

D/517/06

STUDENT HOUSING CONSTITUTION

1. ARTICLE 1 – NAME

The name of the residence is.....

2. ARTICLE 2 – PURPOSE

- 2.1. The university residences must be a home for all registered residents where an atmosphere conducive to learning and holistic development of the individual is catered for.
- 2.2. Where the needs of its diverse members are catered for with the provision of suitable social and educational programmes.
- 2.3. Where adequate facilities and infrastructure are provided for.
- 2.4. Where adequate security is provided for.
- 2.5. Where the mission, vision and objectives of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) are vigorously promoted.

3. ARTICLE 3 – GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 3.1. Democracy
- 3.2. Transparency
- 3.3. Fairness
- 3.4. Integrity
- 3.5. Tolerance
- 3.6. Promotion of diversity
- 3.7. Equity
- 3.8. Equal opportunities
- 3.9. Academic Excellence

4. ARTICLE 4 - DEFINITIONS

- 4.1. **Residence** – a defined geographical location with specific infrastructures accommodating a defined number of registered students.
- 4.2. **Resident** – a registered student in a specific residence.
- 4.3. **Students Representative Council** – as defined in the constitution of the SRC
- 4.4. **Residence Management** – appointed staff by the university to manage residential affairs.
- 4.5. **Student Housing Council** – as defined in the constitution of the SRC
- 4.6. **Governance Structure** – formally elected structure as defined in the SRC constitution (SRC; House Committee Members; Student Housing Council; Faculty Council & Sport Council)
- 4.7. **Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU)** – referred to hereafter as the University.

5. ARTICLE 5 – DUTIES AND REQUIREMENTS OF OFFICERS

- 5.1. The residences will be run by a management team consisting of appointed staff by the University and elected House Committees who all report to the Senior Manager, Student Housing.
 - 5.1.1. **House Committees**
 - 5.1.2. The number of House Committees will be determined by the Senior Manager, Student Housing using the guideline of 1 House Committee member to 30 residents (1:30).
 - 5.1.3. The House Committee is elected annually (see article 7)

- 5.1.4. All House Committees shall have an executive committee consisting of Primarius/Primaria, Secretary and Treasurer.
- 5.1.5. House Committees are to determine portfolios from amongst their elected ranks and the following responsibilities should be included:

- 5.1.5.1. Maintenance
- 5.1.5.2. Recreation / Social Welfare
- 5.1.5.3. Sport / Orientation
- 5.1.5.4. Security
- 5.1.5.5. Academic
- 5.1.5.6. Cleaning & Health Services

- 5.1.6. House Committees are to meet at least twice a month and more if necessary. Minutes of all house committee meetings must be kept, filed and copies thereof circulated to all residence management staff.
- 5.1.7. House Committees may appoint sub-committees in order to assist with the execution of their duties.
- 5.1.8. House Committees are expected to enforce the rules of the residence but all rules are subject to those of the University.
- 5.1.9. House Committees are to assist residence management where necessary.

5.2. Powers and Duties

5.2.1. Primaria/Primarius

- 5.2.1.1. Shall be the Head Student of the residence
- 5.2.1.2. Shall be the chief spokesperson and representative of the house committee.
- 5.2.1.3. Shall protect and promote the good image of the house committee at all times.
- 5.2.1.4. Shall preside over House Committee meetings
- 5.2.1.5. Shall provide leadership and monitor and control house committee activities and delegate duties where necessary.
- 5.2.1.6. Shall represent the house committee on the Student Housing Council.
- 5.2.1.7. Shall promote communication between residence management, the residents and other student governance structures.
- 5.2.1.8. Shall report on a regular basis on those matters to the House Committee as determined by the House Committee.

5.2.2. Secretary

- 5.2.2.1. Shall be the administrative officer of the House Committee.
- 5.2.2.2. Shall keep records and maintain archives of the House Committee.
- 5.2.2.3. Shall maintain and forward regular correspondence to relevant addressee.
- 5.2.2.4. Shall, in consultation with the Primarius/Primaria shall distribute notices, agendas and minutes of House Committee meetings to members.
- 5.2.2.5. Shall keep proper minutes of all meetings.
- 5.2.2.6. Shall be responsible for House Committee inventory.
- 5.2.2.7. Shall ensure that copies of agendas and minutes are forwarded to the relevant residence management and Senior Manager, Student Housing.
- 5.2.2.8. Shall report on a regular basis on those matters to the House Committee as determined by the House Committee.

5.2.3. Treasurer

- 5.2.3.1. Shall be responsible for all House Committee funds.
- 5.2.3.2. Shall budget for all residence activities at the commencement of their term of office.
- 5.2.3.3. Shall ensure that all monies collected are accounted for and paid into the relevant account.
- 5.2.3.4. Shall coordinate all fundraising programmes of the House Committee.
- 5.2.3.5. Shall keep proper record and report quarterly by means of a public statement to the residents. Copies thereof to be circulated to residence management.
- 5.2.3.6. Shall report on a regular basis on those matters to the House Committee as determined by the House Committee.

5.2.4. Other portfolios

- 5.2.4.1. It is recommended that the portfolios of maintenance, cleaning, student welfare, academic, security and FY orientation be mandatory for each residence.

5.2.5. Maintenance

- 5.2.5.1. Shall report all maintenance issues of concern to the relevant residence management authority.
- 5.2.5.2. Shall attend all meetings regarding technical and cleaning issues with the relevant authority or any other ad hoc meeting prescribed from time to time;
- 5.2.5.3. Shall liaise constantly with the relevant residence authority on technical and cleaning issues;
- 5.2.5.4. Shall give feedback regularly to students on maintenance decisions taken at meetings;
- 5.2.5.5. Shall give feedback to students regarding faults reported.
- 5.2.5.6. Shall report on a regular basis on those matters to the House Committee as determined by the House Committee.

5.2.6. Catering

- 5.2.6.1. Shall attend meetings of the catering committee or any other ad hoc meeting called upon to attend;
- 5.2.6.2. Shall liaise constantly with the catering management on catering issues and submit minutes in prescribed format to residence management;
- 5.2.6.3. Shall give feedback regularly to students on decisions taken at meetings;
- 5.2.6.4. Shall keep residence management informed of all problems, complaints and action taken on a regular basis
- 5.2.6.5. Shall form a catering sub committee where necessary.
- 5.2.6.6. NOTE: In self catering residences this portfolio may not be necessary
- 5.2.6.7. Shall report on a regular basis on those matters to the House Committee as determined by the House Committee.

5.2.7. Security

- 5.2.7.1. Shall attend the meetings of the Protection Services Committee and any other relevant ad hoc meetings called upon to attend;
- 5.2.7.2. Shall keep Campus Protection authority and Residence Management abreast of all security threats;
- 5.2.7.3. Shall report security issues to the relevant Campus Protection **and** Residence Management authority;
- 5.2.7.4. Shall remain constantly proactive and vigilant as regards protection issues and make recommendations to the relevant authority on such issues.
- 5.2.7.5. Shall give feedback to students on decisions taken at meetings.

5.2.8. First Year Orientation

- 5.2.8.1. Shall assume responsibility for the drawing up of an orientation programme for the approval of residence management, ensuring that the programme conforms to the vision and mission of the overall institution and does not include any initiation.
- 5.2.8.2. Shall convene a sub-committee which will direct the orientation programme.
- 5.2.8.3. Shall represent the residence at all orientation meetings across the university when required.
- 5.2.8.4. Shall monitor the progress of FY orientation and ensure that the dignity and educational value of the programme is never compromised and report any transgression of policy to the relevant Residence Management authority;
- 5.2.8.5. Shall compile a report upon the completion of orientation, making recommendations and reporting on the effectiveness of the programme.
- 5.2.8.6. Shall report on a regular basis on those matters to the House Committee as determined by the House Committee.

5.2.9. Academic

- 5.2.9.1. Shall encourage high academic performance and identify risk areas. Report such areas to the relevant residence management authority.
- 5.2.9.2. Shall assist in the coordination of the various peer helping and mentoring programmes in the residence.
- 5.2.9.3. Shall initiate academic programmes within the residence which could improve academic performance e.g. how to study, tutorials etc.
- 5.2.9.4. Shall assist with any ceremonies where academic excellence is acknowledged within the residence.
- 5.2.9.5. Shall represent the residence on any academic forums within the University where required.
- 5.2.9.6. Shall monitor the academic atmosphere in the residence with regards to the creation of an environment where learning can be promoted.

5.2.9.7. Shall report on a regular basis on those matters to the House Committee as determined by the House Committee.

5.2.10. Student Welfare (includes sport, culture and wellness)

- 5.2.10.1. Shall represent the residence at all meetings where issues of student welfare are concerned in the University.
- 5.2.10.2. Shall monitor and report on cases of student welfare within the residence e.g. indigence, health etc.
- 5.2.10.3. Shall organise activities in collaboration with the relevant residence authority which focus on student welfare issues e.g. issues of culture, sport, wellness, etc.
- 5.2.10.4. Shall initiate at least one sustainable community development programme within the disadvantaged communities of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality (NMMM).
- 5.2.10.5. Shall initiate and coordinate the residence ball, and any other such activity.
- 5.2.10.6. Note: This is a large portfolio necessitating (at the discretion of the specific residence) a sharing of the portfolio.
- 5.2.10.7. Shall report on a regular basis on those matters to the House Committee as determined by the House Committee.

5.2.11. Cleaning

- 5.2.11.1. Shall report all cleaning issues of concern to the relevant residence management authority.
- 5.2.11.2. Shall attend all meetings regarding cleaning issues with the relevant authority or any other ad hoc meeting prescribed from time to time;
- 5.2.11.3. Shall liaise constantly with the relevant residence authority on cleaning matters;
- 5.2.11.4. Shall give feedback regularly to students on decisions taken at meetings;
- 5.2.11.5. Shall give feedback to students regarding matters which have been reported.
- 5.2.11.6. Shall report on a regular basis on those matters to the House Committee as determined by the House Committee.

5.2.12. General duties of all House Committees

- 5.2.12.1. They shall attend to matters of comfort and recreation.
- 5.2.12.2. They shall assist residence management in the execution of their duties.
- 5.2.12.3. They shall attend House Committee meetings.
- 5.2.12.4. They shall assist in the maintenance of general discipline in order to assure that students abide by the general rules and regulations.
- 5.2.12.5. They shall liaise with residents with regard to requests which should be brought to the notice of the residence management.
- 5.2.12.6. They shall form sub-committees where necessary.
- 5.2.12.7. They shall inform residence management of any cases of illness amongst residents
- 5.2.12.8. They shall promote a spirit of tolerance, studiousness and respect for property and people.
- 5.2.12.9. They shall conduct any administrative duties on behalf of residence management as required from time to time.

6. ARTICLE 6 – MEETINGS

6.1. House Committee meetings

- 6.1.1. House committee meetings are to be held at least twice a month and more if necessary.
- 6.1.2. Notices of meetings shall be advertised at least 7 days before due date unless regular meetings are scheduled as per predetermined arrangement.
- 6.1.3. Quorum of each meeting shall be 50% plus 1 (one) of the members of the Committee.
- 6.1.4. If the meeting cannot be held because of the quorum an alternative should be determined on which the meeting will be held irrespective of the quorum.
- 6.1.5. These are to be recorded and minutes circulated.
- 6.1.6. All house committee members must attend or tender a written apology.
- 6.1.7. If absent from two consecutive meetings without apologies disciplinary and steps may be taken.

6.2. House meetings

- 6.2.1. House meetings may only be called by the Hall Coordinator/Primarius/Primaria in consultation with residence management.
- 6.2.2. All house meetings must be announced by means of an agenda and notice at least three days prior to the meeting.
- 6.2.3. Minutes must be taken and circulated to residence management.
- 6.2.4. A quorum of 50% plus one is required of all residents. If there is no quorum the meeting shall be adjourned for 24 hours and those attending the second meeting shall be deemed to constitute the meeting.
- 6.2.5. House meetings shall occur at least once a term.
- 6.2.6. A special meeting may be convened on receipt of a petition, handed to residence management, signed by at least 20% of the registered residents requesting such a meeting. One week notice must be given of such a meeting. 20% of registered students shall constitute a quorum of such a meeting.

7. ARTICLE 7 - HOUSE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

- 7.1. House Committees are elected annually in the third term for the following academic year. The newly elected House Committee will assist the current House Committee during the last term in order to be trained in the duties and responsibilities for their term of office.
- 7.2. Their term of office commences at the start of the academic year and finishes on the last day of the academic year.
- 7.3. House Committee members will receive a stipend determined by the University Management.
- 7.4. All House Committees must report for training as required by Residence Management.
- 7.5. No House Committee member, other than the individual elected to the SRC as the Accommodation and Catering Officer, may hold a position on any other Student Governance structure and may not receive more than one stipend.

7.6. Elections

7.6.1. Criteria for Nominations

- 7.6.1.1. No disciplinary record from time of sentence for a period of 12 months.
- 7.6.1.2. Academic performance – students should have the number of credits in accordance with their year of study as confirmed by Financial Aid.
- 7.6.1.3. No outstanding debt from semester one (1) of that year.
- 7.6.1.4. All nominees must have at least been residing in the residences for 6 (six) months unless exceptional circumstances are so deemed by the Senior Manager, Student Housing.
- 7.6.1.5. The student must reside in the residence on campus for the full period of appointment.

7.7. Electoral process

7.7.1. Electoral Commission

- 7.7.1.1. The SRC, the Department Student Governance and Development and the department of Student Housing in consultation with the Housing Council, shall appoint an Independent Electoral Commission to conduct the house committee elections.

7.7.2. Voters Roll

- 7.7.2.1. The Chief Electoral Commissioner compiles a voter's roll.
- 7.7.2.2. All registered resident students are eligible to vote in their respective residences.
- 7.7.2.3. Notification of the drawing up of the voters roll shall be given at least 14 days prior to the holding of the house committee elections. The voters roll shall be open to the students for scrutiny.
- 7.7.2.4. Objections and requests for the inclusion or exclusion of names must be submitted in writing, with comprehensive motivation, to the Chief Electoral Commissioner no later than 24 hours after the closure of the voters roll for inspection.
- 7.7.2.5. The decision of the Chief Electoral Commissioner is final.

7.7.3. Nominations

7.7.3.1. The Chief Electoral Commissioner shall invite nominations of candidates for the house committee elections by means of a public notice. The notice shall state clearly the office where the nomination form will be obtained as well as the deadline for their submission.

7.7.3.2. The nominations must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the date of elections at the office/s as published in the notification.

7.7.3.3. No nomination shall be valid unless it contains:

7.7.3.3.1. Full name & surname of candidate

7.7.3.3.2. Student Number

7.7.3.3.3. Faculty

7.7.3.3.4. University Residential address of the nominee

7.7.3.3.5. Name, student number, residence and signature of the enfranchised proposer;

7.7.3.3.6. ID Photograph;

7.7.3.3.7. Name, student number, residence and signatures of two enfranchised seconders.

7.7.3.3.8. A written signed declaration by the nominee that he/she is willing to seek election.

7.7.3.4. The Chief Electoral Commissioner will consider all nominations and determine whether the nominations are accepted or not on the basis of the eligibility as per set criteria. The decision of the Chief Electoral Commissioner is final.

7.7.3.5. Notice shall be given to the persons nominated as candidates for the election by the Chief Electoral Commissioner informing them of their acceptance or not.

7.7.3.6. Every nominee shall submit a Manifesto which will be read at an open residence meeting and it shall include the following:

7.7.3.6.1. photo

7.7.3.6.2. full names

7.7.3.6.3. student number

7.7.3.6.4. course

7.7.3.6.5. motivation

7.7.3.6.6. principle standing for

7.7.3.6.7. promises

7.7.3.6.8. signature

7.7.3.7. Responsibility rests with the approved nominees to canvas within defined guidelines as approved by the IEC.

7.7.4. Funding

7.7.4.1. The Senior Manager, Student Housing shall make available resources to each candidate which will facilitate the printing of posters.

7.7.5. Elections

7.7.5.1. The IEC in consultation with the relevant student governance bodies shall determine the election programme.

7.7.5.2. The IEC shall give notice of time, venue and date of election.

7.7.5.3. The election shall take place on the appointed date and time by means of a secret ballot under the supervision of the IEC

7.7.5.4. The Chief Electoral Commissioner shall be in full control of the election process and shall be empowered to deal with any irregularities that may arise.

7.7.5.5. Only ballot papers supplied by the IEC may be used.

7.7.5.6. Each voter must vote in person.

7.7.5.7. Each voter must produce a student card, or in the absence thereof, an identity document accompanied by proof of registration.

7.7.5.8. Recognised university constituencies may appoint one monitor, in writing, to observe counting of votes.

7.7.5.9. After the election, the names of the successful candidates shall be posted on notice boards stipulating the number of votes, the names of the candidates and the percentage poll. This should take place as soon as possible on completion of the elections.

7.7.5.10. Successful candidates will be elected on the basis of a simple majority.

7.7.5.11. The Executive Office bearers will be elected by the new committee and the outgoing Executive Committee together with specific Residence Management. In the event of a tie, the manager shall have the casting vote.

7.7.6. Replacement

- 7.7.6.1. Should a vacancy occur through resignation or otherwise, a reserve system may be used to fill the vacancy should the need arise.
- 7.7.6.2. Should a vacancy occur in the second semester, the vacancy may be filled through a process of co-option by the relevant house committee with the approval of the Senior Manager, Student Housing.
- 7.7.6.3. Should a house committee member not report within 14 days of the commencement of the academic year he/she shall forfeit his/her position.

7.7.7. Resignation from the House Committee

- 7.7.7.1. Any member of the house committee may tender his/her resignation in writing to the Director of Student Housing.
- 7.7.7.2. Full reasons for the resignation must be furnished.
- 7.7.7.3. Any House Committee member who does not live in residence for the full appointment period shall be required to resign.

7.7.8. Student Housing Council

- 7.7.8.1. Within two (2) days of the House Committee election two (2) members of the House Committee, including the Primarius/Primaria, shall be nominated to form part of the Student Housing Council (refer to Chapter 7, Section 27 of the SRC Constitution).
- 7.7.8.2. The election of the additional member shall take place by closed ballot within the House Committee. If necessary the Primaria/Primarius shall have the casting vote.

8. ARTICLE 8 – INCENTIVES

- 8.1. House Committee members shall receive incentives in the form of a monthly stipend as negotiated by the SRC and approved by EMCOM and a uniform subsidy determined by Residence Management from time to time.
- 8.2. House Committees who do not perform their duties may be suspended without remuneration.
- 8.3. A House Committee member shall, where possible, be entitled where possible, to a designated single room.

9. ARTICLE 9 – CODE OF CONDUCT

- 9.1. House Committees Members shall attend all residence and House Committee meetings.
- 9.2. Should a member be unable to attend a written apology in advance must be submitted to the secretary concerned.
- 9.3. No members shall use offensive or hate language during any house committee meeting.
- 9.4. No resident shall bring the residence into disrepute through his/her conduct anywhere.
- 9.5. Racial and/or cultural intolerance shall be outlawed.
- 9.6. No resident shall distort policy positions and misrepresent the residents for his/her personal gain.
- 9.7. No member shall use the residence name for personal gain.
- 9.8. No resident shall be involved in alcohol abuse nor the taking or selling of narcotics.
- 9.9. Any form of harassment will not be tolerated;
- 9.10. No resident may disrespect or offend the dignity of a fellow student, member of staff or member of the public.
- 9.11. No member shall vandalise any residence structures.
- 9.12. Any House Committee Member, who fails to perform to the required standards, makes themselves liable to suspension and/or withdrawal of privileges and/or stipend and/or dismissal.

10. ARTICLE 10 – DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

- 10.1. The University Central Disciplinary and Residence Disciplinary Code stipulate the necessary requirements.
- 10.2. In addition, House Committee members are subject to the Residence Rules.

11. ARTICLE 11 – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

- 11.1. An annual general meeting in each residence shall be convened for all registered students in that residence. It shall meet annually to approve;
 - 11.1.1. the minutes of the previous AGM
 - 11.1.2. to adopt constitutional amendments
 - 11.1.3. to approve portfolio reports
 - 11.1.4. and to discuss any other relevant matters.
- 11.2. The house committee shall convene and plan for all the activities of the AGM which shall be chaired by the Primaria / Primarius
- 11.3. The secretary shall issue a notice and agenda of the meeting 14 days before such a meeting.
- 11.4. The secretary shall prepare an annual report and make it available for perusal 7 days before the meeting by placing it on relevant notice boards in the residence
- 11.5. The treasurer shall prepare a financial report and make it available 7 days before such a meeting.
- 11.6. 50% plus 1 registered resident student shall constitute a quorum. Should there be no quorum the meeting shall be adjourned for 7 days after which the students attending shall be deemed to constitute a quorum.
- 11.7. The AGM should take place prior to the annual Residence House Committee elections in the 3rd term.

12. ARTICLE 12 – AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

- 12.1. Proposal for amendments to the constitution shall be made at the AGM
- 12.2. A written submission must be tendered in writing and must be supported by a list of at least 20% of the registered residents in that residence, including names, student numbers and signatures.
- 12.3. The detail of such submissions must be spelt out with a motivation and the exact wording of the proposal.
- 12.4. The proposed amendments must be submitted via the secretary of the House Committee concerned to the Student Housing Council and Senior Manager, Student Housing who in turn shall submit the amendments to the Executive Director, Student Affairs for the final approval by EMCOM.
- 12.5. In the case of conflict arising from the interpretation of issues, the matter shall be referred to the Director of Student Housing for arbitration.