



Off-campus Accommodation Tips 2025 (FAQ)

The following off-campus accommodation tips are provided for students interested in residing in off-campus accommodation facilities that are not owned by the NWU, but are accredited by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS).

1. What is the difference between a university residence and accredited accommodation?

University residences	Accredited off-campus accommodation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owned by the NWU. Located either on university property or property leased by the university. You apply to be in a university residence as part of your application to the NWU. The NWU places students in university residences. The accommodation contract is between YOU and the NWU. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NOT owned by the NWU but owned privately. Not located on NWU premises. The NWU does not place you, therefore you may choose in which off-campus accommodation you reside. You are expected to contact the owner/agent/landlord YOURSELF and pick a place you are happy with. The accommodation contract (rental agreement) is between YOU and the owner of the facility (NOT the NWU).

2. What is a rental agreement or contract?

A rental agreement or contract is the same type of document and essentially refers to a legally binding agreement between YOU and the owner of the accommodation facility (not the NWU). Therefore, you in your personal capacity enter into the agreement and will be held liable for the costs. That is why it is important to read your contract and ensure that you are not charged for anything that is NOT covered by NSFAS.

3. What does it mean if accommodation is accredited?

Accreditation refers to a specific status assigned to a privately owned accommodation facility. Accredited accommodation can include apartments, flats, student houses, etc. These places are privately owned, meaning that you in your personal capacity enter into a contract with the owner or agent of the accredited accommodation. Basically, accredited accommodation has met specific minimum norms and standards set by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and required by NSFAS for funding support and will as a minimum have specific amenities and services included to the rental price. This includes bathrooms, basic kitchen appliances, basic furniture, Wi-Fi, etc.

4. How will I know that my off-campus accommodation is accredited by NSFAS?

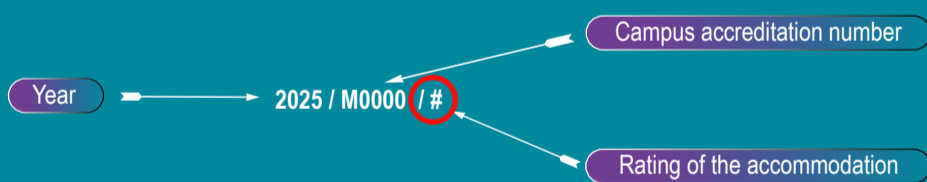
Accommodation facilities that are accredited are listed on the NWU Website: [click here](#). If the accommodation facility you are looking at is NOT on this list, it means that the facility has not been accredited and that the rental fees will NOT be covered by NSFAS. If an owner or rental agent insists that their accommodation facility is accredited but they do not appear on the list, first check with the NWU before signing or agreeing to any rental agreements.

5. How is the NWU involved in the accreditation process?

The NWU checks whether off-campus accommodation facilities meet the minimum norms and standards set by the DHET. However, the NWU is not part of the agreement that you will enter into with the owner or rental agent of the accommodation facility. Thus, YOU enter into an agreement with the private accommodation service provider and you must be sure that you understand exactly what you agree to BEFORE signing! The NWU informs NSFAS which accommodation facilities meet the required minimum norms and standards, whereafter NSFAS proceeds to pay the related accommodation fees – however this is limited to specific amounts set by the DHET and NSFAS. The accommodation service provider cannot change these amounts and require you to pay the difference!

6. How will I know what amount will be paid by NSFAS?

Go to the Residence webpage ([click here](#)) and open the list of accredited services providers. Each accommodation facility has an accreditation number, that looks like this:



Category	Classification	Single Room Fee	Share Room Fee
4	Gold	R47 700.00	R43 900.00
3	Silver	R43 700.00	R40 200.00
2	Bronze	R38 500.00	R35 400.00
1	Minimum	R33 100.00	R30 400.00

****Note, the fees indicated above are for the entire year, and not per month.**

If you sign a lease agreement for more than this amount, NSFAS as well as the University will not pay the short-fall, and you will be liable for this amount.

7. Should I pay a deposit for my off-campus accommodation?

NO! You will never be required by an off-campus accredited accommodation provider to pay a deposit IF you are funded by NSFAS. An owner, rental agent or landlord may NOT request you as a NSFAS funded student to pay an upfront deposit, top-up fee, or any related fee. All costs should be included to the rental fee that is covered by NSFAS.

Should you receive such requests, report this in the complaints line: [click here](#)

9. What if I want to move to another accredited accommodation facility?

If you want to move to another facility, you must give 30 days' notice to your contracted landlord/rental agent. YOU must also provide a cancellation letter to the Student Finance Office on your campus, and submit the new lease agreement to ensure the correct rental agent/owner/landlord gets paid.

8. Will I have to pay for extras at the accredited accommodation?

The following amenities and services must be included to the accredited accommodation and rental amount:

- Water
- Electricity
- Wi-Fi
- Cleaning of communal areas (not your own room)
- Gardening services (if applicable)
- Security gates and lockable rooms

REMEMBER!!

- Accredited accommodation must provide for basic amenities.
- Make sure you are staying at a facility where the rental amount will be covered by the maximum amounts that NSFAS will pay out.
- If you enter into a rental agreement that includes aspects NOT covered by NSFAS, you will be held personally liable by the service provider.

For more information on accredited accommodation requirements, you can refer to the Policy on the Minimum Norms and Standards for Student Housing: [click here](#)

11. Where do I report suspicious offers for accommodation, or scams?

You can report any suspicious offers or conduct, or suspected fraud via the following channels: [click here](#)

12. Where can I submit a complaint regarding my accredited accommodation facility?

Complaints regarding your off-campus accommodation can be submitted here: [click here](#)

10. Should I pay extra to move to another accredited accommodation if the rental agent/owner requests me to do so?

DO NOT FALL for scams where you are offered money to move to a cheaper place! NWU keeps VERY tight control measures which ensures that ONLY legitimate service providers are paid accommodation fees.

Should you receive such requests, report this in the complaints line: [click here](#)