

GUIDELINES FOR ACCREDITING PRIVATE STUDENT ACCOMMODATION 2023

1. Purpose and Guidelines

The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines, clarity, equal opportunity and consistent treatment of all the service providers of privately owned accommodation facilities across all three campuses of the North-West University and to ensure that the University addresses the critical areas of risk associated with the provision of accommodation.

This guideline should be read in conjunction with the Policy on the Minimum Norms and Standards for Student Housing at Public Universities (Government Gazette 39238, dated 29 September 2015¹) and the Higher Education Act of 1997² (as amended).

This guideline does not replace or release any service providers of privately owned accommodation from any local, provincial and national legislation, which applies to any aspect of housing and students housing accommodation.

Please note that should NSFAS issue alternative guidelines for 2023 that has an impact on the accreditation process, NWU reserves the right to amend this guideline.

Service providers who wish to renew their accreditation status and those who wish to apply for accreditation numbers for the first time are advised of the risk of applying through NWU's process. Since the accreditation department will be doing the accreditation work, a fee will be levied for the accreditation evaluation and grading of the facility according to the NWU grading system. This fee will be calculated as 1% of the total annual revenue to be earned from the accredited facility up to a maximum of R10 000.00 per address. If NSFAS implements their own accreditation process for 2023 and they do not recognise the work that has already been done by NWU to recognise the accreditation, fees will not be refundable to the service provider by NWU. It is on this basis then that the accreditation process is being undertaken by NWU for 2023 and service providers who apply through the NWU application platform, agrees to this arrangement.

1.1 Accreditation process³

1.1.1 Application for Addresses not previously accredited

The application form and the required supporting documents (as contemplated in par 1.2.1) must be completed and submitted for the accreditation of the facilities for 2023. Please ensure you have all documents on hand before you start the application process.

- 1.1.1.1 Only applications that have been completed in full will be considered.
- 1.1.1.2 The application form must be completed and submitted online in respect of **each** physical address for where accreditation is required.
- 1.1.1.3 Please note that the submission of the application form or any other documents does not grant an automatic accreditation. A committee appointed by the Director of Business Enterprise and Development, or his/her/their delegate will process the application. The Chairperson of the Accreditation

¹ www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201509/39238rg10502gon897.pdf

² <https://www.gov.za/documents/higher-education-act>

³ Refer to Annexure C for the process flowchart

committee will issue feedback to all applicants to inform them of the decision made by the committee within a reasonable time, upon which a site visit will be scheduled.

1.1.2 Updating of existing Accreditation Status

Your accreditation status of 2022 does not automatically transfer to 2023. The following documents must be updated on the application database by using the link sent directly to you email address as per the NWU records:

1.1.2.1 Latest Municipality account

1.1.2.2 Copy of the 2023 Lease Agreement with the intended lease amount for the full

1.1.2.3 Proof of Payment of the 2023 Accreditation Fee

1.1.3 Application fee

1.1.3.1 An application fee equal to 1% of the total lease income generated by the applicant's accredited facility, up to a maximum of R10 000 is payable with the application. Please take note that this fee is calculated by the number of beds, not by the number of students. Example: 25 beds in total in the facility at R33 600 = $R840,000 \times 1\% = R8,400$ up to a maximum of R10,000.

1.1.3.2 The application fee is non-refundable even in the case of non-accreditation.

1.1.3.3 The application fee should be paid into the following bank account of the NWU:

ABSA Bank

Account Name: NWU Diverse

Account Number: 670 642 313

Branch Number: 632005

Reference: "ACC" followed by the ID Number of Landlord or Registration number of the entity or agency.

The Application form for accreditation for 2023 of new addresses will be available online and all applications must be submitted through [this link](#).

1.2 Criteria

1.2.1 Documents to be provided

1.2.1.1 Required Documents (For the application to be evaluated)

Please ensure that the undermentioned documents are ready for uploading when you prepare to submit your application online.

- An example of a lease agreement with the student confirming the accommodation fee and facilities offered.
- Proof of ownership of the building.
- Latest municipal account. (Not older than 3 months)
- Copies of IDs of the owner(s)/director(s).
- Tax clearance certificate of the owner(s)/entity.
- Receipt of the accreditation fee.
- Proof of banking details.
- Proof of installation of Wi-Fi sufficient for all students in the facility

Your online application submission will be recorded even if you submit it without all these supporting documents. However, the application will not be considered until all these documents have been presented to the Accreditation Office through the Online platform.

1.2.1.2 Optional Documents (For the application to be evaluated)

- Zoning certificate or proof of application.
- Proof of a generator to assist all students being accommodated in the facility with emergency electricity supply.
- Gas installation certificate where applicable.
- Proof that emergency water supply is available on the site.

- Fire equipment installation and inspection certificates; and
- Insurance certificate for public liability.

1.2.1.3 Criteria for Accreditation as per Inspection list

| | |
|---|--|
| Safety | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Security Gates at all entrance to residence ▪ Lockable Rooms ▪ Fence High enough ▪ Access Control ▪ Alarm System ▪ Electrical Fencing ▪ Burglar Bars ▪ Armed response ▪ Subscription to a local Security Firm |
| Bathrooms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shower/bath ~ 1 per 7 students ▪ Toilets ~1 per 5 students |
| Laundry | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Washing machine ~ 1 per 25 students |
| Rooms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Single Room - 8 square meters ▪ Double Room - 14 square meters ▪ Single bed including mattress ▪ Study Desk ▪ Chair ▪ Bookshelf ▪ Wall mounted heater ▪ Lockable Closets ▪ All outside walls must be plastered |
| Study Facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Separate study area at the facility |
| Kitchen – Cooking inside the student rooms should not be permitted. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fridge 210l ~1 per 5 students ▪ Sink – 1 per 10 students ▪ Stove ~ 1 four plate stove per 8 students ▪ Microwave oven ~ 1 per 15 students |

1.2.2 Inspections

- 1.2.2.1 Scheduled inspections will be conducted as per dates sent to the applicant. On the inspection date either the owner or an authorised person must be available to accompany the Accreditation Committee for the inspection.
- 1.2.2.2 All areas (kitchen/bathrooms/bedrooms/laundry/study area/warden flat) must be accessible for the Committee to complete the inspection.
- 1.2.2.3 No construction site will be accredited until the building on the site have been completed and declared safe. This rule also applies to minimum required facilities that are not yet completed.
- 1.2.2.4 Please note, due to various inspections conducted on the scheduled date, delays may be experienced. In these cases, sufficient notification will be provided. The owner(s)/authorised person(s) of the facility

to be inspected, must be available on the date scheduled and contact numbers must be provided to communicate the date.

1.2.2.5 The committee does not inspect a show room, it inspects the entire residence – that requires the complete residence to be ready for occupation when you apply for accreditation.

1.2.2.6 Sporadic spot checks visits may be conducted from time to time, with or without the knowledge of the owner(s)/director(s).

1.2.3 Safety and security requirements

1.2.3.1 Residence rules for the students should address all safety matters related to the provision of accommodation to students, but will, as a minimum, have the following:

- No alcohol is allowed on the accommodation premises, unless in an environment dedicated for the supply of alcohol, such as a bar with a barman and under a controlled environment.
- No illegal drugs or substances which has a narcotic effect are allowed on the accommodation premises.
- No visitor(s) after certain hours during the week and over the weekends.
- No sleeping over of friend(s) in rooms where students share accommodation.
- Proper access control.

1.2.4 Accreditation outcomes

The possible outcome of the accreditation process:

| Type of accreditation | Description | Duration |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| Accreditation | Meet the minimum requirements. | Valid for 1year |
| No Accreditation | Service provider who after the preliminary inspection result was released did not correct or effect the recommendation of the committee. | ----- |
| Blacklisted | Service provider that has supplied the university with fraudulent documentation or engaged in fraudulent /corrupt activities when conducting business with the university | May only apply after (2-5 year) depending on severity of the conduct. |

Accreditation is valid for one year only and all applicants must pay the accreditation fee each year to activate the following year's accreditation and submit the following updated documents:

- Recent municipal account
- Lease agreement template with amount to be paid by student/NSFAS
- Receipt of accreditation application fee

Additional documentation may be required by the Accreditation Team depending on the size of the facility.

A valid accreditation certificate will be issued by the Chairperson of the Accreditation Committee to all the successful applicants that should be displayed in the residence. Documentation confirming the accreditation number will also be emailed to the landlord.

1.2.5 Appeals process

- 1.2.5.1 An applicant whose application for accreditation has been denied may appeal the decision of the Accreditation Committee.
- 1.2.5.2 An applicant must lodge an appeal in writing to the Appeals Committee within five (5) working days after receiving the formal response to his/her/their application.
- 1.2.5.3 The Appeals Committee shall be chaired and constituted by the Director of Business Enterprise Development or his/her/their nominee(s).
- 1.2.5.4 The Appeals Committee must decide on whether to uphold or reject the appeal within a reasonable timeline. In exercising their judgment, the Appeal Committee may interview the owner(s)/agent(s) or may conduct unannounced inspection of the premises.

1.2.6 De-accreditation

- 1.2.6.1 If during the calendar year for which accommodation has been accredited, clear evidence is provided to the University that the accredited property no longer meets the minimum accreditation conditions, the Accreditation Committee will re- inspect the property in question.
- 1.2.6.2 If any significant deviance(s) are found, the service provider shall be afforded an opportunity to remedy such deviance within a period of seven (7) days after having been notified in writing of such deviance(s).
- 1.2.6.3 Where evidence exists that an accredited accommodation provider induced university employees or students, whether monetary or otherwise, to support their (continued) provision of accommodation, such provider shall immediately forfeit their accreditation.
- 1.2.6.4 The University reserves the right without prior notice, to de-accredit a service provider who is engaged in illegal and unethical business practices or have submitted fraudulent documents.
- 1.2.6.5 Once a service provider is de-accredited, all future scheduled payments will be redirected to the new service provider as indicated by the affected students by means of new lease agreements being submitted to the student accounts and bursary department.

2. NSFAS Accommodation Allowance and Payment Procedures

2.1 Responsibility of the student

- 2.1.1 The student must complete an online submission to register their details and upload a completed and signed lease agreement for the payments to the respective accredited private student accommodation provider/agency by 21 February annually. The online link will be supplied to students and accredited service providers when the registration period opens. The student will need the accreditation number of the service provider to complete the online process.
- 2.1.2 It is the responsibility of the student to immediately notify the bursary inquiry counter if they move to another address. A new registration for payments must be completed and submitted accordingly. A cancellation letter and final financial statement from the accredited private student accommodation provider must accompany the new online submission.
- 2.1.3 The student must ensure that the address on the lease agreement is indeed the address where they are residing. Should they be residing at an address other than the one on the lease agreement, it should be reported to the Accreditation Committee.
- 2.1.4 The student must ensure that they comply with all the clauses of the lease agreement that they signed and that they accept responsibility for all obligations placed on them in the lease agreement.
- 2.1.5 Students are to clean their own rooms.
- 2.1.6 Students should be vigilant and take responsible for their own safety. Gates and doors should be locked.

2.2 Responsibility of the lessor/accredited private student accommodation provider/agency

- 2.2.1 Provide the student with the accreditation number
- 2.2.2 Provide a contract/lease agreement to the student with the following minimum information included:
 - 2.2.2.1 Student's name, surname, student number and student ID number.
 - 2.2.2.2 Address of the accommodation facility.
 - 2.2.2.3 Banking details of the lessor/accredited private student accommodation provider/ agency
 - 2.2.2.4 Applicable number of months
 - 2.2.2.5 Annual lease amount

This information must be on a summary page of the lease agreement as the first page of the agreement.

- 2.2.3 Provide the university with a list of details of all NWU students residing in all the accredited facilities of the service provider in an excel format. This list must be provided on the first day of March, April, July, and September and submitted to the e-mail addresses provided in paragraph 6.1 below on the prescribed template as per Annexure B of this communication.
- 2.2.4 A cancellation letter and the final financial statement of students moving out of the facility must be provided to NWU by means of an e-mail to the e-mail addresses provided in paragraph 6a below.
- 2.2.5 Rental charged per student should be inclusive of water, electricity, internet, and where the accommodation facility is more than 2 kilometres from the campus, transport should also be included in the rental amount.
- 2.2.6 The lease agreement entered into with a NSFAS funded student, in terms of the accreditation, may not require:
 - 2.2.6.1 A deposit to be paid by the tenant.
 - 2.2.6.2 Additional rent above the annual maximum amount as established by NWU.

2.3 Responsibilities and procedures of the NWU Student accounts and bursaries department

- 2.3.1 Keep proper control over payments to lessor(s)/accredited private student accommodation provider(s)/agency(ies).
- 2.3.2 Ensure that payments are only made within the approved allocation of bursaries.
- 2.3.3 Assist with inquiries regarding pay-outs and other related issues such as confirmation of student funding.
- 2.3.4 Ensure that the NWU residences are full before processing any contracts – communicate during the stipulated time with the Residence Managers.
- 2.3.5 Ensure that properly completed and signed lease agreement/s are uploaded by the students and approved before payments can be made.

3 Payments to accredited private student accommodation provider(s)

While NWU remains in control of the NSFAS funds to be distributed to Service Providers, the following arrangements will be in place:

3.1 Payment intervals

Payments will be done as follows:

- end of March for January, February, and March.
- end of April for April, May, and June.
- end of July for July, August, and September; and
- end of September for October, November, and December.

Please note that should NSFAS issue alternative guidelines for 2023 that has an impact on the payment process, NWU reserves the right to amend this arrangement.

Settlement of rental amounts by NWU on behalf of NSFAS funded students, in terms of the lease agreements entered into between service providers and students, will only be possible if NSFAS continues with the same process of funding as in 2022. If the funds for accredited private student accommodation facilities do not flow to

NWU, all payment arrangements will be reconsidered and NWU may not be held responsible for the payments. By renewing or applying for accreditation for 2023, applicants acknowledge this arrangement.

3.2 Facilities fees

Lessor/accredited private student accommodation provider/agency will be charged 2.5% of the value of the payment facilitated by the university. This fee will be deducted from the payments made by the NWU to the lessor/accredited private student accommodation provider/agency and the understanding is that the fee is for the service rendered by the NWU in terms of the payments. **The fee may not be recovered from the student.** The fee will be subjected to VAT at the rate applicable at the date of payment.

3.3 Residence fees payable for accredited providers

3.3.2 Accredited Facilities: NSFAS Funded students

The maximum amount payable by a NSFAS funded student will be determined by the NWU Residence Department according to the NSFAS rules at the time and will be provided to the accredited lessor/accredited private student accommodation provider/agency. The NWU has approved the following fee structure, based on the residence fees of the NWU's own residences on the three campuses, as per the 2022 NSFAS guidelines for the annual accommodation allowance:

| | Single | Share |
|---------|--------|-------|
| Gold | 42800 | 36100 |
| Silver | 39200 | 33100 |
| Bronze | 34500 | 30400 |
| Minimum | 29700 | 27600 |

The applicable maximum amount for the accommodation facility will be determined during the site inspection by the NWU Accreditation Committee based on the approved "Criteria Matrix Scorecard". This scorecard will be developed during November 2022 in collaboration with the stakeholders on all three campuses.

4 Contractual arrangements

4.1 Accredited Private Student Accommodation Provider and the students

4.1.1 Students funded by NSFAS and other Bursars

4.1.1.1 Students are required to enter into a lease agreement with an accredited accommodation provider.

4.1.1.2 The university will facilitate the payment of the accommodation allowance as per the payment intervals to the lessor/accredited private student accommodation provider/agency lessor on behalf of the student after the online submission for payments was submitted.

4.1.1.3 Please note that students using NSFAS funding have capped amounts allocated to them and that they may not be able to afford to pay the shortfall if the rental is more than the allocated amount. It will be in the interest of the accommodation provider not to charge rental fees that exceed the NSFAS allocation.

4.1.2 Privately Funded students

4.1.2.1 Students make their own arrangements with the lessor/accredited private student accommodation provider/agency for their accommodation requirements and settlements of their residence fees.

4.2 Non-Accredited Private Student Accommodation Provider and the students

4.2.1 Students funded by NSFAS and other Bursars

4.2.1.1 Students make their own arrangements with the lessor/non-accredited private student accommodation provider/agency for their accommodation requirements and settlements of their residence fees. Students still must apply for travel allowances in cases of own arrangements on the NWU online DIY.

4.2.2 Privately Funded students

4.2.2.1 Students make their own arrangements with the lessor/non-accredited private student accommodation provider/agency for their accommodation requirements and settlements of their residence fees.

4.2.2.2 The university accepts no responsibility for any delivery requirements of any of the services and does not involve itself in any settlement of fee disputes between the students and the lessor/non-accredited private student accommodation provider/agency.

5 Service providers of accommodation facilities and NWU

- 5.1 No formal contractual arrangements will be made between NWU and the lessor/accredited private student accommodation providers/agency. Payment arrangements will be made only in terms of these guidelines and the lease agreement between the student and the service provider.
- 5.2 The university will not be liable for payments of students who have terminated their studies.
- 5.3 The university is only liable for payments of students who are registered. If students are not registered for a semester, the university will not be liable for payment of accommodation fees during that semester.
- 5.4 In the event of the death of a student during the year, the university will not be liable for further payments.

6 Contact details

6.1 Student accounts and bursaries department

Mahikeng Campus: Tel: (018) 389 2516, 2372, 2546, 2646, 2410, E-mail: MC-diy@nwu.ac.za

Potchefstroom Campus: Tel: (018) 299 2667-2673, E-mail: PC-accommodation@nwu.ac.za

Vanderbijlpark Campus: Tel: (016) 910 3532, E-mail: VC-accommodation@nwu.ac.za

6.2 Accreditation department

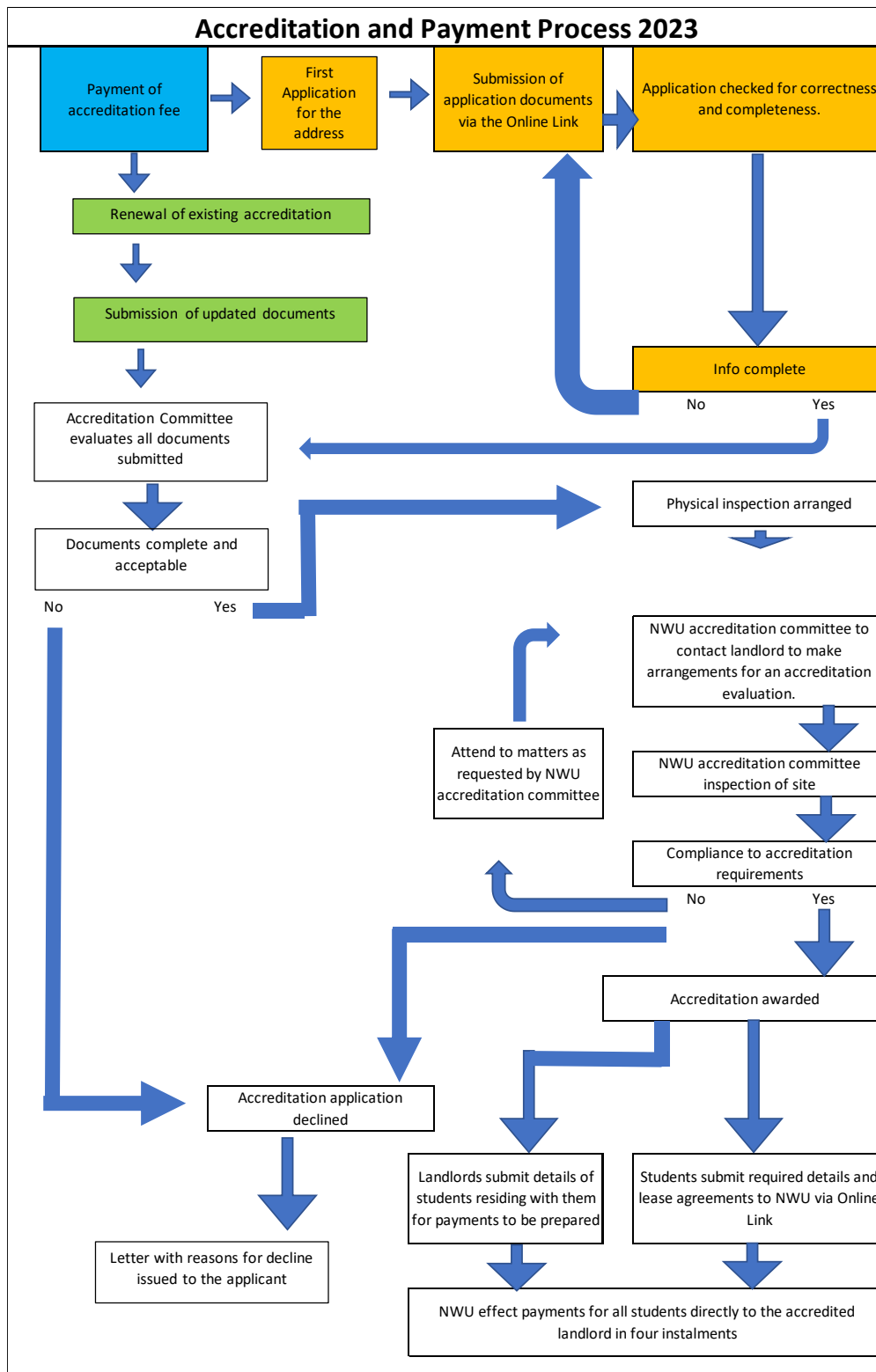
Accreditation Office : accreditation@nwu.ac.za

7 Annexures

A – Application for Accreditation form. [Click on this link to complete the online application form.](#)

B – Template for student information – This should be completed and emailed to the Student Accounts and Bursary Department as per contact detail in 6.3 above.

C – Process flowchart



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