Letter from
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REFERRING to your report, “SMU’s city hostel to open in January” (Nov 27) — indeed, as reported, SMU Residences@Prinsep Street comes at a high price.

But it is even more difficult to understand how the Singapore Management University (SMU) could come up with such a high price when comparisons are made with private, for-profit hostels.

At D’Sophia Lodgings, also located within walking distance of the city campus, single rooms go for about $145 a week in comparison with SMU’s $110. The difference is smaller for twin-sharing — about $100 a week instead of SMU’s $90.

And Sophia’s rent, unlike SMU’s, includes utilities and air-conditioning. Is SMU’s hostel worth the slight discount?

Sophia has all the facilities that SMU provides, and more.

Furthermore, in contrast to SMU’s claustrophobic rooms — where desks and closets are placed under the bed due to space constraints — Sophia’s rooms are more spacious.

Also, the SMU hostel will prohibit cooking except with the microwave oven, for fire safety reasons. This is quite unlike any other private hostel.

Is it too much to ask for a government-aided non-profit university to offer a better deal than their private counterparts?