



UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

on

UNIVERSITY HOUSING

POLICY NUMBER	HR P18	POLICY OWNER	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Institutional Support
OVERSEEING COMMITTEE(S)	Exco → Manco → Council		
APPROVAL DATE	22 October 2016	REVISION DATE	22 October 2021

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy establishes a framework for the letting and management of University owned houses, both on and off-campus. It also provides procedures used for the selection of staff, the establishment of rentals, the payment of rentals and conditions under which tenancies will operate.

REVISION HISTORY

CURRENT APPROVAL CYCLE			
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APPROVAL HISTORY		
DATE OF FIRST APPROVAL:		
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RELATED POLICIES	
POLICY NUMBER	NAME OF POLICY

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SECTION A: POLICY

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The University of Zululand is situated in the rural part of northern KwaZulu Natal, at KwaDlangezwa, some 160 kilometers north-east of Durban and with a second campus at Richards Bay, some 30 kilometers away. Whilst a choice of accommodation exists in Richards Bay, there is a paucity of available accommodation in the surrounding areas of KwaDlangezwa. This creates added difficulties in attracting quality senior staff, especially executives on fixed term contracts and senior academic staff.
- 1.2 Since its earliest days the University has built and acquired staff accommodation. It has houses on KwaDlangezwa campus, in Empangeni and in Mtunzini. As with student residence accommodation, this has never been sufficient nor appropriate for all grades of staff. With the growth in student numbers, staff expectations and increasing competition within the sector for quality executives and academics, the type, location and availability of staff accommodation has become inadequate.
- 1.3 Council, therefore, approved in 2015 the purchase of additional properties to house executives on fixed term contracts in a secure environment. These additional purchases allow a review of the usage of the remaining stock and the development of a comprehensive Housing Policy.
- 1.4 To ensure Policy goals are met, it is also important to develop appropriate procedures for the allocation and control of University owned properties. By establishing such procedures, housing support can become part of the overall recruitment and retention practices of the University and enable it to achieve its goal of quality, espoused in both Vision and Mission statements.
- 1.5 The University has c. 100 housing units. The number of units available will vary from time to time following decisions of Council. All properties will be classified in one of three (3) groups as defined in section 4.1 below. All units will be used to support the recruitment and retention of qualified staff to University positions and the Vision and Mission of the University.
- 1.6 The units range in size from two-bedroom apartments to three and four bedroom houses. The housing units may be allocated to staff for family accommodation or allocated to single staff members on a shared basis.

2 DEFINITIONS

Executive Staff are those appointed by Council who hold positions at Peromnes grades 1-3.

Senior Academics are academic staff at Associate Professor, Professor or Senior Professor who operate as academic leaders within their Departments and Faculties.

Senior Support Staff are those holding positions at Peromnes grades 4-6.

Senior Staff are those holding positions at Peromnes grades 1-6, Associate Professor, Professor and Senior Professor.

Fixed Term Contracts are those contracts issued to senior staff of 2-5 years duration.

Short Term Contracts are those contracts issued to any level of staff between 0 and 2 years.

Housing Units (Units) are housing facilities including gardens, fences and any related outbuildings.

University is the University of Zululand.

3 PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

- 3.1 This policy aims to ensure that quality staff are recruited and retained by the University and is able to compete effectively within the South African higher education labour market.
- 3.2 The related procedures provide a transparency and clarity of how University housing units are used to meet these long term strategic goals.
- 3.3 The procedures also set out how charges for units are arrived at and ensure that appropriate related tax payments are made.

4 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 Housing units will be categorized under three separate heads:
 - 4.1.1 Executive housing;
 - 4.1.2 On-campus staff housing;
 - 4.1.3 Off-campus staff housing
- 4.2 Different principles of allocation and usage may apply between the three categories identified in 4.1.
- 4.3 The allocation of housing units to staff members will follow the procedures that form part of this Policy.
- 4.4 This Policy will support Human Resource (HR) Policies, especially those relating to recruitment and retention and will be modified accordingly when such Policies are themselves updated.
- 4.5 This Policy does not form part of any contract of employment but may be used in moulding any specific clause in an employment contract.
- 4.6 This Policy is an enabling policy and so can and will be modified at any time in support of the Vision and Mission of the University.
- 4.7 The payment of rents or costs as applicable in terms of this Policy is the responsibility of the employee to whom the Unit has been allocated. Where Units are allocated to more than one employee this responsibility rests with the employees jointly and separately.
- 4.8 Except for paragraph 4.10 below, when the right to occupy a Unit comes to an end, for whatever reason, one (1) full calendar month's notice must be provided by either party and the employee must vacate the Unit before the end of the month in which the end of the notice period falls.
- 4.9 When employees retire from the University, the right to occupy a Unit will cease at the

end of the month following the official date of retirement, in which case the Unit must be vacated as described in paragraph 4.8 above.

- 4.10 Should an employee subsequent to the acceptance of occupation of a Unit become disqualified as per paragraph 8 of this Policy, the University can evict the employee with immediate effect.

SECTION B: PROCEDURES

5 CRITERIA for ALLOCATION of HOUSING UNITS

- 5.1 The University has four main purposes for the Units:
- 5.1.1 The housing of executives;
 - 5.1.2 The housing of permanent employees;
 - 5.1.3 Temporary housing for newly appointed staff; and
 - 5.1.4 Housing for staff on short term contracts.
- 5.2 The housing of executives will be restricted to those Units defined in 4.1.1. above and so designated by Council.
- 5.2.1 Executive housing is sub-categorised based upon Peromnes level.
- 5.3 The housing for the other three categories of staff will be accommodated across those Units defined in 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 above.
- 5.4 The proportion of Units used for staff categories 5.1.2 – 5.1.4 will, in the first instance, be in the approximate proportion 50:25:25 respectively. This ratio may be modified from time to time depending upon need.
- 5.5 For staff category 5.1.2 (permanent employees), preference will be given to those on the highest Peromnes grades (4-16). In particular, senior staff will be offered housing before Peromnes grades 7-16.
- 5.6 For staff category 5.1.2 (permanent employees), leases of 3 years will be offered. At the end of such lease period the staff member may apply for a further 3 year lease period. This may be considered but this should not be expected as any extension would be unusual rather than normal.
- 5.7 For staff category 5.1.3 (newly appointed permanent employees), Units may be offered up to a maximum of 6 months from the date of their contractual commencement date. Exceptionally, and on the approval of the Executive Director HR, this may be extended to a maximum of 9 months from the contractual commencement date.
- 5.8 Housing for staff on short term contracts (category 5.1.4) will be offered for the duration of the contract, up to a maximum of 24 months.
- 5.9 Decisions regarding the offering of Units will be recommended by the Executive Director: HR in accordance with this Policy and other relevant Council resolutions for final approval by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Institutional Support.
- 5.10 Decisions of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Institutional Support may be appealed, on procedural grounds only, to the Vice-Chancellor, whose decision will be final.

6 MAINTENANCE OF HOUSING UNITS

- 6.1 The University will pay the costs for remedial work on structural defects and general maintenance of the Units.
- 6.2 The residing employee is responsible for the general upkeep of the property and must keep it in good order.
- 6.3 If the residing employee fails to keep the property in a suitable fashion, the University reserves the right to carry out any cleaning, repairs and maintenance on Units as it deems necessary. Charges for this work will be deducted from the salary of the residing employee.
- 6.4 Maintenance of Units in category 4.1.1 will be outsourced to the maintenance team operating on the relevant housing estate or to other suitable private contractors.
- 6.5 Gardening and pool services will be provided for Units in category 4.1.1.
- 6.6 Maintenance of Units in categories 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 will be carried out by the University's maintenance team, supported, as and when necessary, by additional external contractors.

7 OFFER OF LEASE

- 7.1 An offer of lease to an employee or prospective employee must be accepted within 7 days. No response within that period will be taken as a refusal of the offer.

8 DISQUALIFICATION

- 8.1 The following employees do not normally qualify to apply for University accommodation nor continued accommodation:
 - 8.1.1 Employees currently living within a radius of 50 kilometres from the University;
 - 8.1.2 Employees found guilty of misconduct in terms of the Disciplinary Code of the University;
 - 8.1.3 Employees found guilty of a criminal offence in a Court of Law of a nature that would, in the view of the University, make the occupation of a Unit undesirable;
 - 8.1.4 Any misrepresentation in the application for housing or lack of full disclosure will lead to automatic disqualification.
- 8.2 Any motivation for exemption from 8.1 must be made in writing to the Executive Director: Human Resources.

9 SUBLETTING AND OCCUPATION

- 9.1 Occupation of allocated Units is limited to the employee and his/her dependents as approved by the Executive Director: HR.
- 9.2 Subletting of the Unit or accommodating additional dependents, family members or friends is strictly prohibited.
- 9.3 Contravention of paragraph 9.2 constitutes gross misconduct in terms of the Disciplinary Code of the University and could lead to immediate eviction and further disciplinary action.
- 9.4 Physical audits of occupants in Housing Units may take place from time to time. Access to Housing Units for this purpose must be allowed and facilitated by the registered occupant. Failure to do so constitutes gross misconduct in terms of the Disciplinary Code of the University and could lead to immediate eviction and further disciplinary action.

10 RENTAL CHARGES

- 10.1 Each Unit will be assessed for a market rental value by an independent, external expert.
- 10.2 This will be provided in the form of a market range, indicating the likely minimum and maximum rentals that could be achieved if the property were let on the open market.
- 10.3 Rental on Units will be levied at the minimum of the full market rate range. This rate will be called the assessed rental value (ARV).
- 10.4 No rental will be charged where the employment contract of staff include University accommodation as a condition of service.
- 10.5 When no rental is charged there will be a benefit in kind to the employee. This will be taxable and handled as per extant SARS rules via payroll. To ensure that the housing benefit offered to those whose accommodation forms part of their conditions of service is not burdensome, a pretax addition to monthly salary amounting to $\text{monthly ARV} / (1 - \text{employee's marginal tax rate})$ will be added monthly to cover the additional tax burden.
- 10.6 The ARV on all properties will be reassessed from time to time (but, at least, once every three (3) years) by independent, external experts.
- 10.7 The University will meet the costs of any levies on the Units.
- 10.8 The employee will be responsible for utility (water, gas and electricity) charges.
- 10.9 Rental and any other Unit related costs payable by the employee will be recovered monthly in advance from salary.

11 MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

- 11.1 A full list of Units, occupants and ARV as at 1 December of year (n-1) will be reported by the Executive Director: HR to Exco at its first meeting of the academic year in year (n).
- 11.2 At the same meeting the Executive Director Finance will provide a summary of costs, collections and tax related matters on all Units for the academic year (n-1).

12 TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS

- 12.1 Once approved, the transition from current arrangements to the approved procedures contained within this document will be completed within 6 months of approval of the Policy by Council.
- 12.2 Any current employees required to vacate University property will be afforded a minimum of 4 months' notice of cessation of any existing agreement.

13 POLICY REVIEW

- 13.1 Council shall review the policy on a five-yearly cycle, or earlier if required to support changes in HR policies.
- 13.2 Manco may review and amend section B at any time, in which event the amendments take effect on the date of the Manco approval.
- 13.3 Nothing in this clause shall prevent Council from reviewing this policy at any time prior to the stipulated five-year cycle, in which event a new cycle shall commence from the date of such review.