University Student Accommodation Allocation

Edinburgh Campus
January 2014
Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Purpose</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Objectives</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Accommodation guarantee</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Eligibility to apply</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Eligible Applicants</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Returning Students</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 Students Studying for One Semester</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4 Students with dependents</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Allocation Process</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Application Process</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Accommodation Types and Preferences</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3 Students Applying Through Clearing</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4 Contracting Process</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5 Prioritising Applications</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Third Party Provider Accommodation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Introduction

This document sets out the policy and procedures for the allocation of student accommodation for those studying at the Edinburgh Campus of Heriot-Watt University. The policy shows how a limited number of rooms are allocated and how the demands are prioritised.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide transparency in the way Heriot-Watt University allocate student accommodation and to provide guidelines for staff dealing with students and applicants who may require accommodation.

This document should be read in conjunction with the ‘Rooms for Rent’ booklet which details the types of accommodation available each year as well as the key dates of the application process. [http://www.hw.ac.uk/documents/rooms-for-rent.pdf](http://www.hw.ac.uk/documents/rooms-for-rent.pdf)

3. Objectives

Our objectives are:

- To ensure that accommodation applications are treated fairly and to prioritise applications where necessary.
- To maximise occupancy in the residences
- To offer advice and guidance to those who cannot be allocated to University accommodation.

We will achieve these objectives by:

- Giving priority to those as set out in this policy before processing applications in the order they are received
- Working with Recruitment and Admissions and Planning to predict the likely demand each year
- Providing additional information and advice relating to accommodation options in Edinburgh including; an annual Accommodation Fair on campus, allowing landlords to advertise via dedicated websites and producing supporting documents to be given to students.
4. Accommodation Guarantee

The University guarantees an offer of accommodation to all students who are new to the University and fit all of the following criteria:

- Their study is full time.
- They are studying at the Edinburgh campus for the duration of semesters 1 and 2.
- Their home address is not within the City of Edinburgh Council area.
- Their accommodation application is received before the closing date.

The accommodation guarantee is for a single bedroom for at least semesters 1 and 2 of the academic year for which the application is received.

Returning students who are transferring to the Edinburgh Campus from another Heriot-Watt University campus will be treated as new students to the campus for their first year in Edinburgh and they will be guaranteed accommodation, as long as they fit the criteria outlined above.

5. Eligibility to Apply

5.1 Eligible Applicants

Only Heriot-Watt University prospective students who hold an unconditional firm offer for a full time course of study will be eligible to apply for accommodation for the academic year in which their course commences. This applies to both undergraduate first years, direct entrants and new postgraduates who have not previously been enrolled on a course of study at Heriot-Watt University.

Students with a conditional offer will only be able to apply for accommodation once they have met the conditions of their offer and their record has been changed to unconditional firm on the Heriot-Watt University Student Administration System.

5.2 Returning Students

Students who will be returning to the University shall not be guaranteed accommodation. Each year the Accommodation Office will evaluate the expected student numbers in advance to determine whether there will be availability for returning students for that year. Should it be concluded that all expected new students can be accommodated, with capacity remaining, then applications will open for returning students and a limited
number of rooms will be offered on a first come first served basis. Students with complex support needs or disabilities will be given priority.

Should accommodation not be available for returning students information and advice on accommodation in Edinburgh shall be given. The Accommodation Leased Flats Office shall produce a booklet providing guidance on renting privately in Edinburgh. In addition to this an annual Accommodation Fair shall be held on campus where private providers and letting agents can advertise accommodation to students. Students who are not allocated University accommodation will have the opportunity to apply for a University Leased Flat off campus.

5.3 Students Studying for One Semester

Students whose course does not run for the duration of semesters 1 and 2 will not be guaranteed accommodation. Those coming for one semester can apply to the accommodation office by completing a paper application form and will be placed on a waiting list. After all full academic year applicants (who fit the criteria outlined in section one) have been accommodated, applications for one semester will be considered. Any available rooms will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

Students on certain courses may be given priority over other one semester students, if requested by the University's Recruitment and Admissions department or if there is a separate contractual agreement and it has been agreed with the Accommodation Office in advance.

Those who cannot be accommodated by the University can request information about alternative accommodation options in Edinburgh.

5.4 Students with Dependents

The University does not provide accommodation suitable for families or couples. Students who require accommodation for their dependants should contact the University Leased Flats Office for advice on finding private rented accommodation in Edinburgh.

6. Allocation Process

6.1 Application Process

Applications for accommodation should be made online between the opening date in April and closing date in August. Eligible students can apply using their UCAS/person
ID number and date of birth. Those applying for accommodation for one semester should apply using the paper application form which can be requested by email to the Accommodation Office.

6.2 Accommodation Types and Preferences

A number of accommodation types are available both on and off campus. When applying, applicants should state their first and second preference of accommodation type. Preferences will be allocated on a first come first served basis and cannot be guaranteed.

A number of rooms in each accommodation type will be held back for students with conditional offers. These rooms will be released in batches after the A level and Higher results have been released.

6.3 Students Applying through Clearing

Students who apply to the University through clearing should be aware that they are only guaranteed accommodation if they submit their application by the closing date. The Accommodation Office cannot guarantee accommodation to late applicants and rooms can only be allocated after the closing date subject to availability.

6.4 Contracting Process

The Accommodation Office aims to process applications within 2 weeks of them being submitted. An email shall be sent to the applicant providing details of the type of accommodation that they have been allocated. An offer of accommodation and residences contract will also be included in the email. In order to secure the accommodation offered the applicant must accept the terms and conditions of the contract via the website and make payment of £300 reservation fee within 7 days of the date of the email. Should the applicant fail to do this within the time limit another offer of accommodation cannot be guaranteed. If the applicant chooses to decline the room offered to them their application shall be placed at the bottom of the waiting list and another offer of accommodation will only be made subject to availability.

6.5 Prioritising Applications

Disabled students, those with additional support needs and those with a medical condition may have their request for a certain type of accommodation prioritised. We
shall consider and carefully assess each request and every effort shall be made to meet the needs of the applicant.

To be considered for priority a letter from the applicant's doctor or medical practitioner should be supplied stating the applicant's requirement for a certain type of accommodation and reasons for their requirement. In addition a supporting statement from the applicant should be supplied prior to the closing date. The evidence provided shall be considered by the Accommodation Office and the Disability Service prior to an offer of accommodation being made. Should the required documentation be provided after the closing date it may be difficult for the request to be met.

7. Third Party Provider Accommodation

In addition to University owned accommodation on campus, the University may offer a number of rooms in privately owned accommodation in Edinburgh each year. The number of rooms offered will depend on the expected number of eligible students requiring accommodation for that year. Although the University shall be responsible for allocating the rooms, the contracting process will be managed by the third party provider and the student shall contract with them directly. After allocation, all matters relating to tenancy management and maintenance of buildings shall be dealt with by the third party provider.

This type of accommodation forms part of the accommodation guarantee and shall be offered to applicants who requests it as their first preference in the first instance. Should rooms still be available after all requests have been met then they will be allocated to those who may not have stated that this type of accommodation is their preference.