



**Department of Student Affairs  
Student Housing & Residence Life**

**STUDENT HOUSING ADMISSION POLICY FOR 2022-2026**

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### Acronyms used in this policy

1.	DSA:	Department of Student Affairs
2.	SHAAS:	Student Housing Admissions and Advocacy Services
3.	SH & RL:	Student Housing & Residence Life
4.	SHAC:	Student Housing Advisory Committee
5.	AC:	Admissions Committee
6.	AO:	Admissions Office
7.	FU	First-time entering undergraduate
8.	TU	Transfer undergraduate

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This policy must be read in conjunction with the academic Admissions Policy, as approved by Council or such subsequent academic Admissions policies as may be approved by Council.

This policy covers a five year period, with reviews undertaken by Council each December, for admission in February of each of the following years so as to ensure coherence and alignment with any changes to the Admissions Policy within this period,

The purpose of this policy is to guide the allocation of bed spaces to applicants and students requiring residence accommodation. The primary goals that the University has in providing student housing are:

- Support the general Admissions policy that seeks to admit to UCT students of high academic quality;
- providing redress by addressing the legacy of racial discrimination and inequality in schools and in the higher education system, and building a diverse student profile that reflects the demographics of South African society. Eligible applicants for housing will be reviewed against the UCT Student Equity Policy. The equity principles of diversity, inclusion, redress, equity of access, and equity of outcomes will be considered. In particular, the principle of redress will be given priority.
- contributing to academic success, retention and throughput by providing a living environment conducive for learning; and
- enhancing and facilitating the living learning experience of students within a diverse student residence community.

## 2. CATEGORIES OF STUDENT HOUSING

The policy and criteria for admission to University housing assume that the student housing cycle for

- (a) an undergraduate student will usually be admitted into a 1<sup>st</sup> tier residence, with subsequent readmission into a 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> tier residence; and
- (b) postgraduate students will be considered for entry into 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> tier accommodation.

Direct entry into the 1<sup>st</sup> tier is for FU and TU students. The 1<sup>st</sup> tier provides a reasonably uniform standard of accommodation, catering and related facilities. The 1<sup>st</sup> tier-residences are staffed by part-time wardens and provide programmes supportive of academic, leadership and life skill development as well as access to student learning centres.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> tier is a largely self-catering sector, with some catering options, generally for more senior undergraduate and postgraduate students.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> tier primarily provides postgraduate students with self-catering accommodation.

The Residences Committee places each housing unit into these categories.

The categorisation of residences set out below is for 2017 and is subject to change.

(Where possible, no FU undergraduates should be allocated to 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier residences)

TU students new to UCT will be allocated to a residence in a tier appropriate to their age or year of study.

(a) **1<sup>st</sup> Tier Residences**

Baxter Hall, Carinus, Clarendon House, College House, Fuller Hall, Glendower, Graça Machel Hall, Kilindini (as College House annexe), Kopano, Leo Marquard Hall, Rochester House, Smuts Hall, Tugwell Hall, University House, and Varietas.

(b) **2<sup>nd</sup> Tier Residences**

Self-Catering: Forest Hill B, Forest Hill C, Forest Hill D, Forest Hill E, Forest Hill G, Groote Schuur Flats, Liesbeeck Gardens, Meulenhof, Obz Square, The Woolsack, and

Catering: Forest Hill G, Groote Schuur Residence, and Medical Residence

(c) **3<sup>rd</sup> Tier Accommodation**

Amalinda, Dullah Omar Hall, Edwin Hart, ExAir, Forest Hill F, Harold Cressy Hall, JP Duminy Court, Linkoping, North Grange, Obz Square, Rondeberg Flats, TB Davie Court, and Woodbine Rd.

### **3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS POLICY**

The Director of Student Housing & Residence Life (SH & RL) will implement this policy under the direction of the Residences Committee and the Student Housing Advisory Committee (SHAC) (a standing sub-committee of the AC). The Director of SH & RL will act after consultation with the Executive Director, Student Affairs (ED: DSA), the Director of the Admissions Office (AO) and the Students' Representative Council (SRC) so as to ensure that services are responsive to student needs and the University's needs.

The Director: SH&RL will work with the Faculty Managers to ensure that an appropriate number of firm offers of accommodation are made to individual applicants and that caution is exercised with regard to the over-allocation of spaces. Notwithstanding the need to over-allocate bed spaces, no student with a firm offer of accommodation shall be turned away from residence on arrival at UCT. The possibility, however, remains that students with firm offers of accommodation may be temporarily housed in Transit Accommodation as described under Clause 9 of this policy.

### **4. PRINCIPLES FOR THE OFFER OF A PLACE IN STUDENT HOUSING**

(a) Places in UCT-provided student housing are limited and as the demand is far greater than the available places, in principle students and applicants who live outside the greater Cape Town area will be prioritised. Provision is made for:

(i) applicants who have not been registered previously as students at UCT: and have been admitted to a programme of studies by a faculty in the year for which residence accommodation is sought;

(ii) students who are registered at UCT: and are entitled in terms of UCT's academic rules to register for a programme of studies in the academic year for which residence accommodation is sought;

(iii) applicants not registered at UCT who have previously been registered at UCT and who have not exceeded the maximum number of years permitted to live in residence (see paragraph 4 (f) (g) and (h) below); and have been admitted to a programme of studies in the academic year for which residence accommodation is sought;

- (iv) applicants admitted to a postgraduate programme of studies in the academic year for which residence accommodation is sought. Provision is made to a limited number of postdoctoral research fellows;
- (v) An under-graduate student or applicant who can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Director of Student Housing that failure to be in student housing would cause them excessive hardship may apply for and be allocated a student housing place. (See paragraph 5 below for the particular case of students with disabilities.)
  - Within the faculty apportionment to ensure equity (the objective should be that 80% of the 2240 places be assigned to redress categories: 1 (where a parent under the apartheid system was classified Black), 2 (where a parent under the apartheid system was classified Coloured), 3 (where a parent under the apartheid system was classified Indian) and 4 (where a parent under the apartheid system was classified Chinese).
  - An additional 5% of the 2240 places to be allocated to undergraduate applicants (FU) from other African countries.
- (b) In support of the university's internationalization objectives, 150 places will be allocated to semester study abroad students on the recommendation of the International Academic Programme Office (IAPO). These students will be allocated to a variety of residences in the housing system.
- (c) Students who enter the UCT residence system for the first time as undergraduates, may be permitted to remain in residence for a maximum of a first undergraduate degree/diploma duration (i.e. the length of the undergraduate qualification for which the student is initially registered when they entered UCT for the first time) for undergraduate studies. The length of the undergraduate qualification for students who are registered on extended degree programs will be as determined by the Faculty upon registration. Students who are placed onto extended degree programs by their Faculties during their 1<sup>st</sup> year of undergraduate study will be considered as students registered for an extended degree for the purposes of this clause.
  - (i) Students who enter the UCT residence system for the first time as undergraduates will ordinarily only be able to remain in a 1<sup>st</sup> tier residence for a maximum of two years. Notwithstanding this general two-year limit for 1<sup>st</sup> tier residences, students who are eligible in terms of permitted years of remaining in residence may be readmitted to that residence for a third or fourth year based on their role and contribution to the residence concerned, if recommended by the warden.
  - (ii) Students who wish to apply for leadership position or to run for elected positions in a residence for the following year must be eligible for residence in terms of the permitted years of remaining in residence.
- (d) Students who enter the UCT residence system for the first time as postgraduates may be permitted to remain in residence for a maximum of three years.
- (e) Students who complete all the requirements of an undergraduate degree or diploma while in the UCT student housing system will be eligible for student housing if they register for, or intend registering for, a postgraduate degree or postgraduate diploma, and if admitted to residence may be permitted to remain in residence for a maximum of three years as postgraduate students.
- (f) Students who have been granted leave of absence (LOA) on medical and psychosocial grounds will only be readmitted/allocated to residence on an advisory from the "Fit for Study Panel." Upon readmission to residence, the period of absence for such students (as covered under the approved LOA) will not count towards their "N" rule. Students who take leave of absence for any other reasons, other than those stated above, will be subject to the "N" rule in terms of the duration of their stay in residence

as outlined in Paragraph 4(c). In particular, when such students return to UCT, their period of absence will count towards the “N” rule.

- (g) Not all eligible applicants and students will get a place because the number of places is limited.

## 5. PLACES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Limited accommodation is available in some residences to provide for the needs of students with physical disabilities. As a matter of policy SH&RL will try to make accommodations for applicants and students with disabilities.

## 6. HOUSING ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR FIRST TIME ENTERING UNDERGRADUATES (FU)

Housing offers to new under-graduate applicants will be made according to the criteria as set out below:

- **Financial Aid:** All students who are made an academic offer and are awarded financial aid will be prioritized for housing.
- **Minors:** All students who are minors on 1 February in the year of registration and are made an academic offer will be prioritized for housing.
- **Excellence:** all entering u/g applicants who score 540 APS points will be prioritized for housing.
- **Rules-based and discretionary offers will be made according to faculty-specific strategic criteria, to be reviewed and approved annually by the Admissions Committee.**
- **Medical needs:** These will be based on recommendations to the Director: SH&RL by Disability Service and Student Wellness Units.
- **Director’s Discretion:** These are special circumstances, not covered by the above criteria, to which the director must apply their mind when considering a request for housing.

## 7. RESIDENCE ALLOCATION CRITERIA FOR NEW STUDENTS

### (i) 1<sup>st</sup> tier allocation criteria for new students

Residence allocation is done by the SH&RL’s SHAAS’ office.

Residence allocation aims to allocate new and returning students to individual residences (i.e. buildings) with the aim of achieving race, academic merit and area of study diversity within each residence (and gender diversity in mixed-sex residences).

Residence allocation will take account of the need to make a particular placement if it would make a significant difference to the well-being of the student concerned; examples are physical disability; certain health problems; the placement of siblings together, and affordability (allowing for choice of shared rooms or flats).

Most Health Sciences students who are offered student housing places will be allocated to one of the (usually) 1<sup>st</sup> tier residences close to the Health Sciences campus (i.e. Clarendon House, Carinus, or Rochester House.)

Discretion will also be exercised in allocating other students to particular residences where a strong disciplinary case exists for this (e.g. Performing Arts and Music students).

## 8. APPORTIONMENT OF PLACES: NEW AND RETURNING APPLICANTS

### (a) 1<sup>st</sup> tier residences

Each year not later than April the Residences Committee and the SHAC will determine the number of 1<sup>st</sup> tier places to be made available for the following year for

- FUs and TUs;
- students who were in first-tier residences in the previous year, and who in the intake year will be in their second year in residence and for who may be offered places in residence for a 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year in terms of the policy;
- any other students, having regard to the enrolment plan.

### (b) 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> tier Residences

Each year not later than April the Residences Committee and the SHAC will determine guideline numbers of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> tier places to be made available for the following year for

- FUs and TUs;
- undergraduate students transferring from 1<sup>st</sup> tier residences;
- UCT students wishing to continue in residence for postgraduate study; students in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> tier residences wishing to continue in residence; first-time entering and transfer postgraduate applicants;
- students with spouses and/or minor dependents; and postdoctoral research fellows;
- any other students, having regard to the enrolment plan.

### (c) Guidelines for priority

Students in 1<sup>st</sup> tier residences may apply to remain in 1<sup>st</sup> tier residence and/or to transfer to 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> tier in the following year. Applicants will be allocated 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> tier places by SHAAS, after consultation with Wardens, preference:

- among undergraduates being given to students who have spent the least number of years in residence;
- among postgraduates, to students in their first year of postgraduate study; and
- to those who have made a special contribution to a residence, if recommended by the Warden and if they qualify for housing in terms of the policy.

Provided that where FUs and TUs are admitted to 2<sup>nd</sup> tier residences they will be counted as part of the number of places allocated to FUs and TUs.

### (d) Accommodation for students with spouses and/or minor dependents

A small number of self-catering flats will be made available for allocation to students

- with minor dependents; and/or
- who are married or in committed domestic partnerships.

(e.g. single parents, students with minor dependent siblings, married students or students in committed domestic partnerships).

Preference in the allocation of these flats will be given to postgraduates. Account will be taken of the student status of both members of a couple, and in particular of the number of years each has spent in UCT student housing. If both members of the couple

are students, account will be taken of the number of years they may have spent in residence, their needs and whether they are ordinarily resident in Cape Town.

## 9. TRANSIT ACCOMMODATION

Transit accommodation is accommodation for students who were offered residence accommodation, do not yet have a placement for the year, and need to be placed temporarily until a room becomes available. SH&RL will use all available spaces to provide transit accommodation.

Transit accommodation may be necessary at the onset of each student housing admissions cycle because attempts to balance demand and supply for student residence accommodation when making offers, sometimes lead to over offers.

Transit accommodation offers will be made by SHAAS, following consultation with SHAC and the Director SH&RL.

On the date at the start of the academic year on which students should have signed into residence, any unfilled places will be preferentially allocated to students in transit accommodation who had been given a firm offer of accommodation.

Transit accommodation arrangements may take up to a maximum of two weeks to be resolved. Where students remain in transit accommodation for longer than two weeks, their situation will be reviewed and SHAAS will offer one or more of the following options, appropriate to their individual situation:

- (i) To remain temporarily in the accommodation provided, and to pay a reduced residence accommodation fee of 75% of the full student residence accommodation fee cost for the duration in transit accommodation. (The pro-rata full fee will be charged upon the student subsequently taking up a regular housing place in the same or another residence.);
- (ii) To remain in the transit accommodation for the duration of the academic year, and to pay a reduced student residence accommodation fee of 75% of the full residence accommodation fee for the year;
- (iii) To leave the student residence accommodation and fend for themselves in which case the student will be given a fee rebate of 30% of the residence accommodation fee cost for the actual occupation period, on condition that SH&RL confirms in writing that no regular residence accommodation could have been provided for them beyond the 6-week period of transit accommodation.

## 10. PROCEDURES AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR THE ALLOCATION OF STUDENTS TO SPECIFIC RESIDENCES BY THE SHAAS AND THE WARDENS

**Preamble:** admission to residence for entering students and readmission to residence for returning students shall both be considered on the basis of;

- submitted applications;
- academic eligibility; and
- general eligibility.

The admission and readmission to residence is essentially a two-step process;

- the **offer** of residence to eligible applicants; and
- the **allocation** to specific residences of students with residence offers.



**(a) Student housing places and academic places**

Entering applicants and returning students must submit an annual application for residence accommodation. 2<sup>nd</sup> tier applicants who desire the catering option may indicate such preference on the application. This is, however, not guaranteed.

An offer of a student housing place to an entering applicant will not be made unless the applicant has been made a conditional or firm offer of an academic place for the year of admission.

An offer of a student housing place to a postgraduate applicant will not be made unless the applicant has been made a conditional or firm offer of an academic place for the year of admission.

**(b) Allocation of new students to specific residences**

(i) Students who enter the student housing system for the first time will be allocated to specific residences, in an appropriate tier, by the SHAAS.

(ii) Such residence allocations to first time entering students by the SHAAS shall be via a random residence allocation process as recommended by the SHAC and approved by the Residences Committee.

(iii) The random residence allocation process for first time entering students shall be consistent with, and subject to, the provisions of paragraphs 1 through 8 of this policy.

**(c) Allocation of places to returning students**

(i) The residence allocation process for returning students shall be consistent with, and subject to, the provisions of paragraphs 1 through 8 of this policy.

(ii) The provisions of Paragraph 10(b) above shall also apply to returning students who apply to move to a different tier. In particular;

(iii) Students who apply to remain in the same tier shall be considered for allocation to their current residence. It is understood that such students would, indeed, have already entered their current residence via a random residence allocation process. After receiving (from the SHAAS) the list of eligible returning applicants from their residence, the Warden shall make their selections taking into account the following:

- The goals of the student housing system as summarized in the General Housing Information Handbook;
- The contributions of the applicants to the residence;
- The special needs of applicants for student housing;
- The provisions listed in handbook 3, General Rules and Policies for Students, rules R11.5-R11.7

**(d) Allocation of new and returning Health Sciences students**

Health Science students follow a different academic year pattern. In order to accommodate the different term dates the Health Science students will be allocated to designated health Science residences. First-time entering undergraduates who have been allocated to non-health science residences will be reallocated to a designated health science residence on confirmation of the firm academic offer by the faculty.

**(e) Enrolment co-ordination**

SH & RL, and in particular the SHAAS, must maintain close contact with all faculty offices, the Undergraduate Funding Office and the AO to ensure that the strategic commitment to an integrated and co-ordinated admissions system is achieved.

**11. FILLING OF STUDENT HOUSING VACANCIES**

If student housing vacancies exist which cannot be filled by students or applicants who are eligible for housing including students in transit accommodation, then these vacant places can be offered to students or applicants who are not eligible for housing in terms of this policy.

**12. STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT PERMITTED ON ACADEMIC GROUNDS TO RENEW THEIR REGISTRATION**

An offer of a residence place to a student who is refused permission on academic grounds to renew their registration will be cancelled if they

- do not appeal the academic exclusion to the Readmission Appeal Committee (RAC);
- or if after having appealed the academic exclusion to the RAC and the RAC refused such appeal, the Vice Chancellor (or nominee) does not uphold the student's final appeal against their refused RAC appeal.

If a student takes up their offered place pending the resolution of an appeal to the RAC or to the Vice Chancellor (or nominee) and their appeals fail, the residence place will be cancelled, and the student will be liable for a pro-rata fee for the duration of their occupancy during the year.

**13. STUDENTS WITH FEES OUTSTANDING**

The student housing place of a returning student will be cancelled unless the student has cleared any fee debt owing from the preceding year (other than a fee debt of less than R1,000) by no later than 20 January of the new academic year.

Failure to pay the required initial amount of residence fees by the date determined by the Fees Office will result in the student housing place being withdrawn for international students (including international students paying local fees).

Residence places of international students (especially those in SADC countries) who have been granted a concession in terms of date of initial fee payment by the University will be retained until 1 April, unless the University has granted a further concession to pay fees after this date (i.e. after the due date determined by the Fees Office)

Failure to pay the required initial amount of residence fees due by due date will result in the student housing place being withdrawn for South African students who have not been offered financial aid by UCT.

**14. CANCELLATION OF STUDENT HOUSING OFFERS**

A residence offer to an applicant new to UCT or to an applicant for admission or readmission by a returning UCT student will be cancelled if:

they do not sign into the residence by:

- (i) 22h00 on the third day after the official opening of residence (refer to Student Accommodation General Application Information Handbook 1) Financial Aid students will not be penalised if there are delays processing their applications.

- (ii) 12h00 on the final Friday in February in the case of postgraduate students offered accommodation. However if such students intend to sign in within four days after the official opening of residence, this must be confirmed in writing in advance to the SHAAS. Such students will be financially liable for the full annual residence or accommodation fee applicable to the residence or unit to which they have been allocated.

## **15. RESIDENCE ADMISSIONS WHO DO NOT COMPLETE ACADEMIC REGISTRATION FORMALITIES**

- (a) Anyone who takes up a residence place but who fails to complete academic registration requirements by the following dates will, subject to (b) below, be required to leave the residence and will be liable for the fee for the duration of their occupancy:
  - undergraduates 14 days after the start of lectures
  - post graduates by the end of the first week of March.
- (b) The Director: SH & RL may, after consulting the Warden, the faculty office, and any other appropriate academic administrative department, extend these dates in individual cases.

## **16. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

- (a) A student seeking *readmission* to student housing in the following year must apply to the SHAAS by 15 August.
- (b) A UCT student who has not previously been in residence, but who seeks accommodation in the following year, must apply to the SHAAS by 15 August.
- (c) A UCT student who is offered a place in student housing for the following year, must accept the offer of a place by 15 October of the current year. Offers to which no response has been received by 31 October will be cancelled.
- (d) A student or applicant who is aggrieved by a decision affecting them made in terms of this policy may appeal against the decision by submitting a written appeal to the Director SH&RL. Such appeals will be heard and decided by an independent Appeals Committee, constituted by the University Student Affairs Committee (USAC) for the purpose. The decisions of the Appeals Committee must be implemented by the Director: SH&RL.
- (e) Any review of this policy shall be undertaken after consultation with the Students' Representative Council, the Residences Sub-Council, the College of Wardens, the Residences Forum, the Residences Committee, and the AC. The University Student Affairs Committee (USAC) is responsible for submitting the draft policy and any revisions to it to the Council.
- (f) Any proposed deviation from the provisions of this policy, in between the Council meetings, shall only be considered after consultation with the Residences Committee. If agreed to, such proposed deviations must be communicated to the earliest sitting of the Council.
- (g) The ED:DSA and Director: SH&RL must ensure that the implementation of this policy remains, at all times, free from undue influences by persons who are not mandated with the responsibilities to implement the policy.

Recommended by the AC:  
Recommended to Council by USAC: 7 November 2019  
Recommended by SEC:  
Approved by Council:

Accountability for this policy and its implementation: ED: DSA  
Responsibility for this policy and its implementation: Director: SH&RL