



UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG

RESIDENCE ADMISSIONS POLICY

Version 5

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Policy Title	Residence Admissions Policy
Policy Officer	Campus Housing & Residence Life
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1. Context/ Background

The University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) aspires to be amongst the top universities globally. This aspiration is underpinned by a strong commitment to academic excellence, enhancing Wits' reputation of a research-intensive university and ensuring that appropriate support mechanisms are in place towards students' success. At Wits, creating a living and learning environment is the foundation for the kind of residence culture we are trying to create. Wits may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth. We are committed to cultivating a residence culture that is inclusive, and reflective of the diversity of our student body. Through an approach that is student centered, we seek to work with students on a journey of academic success and holistic development. Residence life is a special experience, one that seeks to promote a cosmopolitan student experience, rooted in the Wits values, and one which prepares Wits students to make a meaningful contribution to the world beyond the university.

This Residence Admission Policy sets out the criteria by which students are provided with accommodation in university-controlled residences. This includes both University owned residences and those with which the University has entered into lease agreements. The policy provides an outline of the requirements that applicants and students must meet to qualify for admission into residence. Due to the limited number of places available, meeting the requirements does not guarantee a place.

2. Definitions

BAR	Barnato Hall
BRC	Braamfontein Centre
CPL	Campus Lodge
Dean	Dean: Student Affairs
EOS	Ernest Oppenheimer Hall self-catering
FYC	Final YOS completed, pending decision for Academic Program
FTEN	First Time Entrance
INL	International House
Internal student (IN)	Registered student not in residence
JCT	Wits Junction
KNS	Knockando Hall self-catering
M1A	Renewal of registration permitted by Wits Readmissions Committee-1
M1C	Renewal of registration permitted by Wits Readmissions Committee-1 with conditions
M2A	Renewal of Registration permitted by Wits Readmissions Committee-2
M2C	Renewal of Registration permitted by Wits Readmissions Committee-2 with conditions
N	"n" is the approved length of the curriculum for the degree for which the student is registered

N+1	"n" is the approved length of the curriculum + 1 year.
NOS	Noswal Hall
PCC	Candidature continues
PCD	Permitted to proceed
PNM	Permitted to Proceed to Cuban Exit Examination
PSC	Permitted to proceed on a special curriculum
Q	Completed all requirements for qualification
RES	Reith Hall self-catering
Resuming student (RES)	A student who had a gap year and previously resided in residences.
'Returning' student (RET)	Registered student currently in residence
SET	Senior Executive Team
Under Age	16yrs -17yrs
VCO	Vice Chancellors Office
WCV	West Campus Village
WRC1	Wits Readmissions Committee 1

3. Principles

Several factors impact on residence placement, especially considering the limited number of beds available in university residences. Academic merit and progression, amongst others as outlined below, are the key factors regarding residence placement.

The University Residence Admission policy (RAP) is in line with the University's strategic purpose in attracting academically excellent students from diverse backgrounds. First-year undergraduate students are considered the most vulnerable and priority will be given to their placement in residences. In giving priority to first years, the University will reserve 50% of its undergraduate bed capacity to first years. It is accepted that the RAP will contribute to the academic success and retention of its students by providing an environment that is conducive for learning.

- a) To be eligible to reside in a university residence, a person must, at least –
 - i. be registered as a full-time student at the University and be registered for a minimum of 50% of the full curriculum as per the Faculty Rules & Syllabus.
 - ii. meet specific academic criteria.
 - iii. have an exemplary disciplinary record.
- b) Residence placement is subject to application for accommodation eligibility in terms of the admissions criteria of this policy and is valid for one year only.
- c) As placement is from year to year, the University reserves the right not to renew any student's placement at the University's discretion.
- d) Placement in one year does not guarantee automatic placement throughout the programme of study, and a student must re-apply every year.
- e) Placement in a student's choice of residence is also not guaranteed, irrespective of whether a student is admitted to their first choice of academic programme.
- f) All students admitted or readmitted to full-time undergraduate or postgraduate studies must adhere to the requirements, criteria and procedures set out in this policy to be considered for placement in a university-controlled residence including university leased residences.
- g) To achieve maximum occupancy and ensure the realisation rate, an over-subscription of prospective students is done for the various residences. The University reserves the right to accommodate the relevant over-subscribed students in alternative University residences and the University reserves the right to move students from one residence to another.

4. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the criteria that determines selection and allocation of rooms to both Undergraduate and Postgraduate students.

In assessing applications for admission to residences, the following factors are considered:

1. Closing dates for applications	Applications will only be considered if received within the cut-off dates as advertised annually by the Central Accommodation Office. No late applications will be accepted.
2. Academic application status	Residence decisions will be finalized only after an academic offer is made to and accepted by the applicant.
3. Financial standing	<p>FTEN students who are made a firm academic offer and are self-funded, awarded a bursary or have applied for NSFAS will automatically be admitted into residence.</p> <p>“RETURNING” (RET) and “INTERNAL” (IN) residence applicants who have outstanding fees upto R10,000 as at 30 November in respect of the current year are eligible for residence admission for the following year.</p> <p>Students owing more than R10,000 will only be eligible for a residence offer based on compliance with the University Fees Policy on Re-registration. Students funded by Wits approved sponsors/donors and NSFAS will receive an offer and may be admitted subject to the University Fees Policy being complied with.</p>
4. Academic standing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Academic merit is the primary principle used for admission to residences.• All FTEN applicants who have been given an academic offer will be made an offer of accommodation.• Firm offers of accommodation to RET, RES and IN students can be made only after the release of a student's end-of-year examination results.• The AM (Average Mark) of the final examination marks is used to rank RET, RES and IN students applying for accommodation (from highest AM to lowest AM) for the placement in residences for the following year.

Prioritisation of offer based on academic standing: -

Residence Category	Academic Requirement	Appeals Required
FTEN	Students with an academic offer who have applied for residence will be made a residence offer.	Appeal process not applicable
RET/ RES/ IN (students will be made residence offer in order of priority)	1. Students who have passed all courses and or with an overall of PCD/PSC/ PCC/PNM/FYC/Q outcome	1. No appeal necessary
	2. Students must be registered for more than 2 full year courses (see 3a i)	2. No appeal necessary
	3. Students with a successful WRC1 outcome, (outcome status M1A and M1C)	3. No appeal necessary
	4. Students with a successful WRC2 outcome (outcome status M2A and M2C)	4. Appeal to be submitted to the Residence Appeals Committee.
*Allocation is subject to the availability of places		
5. Length of stay	<div><div>The maximum permissible number of years in a residence is linked to your academic progression and is as follows: Undergraduates: 1st Degree = n +1years Continuing degree (e.g. BA Law, GEMP) = n +1 years Postgraduates: Honours or Diploma = 2 years Masters by Coursework = 2 years Masters by Research = 3 years PhD = 4 years where “n” is the approved length of the curriculum for the degree which the student is registered. Students registering for a second undergraduate degree will not be allowed in residence. Students registering for a new qualification that is the same or at a lower NQF level of their current qualification will not be considered for residence.</div><div>U G P G</div></div>	

6. Age Limits (Ages as at 1 January of the year of admission)	<p>Catered residences: 16 to 24 years of age</p> <p>Self-catering residences: BAR; BRC; CPL; NOS; KNS; EOS; R E S ; 17 to 35 years of age</p> <p>INL 18 to 45 years of age (4th year onwards)</p> <p>WCV 18 to 45 years of age (All postgraduate programmes)</p> <p>JCT 17 to 35 years of age (UG) or 45 years of age (PG)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only undergraduate students will be permitted to stay in catered residences whilst postgraduate students may only stay in self-catered residences which is in line with their academic terms. • Underage students will be placed in single sex catered residences. However, due to limited spaces, CHRL may opt to accommodate some of these students in specific self-catered residences.
7. Disciplinary and criminal record	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A record of repeated minor disciplinary infractions or a single major infraction may lead to a refusal to admit a student to a residence. • Unacceptable conduct might lead to formal disciplinary processes as outlined in the Student Rules for Discipline. • A student with a criminal record acquired prior to, or following admission to the university, will not be admitted to a residence.
8. Exceptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An agreed number of places shall be reserved for academically excellent First Year undergraduate students who have been identified and referred by VCO. • Any deviation to the above criteria set out in this document will require the approval of the Dean and may require further approval from VCO and or SET as determined by the Dean, this includes any fee concessions relating to admission to residences.
9. Students with disability	<p>Limited accommodation is available in residences to provide for the needs of students with physical disabilities. As a matter of principle, the University will strive to provide basic support for students with disabilities. However, all residence admission criteria must be met to be admitted into residences.</p>
10. High-Level sporting achievement	<p>In recognising the University's aspirations towards greater sporting success at Wits, accommodation may be reserved for high-level sports persons provided they meet the residence admission criteria set out in this document.</p>
11. Inclusivity in residences	<p>All students, including LGBTQIA+ students and those with specific cultural/religious beliefs, who meet the admission criteria outlined in this document will be given the opportunity to request specific housing arrangements to support their dignity and safety.</p> <p>The approval of specific housing requests is within the discretion of the University and is subject to the availability of accommodation. Such requests will be considered with a view to prevent harm and/or prejudice.</p>

	CHRL will make every reasonable effort to honour these requests, and where this is not possible, clear communication and alternatives will be discussed. All requests will be treated confidentially and with sensitivity. The University does not accommodate housing preferences rooted in bias, prejudice, and/or unfair discrimination of LGBTQIA+ identities.
12. Promotion of diversity	In the interest of promoting diversity and a cosmopolitan residence life experience within the residences of the University, the Director of Campus Housing and Residence Life may apply such additional reasonable measures at their discretion in placing a student.

5. FILLING OF STUDENT ACCOMMODATION VACANCIES

Should there be residence vacancies which cannot be filled by eligible applicants, the University reserves the right to offer these places to students, such requests are considered by the Deputy Director: Financial Administration and Residence Placements or the Director: CHRL. This excludes students who have an unsuccessful residence appeals outcome.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 Campus Housing & Residence Life (CH&RL) is responsible for the development of a clear and transparent residence admissions policy & clearly communicates the admissions process, requirements, and deadlines to prospective and current students. Ensures that residence admissions policies align with the institution's mission, goals, and non-discrimination policies.

6.2 The Central Accommodation Office receives, processes, and reviews the residence applications and ensures students meet the eligibility criteria set out in the residence admissions policy.

6.3 Students submit residence applications within the specified deadlines, providing accurate and complete information.

7. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Date	Summary	Changed by
01	2011	Approved by Council	CH&RL
02	June 2019	Review/Updated	CH&RL
03	August 2023	Review/ Updated	CH&RL
03	12 October 2023	Approved by Council	CH&RL
04	April 2024	Review/ Updated	CH&RL and the Registrar
05	19 May 2025	Review/Updated	CH&RL