

Residential Services Accommodation Allocation Policy

2020/2021

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INTRODUCTION

Residential Services (RS) is committed to ensuring that all applications for accommodation are dealt with in a fair and transparent manner throughout the application and allocation process. This document sets out the Allocation policy for Residential Services Managed accommodation.

This Policy is reviewed annually and is subject to change as determined by the Head of Residential Services and the Allocation & Administration Manager

The document is applicable to staff dealing with and allocating students into university-owned and managed accommodation, namely:

- Hendrefoelan Student Village,
- Singleton Park Campus,
- Bay Campus,
- Beck House
- SAS Lettings – Off-Campus properties
- Any accommodation providers entering into an agreement with Swansea University

Swansea University's portfolio of accommodation consists of properties managed by the University both on and off-campus via various agreements with accommodation providers.

The University works in partnership with accommodation providers, If allocated to this type of accommodation full details will be provided to you at the time of allocation.

There is a mix of accommodation types ranging from traditional style halls to shared flats and houses. For full details, please see our web pages: www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/

Applications for accommodation are made online and the eligibility criteria (Allocation Policy) is published in advance of the application process commencing.

Residential Services welcomes applications and enquiries from students regardless of age, ethnic or national origins, race, religion, sex, sexual preference, marital status, family responsibility, physical or sensory disability and political or religious beliefs and activities, unless those activities are unlawful or contrary to the policies of the University.

The Allocation Policy is reviewed annually to ensure that it reflects the current University strategic aims and objectives and takes into account the requirements of the student body, following consultation.

Head of Residential Services, January 2020

1. AVAILABLE UNIVERSITY ACCOMMODATION

For up to date information about our residences please visit our web pages where you will find details of facilities and information about rents, designated areas and tenancy length.

www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/accommodation-options/

a) Designated Areas Within Residences

In response to demand from students Residential Services (RS) has set aside certain areas in residence to cater to the following preferences:

1. **Welsh speakers** - for students who wish to live with other Welsh-speaking students. Whilst every attempt will be made to fill the flat with Welsh speakers this may not always be possible and is dependent on circumstances.
2. **Alcohol-free flats** – for students who wish to live in an alcohol-free environment
3. **Quieter flats** – with noise restriction between the hours of 11 pm and 8 am
4. **Mature flats** – for students 21 and older
5. **Postgraduate flats** – for 51-week contracts
6. **Single-sex flats** – students can request to live in an all-male or an all-female designated flat
7. **Couple/family flats** are also available in Beck House.
8. **Show Flats / Open Day Rooms***

NB – every effort is made to fulfil all preferences, this may not always be possible.

b) Students with particular support needs

- The Disability Office (DO) will notify RS of any adjustments required in order to accommodate students who have a disability, require additional equipment or support, provided they have declared this on their UCAS application. RS, the DO and the student will then liaise to ensure that specific adaptations or equipment are put in place, providing a minimum of 6 weeks' notice is given to RS. For more information see: www.swansea.ac.uk/disability/
- Full details of support available within accommodation for students with disabilities can be found on our web page - www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/supportavailable/

*Show flats

In order to show prospective students and parents our accommodation, we have rooms that students open during our Open Days. For further information see:

www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/accommodation-options/accommodation-designated-areas/show-flats/

SAS Lettings - Student Accommodation Services Properties

Student Accommodation Services (SAS Lettings) advertise and manage, or advertise only, a portfolio of properties that are owned by private landlords. This accommodation can be booked by all students from November (the exact date will be highlighted on the SAS website). The contract is normally for a period of 47 weeks for undergraduates. For further information see:

www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/sas-lettings/

2. ACCOMMODATION GUARANTEE

The eligibility criteria for students applying for university accommodation can be found on the link: www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/guarantees-and-eligibility/

a) The Guarantee Applies to:

For details or our guarantee please read the information here:

www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/applying-for-accommodation/what-happens-next/

New Undergraduates

- Students who have an Unconditional or Conditional Firm Offer from Swansea University
- Students who have an Insurance Offer from Swansea University
- Health Care and Graduate Medical Students – for more information see:

www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/accommodation-options/accommodation-designated-areas/non-standard-course-length/

New Postgraduates –

- Students who hold an Unconditional offer from Swansea University for a taught Masters, Diploma Course or Legal Practice Course (LPC)
- Students who have been accepted for a PhD or MRes placement, providing they are paying full fees
- Students who are progressing to a postgraduate course having studied for their first degree at Swansea University

For more information see: www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/postgradinternationalstudents/

NB: RS does not currently have the ability to house postgraduate students who need to stay beyond the end date of their tenancy. These students will be assisted in finding suitable short term private sector accommodation but this cannot be guaranteed.

Exchange/Visiting Students

There is a dedicated web page that sets out the criteria for international exchange students wishing to live in university accommodation:

www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/applying-for-accommodation/nonstandardcourselength/

The only students guaranteed accommodation are:

- Swansea Students on the study abroad scheme
- It will be the responsibility of the students to make an accommodation application online for these rooms. Any student who takes a room for the full year without notifying Residential Services that they will leave for the second semester will only be released under the university's transfer/withdrawal procedure and will have to pay until a replacement tenant is found.
- Fee-Paying Visiting Students from partner universities

Returning / Continuing Students (UK)

The total number of returning / continuing students allowed into accommodation for additional years is set each year by the university. The following order of priority will be used:

- First-year students
- Students with disabilities or specific needs
- Final year students and postgraduates
- Other years

RS may decide to restrict applications using the following criteria:

- Maximum time allowed in residence 2 years
- Final years only
- Vacancies only available in stated residences/sites
- Priority for rooms on a particular Campus will be given to students studying there, however, all students are welcome to apply

The above criteria do not apply to properties within the (SAS) managed property portfolio. Eligibility for these properties is open to all (i.e.UG and PG) students, who must be enrolled on a full-time course of study/research for the coming academic year.

There is no restriction on the number of years students may live in these properties although there is no guarantee a student can stay in a specific property for consecutive years.

Any appeal should be made in writing to the Head of Residential Services

Returning students (International) will be offered

- Normally the maximum is 3 years in residence unless extenuating circumstances.

New and returning families and couples will be offered

- Maximum 3 years in residence –
- The couple accommodation is open to both married and unmarried couples and same-sex partnerships.
- Single parents and students who become pregnant during their study at Swansea are also eligible to apply.
- In years when demand is particularly low RS may allow some families/international students an additional year but only after all other eligible categories of student have been accommodated

NB: The University is unable to offer accommodation to families who have more than three school-age children and a baby as the 3 bedroom flats in Beck House are designated for a maximum of 5 occupants.

Students under 18 years of age

- Students who are under 18 and will not attain this age within a couple of weeks of the start of the academic year will be given priority for accommodation over other students, provided suitable accommodation is available.

Swimmers and elite sports scholars

- Students are only guaranteed accommodation on the Singleton Campus if confirmed by the Head of Department of Sport and Physical Recreation that they form part of the elite swimming squad and provided they apply for accommodation by the 30th June deadline.

Welsh speakers

Specific areas for students who want Welsh speaking flatmates. For further information see: www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/applying-for-accommodation/welsh-speakers/

NB: If there is insufficient demand to fill a flat or a student withdraws/suspends part way through the year the vacant rooms may be filled with non-Welsh speaking students.

Other Categories (May Apply But Are Not Guaranteed)

This section deals with students and other parties connected to Swansea University who are able to apply for accommodation subject to availability:-

Exchange and visiting students see:

www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/applying-for-accommodation/nonstandardcourselength/

Students arriving during the academic year

- Students whose course starts at other periods during the academic year should make an online application in the usual manner. Applications will be considered using the criteria mentioned above. As at other periods, students studying for the remainder of the academic year will have priority over students who wish to stay for shorter periods.
- Students who cannot be offered accommodation in University residences will be referred to (SAS) for assistance.

English Language Training Students (ELTS)

Students applying during the academic year (September to June)

During the academic year, ELTS students are eligible to apply for University accommodation but will only be housed once all students in the guaranteed categories above are dealt with:-

Students applying at this time are not likely to have a choice of accommodation

Students arriving for courses with start dates during the academic year in January and April should make an online application and will be offered a room if a suitable vacancy exists, but this is not guaranteed. Students who arrive without having contacted RS in advance or who have not made an application should book into a local guesthouse, as no temporary accommodation will be available.

Students applying for pre-sessional courses

- During the summer vacation, ELTS students studying for 10 weeks or less will be housed in Hendrefoelan Student Village and on Singleton campus where a limited number of standard and en-suite rooms will be available.
- Payment for summer language bookings must be made on acceptance of the offer of a room.
- These students, who are fee-paying, will have priority over other visitors and academics.
- ELTS also receives bookings for short and tailor-made courses for groups who will not progress to study at Swansea University – efforts will be made to house these groups if possible.

Students who have withdrawn or suspended

Students who have suspended studies may be permitted to remain in residence for the remainder of the academic year provided permission has been granted by the Head of RS and a new tenancy signed. These students will have to pay for any further period in residence in advance.

Students on courses in organisations affiliated to Swansea University

Are welcome to apply for accommodation and will be allocated once the above categories are dealt with.

Academic visitors/work placements/visiting students (non-enrolled)

It may be possible to offer accommodation for the above during the summer vacation, subject to availability. For more information please email accommodation@swansea.ac.uk

The visit must be academic-related - former students who are not currently undertaking any research or placement cannot book University accommodation in this way. They will be referred to Conference Services to book via this route. This also applies to groups visiting the university for Continual Professional Development.

The above category bookings will need to be fully paid in advance. A minimum booking of 3 weeks will be required.

Students resitting exams

Students attending during August for re-sit examinations will be able to apply for rooms via the Conference Office. Information will be sent out via the Academic Registry Examination Office on how to book.

Students attending the Graduation ceremony

Rooms will be available on campus for students attending the graduation ceremony through the CO. Rooms for family members will also be available through the CO booking system.

Students wishing to stay for the summer period

Current Swansea University students who wish to remain in residence over the summer will be able to apply online in May using the online applications system. Although every effort will be made to assist them, RS cannot guarantee that suitable accommodation will be available at the time requested.

Parents & friends

Rooms for family members and friends will be available through the Conference Office booking system for the summer vacation period.

Beck House has the availability of a Guest Flat that is available for residents to book on behalf of their guests all year round. This can be booked by completing the booking form and paying the fee in advance. There is a minimum stay of 3 nights for a maximum of 2 Adults.

3. ALLOCATION PRIORITIES

Please see our web page for details: www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/applying-for-accommodation/what-happens-next/

Within each category, RS offers accommodation using the following criteria:

- Disability/medical priority/specific requirements*
- Students studying at the Bay campus will get priority for this site over students studying at Singleton
- Students under 18 years of age
- Date order of application
- Date accepted on to course/programme
- Accommodation preference

*Medical/supporting evidence must be provided to RS and details need to be noted on the accommodation application form. It may not be possible to re-allocate rooms or cater to specific needs close to the start of the new academic year.

Whilst students meeting the above criteria are able to apply for accommodation in the University or SAS residences, RS is not obliged to offer accommodation for more than one year at a time.

4. ELIGIBILITY

Students or other parties not able to apply for or utilise university or SAS Lettings properties.

Categories of students who have:-

- Not started on the course accepted.
- Not Enrolled with the university prior to the deadline set
- Withdrawn from studies and no longer a student
- Suspended from studies (unless continuing during the same academic year)

Students not enrolled or not commenced on a course:-

Students who are not fully enrolled with the University are not eligible to live in University Residence; this also applies to (SAS) managed properties. Students found to be in this category will be;

- Contacted to clarify their student status
- Advised that as a non-enrolled student they are not eligible for University accommodation
- Invited to complete their University enrolment – in which case they will then be entitled to apply for accommodation or remain in the residences/house

Students who have withdrawn or suspended studies:-

Students who withdraw or suspend studies must complete a Release from Accommodation Request form and submit it to RS as soon as they are aware. **The form is available here:**

www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/document-store/

RS receives a notification of withdrawals and suspensions on a weekly basis from Information Services and Systems and will contact students who have not submitted a form to ensure that this is completed.

Students requiring temporary accommodation

Swansea University does not have any designated temporary accommodation for students either at the beginning of or during, an academic year. Students who have not made an accommodation application or notified RS of their arrival in Swansea should book into a local guesthouse for the first few nights of their stay.

The University cannot subsidise or reserve this accommodation on behalf of the student. A link to information about local hotels and guesthouses can be found on the page below:-

www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/a-z/

Grounds on which an Accommodation Application can be refused

Students may be refused accommodation for additional years, outside of the restrictions mentioned above if:-

- They have outstanding rent due on a previous period of residence or have reached “Reminder letter 3” stage in the Debt Management Procedure.
- They have been the subject of disciplinary action due to serious breaches of residence regulations leading to sanctions in the D and E stage of the disciplinary matrix.
- If following the offer of accommodation, a student is found to have a criminal record that makes it inappropriate that they live in a communal environment the offer will become null and void. All such matters must be disclosed at the time of application. The Allocations Manager will make the initial assessment; any appeal received being processed by the Head of RS.* see also Appeals section below

Students who wish to book accommodation in a SAS Lettings Property and have an offer from the University which has not yet been confirmed may book accommodation however; if their offer is not confirmed and the tenancy has started they will be liable for rent due until a replacement can be found. If the tenancy has not yet started their Reservation Deposit will be retained.

It is not possible to offer any accommodation in a SAS property to non-students-

5. FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

It is the student’s responsibility to notify RS of any change to their plans to study in Swansea or take up their accommodation.

Cancellations prior to arrival

Students who are deferring for a year will have their Reservation Deposit rolled over to the following year provided they notify Residential Services before the tenancy start date.

Students who have paid a Reservation Deposit of £350 and cancel their accommodation by 2nd August will receive a £100.00 refund.

This applies to the following students:-

- UF students

- Returning students
- Withdrawing or Suspending studies

NB: This does not apply to SAS Properties – in the case of cancellation the student’s deposit will be retained unless a replacement can be found and a new deposit paid

Non-arrivals

Students who do not arrive by midday on the Monday following the tenancy start date and who have not notified RS of their late arrival may have their accommodation booking cancelled and the deposit retained.

Rooms cannot be held beyond the first week of term unless the first term’s rent has been paid in advance. Students who hold a room in this way and later find they are unable to attend the University will be charged rent until the room can be re-let.

If a student who has been delayed agrees to release their room, RS will hold their deposit and attempt to allocate another room on arrival. If no room is available, assistance will be given, via SAS, to find private accommodation and the deposit refunded.

Students who have accepted an offer of a room online without having viewed the room are entitled to cancel the booking within 7 working days of the acceptance. If however, the student has collected the key and moved into the room this is no longer applicable.

6. RELEASE FROM ACCOMMODATION & ROOM TRANSFER REQUESTS

All requests must be made via the request forms which can be found in our online document store.

www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/document-store/

Transfer Requests

There are several ways in which a student can transfer to alternative accommodation:-

- **A Pre Arrival Transfer** this is made before moving into University residences by completing a Pre-Arrival Transfer form (no fee)
- **Room Swap** - Once in accommodation - A room swap page will go live on Facebook where students can seek a swap with another student – £5 charge
- **In House Transfer** - Transfer to a different room within University residences – students will pay a transfer charge of £50 if the room move is accepted.

Whilst every effort is made to fulfil all requests, due to various circumstances this is not always possible.

Waiting list

A waiting list for University residences will open approximately two weeks after the start of the academic year. Priority for rooms will be given on the same basis as the original accommodation allocations (see above). Vacancies created by students withdrawing from or suspending studies will be considered before students requesting release into the private sector unless there is a requirement for a particular room type.

ACCOMMODATION RELEASE REQUESTS

Students Withdrawing or Suspending studies

Once the Academic Registry confirms their status, students will be liable for a minimum of 6 weeks’ rent from the date of submission of the form. Their liability for rent will be ended at this time provided

they vacate the room and return the keys. If a replacement tenant can be found sooner than the 6-week end date, the tenancy substitution charge will be added to the total due.

Mid-year

If a student has withdrawn or suspended studies and returned their key, it may be possible to fill their room with a replacement tenant (not current resident) sooner than the 6-week notice period. RS staff will liaise with the Residence team to ensure that the room can be cleaned for the new occupant.

It will not be possible to start a new tenancy during the winter vacation period due to operational restrictions.

End Year turn round (40-week tenancies)

Students wishing to stay an additional night/nights can only do so with the agreement of site staff and the Allocations Manager. Any additional night's stay will be charged at the room rate.

Summer stay bookings from new tenants cannot be taken until the Monday of the week following student departures at the earliest and may not be able to be taken until the Friday of that week depending on other operational commitments. There is a minimum booking of 3 weeks

7. APPEALS

Students, who wish to appeal against any decision related to room allocations should initially put their case in writing to the Head of RS. If the situation cannot be resolved at this stage, the appeal will then be passed to the Director of Student Services.

When the provision of false or misleading information in support of an application becomes known after moving into accommodation or an offence is subsequently committed:

1. The relevant RS Officer shall write to the student outlining the discrepancy and requesting the student to submit a written reply, addressing why false or misleading information has been provided.
2. The reply shall be referred to the Head of RS who shall decide whether the candidate has a case to answer.
3. If it is decided that there is a case to answer, the student shall be invited to respond before a decision is taken as to possible sanction.
4. If, after considering the student's response to the allegation, it is decided that there has been a deliberate attempt to provide false or misleading information, or an offence has been committed which makes it inappropriate that they live in a communal environment one or more of the following penalties shall be invoked:
 - The student may be moved to alternative accommodation
 - The student may be requested to leave university accommodation
5. Students who wish to appeal to the Director of Student Services against any sanctions imposed can do so.

Residential Services 2020
