



**POLICY:  
Off-Campus Accommodation**

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<p align="center">UJ documents (e.g. Policies, Regulations, Guidelines, Contracts)</p> <p>UJ Statute;  <input type="checkbox"/> UJ administration and placement  <input type="checkbox"/> UJ Occupational health and safety;  <input type="checkbox"/> UJ Handling Student complaints  <input type="checkbox"/> UJ Student Regulation  <input type="checkbox"/> UJ Regulation for student discipline  <input type="checkbox"/> UJ Management of Pregnant students</p>	<p align="center">Other (e.g. Legislation, DoE and HEQC directives and guidelines)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Higher Education Act 101 of 1997  <input type="checkbox"/> National Student Financial Aid Scheme Act 56 of 1999  <input type="checkbox"/> National Building Regulation  <input type="checkbox"/> City of Johannesburg Public Health bylaws  <input type="checkbox"/> City of Johannesburg Commune Policy</p>
Stakeholders affected by this document (units and divisions who should be familiar with it):	<input type="checkbox"/> Registered Student <input type="checkbox"/> Division of student Affairs <input type="checkbox"/> Campus Health staff <input type="checkbox"/> Campus and UJ SRC
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## APPENDICES

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- ii. Evaluation form( AOA 200)
- iii. Appeal(AOA 300)
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# POLICY ON THE ACCREDITATION OF OFF-CAMPUS ACCOMMODATION

## 1. PREAMBLE

The University of Johannesburg student numbers will stabilise at around 48 000-50 000. Only 6 000 students live in UJ residences. Space is extremely limited and demand by far exceeds residence capacity. Eligible returning students occupy 60% of residence space, leaving the remaining 40% space for new applicants each year.

Most students come from areas which are not close to the four University campuses. This necessitates accommodation for such students who are unable to secure accommodation in university residences, in areas that are conveniently located close to the four university campuses.

Significant numbers of students live in off-campus accommodation close to the campuses of the University. It has become necessary for the University to have a policy on off-campus accommodation for such students, to protect the rights and interests of the University and its students.

The Policy on Off-campus Accommodation forms part of the policies and practice of the University of Johannesburg and is a key element in maintaining mutual and healthy relationships among students, the University, the providers of off-campus accommodation to students and the broader community. The policy provides for the accreditation of off-campus accommodation for registered students of the University of Johannesburg and related matters. Accredited student accommodation must conform to the provisions of the National Building Regulations and the City of Johannesburg Public Health by-laws. The Rental Housing Act, the common law and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, forms the context of this policy.

## 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- 2.1 Establish criteria and procedures for the accreditation of off-campus accommodation of registered students of the University of Johannesburg, be it communes or industrial buildings converted into habitable areas for students;
- 2.2 Make provision for transparent administrative processes which ensures that accreditation is dealt with fairly and consistently;

- 2.3 Provide procedures to address appeals and complaints, by both the services providers and students;

### 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all privately owned, non-university accommodation and to UJ students residing in such off-campus accommodation.

### 4. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions shall apply:

**“Approval”** means any approval granted by the University of Johannesburg.

**“Dwelling house”** means a detached self-contained inter-leading suite of rooms containing a kitchen with or without an ancillary scullery and the appropriate ablutions, used for living accommodation and housing, together with such outbuildings and subsidiary dwelling unit as is ordinarily permitted therewith.

**“Commune”** means a dwelling house where the habitable rooms are rented out for an extended period to unrelated persons who share the communal facilities.

**“Off-campus accommodation”** means accommodation that is not a residence owned or managed by the University of Johannesburg.

**“Owner”** means the registered owner (whether a natural person or a legal person) of the land, which shall include the holder of a long term lease, or the holder of a land tenure right such as permission to occupy certificate, deed of grant, leasehold or initial ownership, a designated executor, administrator, guardian or one holding any other official capacity, any successor in title, a duly authorized agent”

#### Abbreviations

NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
SARL	Student Accommodation and Residence Life
COJ	City of Johannesburg
UJ	University of Johannesburg

SRC	Student Representative Council
HOD	Head of Department
APB	Auckland Park Bunting Road Campus
APK	Auckland Park Kingsway Campus
DFC	Doornfontein Campus
SWC	Soweto Campus
DOHET	Department of Higher Education and Training

## **5. REVIEW AND CONTEXT**

This policy will be reviewed annually in accordance with the Policy on Policy Development and will take place in consultation with the following stakeholders:

- 5.1 UJ SRC
- 5.2 Division for Governance and Revenue
- 5.3 Division for Student Affairs
- 5.4 Division for Occupational Health and Safety

This policy should be read in conjunction with the applicable City of Johannesburg housing policies, the Higher Education Act of 1997 (as amended), the Housing Act of 2007 (as amended) and the Rental Act of 1999 (as amended).

## **6. IDENTIFICATION OF POLICY NEEDS**

The local community and the university have frequently cited the following concerns, which inform the need for this policy;

- 6.1 Exploitation of students by unscrupulous landlords;
- 6.2 High incidences of anti-social behaviour among students living in off-campus accommodation, including noise levels, particularly late at night;
- 6.3 Overcrowding of dwelling houses and communes for the sake of profit, that generates decay of the residential area.
- 6.4 Shortage of residential space on university campuses;
- 6.5 A need to develop a system to accredit suitable off-campus student accommodation;
- 6.6 A need to educate students on their responsibilities as good tenants in residential areas and as registered students of UJ;

- 6.7 A need to keep an updated database of students living in off-campus accommodation close to the UJ campuses;
- 6.8 A need to enforce discipline on off-campus students who engage in anti-social behaviour at variance with the values of UJ

## **7. CRITERIA AND PROCEDURE FOR ACCREDITATION**

### **7.1 Important document required for accreditation:**

Only if owners of accommodation can present the following documents will their properties be considered for accreditation:

- 7.1.1 Building Plan approved by COJ
- 7.1.2 Development Plan
- 7.1.3 Proof of residential permit (zonal)
- 7.1.4 Original tax clearance certificate

### **7.2 Basic requirements**

In order to qualify for accreditation a dwelling house or commune must at the minimum comply with the following requirements:

- 7.2.1 Students sharing rooms should have their own lockable closets. There should be a maximum of two students per room (size should be a minimum of 4 m x 3 m= 12 square metres for sharing)
- 7.2.2 Rooms should be equipped with a single bed, cupboard, study desk, chair and a bookshelf.
- 7.2.3 No more than five students must share a bath or shower and toilet.
- 7.2.4 Cooking facilities, with at the minimum a stove, a fridge, a sink, lockable cupboards, a microwave oven and a workplace, that can be used by a maximum of 15 students.
- 7.2.5 Students are to clean their own rooms and the service provider must clean all communal areas.
- 7.2.6 Rental charged per student is inclusive of water and electricity.
- 7.2.7 Reliable and regular transport to the nearest UJ campus must be provided by the landlord in areas where the distance of the accommodation from such campus exceeds 3 km.
- 7.2.8 All off-campus accommodation facilities must be of a standard that is at least the equivalent of a UJ residence in terms of quality and appearance.

## **8. ACCREDITATION APPLICATION PROCESS**

- 8.1 An owner of accommodation who wishes to apply for accreditation of accommodation must do so by completing in full the relevant application forms attached to this policy (see attachments) and available from the SARL office on any campus. Only applications that have been completed in full and that contain all the information required will be considered.
- 8.2 An application must be completed in respect of each physical address for which accreditation is required.
- 8.3 Every application must be accompanied by proof of payment of a non-refundable administration fee, determined annually by UJ.
- 8.4 All applications for the accreditation of accommodation must be submitted to the Director of SARL by 31 August of the preceding year. No late applications will be considered.

## **9. ACCREDITATION PROCESS**

- 9.1 Once an application for the accreditation of accommodation has been received and all the application requirements have been met, an Evaluation Committee inspects the premises on behalf of UJ.
- 9.2 The Evaluation Committee comprises the following:
  - (i) SARL Senior Manager, (chairperson);
  - (ii) SARL Coordinator: Off-campus Accommodation;
  - (iii) President of the UJSRC or her/his nominee;
  - (iv) Chairperson of the campus SRC closest to the accommodation, or her/his nominee;
  - (v) A representative of the Division for Occupational Safety;
  - (vi) A representative of the City of Johannesburg, as determined by the COJ;
  - (vii) A representative of the COJ Health and Development Planning Department, as determined by this department.
- 9.3 The Evaluation Committee inspects the dwelling house or commune in the presence of the owner or her/his authorized representative, and determines whether or not the dwelling house or commune meets the requirements for accreditation as provided for in 7.2 above.
- 9.4 After inspection of the premises, the Evaluation Committee makes a recommendation to the Director: SARL on whether or not the accommodation should be accredited.
- 9.5 A recommendation must be supported in writing by at least 4 of the members of the Evaluation Committee.
- 9.6 The Director: SARL makes a decision on the accreditation of accommodation within 72 hours after the evaluation has taken place, and informs the owner of the accommodation forthwith and in

writing. She/he bases his decision on the recommendation of the Evaluation Committee. If she/he takes a decision which is at variance with the recommendation of the Evaluation Committee, she/he must provide reasons in writing to the Executive Director: Student Affairs for doing so.

- 9.7 Physical property is accredited, not the owner of the property.
- 9.8 Accreditation is for a period of one calendar year, from 1 January-31 December.
- 9.9 If, in the consensus view of the Evaluation Committee, accommodation does not meet the requirements for accreditation after the first inspection, but may meet the requirements if the owner is afforded the opportunity to address certain clearly defined shortcomings, the Evaluation Committee may delay their recommendation on accreditation by one week in order to afford the owner the opportunity to remedy such shortcomings. No further extensions will be allowed.
- 9.10 UJ does not enter into a formal contract with the owner of accredited accommodation.
- 9.11 Once accommodation has been accredited, details of the accommodation are placed on a database of off-campus accommodation. This database is regularly updated and made available to current and prospective students. The database is available on the UJ website.
- 9.12 Only accredited accommodation may be advertised on UJ notice boards. Notices advertising accredited off-campus accommodation may be placed on UJ notice boards only with the prior approval of the Director: SARL.

## **10. APPEAL**

- 10.1 An owner whose accommodation has not been accredited may appeal the decision.
- 10.2 An owner, who wishes to lodge an appeal, must do so within 72 hours after having been informed of the decision not to accredit the accommodation.
- 10.3 The appeal must be in writing and directed to the Executive Director: Student Affairs.
- 10.4 The Executive Director: Student Affairs must make a decision on whether to uphold or reject the appeal within 5 working days after receipt of the appeal. In exercising her/his judgement, the Executive Director may interview the owner, may inspect the premises and may receive such other advice as she/he deems fit.
- 10.5 The decision of the Executive Director is final.



## **11. DE-ACCREDITATION**

- 11.1 If, in the course of the calendar year for which accommodation has been accredited, clear evidence is provided to the Director: SARL that the accredited accommodation no longer meets all of the requirements for accreditation, she/he must present such evidence to the Evaluation Committee (see 7.4.2 above).
- 11.2 The Evaluation Committee must, within 14 days after having been presented with the evidence, advise the Director: SARL on whether or not to de-accredit the accommodation.
- 11.3 If, in the consensus view of the Evaluation Committee, the accommodation may escape de-accreditation if certain clearly defined shortcomings are addressed forthwith by the owner, the owner shall be afforded an opportunity to remedy such shortcomings within a period of 7 days after having been notified in writing of such shortcomings by the convener of the Evaluation Committee.
- 11.4 If the Director: SARL, based on the advice of the Evaluation Committee, decides to de-accredit the accommodation, she/he must inform the owner of the accommodation of her/his decision forthwith.
- 11.5 The owner of the accommodation has the right to appeal the decision to de-accredit, in which case the same procedure as described in 7.5 above is followed.

## **12. NSFAS FUNDING FOR ACCREDITED ACCOMMODATION**

- 12.1 Once accommodation has been accredited, the Division for Financial Governance and Revenue is provided with the information.
- 12.2 NSFAS only funds the cost of accommodation of students who live in accredited off-campus accommodation.
- 12.3 Only accredited dwelling houses and communes that accommodate a minimum of 15 students, or a formally-constituted consortium of dwelling houses and or communes that in the aggregate accommodate a minimum of 20 students, qualify for NSFAS funding.
- 12.4 A student who applies for financial aid in terms of NSFAS, and who seeks off-campus accommodation, is provided with a list of accredited accommodation by the Division for Financial Governance and Revenue.
- 12.5 The Division for Financial Governance and Revenue determines, in accordance with the provisions of the National Student Financial

Aid Scheme Act of 1999, whether a student qualifies for financial aid from NSFAS.

- 12.6 At a date prior to registration for the academic year, a student who thus qualifies for NSFAS financial aid provides the Division for Financial Governance and Revenue with proof of accommodation in accredited accommodation and with proof of the rental for the accommodation.
- 12.7 The Division for Financial Governance and Revenue then allocates to the student an amount for the payment of the rental for accredited accommodation from the NSFAS loan. The maximum amount charged for accommodation is determined by the University from time to time.
- 12.8 The student uses the amount thus allocated to her/him to pay for her/his accommodation. No contract for the payment of accommodation rental by the student shall exist between UJ and the owner of the accredited accommodation.

### **13. STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

Students who live in accredited accommodation are expected to live in accordance with the values of UJ. The Student Regulations also apply to students who live in accredited accommodation.

16 AUGUST 2010

[OFF-CAMPUS-ACCOMMODATION]