

	UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN		
	DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT AFFAIRS SH&RL: Off-Campus Student Accommodation Accreditation Policy	Reference	OCSAS/01
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1. Documents and legislation to be read in line with this Policy

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993
- Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 as amended
- National Student Financial Aid Scheme Act 56 of 1999
- Rental Act 50 of 1999
- Consumer Protection Act 68 of 2008
- Report on the Ministerial Committee for provision of Student Housing at Universities, September 2011.
- Policy on Minimum Norms and Standards for Students Housing at Public Universities
- UCT Student Regulations

2. Definitions and interpretations of terms

No	TERM	DEFINITION
2.1	Policy	Off-Campus Student Accommodation Accreditation Policy
2.2	Service Provider	Service providers who are private providers of Off Campus Student Accommodation which can be natural or juristic persons.
2.3	Landlord	The Landlord refers to the owner of the property who rents out land, a building or accommodation.
2.4	Off Campus Accommodation	Refers to private property advertised towards student accommodation.
2.5	DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training.
2.6	Lease Agreement	A Lease Agreement is a contract that outlines the terms under which one party agrees to rent an asset, in this case, property owned by another party.
2.7	UCT	University of Cape Town
2.8	SRC	Student Representative Council of the University of Cape Town
2.9	NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme is a South African government student financial aid scheme which provides financial aid to students who wish to study at one of South Africa's public Higher education institutions.

3. Purpose

The aim of this policy is to provide guidelines to students, landlord, service providers and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that they understand and are familiar with

the private accommodation accreditation process. The Accreditation process is the regulation of privately owned student housing as legislated in the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 that speaks to the Policy on the Minimum Norms and Standards of Student Housing gazetted in September of 2015.

4. Objective

The objective of this Policy is to:

- 4.1 establish a criteria and procedure for evaluating applications from Service Providers and Private landlords to formally assess, grade and accredit suitable Off Campus Accommodation.
- 4.2 ensure consistent regulation with other guidelines, regulations and legislation relevant to the Policy.
- 4.3 establish adequate monitoring and accountability procedures for accredited property owners.

5. Scope

This Policy applies to Private Landlords, Students, Property Investors and other relevant Stakeholders within UCT.

6. Basic requirements of properties

A property must comply with the Minimum Norms And Standards For Student Housing as per Policy on Minimum Norms and Standards for Student Housing at public universities as published in GG no R 897 29/9/15.

The requirements include:

6.1 Rooms: -

- a. Maximum of two students per room. Students sharing a room must be allocated their own bed.
- b. Single rooms should be no smaller than 8m², whilst double rooms should be no smaller than 14m².
- c. Rooms must be equipped with a single bed and mattress; cupboard; study desk; desk chair; bookshelf; curtains; study lamp; mounted pin board; wastepaper bin; and bedside table for each student.
- d. Rooms should be lockable with lockable closets.

6.2 Amenities: -

- a. No more than four students will share a wash basin; no more than seven students will share a shower cubicle; and no more than five students will share a lavatory in a house
- b. Showers and lavatory cubicles should be designed in such a way that it provides individual privacy. Shower doors or curtains must be fitted to shower cubicles so as to ensure privacy.
- c. An adequately equipped kitchen must be provided. Kitchens must be equipped with, at minimum, a stove, and a fridge for every eight students; lockable cupboards for each student; a sink; a microwave oven; and a countertop workplace, which can be used by a maximum of 15 students.
- d. Rental charged per student must be inclusive of water and electricity.
- e. Where prepaid meters have been installed, the service provider must provide an allowance for electricity. However, if the students exceed the allocated amount, they (student) are liable to top up the electricity meter themselves.
- f. The provider must provide efficient security systems at each dwelling.
- g. Internet services, either via Fibre Optic cable or Wi-Fi at the premises.

7. NSFAS funded students

- 7.1 All NSFAS funded students must ensure that they apply for an accommodation that is on an official OCSAS accommodation list.
- 7.2 All NSFAS funded students are exempted from paying the standard refundable deposit.
- 7.3 NSFAS students are required to take note of the maximum allowance paid for monthly rental which is determined on an annual basis.
- 7.4 Students will be held liable for any shortfall of their rent that exceeds the accommodation allowance and any other expenses such as utilities and Wi-Fi.
- 7.5 NSFAS students are required to submit all their required documents, including a copy of the Lease Agreement and Compliance Letter in a timeous manner to avoid any delays in the payments of the monthly allowance.
- 7.6 All NSFAS related matters must be mailed to financialaid@uct.ac.za

8. Student well-being

- 8.1 Student's health, safety and environment are always a priority and can under no circumstances be compromised.
- 8.2 Landlord/ service provider must at all times comply with all legislative requirements pertaining to health and safety
- 8.3 Provision of a first Aid kit must be readily available, accessible and fully stocked at all times, is mandatory
- 8.4 Emergency contacts must be readily available and visible to students.

9. Landlord responsibilities

- 9.1 The landlord/ service provider must ensure that the property has been accredited before entering into any lease agreement with a students.
- 9.2 The landlord/ service provider must go through the Lease Agreement together with the student to ensure that both parties understand the conditions of the lease agreement.
- 9.3 The landlord/ service provider must submit the lease agreement to the OCSAS office when applying for accreditation status.
- 9.4 The landlord/ service provider must ensure that the accommodation complies with all the statutory and municipal requirements for student housing.
- 9.5 The landlord/ service provider must ensure that the accommodation offered is conducive for living and learning.
- 9.6 The landlord/ service provider may not accommodate students exceeding the number of beds approved by virtue of the application.
- 9.7 UCT must be allowed reasonable access to the property subject to the policy throughout the year.
- 9.8 The landlord / service provider must submit to the University a signed list of students residing in the relevant off campus accommodation properties on a quarterly basis.

10. Student responsibilities

- 10.1 Students shall not act or conduct themselves in a manner that may bring the name of UCT into disrepute.

- 10.2 It remains the responsibility of the student to ensure that they understand the content of the lease agreement. If they do not, they should ask the landlord to explain and clarify any uncertainty.
- 10.3 It remains the prerogative of the student to choose suitable off campus accommodation. It is the student's responsibility to abide by the rules of the landlord as well as those of the university.
- 10.4 Students will remain liable for any shortfall of their rental that exceeds the NSFAS cap.

11. Exemption from liability

- 11.1 The University, its management and employees, will under no circumstances be responsible for any claims that students or the public might have against a private landlord or service provider.
- 11.2 However, UCT will, where appropriate, investigate any complaints received relating to Off Campus Accommodation.
- 11.3 If the University receives such a complaint, it reserves the right to re-evaluate the Off Campus Accommodation to establish whether it still meets the requirements set in this policy.
- 11.4 The landlord indemnifies and has no claim against UCT, its management and employees, against any loss, damage or injury that may arise, howsoever and whenever, out of any act of omission on the part of the landlord or service provider or any third party in offering accommodation to students.
- 11.5 The University, its management and employees, will under no circumstances be responsible for any claims that a landlord /provider of private student housing might have against a student. While the University seeks to accredit private accommodation providers, this in no way releases such providers from complying with all legislative and policy requirements.

12. Review date

The policy will be reviewed every three years or as and when is necessary.