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## Stellenbosch University Guidelines for Off-campus Private Student Accommodation Accreditation 2022

Private Accommodation Office, Centre for Student Accommodation, Registrar's Division  
November 2021

### 1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 Accreditation is the regulation of off-campus privately owned student housing (“**off-campus private accommodation**”) at South African Universities according to regulation of the Policy on the Minimum Norms and Standards for Student Housing at Public Universities of September 2015 (the “**Policy**”).
- 1.2 The Policy stipulates that universities should rate and differentiate off-campus private accommodation according to standards set by each university and that off-campus private accommodation providers (“**landlords**”) shall establish clear and comprehensive standard lease agreements after consultation with relevant University officials and student representatives.
- 1.3 The purpose of this document is to provide the necessary guidelines to landlords for Stellenbosch University (“**SU**”) accreditation (“**the Guidelines**”). Landlords within proximity of any SU campus can apply to join the accreditation scheme for student accommodation.
- 1.4 Accreditations are done by SU’s **Private Accommodation Office (“PAO”)** within the Centre for Applications, Student Accommodation and Client Services. The centre forms part of the services of the Registrar’s Division.
- 1.5 The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (“**NSFAS**”) provides fully subsidised funding for students who meet certain criteria and are studying at public universities.
- 1.6 The 2020 Guidelines for the Department of Higher Education and Training Bursary Scheme for Students at Public Universities that was approved by the Minister of Education on 6 December 2019, indicated that students living in private leased accommodation can only qualify for an accommodation if they are accommodated in university accredited accommodation.

### 2. NSFAS ACCOMMODATION ALLOWANCE

- 2.1 The maximum allowance for off-campus private accommodation is capped at the cost of the internal SU accommodation costs for an equivalent accommodation type.
- 2.2 For **2021** the allowance was R56 160 for the academic year.
  - 2.2.1 The amount is aligned with the annual SU student housing increase and is confirmed in December of the year before enrolment.
  - 2.2.2 The capped amount is subject to NSFAS’s approval.
  - 2.2.3 No deposits or any other costs (e.g. administration cost or transport) are covered by this NSFAS accommodation allowance.
  - 2.2.4 The full accommodation allowance is paid in ten (10) instalments (March to December) for Stellenbosch campus; and eleven (11) instalments (January to November) for Tygerberg campus per year to the student. It is the student’s responsibility to pay landlords on time.



- 2.3 Students must provide proof of a written lease agreement (“lease agreement”) with landlords, before they can receive their accommodation allowances every month.
- 2.4 SU reserves the right to request further documents to verify the legitimacy of such lease agreements.
- 2.5 In cases where a private accredited landlord provides more than 20 beds to student’s, direct monthly payments to private accredited landlords for NSFAS students can be made by SU, provided that SU receives instruction in writing from the student to do so.

### 3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### 3.1 Responsibilities of students, including bursary recipients

- 3.1.1 It remains the responsibility of the student to ensure that they understand the content of the lease agreement, the cost of accommodation and their obligations as a lessee in terms thereof. The lease agreement is between the student and the landlord. SU is not a party to the agreement. SU will therefore not intervene in matters pertaining to the lease agreement between the landlord and the student.
- 3.1.2 It remains the prerogative of the student to choose suitable off-campus private accommodation.
- 3.1.3 The landlord may impose his/her own rules in respect of off-campus private accommodation which a student must follow. It is the responsibility of the student to abide by these rules.
- 3.1.4 Bursary recipients:
  - 3.1.4.1 Bursary recipients with a confirmed funding offer need to complete a survey that will be e-mailed to them after they have registered for the academic year. It will be required for the bursary recipient to indicate their accommodation type and address and to also upload their signed lease agreement. The Centre for Undergraduate Bursary and Loans Office (“UBL”) will send the survey.
  - 3.1.4.2 Students must inform UBL in writing if they cancel the lease agreement, at the same time that they notify the landlord. In this regard students need to take note of the cancellation regulations in the lease agreement. After confirmation of cancellation, the payments for that accommodation will stop. Payments will continue once a new lease agreement is provided.
  - 3.1.4.3 The student remains liable for any payments relating to accommodation that exceeds the NSFAS capped allowance.
  - 3.1.4.4 Please keep in mind that NSFAS stipulates a deadline for changes in accommodation (living arrangements). Students need to notify UBL in writing at least a month ahead to provide adequate time to make changes in payment of accommodation and meal allowances.

#### 3.2 Responsibilities of the Undergraduate Bursaries and Loans Office (UBL)

- 3.2.1 UBL is responsible for the financial administration of payments to the student or service provider.
- 3.2.2 UBL will check and confirm the student’s status as a NSFAS-bursary recipient and will provide written proof thereof to the student and any potential landlord (if necessary), with the consent of the student.



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- 3.2.3 UBL will send out the survey to NSFAS-recipients with confirmed funding to establish their accommodation status and addresses.
- 3.2.4 UBL will receive lease agreements along with the completed survey from the students.
- 3.2.5 UBL will make monthly payments to students or directly to landlords, where applicable and where the student gave consent.
- 3.2.6 The UBL will not intervene in matters pertaining to the contract between the landlord and the student. UBL is not party to the agreement between the student and the landlord.

### **3.3 Responsibilities of landlords**

- 3.3.1 The Landlord must ensure that the off-campus private accommodation is accredited by the **PAO**.
- 3.3.2 The Landlord must ensure that the prescribed application for accreditation is submitted to SU. The application form is available on [www.maties.com](http://www.maties.com) (> accommodation > private accommodation).
- 3.3.3 The Landlord must provide the signed lease agreement between the student and the landlord, to the student.
- 3.3.4 An accreditation of property cannot be transferred to any other property even if the properties are owned by the same service provider/landlord.
- 3.3.5 The Landlord must inform the PAO of any changes to the conditions of the accredited off-campus accommodation and ownership of the property.
- 3.3.6 The Landlord must ensure a standard of living and comply with the guidelines throughout the year. It remains the landlord's responsibility to ensure that the off-campus private accommodation complies with the original agreed standards at all times.
- 3.3.7 The Landlord's off-campus private accommodation must comply with all municipal and statutory requirements for accommodation. Landlord's must familiarise themselves with these requirements. SU is not responsible for any non-compliance by the Landlord.

### **3.4 Responsibility of the PAO**

- 3.4.1 The PAO will provide the applicable form for accreditation to be completed by the landlord.
- 3.4.2 The PAO will be responsible for the accreditation process as stipulated in para 4 of this document and for communicating with the Landlord in this regard.
- 3.4.3 The PAO will monitor the standard of living at off-campus private accommodation throughout the year and reserves the right to revoke the accreditation if the facilities are not maintained and is not meeting the agreed standard.
- 3.4.4 The PAO will list the accredited accommodation on SU's website on [www.maties.com](http://www.maties.com) and the office will refer students to the relevant off-campus private accommodation options. In this regard the PAO complies with the regulations set out in the Protection of Personal Information 4 of 2013 ("the **POPI Act**"). By applying for accreditation, the Landlords consents to SU publishing information about the property on the relevant website.
- 3.4.5 Once applications for accreditation have been processed, the PAO will provide the UBL with the list of accredited accommodation.
- 3.4.6 The PAO will not intervene in matters pertaining to the contract between the landlord and the student. The PAO is not party to the agreement between the student and the landlord.



### **3.5 Fees**

- 3.5.1 An annual non-refundable administration fee of R100 per bed will, when applicable, be charged by SU from the landlord.

### **3.6 Appeals process**

- 3.6.1 A landlord whose application for accreditation has been declined may appeal against the decision of the PAO.
- 3.6.2 A landlord applicant must lodge an appeal with the PAO within five (5) working days after receiving the formal outcome of the application and at the same time provide the PAO with written submissions setting out fully the grounds of appeal accompanied by substantiating facts and documents.
- 3.6.3 The PAO determines its own process, which may include inspecting the premises. The PAO concludes the appeal as soon as is practically possible and reasonable. The PAO reserves the right to uphold (with or without conditions) or reject the appeal. If the appeal is upheld, the PAO can substitute the outcome of the accreditation process with another outcome that the PAO could have reached.
- 3.6.4 The decision of the PAO is final.

### **3.7 Complaints**

- 3.7.1 If the PAO receives a complaint pertaining to accreditation requirements, the PAO will have a follow-up with the relevant parties to ascertain the circumstances.
- 3.7.2 If applicable and depending on the nature of the complaint, consent will be obtained from the student to inform the landlord of the complaint. Should the student agree, the complaint will be sent to the landlord for feedback.
- 3.7.3 The PAO can only act on matters pertaining to the guidelines of accreditation.
- 3.7.4 If it is found by the POA that the accreditation requirements are not met, accreditation may be reconsidered. If the accreditation of the off-site private housing is not up to standard, SU reserves the right to withdraw the accreditation, or stipulate conditions that the landlord must fulfil to avoid withdrawn of accreditation.
- 3.7.5 If a complaint pertains to payment of the NSFAS accommodation allowance, it will be escalated UBL.
- 3.7.6 SU, its management and employees, will not be liable in respect of any claim whatsoever arising from any cause at all flowing from the lease agreement entered between the student and the landlord of off-campus private accommodation.

### **3.8 Disclaimer**

- 3.8.1 Students who enter into a lease agreement with landlords providing off-campus private accommodation do so in their private capacity.
- 3.8.2 SU is not a party to any lease agreement entered into between the student and the landlord in respect of off-campus private accommodation. SU will not become involved in and does not accept liability for any accident, death or injury or the loss or damage to, or destruction of any property, or any issues arising out of the operation of the lease agreement between the student and the landlord, payment of rent and/or disputes between the parties pertaining to the lease agreement and/or service delivery.



- 3.8.3 SU will not be involved in the securing of tenants and will not be held responsible for empty rooms or non-payment by students.
- 3.8.4 SU will not be involved in the collection of rentals, held responsible for any outstanding balances, damage to personal property and personal harm to students as a result of accreditation of the facility.
- 3.8.5 Accredited off-campus private accommodation will be evaluated and approved annually by SU.
- 3.8.6 Accreditation of off-campus private accommodation can be withdrawn if the standard drops below the prescribed minimum standards (See paragraph 4) and SU will not be responsible for any loss if accreditation is withdrawn.
- 3.8.7 All accredited off-campus private accommodation will receive priority marketing within the structures of SU and will be identified as preferred suppliers once all the on-campus beds are filled.

### 3 PROCEDURE

**Step 1:** A landlord is required to complete the application form for accreditation of off-campus private accommodation (“**accreditation application form**”).

The following documentation should also be included:

- Proof of applicable municipal zoning permit;
- Original Tax Clearance Certificate of the applicant; and
- Proof of Ownership of the property.

The University will only consider applications in respect of which:

- (a) application forms have been completed in full;
- (b) all the required information has been provided;
- (c) all relevant documents have been furnished; and
- (d) the time period for the validity of the documents have not expired;

**Step 2:** E-mail the completed application for accreditation to [privateaccomm@sun.ac.za](mailto:privateaccomm@sun.ac.za) to reach the PAO before the end of the end of the preceding year.

**Step 3:** The PAO will arrange a site visit with the landlord to verify the information on the accreditation application form. Please note that site visits will be continued, aligned with the applicable COVID-19 regulations in place at the time of such a site visit.

**Step 4:** If all criteria are met, the accreditation will be confirmed in writing by the PAO to the landlord and, if accredited, the property will be listed on the SU website. In cases where some matters might be outstanding, the accreditation will be pending. Accreditation may be granted as soon as the pending matter have been resolved.

**Accreditation status must be renewed on an annual basis.** Should the landlord fail to meet the requirements, the accredited status of the off-campus private accommodation will be withdrawn and any reference of such a landlord will be removed from the SU website. NSFAS accommodation allowances can also not further be paid to the landlord in such cases.



## 4 CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION

There are two types of accreditation, namely NSFAS accreditation or SU accreditation. The criteria are summarised below:

NSFAS ACCREDITATION	SU ACCREDITATION
<p><b>Number of beds</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ A minimum of <b>four (4) beds</b> should be offered within one facility to be accredited.</li><li>▪ If the dwelling offers <b>less than four beds</b>, but meets the criteria set for NSFAS accreditation (including the fee structure), it could be considered for a <b>NSFAS SINGLE ACCOMMODATION ACCREDITATION</b>.</li></ul> <p><b>Distance and transport</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Dwelling should be situated in Stellenbosch or, in the case of Tygerberg campus, in the surrounding area.</li><li>▪ The accommodation should be within a 3 km walking distance from campus. Students can make use of campus shuttle service at various pick-up points on campus.</li><li>▪ If accommodation exceeds 3 km, NSFAS accreditation requires that the landlord should provide reliable transport running between the off-campus private accommodation and the relevant campus at regular intervals from 06h00 to 22h00.</li></ul> <p><b>Facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Student double rooms should be no smaller than 14m<sup>2</sup>, and a single room should be a minimum of 8m<sup>2</sup>.</li><li>▪ Rooms should be furnished with at least<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ lockable closets;</li></ul></li></ul>	<p><b>Number of beds</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ A minimum of <b>four (4) students</b> should be accommodated within one facility to be accredited.</li><li>▪ If the dwelling is part of a block of flats, the dwelling will not be individually accredited, as this could create the perception that the whole block is SU accredited. Please note that the Body Corporate could apply for accreditations for the whole block or specific apartments</li><li>▪ The dwelling can be advertised through rental agencies. Rental agencies are listed on the SU website.</li><li>▪ However, if the dwelling offers <b>less than four beds</b>, meets the criteria set for SU accreditation AND a NSFAS student has already signed a lease agreement and thereby agreed to abide by the regulations of the dwelling, it could be considered for a <b>SU SINGLE ACCOMMODATION ACCREDITATION</b>. This status will be reviewed annually.</li></ul> <p><b>Distance and transport</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Dwelling should be situated in Stellenbosch or, in the case of Tygerberg campus, in the surrounding area.</li><li>▪ The accommodation should preferable be within a 3 km walking distance from campus. Students can make use of campus shuttle service at various pick-up points on campus.</li></ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ a single bed steel or wooden frames including mattress/sponge;</li><li>✓ a study desk;</li><li>✓ a chair; and</li><li>✓ a bookshelf.</li><li>▪ No more than four (4) students should share a bath or shower and toilet.</li><li>▪ Kitchen or kitchenette:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Cooking inside student rooms should not be permitted;</li><li>✓ Suitable student storage, preparation and kitchen space should be provided;</li><li>✓ Stove – one (1) per four (4) student residents;</li><li>✓ Sink – one (1) per 10 students in commune dwellings and 15 student residents in high rise buildings;</li><li>✓ Lockable cupboards – one (1) per student resident;</li><li>✓ Microwave oven – one (1) per eight (8) student residents in commune dwellings and 12 in high rise building;</li><li>✓ Countertop space – sufficient for eight (8) students’ in commune dwellings and 12 students’ in high rise buildings; and</li><li>✓ A minimum provision of cold storage, 210 litres per five (5) students.</li></ul></li><li>▪ In cases where NSFAS applicant could provide their own furniture, for example for an unfurnished flat, accreditation could still be considered.</li><li>▪ A communal area should preferably be available.</li><li>▪ If applicable, the parking norm provision of one (1) parking bay per two tenants for residential developments shall be applicable to off-campus accommodation.</li><li>▪ The necessary security measures should be in place, e.g. burglar bars, alarm, armed response and/or electrical fencing.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ If accommodation exceeds 3 km, SU accreditation requires that the landlord should provide reliable transport running between the off-campus private accommodation and the relevant campus at regular intervals from 06h00 to 22h00.</li><li>▪ If student have their own transport, no provision for transport will be required.</li></ul> <p><b>Facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Student double rooms should be no smaller than 14m<sup>2</sup>, and a single room should be a minimum of 8m<sup>2</sup>.</li><li>▪ Dwelling do not have to be furnished as required for NSFAS accreditation, but the following requirements should be met:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Lockable closets;</li><li>✓ No more than four (4) students should share a bath or shower and toilet;</li><li>✓ Cooking inside student rooms should not be permitted;</li><li>✓ Suitable student storage, preparation and kitchen space should be provided;</li><li>✓ Sink – one (1) per 10 students in commune dwellings and 15 student residents in high rise buildings;</li><li>✓ Lockable kitchen cupboards – one (1) per student resident;</li><li>✓ Countertop space – sufficient for eight (8) students’ in commune dwellings and 12 students’ in high rise buildings;</li><li>✓ A communal area should preferably be available.</li><li>✓ If applicable, the parking norm provision of one (1) parking bay per two tenants for residential developments shall be applicable to off-campus accommodation.</li></ul></li></ul>
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### Services

- Students are to clean their own rooms.
- The landlord is responsible for the cleaning of all communal areas, ablution areas in larger facilities on a daily basis.
- Laundry facilities must be provided at the off-campus private accommodation, or laundromat facilities should be accessible near it.
- Wifi must be available on site.

### Rent

- The bed tariff is in line with SU student housing offerings and meets the NSFAS accommodation allowance cap.
- Please note that NSFAS rental payments are allocated over a 10-month period (and not 12 months)
- Rental charged per student is, as far as possible, inclusive of wifi, water and electricity.
- No upfront deposit is required upon proof of NSFAS funding.

- ✓ The necessary security measures should be in place, e.g. burglar bars, alarm, armed response and/or electrical fencing.

### Services

- Laundry facilities must be provided at the off-campus private accommodation, or laundromat facilities should be accessible near it.
- Cleaning services should be available if needed.
- Wifi must be available on site.

### Rent

- If a NSFAS student is accommodated in a SU accredited dwelling, please note that no upfront deposits can be required.
- **The NSFAS student will be responsible for the amount that exceeds the NSFAS allowance cap and all other expenses that is not included in the rent, e.g wifi.**
- Please note that NSFAS rental payments are allocated over a 10-month period (and not 12 months)