



RHODES UNIVERSITY
Grahamstown • 6140 • South Africa

Policy on Accreditation of Private Accommodation

Policy Volume	Academic Faculty & Students
Responsible Committee/Unit/Division/Faculty	Division of Student Affairs
Responsible Chairperson/Director/Manager	Director : Student Affairs
Dates of First and Subsequent Council Approvals	Approved on 10 September 2020
Policy Approval Pathways (e.g. committee, Senex, Senate, Council)	Board of Residence, Student Services Council, Senate , Council
Revision History: Approved Reviews	New policy
Review Cycle (e.g. every 2/5/7 years etc.)	3 years
Next Review Date	2023

1. POLICY PARTICULARS

1.1. Policy Title	Policy on accreditation of private accommodation
1.2. Policy Statement	Rhodes University strives to provide an environment that is conducive to living and learning to all Rhodes University students. The Accreditation of Private Accommodation policy provides for the accreditation of off-campus accommodation for registered students of Rhodes University and related matters.
1.3. Reason for Policy	The purpose of this policy is to establish criteria for the accreditation of off- campus housing for registered Rhodes University students, be it dwelling houses, communes or flats.
1.4. Policy Objective/s	The policy aims to : <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish criteria and procedures for the accreditation of off- campus accommodation for registered students of Rhodes university, be it in commune or building intended for student accommodation;• Make provision for transparent administrative processes to ensure that accreditation is dealt with fairly and consistently;• Establish adequate monitoring and accountability procedures for accredited properties and service providers;• Ensure consistency with other guidelines, regulations and legislation relevant to this policy.
1.5. People affected by this Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All privately owned off- campus accommodation that seeks accreditation or is accredited by Rhodes University.• All students seeking or living in off campus accommodation
1.6. Who should read this Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Rhodes University stakeholders• All owners of private accommodation and/ or estate agents
1.7. Implementers of this Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Division of Student Affairs• Finance Division• All service providers of off- campus accommodation

2. RELATED DOCUMENTS FORMS AND TOOLS

Relevant Legislation (Legislation/Regulatory requirements/Organisational Reports – name these)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 with special reference to section 24 • Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act no.101 of 1997) • Policy on Minimum Norms and Standards for Student Housing at Public Universities • Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993 • Guidelines for the Department of Higher Education and Training Bursary Scheme for Students at Public Universities • And all other or related relevant legislation/ policies
Related Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Disciplinary Code • Policy on Allocation of residences
Related Protocols
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Declaration and Agreement (Indemnity)
Forms and Tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application for accreditation form • Checklist for accommodation

3. POLICY DEFINITIONS

(Technical or Conceptual terms used in the policy)

No	TERM	DEFINITION
3.1	Privately owned accommodation	Any privately owned housing unit, such as a private residence, multiple bedroom house that houses only students, individual room in a house occupied by the homeowner, garden flat, and block of flats or duplex within a complex - leased directly from a property owner or indirectly through an accredited leasing agent.
3.2	Property/dwelling/commune	The property at which the service provider provides off- campus accommodation to Rhodes University students.
3.3	Provider	A person or entity that provides off- campus accommodation to students.

3.4	Oppidan	Refers to a student who lives off campus in accommodation independently of the university.
3.5	Conditional accreditation	Means the status granted by Rhodes University to a service provider who partially meets the requirements for full accreditation.
3.7	NSFAS	The National Student Financial Aid Scheme.

4. PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THIS POLICY

OVERVIEW
Rhodes University Private Accommodation Policy is based on the following principles :
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Uphold the human dignity of students. 4.2 Accessible, affordable and safe accommodation. 4.3 Environment conducive to living and learning. 4.4 Good governance of the process. 4.5 Compliance with other statutory frameworks. 4.6 Students on NSFAS bursary shall only receive a living allowance if they are accommodated in university accredited accommodation.

5. CRITERIA AND PROCEDURE FOR ACCREDITATION

<p><u>Directive 1 :</u></p> <p>5.1 Documents required</p> <p>Properties shall only be considered for accreditation if the following documents are presented by an applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1.1 Original Tax Clearance certificate; 5.1.2 Certificates of compliance(Fire safety, Electricity & Gas Installation, Occupational Health & Safety); 5.1.3 Evacuation Plan; 5.1.4 A copy of water and electricity bill; 5.1.5 Certified ID copy.
--

Directive 2

5.2 Basic requirements of properties

In order for a property to qualify for accreditation, it must at the minimum, comply with procedure on the minimum norms and standards for student housing , including the following requirements :

- 5.2.1 The quality and appearance of all off-campus accommodation facilities must be of a standard that is at least the equivalent of Rhodes University on-campus residences.
- 5.2.2 There should be a maximum of two students per room. Students sharing rooms must each have their own, lockable closets.
- 5.2.3 Single rooms should be no smaller than 8 m², whilst double rooms should be no smaller than 14 m².
- 5.2.4 Rooms must be equipped with a single bed and a mattress; cupboard; study desk; desk chair; bookshelf; curtains; study lamp; mounted pin board; wastepaper bin; and bedside table for each student.
- 5.2.5 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 (toilet) in a house.
- 5.2.6 Showers and lavatory cubicle will 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.
- 5.2.7 An adequately equipped kitchen must be provided. Cooking will not be permitted in any student room. The term "adequate" refers to sufficient preparation, storage, cold storage, cooking and washing/cleaning space and facilities.
- 5.2.8 Kitchens must be equipped with, at the 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.
- 5.2.9 Students are required to clean their own rooms, whilst the provider is required to clean all communal areas at least twice a week.
- 5.2.10 Rental charged per student must be inclusive of water.
- 5.2.11 Where prepaid meters have been installed, the service provider must provide an allowance for electricity. However, if students exceed the allocated amount· they (the students) must top it up themselves.
- 5.2.12 The provider must provide efficient security systems at each dwelling.
- 5.2.13 Internet services, either via fibre optic cable or Wi-Fi, should be provided at the dwelling house.
- 5.2.14 A study Centre, equipped with computer facilities and a printer, must be provided at every site where more than 20 students are accommodated.
- 5.2.15 The provider must comply with municipal by-laws.

Directive 3

5.3 Application process

An owner of accommodation facilities (i.e. the provider or a person who complies with the provisions of Clause 5.2 above) who wishes to apply for accreditation of such facilities must do so by completing, in full, the relevant application forms (available on the Rhodes University website).

- 5.3.1 Only applications that have been completed in full, and that contain all the required information, will be considered.
- 5.3.2 An application must be completed in respect of each physical dwelling for which accreditation and grading is required.
- 5.3.3 A service provider or a legal entity who wishes to apply for accreditation of accommodation must do so by completing in full the relevant application form.
- 5.3.4 It is the responsibility of every applicant or service provider to familiarise themselves with the policy requirements for accreditation and other relevant application procedures.
- 5.3.5 An application must be completed in respect of each property that would be used as off-campus accommodation.
- 5.3.6 All applications for the accreditation of accommodation must be submitted before or by the closing date as determined by Rhodes University.
- 5.3.7 Rhodes University will determine annually the date, process and timelines for application and approval of accreditation.
- 5.3.8 No late applications will be accepted.
- 5.3.9 An accreditation of property cannot be transferred to another property even if the properties are owned by the same service provider.
- 5.3.10 Any changes to the conditions of the accredited off-campus accommodation and ownership of the property will require re-application.
- 5.3.11 Rhodes University reserves the right to grant full accreditation, conditional accreditation, decline accreditation, withdraw accreditation and blacklist.
- 5.3.12 Rhodes University will communicate the outcome of the accreditation processes in writing to all applicants.
- 5.3.13 Upon being granted accreditation a Memorandum of Agreement shall be signed between Rhodes University and the service provider, after which the original copy must be forwarded to the University legal services.
- 5.3.14 Accreditation is for a period of three (3) years, subject to the de-accreditation provisions contained in 6.9 of this policy.
- 5.3.15 A panel appointed by Rhodes University will review all applications received. The Accreditation Panel will consider all the above-stipulated requirements and make a decision on whether to decline or grant accreditation.
- 5.3.16 The possible outcome of the accreditation process include full accreditation, conditional accreditation and declined accreditation.
- 5.3.17 In the event that accreditation is conditionally granted, declined or de-accredited the applicant reserves the right to request written reasons from the Accreditation Panel within 14 working days of the decision.

Directive 4

5.4 Evaluation process

The Evaluation Committee comprises the following:

- The Manager Student Services/ DSA representative nominated by the Director
- The Oppidan Hall warden
- A Rhodes University member of the SRC

- An Oppidan sub warden
- A Representative of Residential Operations
- RU Safety Health Environment Officer
- One Legal expert

The Inspection Sub- committee shall be comprised of :

- Occupational Health Officer
- Residential Operations Nominee
- A representative from Facilities Department

- 5.4.1 The Inspection Committee shall inspect the property in the presence of the service provider or his/her authorised representative, and must determine whether or not the property meets the requirements for accreditation.
- 5.4.2 After inspection of the premises, the Evaluation Committee will make a recommendation to the Director Student Affairs.
- 5.4.3 As soon as practicably possible after the Evaluation Committee made its recommendation, the Director Student Affairs shall communicate the outcome to the applicant/s in writing.
- 5.4.4 The physical property, and not the applicant, is accredited.
- 5.4.5 If, in the consensus view of the Evaluation Committee, an accommodation facility does not meet the requirements for accreditation after the first inspection, but may meet the requirements if the provider is afforded the opportunity to address certain clearly defined shortcomings. The Evaluation Committee may delay their recommendation on accreditation and grading by one week, in order to afford the owner the opportunity to remedy such shortcomings. No further extensions will be allowed.
- 5.4.6 Once accommodation has been accredited, details of the accommodation are placed on a database of accredited off-campus accommodation facilities. This database must be regularly updated, and made available to current and prospective students. The database should be made available on the Rhodes University website.

Directive 5

5.5 Appeal Process

- 5.5.1 A provider whose application for accreditation has been unsuccessful may appeal the decision.
- 5.5.2 The provider must lodge an appeal within seven days after having been informed of the University's decision not to accredit and grade the property.
- 5.5.3 The appeal must be in writing, and directed to the DVC: Academic & Student Affairs.
- 5.5.4 The DVC shall make a decision on whether to uphold or reject the appeal within ten working days after receipt of the appeal. In exercising his/her judgement, the DVC may interview the provider; recommend re- inspection of the premises; and receive such other advice as he/she deems fit.
- 5.5.5 The decision of the DVC: Academic & Student Affairs is final.

Directive 6

5.6 De-Accreditation process:

- 5.6.1 If in the course of the three years for which accommodation has been accredited and clear evidence is provided to the Director Student Affairs that an accredited accommodation facility no longer meets all the accreditation, he/she must present such evidence to the Evaluation Committee.
- 5.6.2 The Evaluation Committee must, within 14 days after having been presented with the evidence, inspect the property, and advise the Director Student Affairs on whether or not to de-accredit the accommodation.
- 5.6.3 If, in the consensus view of the Evaluation Committee, de-accreditation may be avoided if certain clearly define shortcomings are addressed forthwith by the service provider, the service provider will be afforded an opportunity to remedy such shortcomings within a period of seven days after having been notified, in writing, by the Evaluation Committee of such shortcomings.
- 5.6.4 If, based on the advice of the Evaluation Committee, the Director Student Affairs decides to de-accredit the accommodation facility, he/she must inform the provider of the accommodation of his/her decision accordingly.

5.7 Directive 7

- 5.7.1 Rhodes University students living in rental accommodation whether accredited or not shall be bound by the Rhodes University Student Disciplinary Code.
- 5.7.2 Providers of accredited accommodation shall collaborate with Rhodes University to establish agreed upon disciplinary procedures and mechanisms.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

(Roles and responsibilities of Key Personnel/Divisions/Faculties/Departments)

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Division of Student Affairs	To implement the procedures and processes outlined in this policy
Finance Division	To implement financial transactions related to this policy
Evaluation Committee	To evaluate and inspect applications and recommend to the Director Student Affairs
Deputy Vice Chancellor: Academic & Student Affairs	To Chair Appeals' committee

7. CONTACTS

Area of Concern	Division/Faculty/Department	Telephone	Email
Implementation	Student Affairs	046 603 8181	studentaffairs@ru.ac.za

The policy will be reviewed at the end of the three-year cycle.

It will go through the following structures: Student Services Council, Senate, Council

Communication of the review process:

At the end of the three year cycle the Director Student Affairs will facilitate a process for the review of the policy. The Review Committee will be comprised of the following representatives :

- Director: Student Affairs
- SRC President
- Oppidan Hall warden
- Oppidan Councillor
- Safety Health Environmental Officer
- University Legal Representative
- Deputy Director : Infrastructure & Operations