accommodation furniture packages ensure a seamless setup experience for landlords, overseas parents, and investors.

Faster turnaround: Most properties are furnished within 24-48 hours (depending on stock availability), ideal for landlords working within tight timelines.



Student-focused designs: Furniture that is durable, easy-maintenance, and practical for a student's lifestyle.



Complete support: From installation to ethical waste removal, we provide a complete, end-to-end service that's cost-effective and quick to deliver.



Flexible options: Starting from £3,395 + VAT, our design-led furniture packages offer complete, customisable solutions for student housing.



Case Studies

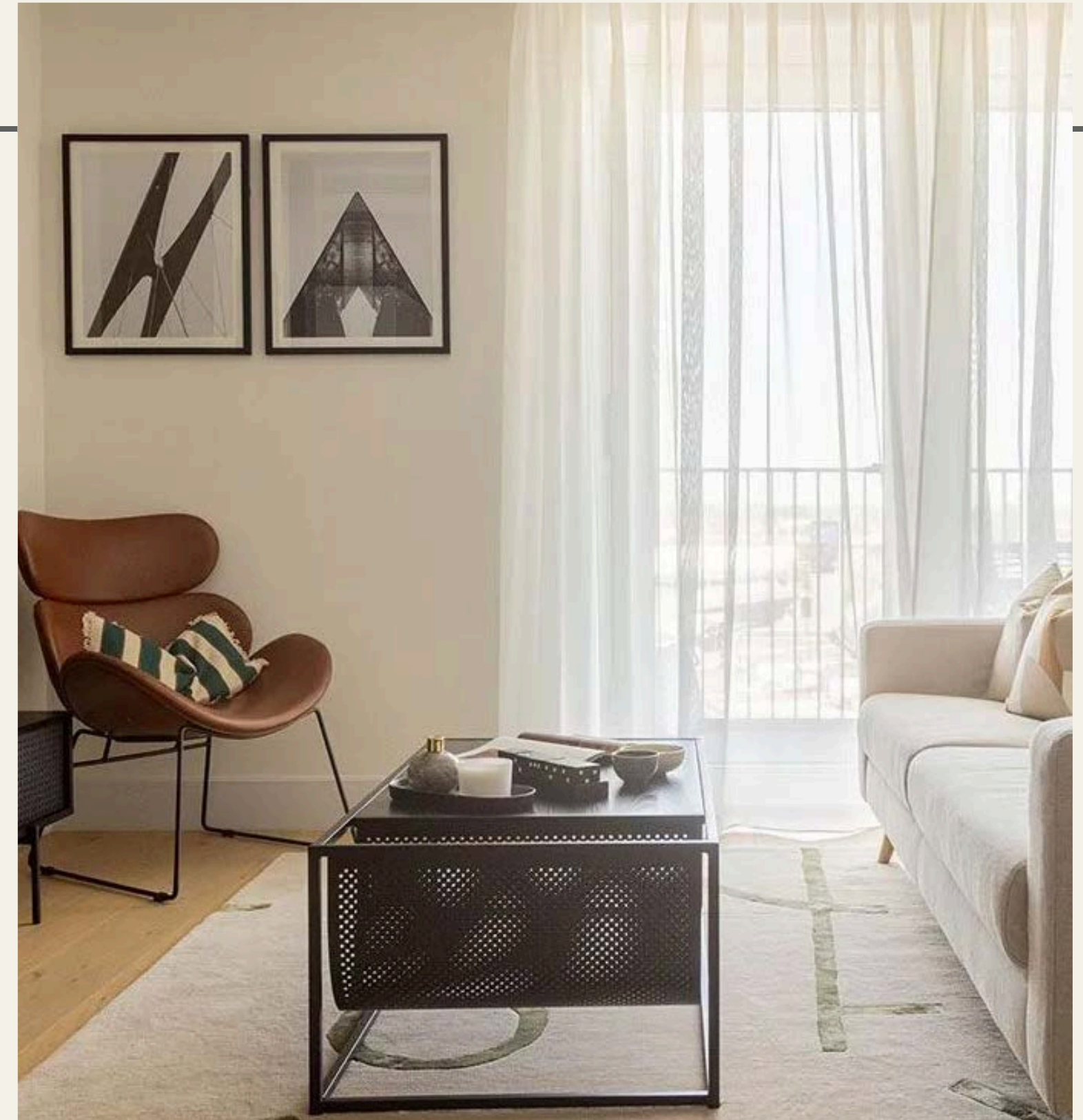
Here's a snapshot of a few case studies followed by real testimonials from happy clients showcasing some of our projects that resulted in quick lettings.

Three Lets secured in 1 week

Our client needed to furnish three adjacent units to achieve a rapid turnaround on lettings despite marketing efforts beginning before furniture installation. With our intervention the void periods were reduced and three units were let by high-calibre clients within a week.

“If a swift let is desired, the furniture package from InStyle Direct is the way to go.” — The Estate Agency that rented the units stated.

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Case Studies

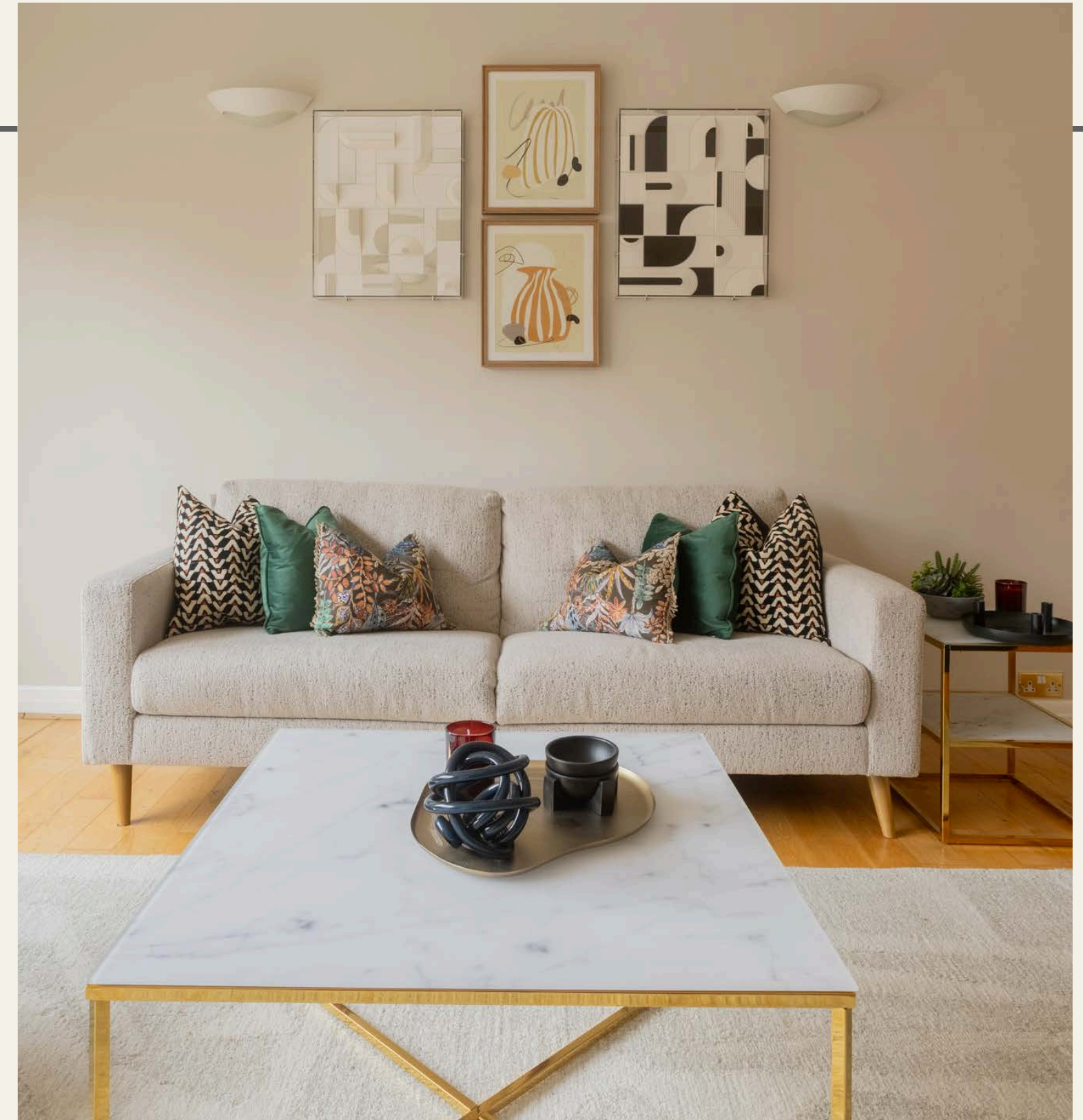
41% rent boost in just one week in SW7

When a two-bedroom flat in SW7 needed a quick uplift, we delivered smart cosmetic refurbishments and design-led furnishings in under one week—reviving joinery, updating finishes, improving lighting, and installing tailored FF&E. The transformation resulted in the very first viewer agreeing to rent at the new rate: a stunning jump from £3,400 to £4,800—a 41% increase in rent achieved within days and virtually no void period.

“This was a fast-paced project with no room for delays. By combining light refurbishment with smart furnishing choices, we were able to completely shift the rental potential of the property in under a week,” said Amar Tufail, Associate Director at InStyle Direct.

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Here’s another example showing how strategic updates can drive significant rental uplift.



Tips to attract student tenants

Location still reigns

Proximity to universities, transport links, supermarkets, and social spots significantly increases appeal—highlight these in your listings.

Offer flexible lease terms

Many students prefer 9- or 12-month contracts to match academic calendars. Consider including flexibility for early or mid-year intakes.

Make safety a selling point

Install secure locks, smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors, and if possible, a video intercom. Reassurance matters.

Keep it clutter-free

Students want functional, low-maintenance spaces. Avoid over-styling and focus on clean layouts with just the essentials.

Respond quickly to maintenance

Fast, reliable maintenance is a top priority for students and parents. A responsive landlord builds trust and reduces complaints.

Tips to attract student tenants

Include bills in rent where possible

Bundled bills (utilities, internet) simplify budgeting for students and make your listing stand out from the rest.

Showcase in good light

Professional photos and virtual tours—ideally taken in natural light—go a long way in attracting student enquiries, especially for overseas tenants.

Highlight study-friendly features

If your property has quiet zones, good sound insulation, or blackout curtains—shout about it. These small details matter to student tenants.

Don't do it alone

If you're short on time or unsure how to make your property student-ready, working with a furnishing partner like InStyle Direct can help you get it let faster—with tailored solutions, fast turnarounds, and stress-free setup.

Petite touches = Big impact

Wall hooks, bedside shelves, or USB plug sockets can make a space feel more student-friendly without major cost.



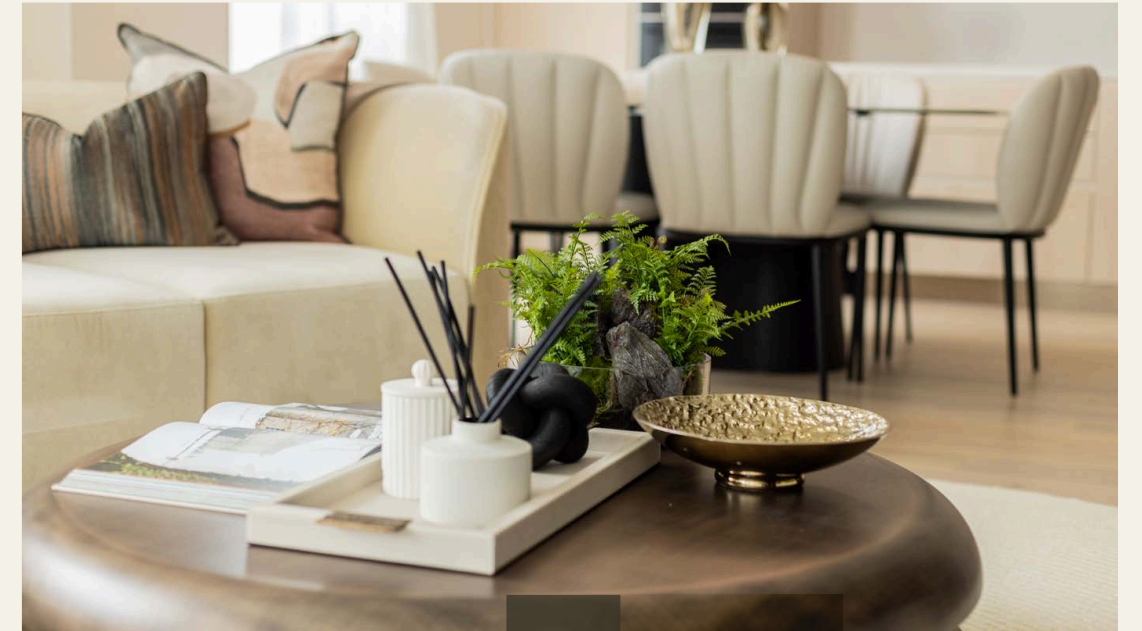
HOW WE CAN HELP



The student accommodation market is steadily going on an upward trajectory, and it presents exceptional opportunities for landlords and investors. With the 2025 academic year fast approaching, immediate action is required to capture this peak letting season demand.

Professional furnishings help your property stand out in this market. For over 20+ years, we have specialised in transforming properties for landlords, investors, and developers. We understand the unique market dynamics of student-led accommodations, with a deep understanding of overseas clients. Partner with us to get your property student-ready—on time, on trend, and with zero hassle.

Get In Touch



Ready to tap into the student housing surge? Get in touch to explore how we can help transform your property and position it for maximum rental demand.

+44(0) 20 8964 1966
sales@instyledirect.co.uk
instyledirect.com

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