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Stellenbosch University Guidelines for Off-campus Private Student Housing Accreditation in 2020 (2021 intake)

1 July 2020 (updated)

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 Accreditation is the regulation of off-campus privately owned student housing (“**off-campus private housing**”) 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 housing according to standards set by each university and that off-campus private housing 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 for Stellenbosch University (“**SU**”) accreditation. Landlords within proximity of any SU campus can apply to join the accreditation scheme for student housing.
- 1.4 Accreditations are done by SU’s **Private Accommodation Office** within the Centre for Admissions, Residence Placement and Private Accommodation. The centre forms part of the services of the Division for Student Access.

2. NSFAS ACCOMMODATION ALLOWANCE

- 2.1 The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (“**NSFAS**”) provides fully subsidised funding for students who meet certain criteria and are studying at public universities.
- 2.2 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, for 2020, students living in private leased accommodation can only qualify for an accommodation if they are accommodated in university accredited accommodation.
- 2.3 The table below indicates the allowance applicable to the different categories of accommodation for undergraduate contact students.

Table 1: NSFAS Accommodation allowances 2020

Accommodation type	Allowance type			
	Learning material	Living allowance	Accommodation	Transport
University managed residence with catering	Max R5 200	Max R2 900	University set residence fees	None
Private off-campus accredited accommodation	Max R5 200	Max R15 000	Max R54 000 per annum	None
Living off-campus in family or non-accredited accommodation (own accommodation)	Max R5 200	Max R15 000	None	Max R7 500



2.4 The following regulations for NSFAS allowances should be taken in account:

- 2.4.1 The maximum allowance for off-campus private housing is capped at the cost of the internal SU accommodation costs for an equivalent accommodation type.
- 2.4.2 Students must provide proof of a written lease agreement (“**lease agreement**”) with landlords, before they can receive their accommodation allowances every month.
- 2.4.3 SU reserves the right to request further documents to verify the legitimacy of such lease agreements.
- 2.4.4 No deposits or any other costs (e.g. administration cost) are covered by this allowance.
- 2.4.5 The full accommodation allowance is paid in ten (10) instalments (February to November) for Stellenbosch campus; and eleven (11) instalments (January to November) for Tygerberg campus per year to the student. The students are responsible to pay landlords on time.
- 2.4.6 It is possible that SU can make direct monthly payments to private accredited landlords for NSFAS students, 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.
- 3.1.2 It remains the prerogative of the student to choose suitable off-campus private housing.
- 3.1.3 The landlord may impose his/her own rules in respect of off-campus private housing which a student must follow. It is the responsibility of the student to abide by the rules.
- 3.1.4 Bursary recipients:
 - 3.1.4.1 Bursary recipients need to complete a questionnaire that will be e-mailed to them after they have registered to indicate their accommodation type and address and also upload their signed lease agreement. The Undergraduate Bursary and Loans Office (“**UBL**”) will send the questionnaire.
 - 3.1.4.2 Students must inform UBL if they cancel the lease agreement by providing UBL with a copy of the lease cancellation, at the same time that they notify the landlord. Consequently, the payments for that accommodation will stop.
 - 3.1.4.3 The student remains liable for payments that exceeds the NSFAS capped allowance.

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

- 3.2.1 The 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.
- 3.2.2 UBL will send out the questionnaire to NSFAS-recipients to establish their accommodation status and addresses.
- 3.2.3 UBL will receive lease agreements along with the questionnaire.
- 3.2.4 UBL will make monthly payments to students (or directly to landlords, where applicable and where the student gave consent).



3.3 Responsibilities of landlords

- 3.3.1 The Landlord will make sure that the off-campus private housing is considered for accreditation by the **Private Accommodation Office**.
- 3.3.2 The Landlord will ensure that the prescribed application for accreditation is submitted to SU. The application form is available on www.maties.com (> accommodation > private accommodation).
- 3.3.3 The Landlord will provide the signed lease agreement between the student and the landlord, to the student.
- 3.3.4 The Landlord will 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 housing complies with the original agreed standards at all times.
- 3.3.5 The Landlord's off-campus private housing must comply with all municipal and statutory requirements for accommodation. Landlord's must familiarize themselves with these requirements. SU is not responsible for any non-compliance by the Landlord.

3.4 Responsibility of the Private Accommodation Office (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 stipulate in par 4 of this document and for communicating with the Landlord in this regard.
- 3.4.3 The PAO will monitor the standard of living through out the year and reserves the right to revoke the accreditation if the facilities is not maintained and is not up to the agreed standard.
- 3.4.4 The PAO is responsible for listing the accredited accommodation on SU's website and the Office will refer students to the relevant private accommodation options.
- 3.4.5 The PAO will not be able to intervene in matters pertaining to the contract between the Landlord and the student. PAO is not party to the agreement between the student and the Landlord.

3.5 Disclaimer

- 3.5.1 Students who enter into a lease agreement with landlords providing off-campus private housing do so in their private capacity.
- 3.5.2 SU is not a party to any lease agreement entered into between the student and the landlord in respect of off-campus private housing. SU will not become involved in and does not accept liability for 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.
- 3.5.3 SU will not be involved in the securing of tenants and will not be held responsible for empty rooms or non-payment by students
- 3.5.4 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.
- 3.5.5 Accredited off-campus private housing will be evaluated and approved annually by SU.
- 3.5.6 Accreditation of off-campus private housing can be withdrawn if the standard drops below the prescribed minimum standards and SU will not be responsible for any loss if accreditation is withdrawn.



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3.5.7 All accredited off-campus private housing will receive priority marketing within the structures of SU and will be identified as preferred suppliers once all the on-campus beds are filled.

3.6 Fees

3.6.1 An annual non-refundable administration fee of R100 per bed will be charged by SU.

4. PROCEDURE

Step 1: Complete the application form for accreditation of off-campus private housing (“**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.

Step 2: E-mail the completed application for accreditation to privateaccomm@sun.ac.za.

Step 3: The Private Accommodation Office 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 as soon as COVID-19 regulations allow for it.

Step 4: If all criteria are met, the accreditation will be confirmed in writing and, if accredited, the property listed on the SU’s website. In cases where some matters might be outstanding, the accreditation will be pending. The accreditations will be granted as soon as the pending matter has been resolved.

Step 5: An annual non-refundable administration fee of R100 per bed will be charged.

Accreditation status must be renewed on an annual basis. Should the landlord fail to meet the requirements, the landlord will be de-accredited as an off-campus private housing provider and any reference such a landlord will be removed from SU’s website.



5. 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><u>Number of beds</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A minimum of four (4) beds should be offered within one facility to be accredited.▪ If the dwelling offers less than four beds, but meets the criteria set for NSFAS accreditation (including the fee structure), it could be considered for a NSFAS SINGLE ACCOMMODATION ACCREDITATION.▪ If the dwelling is part of a block of flats, the dwelling will not be individually listed, as this could create the perception that the whole block is NSFAS accredited. NSFAS students will, however, be referred by the Private Accommodation Office. Please note that the Body Corporate could apply for accreditations for the whole block. <p><u>Distance and transport</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Dwelling should be situated in Stellenbosch or, in the case of Tygerberg campus, in the surrounding area.▪ 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.▪ If accommodation exceeds 3 km, NSFAS accreditation requires that the landlord should provide reliable transport running between the off-campus private housing and the relevant campus at regular intervals from 06h00 to 22h00.	<p><u>Number of beds</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A minimum of four (4) students should be accommodated within one facility to be accredited.▪ 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.▪ The dwelling can be advertised through rental agencies. Rental agencies are listed on the SU website. <p><u>Distance and transport</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Dwelling should be situated in Stellenbosch or, in the case of Tygerberg campus, in the surrounding area.▪ The accommodation should preferably be within a 3 km walking distance from campus. Students can make use of campus shuttle service at various pick-up points on campus.▪ If accommodation exceeds 3 km, SU accreditation requires that the landlord should provide reliable transport running between the off-campus private housing and the relevant campus at regular intervals from 06h00 to 22h00.▪ If student have their own transport, no provision for transport will be required.



Facilities

- Student double rooms should be no smaller than 14m², and a single room should be a minimum of 8m².
- Rooms should be furnished with at least
 - ✓ lockable closets;
 - ✓ a single bed steel or wooden frames including mattress/sponge;
 - ✓ a study desk;
 - ✓ a chair; and
 - ✓ a bookshelf.
- No more than four (4) students should share a bath or shower and toilet.
- Kitchen or kitchenette:
 - ✓ Cooking inside student rooms should not be permitted;
 - ✓ Suitable student storage, preparation and kitchen space should be provided;
 - ✓ Stove – one (1) per four (4) student residents;
 - ✓ Sink – one (1) per 10 students in commune dwellings and 15 student residents in high rise buildings;
 - ✓ Lockable cupboards – one (1) per student resident;
 - ✓ Microwave oven – one (1) per eight (8) student residents in commune dwellings and 12 in high rise building;
 - ✓ Countertop space – sufficient for eight (8) students' in commune dwellings and 12 students' in high rise buildings; and
 - ✓ A minimum provision of cold storage, 210 litres per five (5) students.
- In cases where NSFAS applicant could provide their own furniture, for example for an unfurnished flat, accreditation could still be considered.
- A communal area should preferably be available.

Facilities

- Student double rooms should be no smaller than 14m², and a single room should be a minimum of 8m².
- Dwelling do not have to be furnished as required for NSFAS accreditation, but the following requirements should be met:
 - ✓ Lockable closets;
 - ✓ No more than four (4) students should share a bath or shower and toilet;
 - ✓ Cooking inside student rooms should not be permitted;
 - ✓ Suitable student storage, preparation and kitchen space should be provided;
 - ✓ Sink – one (1) per 10 students in commune dwellings and 15 student residents in high rise buildings;
 - ✓ Lockable kitchen cupboards – one (1) per student resident;
 - ✓ Countertop space – sufficient for eight (8) students' in commune dwellings and 12 students' in high rise buildings;
 - ✓ A communal area should preferably be available.
 - ✓ If applicable, the parking norm provision of one (1) parking bay per two tenants for residential developments shall be applicable to off-campus accommodation.
 - ✓ 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 housing, or laundromat facilities should be accessible near it.
- Cleaning services should be available if needed.



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

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 housing, 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.
- 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.

- 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 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.