

LONDON

CONVENTION BUREAU

London Accommodation Charter Guidelines 2018

Overview & Introduction

This document has been created by London & Partners, the official Convention Bureau, to explain their service and process involved in securing blocks of accommodation across London for citywide events. London & Partners act as an intermediary between major hotel groups and individual hotels and clients/PCO's with a view to obtaining a consolidated number of rooms and rates for congresses of 2,000 delegates or over. It aims to act as a tool to promote London in the best way possible; including the most attractive rates for international business delegates when traveling to London for major events and congresses. Contracting and further negotiations surrounding legal terms and conditions will be conducted between the Hotel and Association/PCO/Agent directly – with the support of London & Partners if and when necessary.

All the points in this Charter document are to be used as guidelines and recommendations to support all parties involved in working towards a successful outcome.

Accommodation & Citywide Process – how it works

- Upon receipt of the brief from the Client, London & Partners will send out a request for blocks of hotel rooms and will include within this, an overview of the congress, including history, delegate numbers, and any other relevant information to help the hotel in assessing how many rooms they can allocate. This request will be sent to the most relevant contact at each hotel or hotel group to cascade to suitably located hotels within their portfolio.
- At this stage, the identity of the congress will be confidential as we will be in a bidding situation. Therefore, this will be done via reference code rather than the congress name in order to retain the confidentiality and for the official agency (PCO) to be able to secure rooms on a priority basis, before the announcement of the event coming to London.
- All Hotels will confirm their proposal by completing the form sent with the congress overview, which will include the number of rooms offered, the rate and other relevant information. It should be signed to commit to the offer and be returned to stallarico@londonandpartners.com.
- The rooms will be held by the Hotels for London & Partners until further such time as the event is either lost or confirmed. Once the event is confirmed and the PCO is appointed, London & Partners will communicate this to the relevant Hotels and hand over the block of rooms to the designated PCO/Housing Agent/Client.
- London & Partners will facilitate face to face introductions between the relevant personnel at the Hotels and the PCO/housing agent, thus facilitating initial engagement and assist with establishing the relationship between both parties. The Client/PCO/Housing Agent will then deal directly with the Hotels in order to firm up all contractual requirements.
- It will be the responsibility of the Client/PCO/Housing Agent to keep hotels informed regularly of booking trends and how the blocks are selling. Therefore,

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releasing any rooms that are unlikely to sell, and thus giving hotels opportunity to resell.

- In addition to the information and guidelines, the Association team at London & Partners can organise educational sessions for hotel reservation, sales and revenue teams to explain the association business and the bidding process, if required.

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THE CHARTER RECOMMENDATIONS

Rates

- All rates quoted are per room, per night for single and double occupancy and include breakfast* and VAT.
*budget hotels breakfast offering may vary.
- VAT is currently charged at 20% as at October 2017 but could be subject to change should this be altered by the Government.
- A supplement for triple occupancy or higher room category will apply.
- Rates quoted will be valid for the specific event dates only, including shoulder nights.
- In the case of a request for rates more than 18 months in advance, and if the Hotel is unable to quote that far out, then the rates can be submitted for the comparable dates in the following year with an annual applicable CPI inflation rate.
- On completion of the London & Partners accommodation form, all rates and room blocks will be held until such time as the event decision is made.
- The Hotel will do its utmost to protect the contracted accommodation rates and blocks which are relevant to the event dates within all respective booking channels, taking into consideration any agreements in place with Client/PCO/Agent and based on the materialisation of room blocks.

Commission

- All rates are inclusive of commission (at a recommended minimum of 8% +VAT on the VAT exclusive accommodation rate), unless specified otherwise by the Hotel at the time of quotation. Note - some budget hotels and university accommodation offer different or no commission.
- The Hotel will pay commission to those nominated housing agencies or PCO's after due diligence is carried out by the hotel to facilitate payment of such commission.
- If two or more agencies/PCOs are involved in the enquiry and booking process, commission will only be paid to the agency/PCO selected by the Client at the time of confirmation and notified to the Hotel in writing.
- Commission is payable on consumed accommodation only as per the commission percentage stated above and as agreed in the booking terms and conditions.
- Commission on cancellation charges is payable ex VAT.

Contracting Timescales

It is recommended that, once the congress is announced for London and a PCO has been appointed, it is of utmost importance that the room blocks are contracted as quickly as possible and within a year of the congress.

Given the amount of time the rooms may have been on hold, it is imperative that the housing agent or PCO works with the hotels in close collaboration to ensure timely and satisfactory contract is agreed and signed.

Pre-Contracting Allocation Reduction Schedule (Attrition)

- The terms of attrition will be negotiated with the Hotels directly at contracting stage. The Hotels are aware of the normal congress type allocation policy whereby rooms can be released without penalty up to 90 days/3 months in advance. **However, this will vary based on the number of rooms being held against the total room stock.**

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Due to the nature of allocation group bookings, here is a recommended schedule for holding rooms on option with the hotels:

90 Days	100%	May be cancelled with no penalty
60 Days (89 - 60 days)	50%	Of remaining room nights may be cancelled with no penalty
30 Days (59 - 30 days)	25%	Of remaining room nights may be cancelled with no penalty
7 Days (29 - 7 days)	5%	Of remaining room nights may be cancelled with no penalty
After 6 Days		Full Cancellations apply

Reverse Attrition

- Upon contracting, should the PCO release part of the bedroom stock held by the hotel, the PCO can at a later stage request the hotel to hold and contract other bedrooms under the same terms and rate as originally offered. **Note: this is subject to availability and size of the hotel, and only applies to the same room type originally offered or contracted.**

Group and Individual Bookings

- At the time of contracting, the Client/PCO/Agent must advise the Hotel the % of rooms that will be allocated to groups or individuals.
- For any client wishing to confirm and guarantee a specific group booking, i.e. for a headquarter hotel, the relevant Hotel's terms and conditions will apply and a separate Addendum to the contract will be issued if necessary.
- At the time of confirmation, some hotels may require a credit card guarantee to secure the booking. Please ensure the card expiry date is valid for the arrival date corresponding to the event dates. In all cases, guests will be required to provide a credit card upon check in.

No Shows

- Any rooms guaranteed for arrival that fail to arrive will be charged according to agreed contractual terms with the Hotel.
- Hotels will make best endeavours to resell the rooms, although full recompense will depend on the rates achieved and relevant booking channel fees.

Early Departure

- Charges for early departures will be at the discretion of the relevant Hotel.

Check-In/Check-Out

- Generally, check-in time is 2pm and check-out time is midday. Hotels will make Client/PCO/Agent aware of this at the time of contracting.

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Concessions

In order to enhance the Hotel offering, it is suggested that certain concession may be offered to a room block booking. The following are recommended:

- 1 complimentary room in 50 rooms booked and confirmed, maximum 6 rooms per room block
- Staff rooms offered at 50% off the group rate. Maximum 1 room for every 50 rooms confirmed within the block
- The hotels may offer a dedicated welcome desk in Reception depending on the size of the group staying in-house, discretionary by the Hotel.
- Complimentary access to the Business Centre
- Travel agency rates for hotel site visits, subject to availability (1 site visit with maximum 3 rooms), refundable on contract signature
- Complimentary WiFi
- Complimentary use of the hotel gym and pool – where applicable
- Group rates will be applicable three days prior to and three days post event, subject to availability
- Upgrades will be offered depending on the room block contracted

Data Protection and Protecting the Official Housing Rates

- In accordance with the Data Protection Act, the Hotels will not disclose the Hotel's entire in-house guest list to any third party. Upon request, the Hotels may provide a print out of the in-house guest list, related only to the contracted and reserved guests within the group allocation.
- The Hotels will make every endeavour to identify other third parties/agencies trying to book groups for the Congress outside of the official PCO. Where the Hotels will do their best to identify these agencies they are not required to refer agencies acting on behalf of Pharma companies or share name of guests staying at the Hotel.
- The Hotel will make every effort to ensure the Congress rate is the lowest group rate available and will not knowingly undersell to other third parties.
- The Hotel will endeavour to support each group where ever possible. However, it is possible that pre-agreed and contracted corporate rates as well as those with special terms and conditions may not be able to be taken into consideration.

Rewards and Hotel Incentive Schemes

- Hotels may offer reward points to individuals who book their stay with the hotel directly and to the Association OR the PCO contracting the bedrooms. Additional Terms & Conditions will apply and will need to be agreed with the Hotel directly.