

The design of student accommodation –
supporting their experience of university

Liz Pride and Michael Ritchie – MJP Architects

‘Many alumnae will have fond memories of their very own room when they first joined the College. Full of promise of the rich experiences to come, and a haven from the hectic round of lectures, supervisions, formals and sports.
A room of one’s own is a place to think and to grow.’

Murray Edwards College, Cambridge

2017



St. Jerome, In His Study

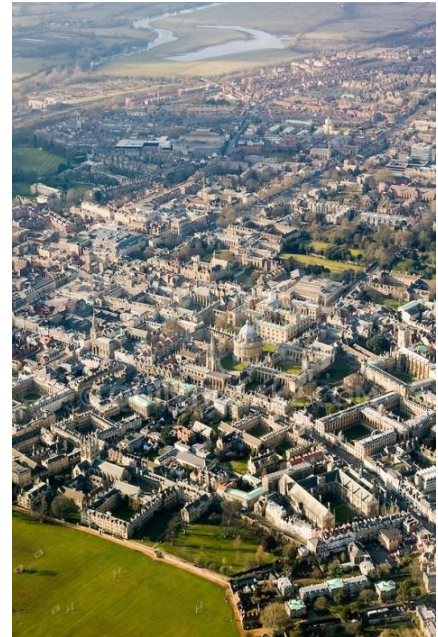


St. John's College Oxford, MJP Architects

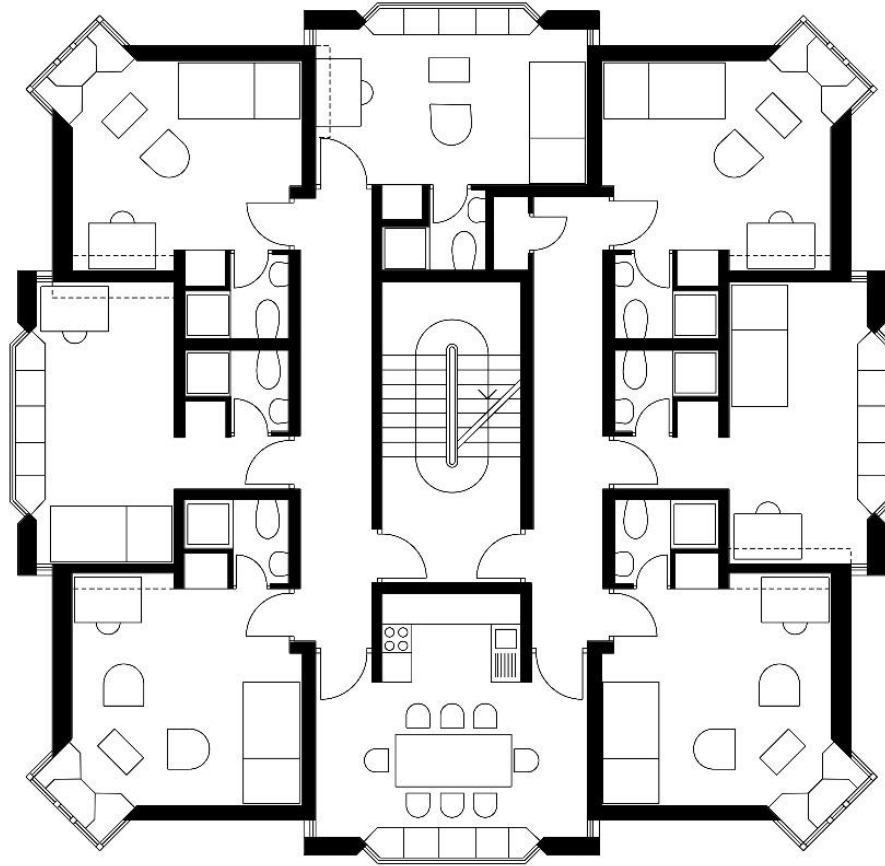
'A place to think and to grow'

Different arrangements of student accommodation:

- Staircase
- Hall/corridor
- Cluster flat
- Townhouse
- Tower block



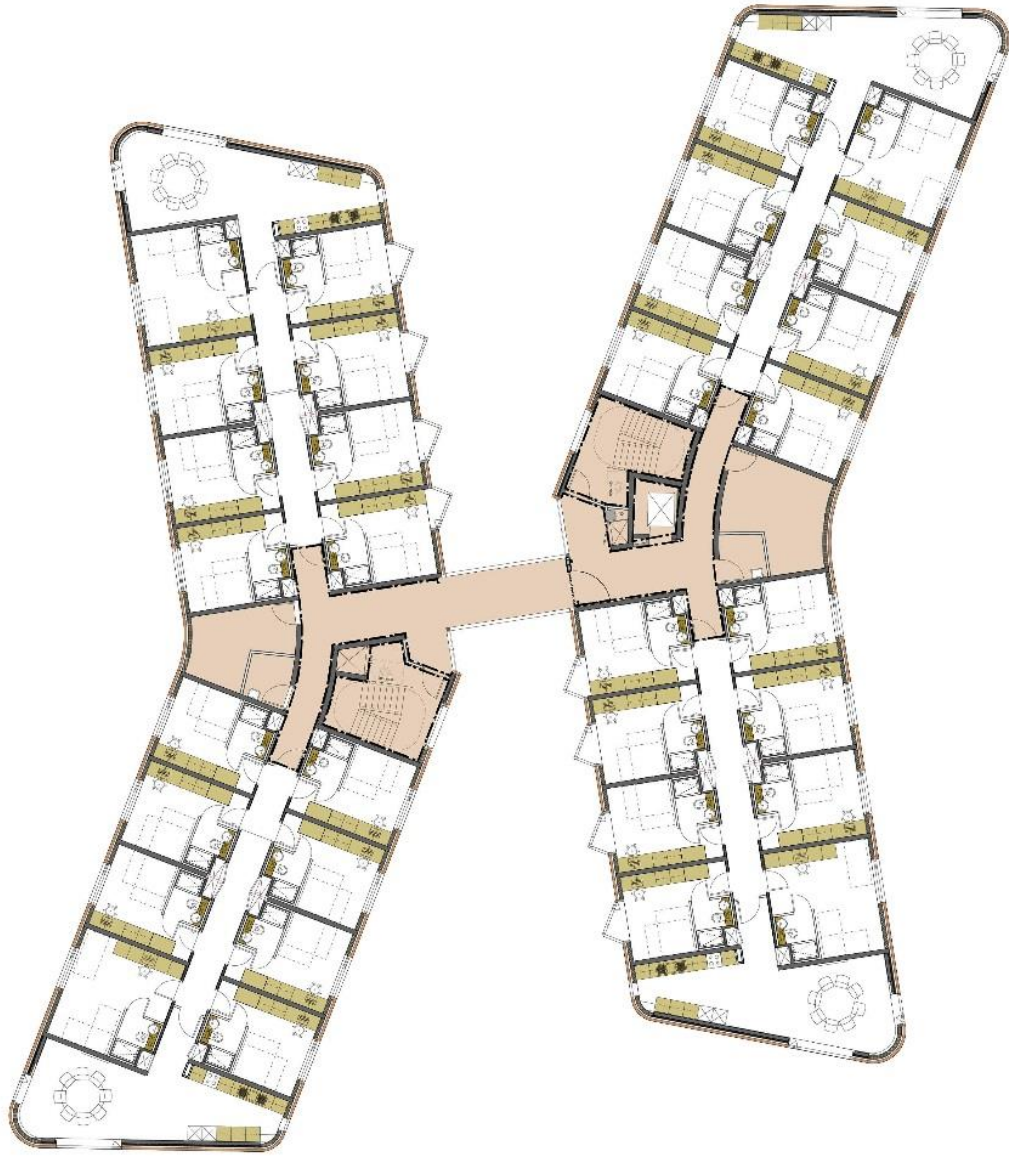
The quadrangle – an academic community



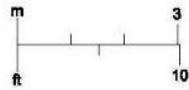
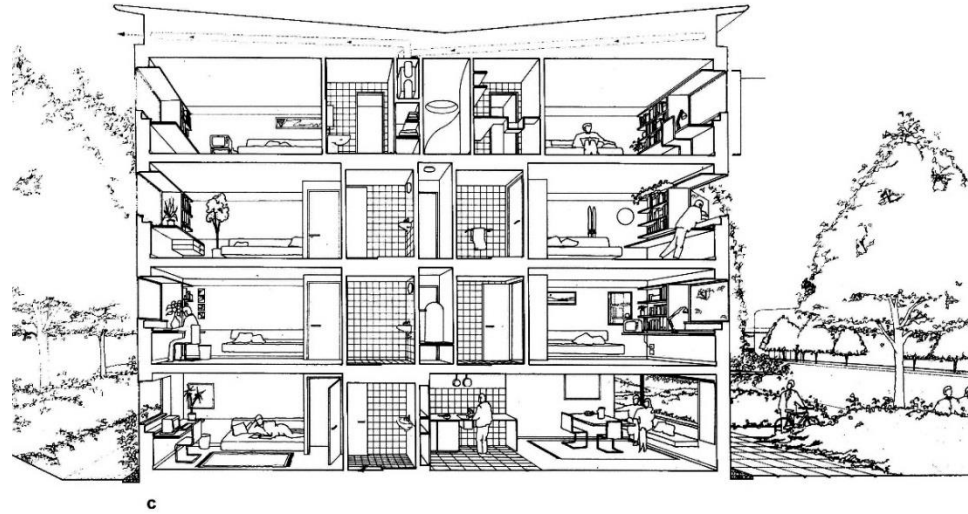
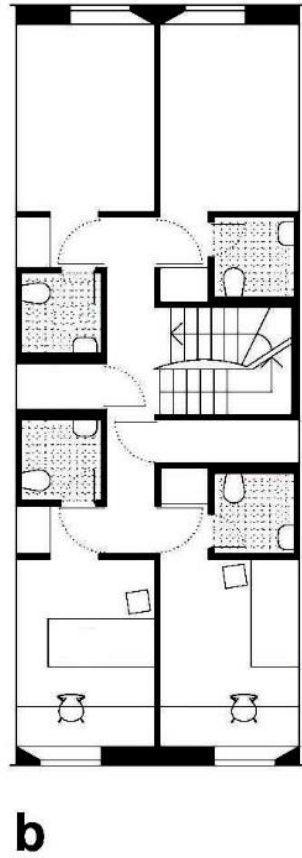
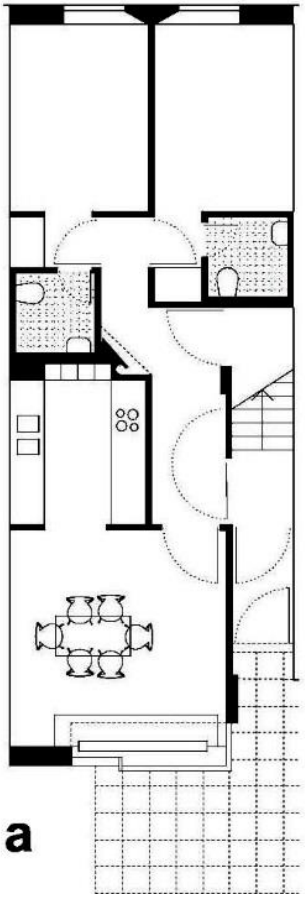
Staircase layout – Balliol College Oxford, MJP Architects



Corridor/hall layout – LHA Belvedere Place, MJP Architects



Cluster flats – University of Warwick, Page and Park Architects



Townhouse – University of East Anglia, Rick Mather Architects

Huge increase in accommodation by private providers:

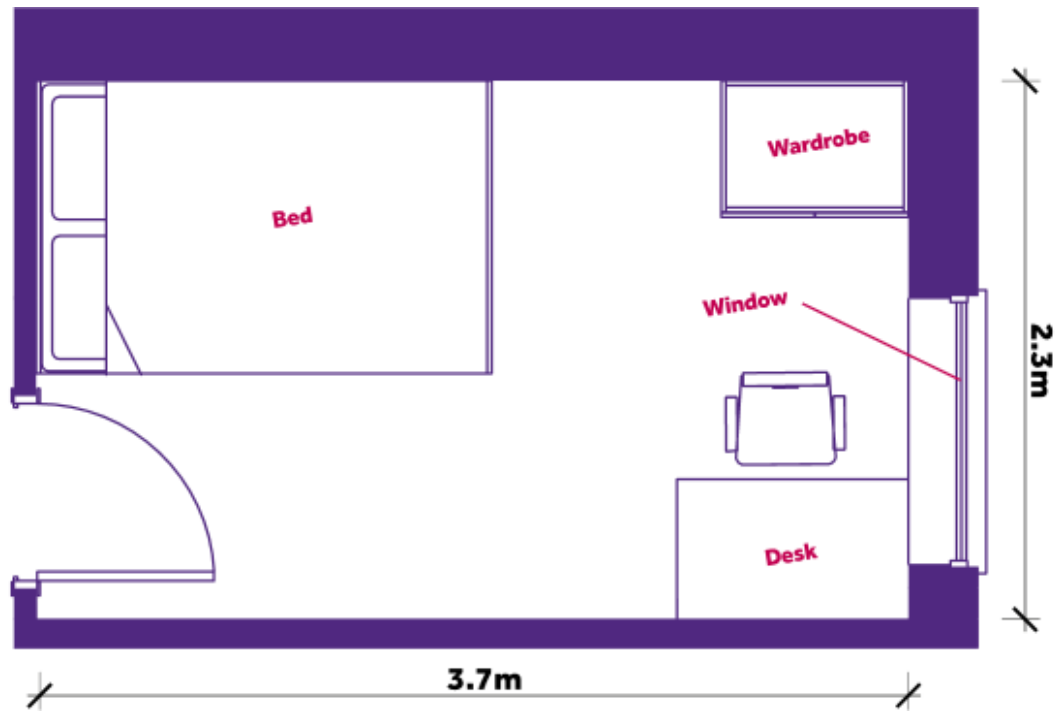
- Large blocks – some over 1,000 students
- Majority ensuite and studio rooms.
- Marketed as ‘luxury’ rooms, but generally small
- Emphasis on shared facilities: café, gym, study area etc
- Programme of social activities
- Students as customers. Marketing plays to student & parents concerns about making friends, being safe
- In 2015-16, average private provider rents ranged from £120-£250 per week across the UK, with rents up to £500 per week in London



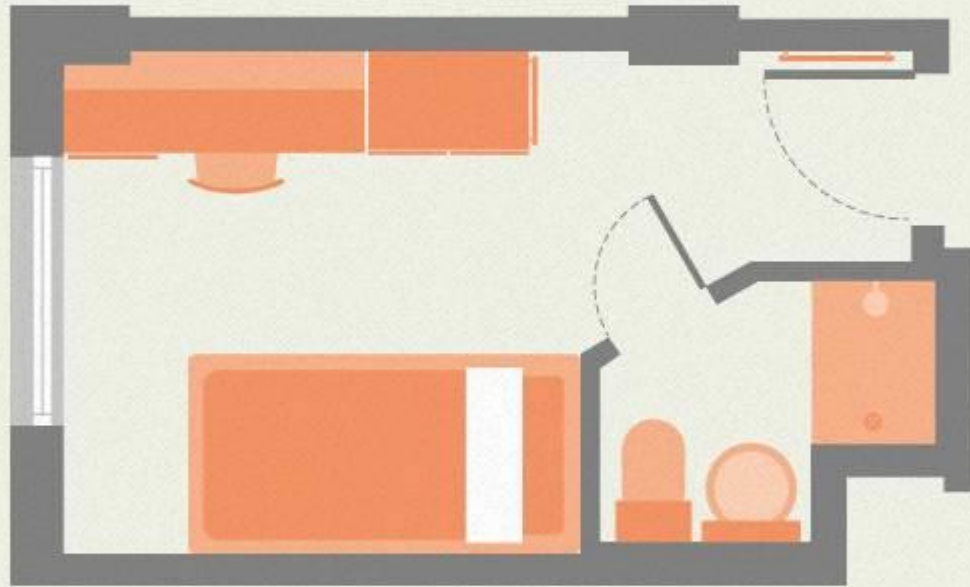
Towers – Urbanest Kings Cross, 669 rooms
Unite Portsmouth, 1,001 rooms
Unite Stratford, 951 rooms

Different types of student room:

- Single study bedroom – shares bathroom and kitchen/dining hall
- Ensuite study bedroom – shares kitchen/dining hall
- Studio – own bathroom and kitchen
- Shared study bedroom



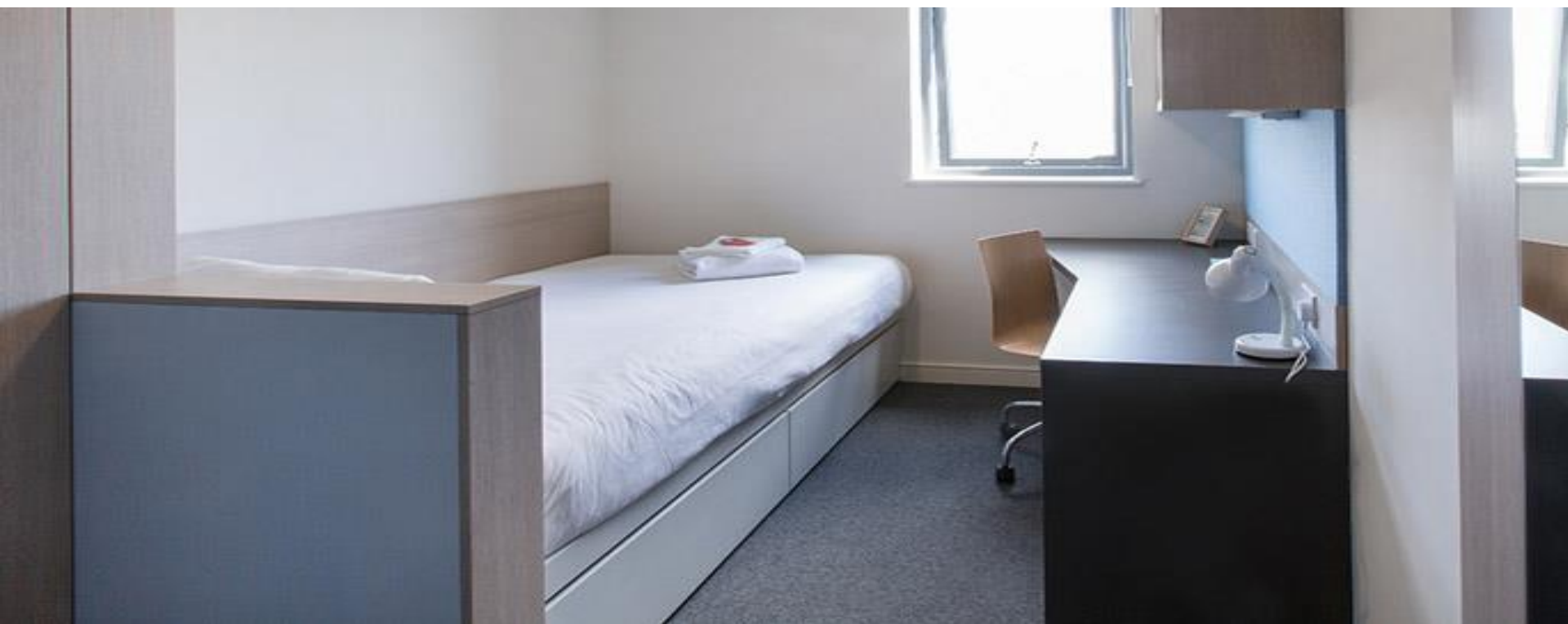
Non-ensuite – Liberty Living 8.5m²



Ensuite – University of London, 13m²



Ensuite – Liberty Living, Newcastle



Ensuite – Imperial College

CLIFTON HOUSE- BRONZE ENSUITE



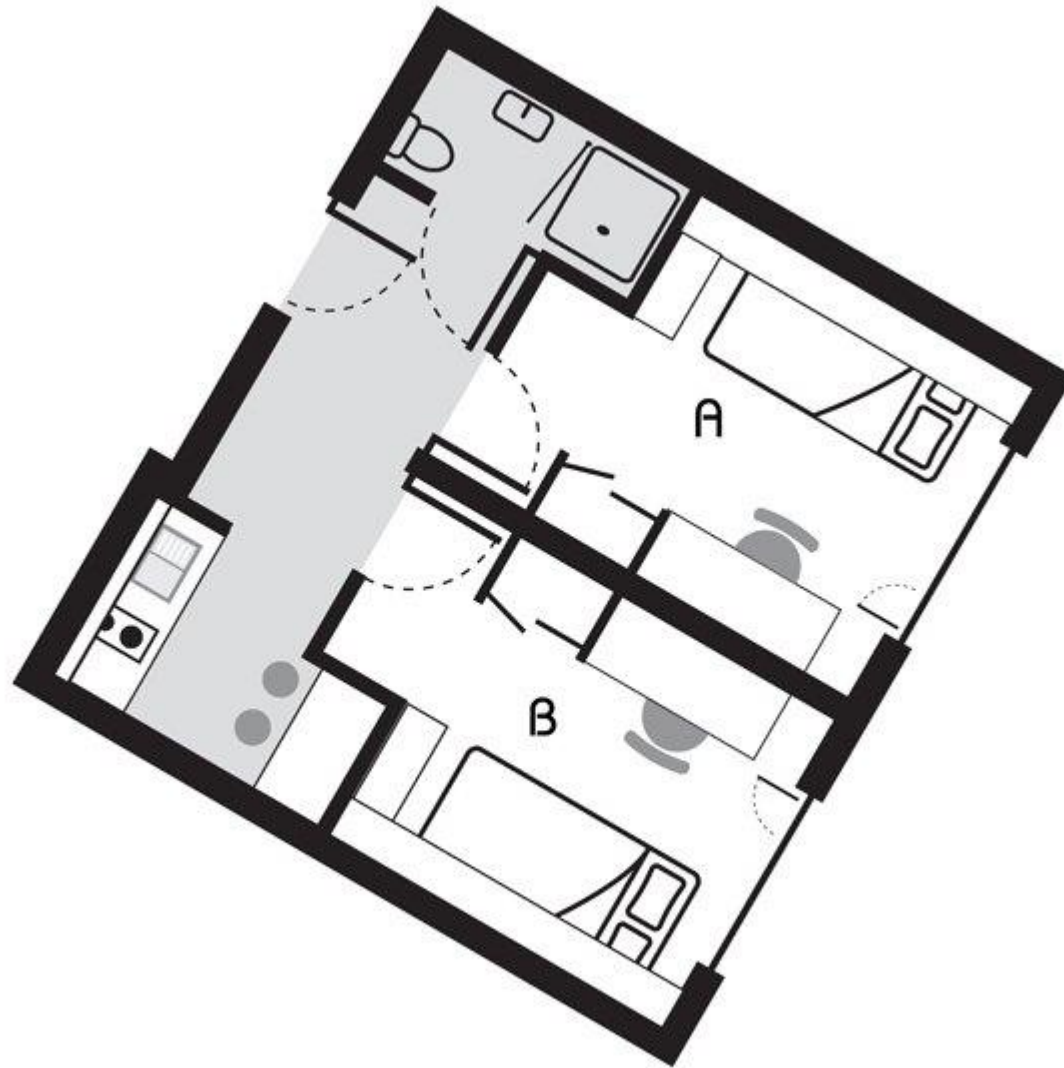
Ensuite – Livety, Glasgow, NORD Architects



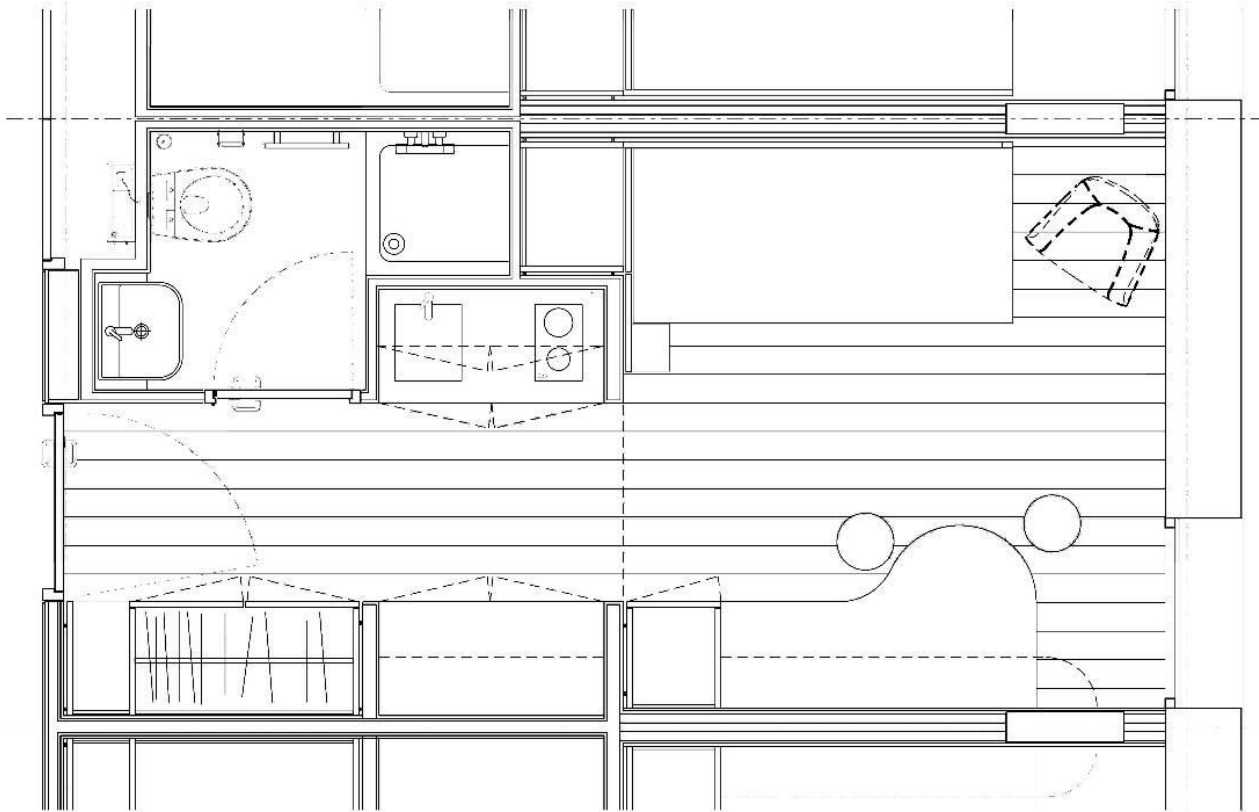
Ensuite – University of London, T P Bennett and Maccreanor Lavington



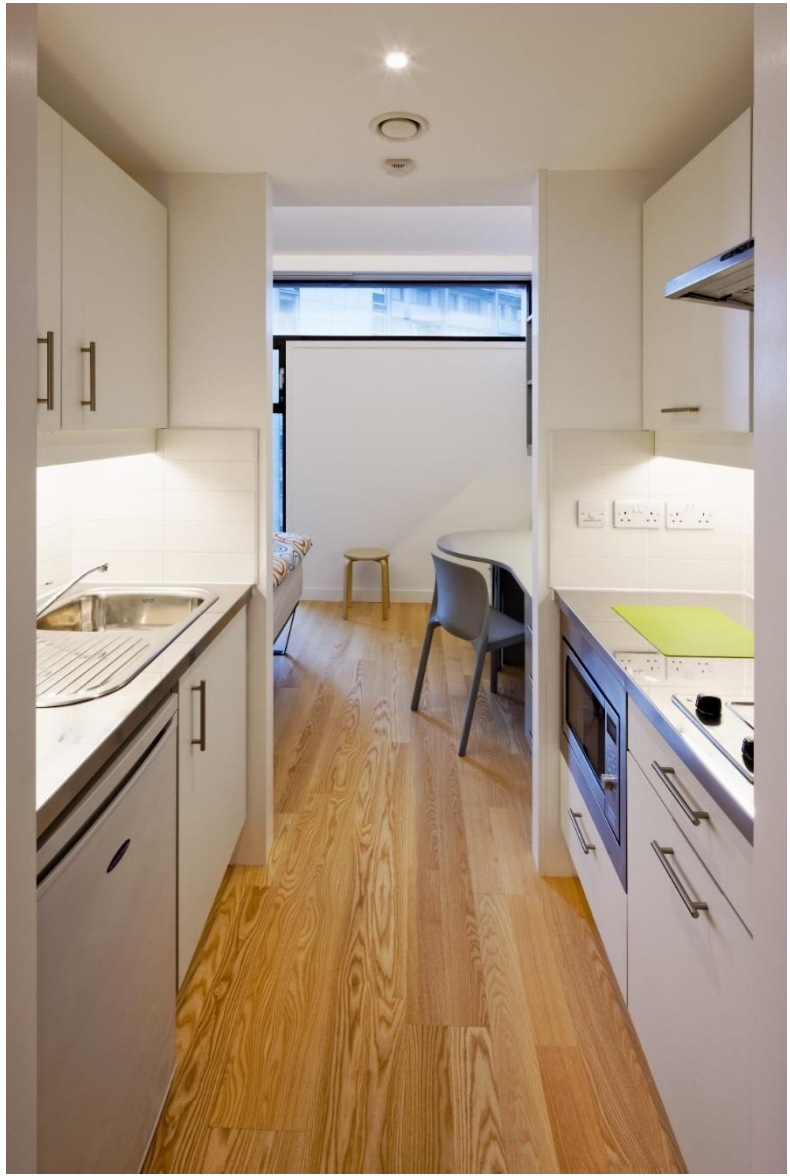
Ensuite - Urbanest, London, FCB Architects



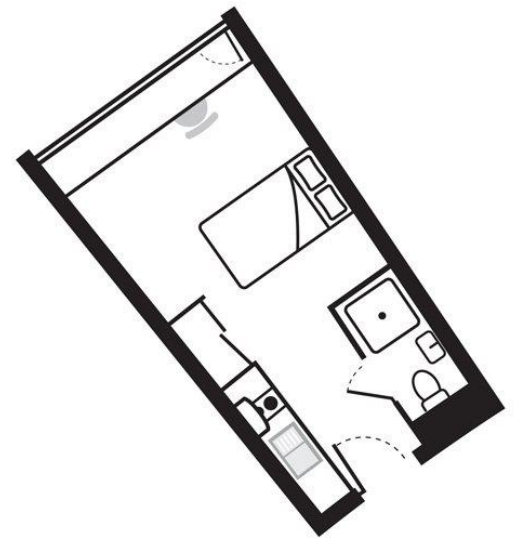
Non-ensuite flat for 2 - Urbanest, Westminster Bridge Road, AHMM



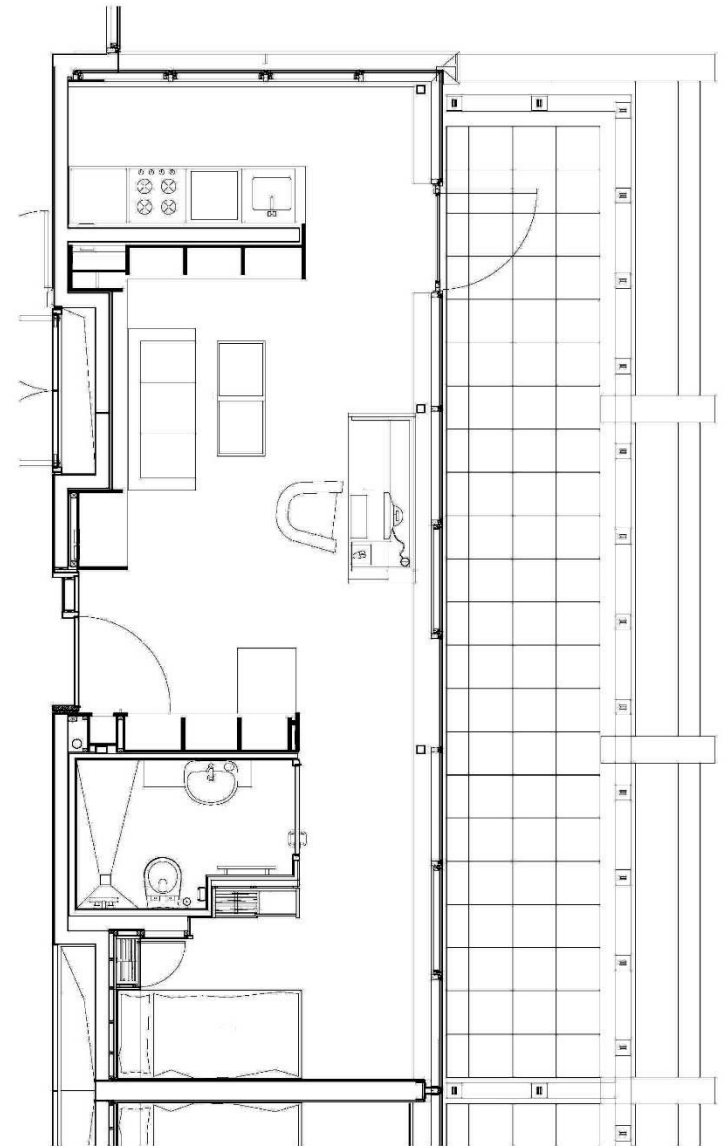
Studio – LHA Torquay House, MJP Architects



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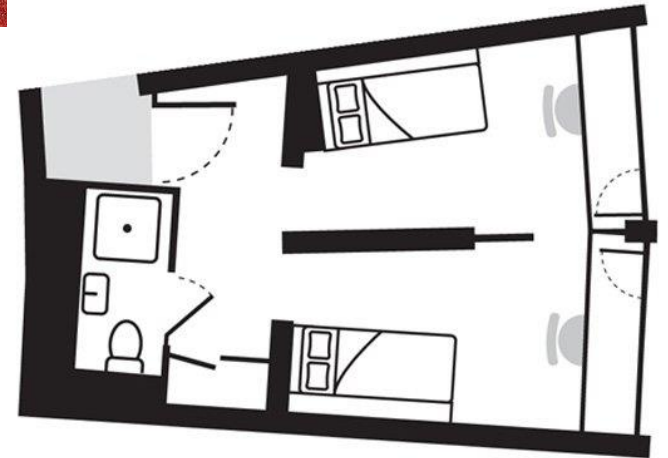
Studio flat - Urbanest, Westminster Bridge Road, AHMM



Studio with separated activities - St. John's College Oxford, MJP Architects



Twin ensuite room – Imperial College



Semi-shared room - Urbanest, Westminster Bridge Road, AHMM

Kitchens and dining halls:



Exeter College, Oxford



University of Nottingham, Jubilee Campus

Communal dining: social and academic exchange



Shared kitchens - townhouse at University of Lancaster, and with lounge area at Liverty, Glasgow



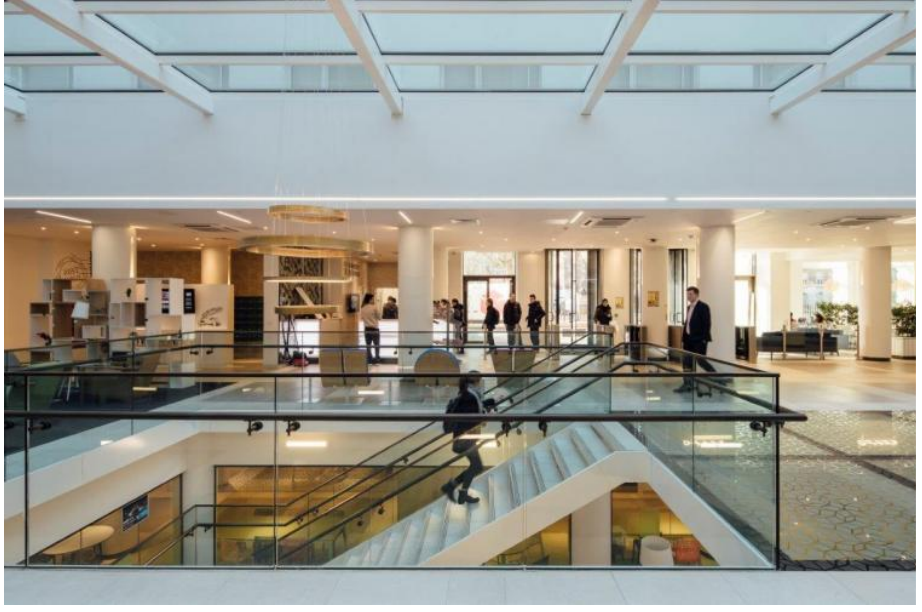
Communal Kitchen for 400 – University of Edinburgh, North Holyrood, JM Architects



Café - Urbanest, Kings Cross London, Glenn Howells Architects

Shared facilities:

- Study rooms
- Café, lounge, gym, computer room, pool and other sports facilities, cinema, games room, music room, spa, laundry, bike store...



Café/dining/study areas, entrance foyer – University of London, Garden Halls, TP Bennett/Macccreanor Lavington.



Competition for student customers: gym, cinema, games room

How design can make a difference in affordable accommodation:

- Scale
- Sense of community
- Places that invite interaction
- Character and identity



Scale: building form sub-divides 950 students into small communities – University of Surrey, MJP



Community and identity: central quod (with tree) create a focus - St John's College Oxford, MJP Architects



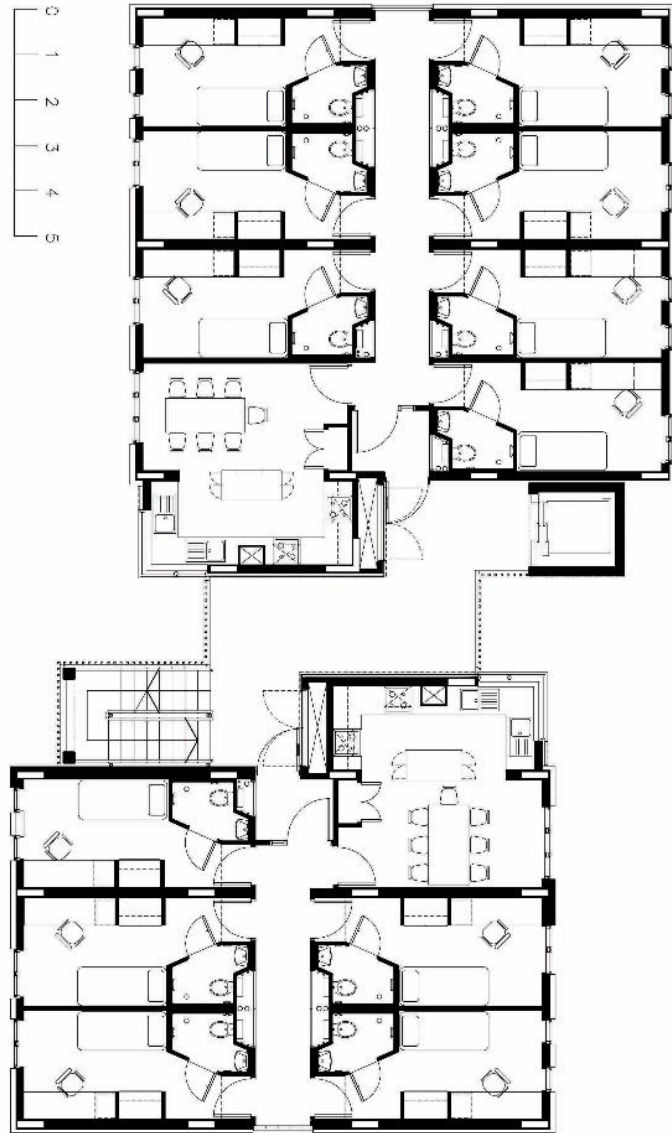
Community and interaction: colonnade concentrates movement and activity – University of Roehampton, MJP



Community and interaction: buildings form a sociable lane overlooked by kitchens and study bedrooms - Wadham College Oxford and Trinity College Cambridge, MJP



Community and interaction: tables at generous kitchen windows overlook public realm – University of Roehampton and St John's College Oxford, MJP



Community and interaction: cluster flats with shared stair and adjacent kitchens - Haworth Tompkins Architects



Sense of place and interaction: design of corridors and stairs invite interaction – Unienstede Student Housing, The Netherlands and University of Roehampton



Community and interaction: window seat with views to communal spaces - Jowett Walk, Balliol College Oxford, MJP



Community and interaction: window seat adds character – Royal Veterinary College, Hawkins Brown Architects



Character: daylight, views and finishes emphasise study area – St Antony's College Oxford, Bennetts Associates



Character: sleeping platform over ensuite bathroom



Identity and control: personalising your room to make a creative environment for study



Identity and control: let students adopt their space. Avoid institutional furniture, notices and clutter.



Identity: an environment for adults who are serious about their studies – lounge, Livity Glasgow, NORD Architects



Character: careful use of colour - Tietgenkollegiet, Copenhagen, Lundgaard-and-Tranberg



Character - daylight, lighting, colours and finishes – St Antony's College Oxford, Bennetts Associates



Character: range of complementary furniture to suit different preferences, but without visual chaos



Character: unusual features add character, but avoid gimmicks that will date – iCrave, New York



Character: consistent good design in all areas and attention to detail



External spaces: landscape that can be used - places to socialise, study and play, places for calm and contemplation.

Conclusion

- New models are needed for attractive affordable student accommodation
- Focus on facilities that support students as members of an academic community

Is it inevitable that the university will be reduced to the function of providing, with increasingly authoritarian efficiency, pre-packed intellectual commodities which meet the requirements of management?

Or can we by our efforts transform it into a centre of free discussion and action, tolerating and even encouraging “subversive” thought and activity, for a dynamic renewal of the whole society within which it operates?

E.P. Thompson
Warwick University Ltd
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